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EDWARD BAKER LITTLEHALES: THE EVOLUTION OF MILITARY GOVERNANCE AND THE DEMISE OF THE MILITARY UNDER-SECRETARY 1801-1819

by

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Contents

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List of images

Introduction

> The Office of Military Secretary will be abolished, Sir E. B Littlehales having resigned…a considerable reduction will be effected in the expense of each department by the removal of every useless hand.
>
> *Belfast News-Letter,* 17 August 1819

Whether Sir Edward Baker Littlehales, military under-secretary from 1801-1819 ever read the comments quoted above is not known, but it would be hard to think of a judgment which would have hurt him more than being considered a 'useless hand.' Such comments do him little service. Littlehales was a man who avoided the spotlight where possible, but his longevity and position meant that he was a witness to, and occasionally an actor in, some of the most important events of the early nineteenth century in Ireland.

That Littlehales' work has not received the attention it deserves reflects perhaps the nature of his post and personality. But it is also the case that Irish historians have not, with certain notable exceptions, examined the changes which occurred in Ireland in the early nineteenth century in a key area – the governance of the military function in the years following the Act of Union. More specifically, the role of military under-secretary has been almost completely absent from scholarly investigation. Littlehales took up this role in 1801, having previously fulfilled the role of private secretary to Lord Cornwallis, lord lieutenant from 1798 to 1801. While Littlehales is almost entirely absent from historical scholarship, the length of his tenure in a senior position means he is central to understanding military governance in Ireland during the era[1]. He worked closely with a variety of different

[1] A positive picture of Littlehales emerges in *Our young soldier*, by Mary B. Fryer (Toronto, 1996), the biography of Francis Simcoe (1791-1812), son of the general with whom Littlehales had served in Canada. Edward Brynn in *Crown and castle: British rule in Ireland, 1800-1830* (Dublin, 1978) alludes to his diligence when touring the country. Brian Jenkins, however, deems him "aging and fussy" with a tendency to "attach more importance to trifles than they deserve" in his chapter in Brian Jenkins, 'The chief secretary' in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds), *Defenders of the Union: a study of British and Irish unionism since 1801* (London, 2001), pp 39-65.

influential personalities in Dublin Castle and his tenure as military under-secretary offered consistency at a time when those in charge of the military in Ireland, as well as the broader governing elite, were trying to re-imagine and re-articulate their collective role. This re-imagining was necessitated by the Act of Union but was also affected by the threat of invasion from Napoleonic France and the ever-present reality of internal unrest in Ireland. In his role as military under-secretary, Littlehales was centrally involved in this evolving regime.

Aspects of this broader evolution form key concerns of this study, but at a more specific level it will be argued that the role of under-secretary as one of the key actors in military government diminished greatly over the period in question. As such, it is important to examine the decline in influence of this role in light of the Act of Union (and the commensurate rise in influence and direction from government in London) as well as the rising prominence of the role of chief secretary.[2] When one considers the increasing professionalism of the civil service through the early nineteenth century (partly thanks to the migration of members of the military into civil roles),[3] coupled with the fact that Littlehales' role was effectively merged with its civil counterpart following his retirement, it would appear self-evident that the role was declining in importance. Nevertheless, through examining the career of this outwardly unremarkable bureaucrat, it is possible to shed light both on the evolution of military governance after the Act of Union, and also on the failings of an incomplete union and the attempts made by the administration in Dublin Castle to compensate for this.

[2] R. B McDowell, *The Irish administration 1801–1914* (London, 1964), p. 30 notes that the role of chief secretary grew partly due to an increasing role in the allocation of funding.
[3] R. B McDowell, *Social life in Ireland 1800–1845* (Dublin, 1957), p. 82.

Aim of the dissertation

In examining Littlehales' career, this thesis aims to shed light on a key area in early nineteenth century Irish history – the development of bureaucracy after the Act of Union. In particular, it will consider bureaucratic development through an examination of the role of the military under-secretary. Although he arrived in Ireland in a military capacity in 1798, Littlehales did not become military under-secretary until 1801, following the Act of Union. Given that he held the role until his retirement in 1819, his length of service was greater than that of any of the other senior officials in the Dublin Castle administration at the time. Accordingly, his career affords a valuable opportunity to chart the evolution in post-union military governance via the career of one official. Within the literature pertaining to Irish administration and the military in Ireland there has been a tendency to focus on seminal events such as 1798 or the Act of Union, at the expense of more longitudinal studies which show gradual evolution. This fact has been adverted to by Theo Hoppen who has noted that 'politically the two decades following the union are often dismissed as something of an incomprehensible hiatus during which "things" in some mysterious way "took time to adjust."'[4] By examining the career of one official over an extended period it is possible to present new perspectives regarding the role of personality in the post-union administration. Accordingly, particular attention will be given to investigating and uncovering the network of relationships which Littlehales had, primarily in Dublin, but also with colleagues in London. The claim made by historians such as R. B McDowell and Edward Brynn that the role of the military under-secretary diminished greatly after the union will be investigated and the growing importance of the role of chief secretary will be traced.[5]

[4] K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800: conflict and conformity* (London, 1989), p. 14.
[5] McDowell, *The Irish administration 1801–1914*, p. 30.

More broadly, this thesis seeks to situate military governance in Ireland in a larger 'imperial' context, considering it as part of an overall imperial strategy emanating from Westminster, while highlighting the localised peculiarities which made it distinctly 'Irish'. In this regard it will complement assertions made by McDowell that a degree of local autonomy was essential, despite the continuing attempts by Westminster to limit such freedom. [6] Moreover, it will analyse the strategy that determined military presence in Ireland and the degree to which this was linked to governmental policy and personnel in both Westminster and Dublin Castle. Interpreting governance in this context will allow for consideration of the role of military under-secretary as a nexus through which policy was formulated and implemented, and as a conduit through which decisions could be evaluated. In this regard, the under-secretary can be seen to be uniquely placed, being at the heart of the formulation of policies but also central to their implementation and subsequent appraisal.

Leaving aside the longevity of his career and the central position he occupied, Littlehales lends himself to sustained attention for a variety of additional reasons. Firstly, his presence in the historical record is patchy at best and until very recently there was little evidence of an archive of his work of any scale. This changed with the discovery of a sizeable and important archive relating to his role as military under-secretary. Secondly, as a character he has, to date, received very little consideration by scholars, being almost entirely absent from historical studies. Indeed, there is a striking contrast between his prominence in contemporary sources (ranging from governmental papers through private correspondence with senior Irish figures) and his near total absence from historical research in the arena of government and administration. This can be explained in part by the absence of a corpus of primary sources relating to Littlehales, but he does have a presence in other primary sources

[6] McDowell, *The Irish administration 1801–1914*, viii.

such as official papers and the archives of other prominent figures. Given Littlehales' occupation of a significant administrative role for nearly two decades, this absence seems unusual and his long career close to the heart of the Irish administration merits examination. When one considers the breadth of change prompted by the redefinition of the constitutional relationship after 1801, coupled with the varied and challenging military issues of security prompted both by insurrection and war with France, the need to address this absence is marked.

Despite the growth in research into Irish military history, there remains a lacuna in the area of military governance in the early nineteenth century. Irish military historiography has been mainly focussed on the twin pillars of the Irish experience in prosecuting the war against Napoleon and the local military response to internal unrest such as 1798. In light of the comparative lack of scholarly research on this topic, this thesis will contribute to our understanding of government during a time of considerable upheaval and transformation. In the process, our knowledge of both military governance and the significance of Littlehales' role and office will deepen significantly.

Literature review

While there has been some appraisal of military governance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there is a paucity specifically in relation to Ireland and the subject represents one of the remaining fallow areas of Irish historical scholarship. While this obviously represents an opportunity to undertake ground-breaking research, it also makes it difficult to gain a full understanding of how the contemporary military situation was viewed by those in Dublin Castle. To date, scholars have tended to focus on either specific events such as insurrections and the reaction of the military to them, or analysis of military

governance has been offered as part of a greater overview, where it is, perhaps understandably, overshadowed by analysis of political issues and civil governance.

Written at a time when there was even less interest in this area, Edward Brynn's *Crown and Castle: British rule in Ireland, 1800-1830* provides a solid overview of the structures of government and adeptly portrays the intimacy and collegiality of Dublin Castle at the time of the union and in its aftermath, while also giving some consideration to the role of senior government figures (particularly the lord lieutenant) in issues such as patronage.[7] However, while he charts a certain amount of evolution, this is confined mainly to the area of political governance. A similarly narrow focus characterises Alan J Ward's *The Irish constitutional tradition*, where the failings of the administration at the time of the union are ably dissected, but again very much in the civic arena.[8] Brynn's work owes much to McDowell's *The Irish administration, 1801-1914* another general work which shows development both in government generally, and in both practice and governance of the military, with a strong focus on the context of the Act of Union and the changes it wrought.[9] McDowell also considers these issues in a fine chapter on the military in his edited work *Social life in Ireland, 1800-1845*.[10] However, while McDowell's work can be seen as exemplary in terms of its scholarship and breadth, it is very much a series of survey works and is inevitably of its time. Indeed, the fact that much of his work remains as a reference point only highlights the absence of subsequent scholarship in this subject. As such, there is a pronounced need for studies, such as that provided by the present thesis, in order to update historical research in this area especially in view of the sources which have recently come to light.

[7] Brynn, *Crown and castle: British rule in Ireland, 1800-1830.*
[8] Alan J Ward, *The Irish constitutional tradition* (Dublin, 1994).
[9] McDowell, *The Irish administration, 1801–1914*.
[10] McDowell, *Social life in Ireland, 1800–1845.*

This lacuna in scholarship in the realm of governance is noted in Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue's 2012 volume *The Irish lord lieutenancy,* which seeks to 'address a significant gap in our understanding of the history of Irish governance and British-Irish relations.'[11] One particular chapter in this collection – that by Hoppen – provides a good insight into the specific role of the lieutenancy during the period in question. By highlighting the variety of approaches to administering Ireland in the early part of the nineteenth century, Hoppen showed that assessing one role over a period of time can showcase an evolution in governance. This approach – focusing on one office over a long period – has been adopted for this thesis, with the key difference being that in Hoppen's study, there were multiple holders of the post, whereas Littlehales is the sole holder of the military under-secretary role.[12] A similar and useful approach is adopted by Tony Gaynor in a recent work which focusses on the commander-in-chief role.[13]

Biographies of the more junior administrators below the strata of chief secretary are limited, even for a prominent and influential character like Edward Cooke (military under-secretary, 1789-1796; civil under-secretary, 1796-1801). With regard to Littlehales, there is undoubtedly a dearth of scholarly research specifically relating to his role of military under-secretary and his input into the formulation and implementation of military policy. Undoubtedly, this is partly due to historical difficulties, alluded to above, in accessing a full suite of primary sources which would provide as detailed a picture as possible. What autobiographies are present, are reflective and need to be read with a degree of caution, as there is a subjectivity which needs to be considered.[14] Beyond such limitations, however, it seems that many students of early nineteenth century Irish history have elected to shy away

[11] Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue, 'The Irish lord lieutenancy, c. 1541-1922', in Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue (eds.). *The Irish lord lieutenancy* (Dublin, 2012), p. 1.
[12] K. Theodore Hoppen, 'A question none could answer: "What was the viceroyalty for?" 1800-1921', in Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue (eds.), *The Irish lord lieutenancy* (Dublin, 2012), pp 132–57.
[13] Tony Gaynor, *Commanders of the British Forces in Ireland 1796–1922* (Dublin, 2022).
[14] Geoff Mortimer, *Eyewitness accounts of the Thirty Years War 1618–48* (London, 2002).

from consideration of the perceived 'banalities' of government and its administrators, in favour of the more exciting narrative of rebellion and emancipation. This research will show another side of the story – addressing in part this lacuna in the historiography of modern Ireland.

Although it considers a different and more prominent character, the doctoral thesis of Mark Jarrat on Castlereagh and the French restoration of 1814-15 was particularly useful in understanding the tension between an organisation and the individuals operating in it during the period in question.[15] By examining Castlereagh's formulation of policy as a consequence of both an individual's political socialisation, cultural background and the limitation of 'information flows' Jarrat paints a compelling picture of the myriad limitations of both those who governed and the organisational infrastructure which they endeavoured to govern through. Although my conclusions differ in terms of the primacy of personality, they are enabled by an understanding of the link between an official as an individual and as a member of a broader culture which Jarrat's work afforded.

One of the key aims of this work is to understand the role of the military under-secretary with regard to the three primary military forces operating in Ireland for most of his tenure: the regular army, the militia and the yeomanry. The historiography in this area has typically focused on either one specific force, or on a particular regiment, formation or region. Bartlett's *The fall and rise of the Irish nation*, while not specifically about the military, succinctly details the military response to insurrection in 1798, illustrating the strong link between political and military reaction.[16]

[15] Mark Jeffery Jarrat, 'Castlereagh, Ireland and the French Restoration of 1814–15' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Stanford University, 2006).
[16] Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation* (Maryland, 1992).

For the militia the key works remain McAnally's seminal work *The Irish Militia 1793-1816* and Nelson's more recent study *The Irish militia 1793-1802.*[17] These are limited in their focus and in the case of Nelson in their chronological scope. Despite this limitation, Nelson's consideration of the issue of loyalty in the militia, a largely Catholic force, is of relevance in understanding the attitude of those in Dublin to the policing of unrest. Both authors highlight the linkages between the militia and the regular army, both in terms of policing but also as a channel for recruitment. This was an important feature of the militia for Dublin Castle, as the Napoleonic Wars accentuated the reliance of Britain on Ireland as a strategic source of manpower. Such issues were day-to-day considerations for Littlehales and his seniors in the Castle. While similar management considerations applied with the Yeomanry, such linkages with the regular army were not as pronounced and it has been argued that the scale of service in the largely protestant yeomanry may have had an inimical effect on the recruitment of the Protestant lower classes to the regular army.[18] The work of Allan Blackstock, most importantly his monograph *An Ascendancy Army: the Irish yeomanry 1796-1834*, is also of use in this study in terms of understanding a force which, like the militia, was a key part of Littlehales' working life, but which was also more comprehensible to him in many ways.[19] For all the above work, it can be argued that, despite their many merits, their primacy is due in part to the relative dearth of study at the macro level. What is lacking is a higher-level study of the various forces which coexisted in Ireland at the time, and which were often required to work in concert. The one exception to this is David Miller's chapter 'Non-professional soldiery c1600-1800' in *A military history of Ireland*

[17] Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793–1816, a social and military study* (Dublin, 1949); Ivan Nelson, *The Irish militia 1798–1802: Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007).
[18] James Deery, 'Irish experiences in the British Army during the Napoleonic Wars a quantitative analysis of Irish military service in the regular army 1808 to 1815' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Maynooth University, 2024), p. 10.
[19] Allan Blackstock *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry 1796–1834* (Dublin, 1998).

which endeavours to place these forces in a broader tradition albeit over a long period.[20]

Studies such as those of Nelson and Blackstock offer detail on specific military forces, but an understanding of the role of each force in society is often lacking. Such detail is critical in comprehending Littlehales' role both as an ex-military man working in civil administration, and as an official tasked with mediating the different imperatives of civil government and the command structures of the various forces. Linda Colley's seminal work *Britons* with its exploration of the development of British national identity is useful in this regard. Of particular applicability to this study is the chapter dealing with manpower which details how the military interacted in broader society as well as the power of patriotism which permeated society at the time. As is well known, however, Colley elected not to integrate Ireland into this study. With this in mind, and on its own merits, the research by Catriona Kennedy on early Napoleonic era warfare and the commensurate influence on culture and society is important in offering a more nuanced understanding of Irish society in a time of 'total war'.[21]

Furthermore, for an overview of the role of the regular army in Ireland during the period, Bartlett's and Jeffery's co-edited work *A military history of Ireland* contains several useful chapters, particularly those of E.M. Spiers, who sheds light on the composition of the army at the time and the relationship between religion and service, and Virginia Crossman, who offers insight into broader issues of internal peacekeeping, though she tends to focus on the post-Napoleonic period.[22] Crossman has also undertaken useful research into the Peace

[20] David Miller 'Non-professional soldiery c1600-1800' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith. Jeffery (eds). *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 315–35.
[21] Catriona Kennedy, 'True Britons and real Irish: Irish Catholics in the British Army during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars' in Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (eds), *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke, 2013), pp 37-56.
[22] E.M. Spiers 'Army organisation and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith. Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland*, pp 335-57.

Preservation Force which Littlehales was involved in establishing.[23] This study complements the earlier work of Galen Broeker on the same force.[24] Such works are critical in understanding the evolution in the methods of addressing internal unrest which occurred particularly during the tenure of Robert Peel as chief secretary. While the experience of society in a time of total war is not the focus of this study, an understanding of the impact of the war is necessary to appreciate the demands facing Littlehales in his role. On a fundamental level, as Bartlett notes, the war on the continent benefited many in Irish society, bringing as it did a series of economic booms.[25]

One of the limitations in the works noted tends to be a focus which rests exclusively on Ireland and Irish soldiers. Despite the merits of this approach, it doesn't acknowledge that there was a sustained, if inconsistent desire in both London and Dublin to bring a greater degree of coordination between the army in both regions – something which Littlehales had to manage on more than one occasion. Conversely, Colley, as noted above, looks at identity in every part of the United Kingdom except Ireland. This is unfortunate as a character such as Littlehales, born in England, but with a lifetime of working in different parts of the Empire, and married to a premier member of the Irish Ascendancy, is a study in malleable identity.[26]

Out of all aspects touched upon by this research, the Act of Union is the one which has seen the deepest research previously.[27] From the existing well-developed historiography, it is clear that the challenge for historians relates to the distillation of facts from the various ideological narratives espoused both at the time of the union, but also in its aftermath. As

[23] Virginia Crossman, 'Preserving the peace in Ireland: the role of military forces 1815–45' in *The Irish Sword,* xvii, no 69 (Summer 1990), pp 261.
[24] Galen Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force' in *Journal of Modern History, xxxiii*, no 4 (Dec. 1961), pp 363-373.
[25] Thomas Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1791-1815' in James Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland*, *1730–1880* (4 vols, Cambridge, 2018), iii, p. 74.
[26] Linda Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, 1992).
[27] See: James Kelly, 'The historiography of the Act of Union' in Michael Brown, Patrick Geoghan and James Kelly (eds), *The Irish Act of Union 1800: bicentennial essays* (Dublin, 2003), p. 5.

James Kelly put it 'the historiography of the Act of Union is longer and more obviously determined by political attitude than is true of perhaps any other issue in modern Irish history.' This contention is reflected in both the relevant primary and secondary literature.[28] As noted by Kelly, until comparatively recently most histories were composed to sustain a political outlook, not to analyse what happened; this bias has influenced the historiography of the union, with the majority of writers on the subject being nationalist in outlook.[29] This tendency towards a polemical narrative has confused not only our understanding of what happened, but also of the major characters involved, many of whom are reduced to simplistic roles of hero or villain. The historiography has improved however, beginning with the work of G.C. Bolton in the 1960s and has continued in subsequent years, not least during the bicentenary period.[30] Bolton's work is particularly important in that it capably recontextualises the longstanding issue of the role of bribery in securing the union. This was expanded on more recently by Geoghegan who brought a balanced view to the motivations for the union and particularly to the issue of corruption.[31] In tandem with this, the work of James Kelly is particularly important in placing the act in a broader context, seeing it as part of a longer tradition rather than a dramatic *volte-face* by the government. [32]

Primary Sources

In his introduction to the 1859 edition of the correspondence of the Marquis Cornwallis, Charles Ross noted the sombre fact that many of the principal actors in the history of the union period had purposely destroyed their papers.[33] Among the characters Ross lists is Edward Baker Littlehales. Such an assertion can only have applied to part of his archive as a

[28] Kelly, 'The historiography of the Act of Union', p. 3.
[29] Kelly, 'The Historiography of the Act of Union', p. 5.
[30] G.C. Bolton, *The Passing of the Irish Act of Union: A study in parliamentary politics* (Oxford, 1966).
[31] Patrick Geoghegan, *The Irish Act of Union* (Dublin, 1999).
[32] James Kelly, 'Popular Politics in Ireland and the Act of Union' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, x* (2000), pp 259-287; James Kelly, 'The Act of Union its origins and background' in Daire Keogh and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Acts of union: the causes contexts and consequences of the Act of Union* (Dublin, 2001), pp 46-67.
[33] Charles Ross (ed.), *Correspondence of Charles First Marquis Cornwallis* (3 vols, London, 1859), i, vi.

substantial corpus of material has come to light in recent years. At some stage in the twentieth century, the 'Littlehales Archive' was split into two separate collections. The larger of these was acquired by Maynooth University Library in 2013 and comprises nearly two thousand items.[34] Held in the Department of Special Collections and Archives in the John Paul II Library, this collection represents a previously untapped source. Its contents are still being catalogued and it has not previously been available for research. The second collection, also uncatalogued, is housed in the National Archives of Ireland and contains nearly one thousand items.[35] Littlehales had a broad network of correspondents, numbering over three hundred and including government officials, politicians, military commanders and influential members of the church and ascendancy. Although Littlehales was a functional rather than a descriptive writer and the vast majority of the correspondence in both of these collections is of a professional rather than personal nature, nevertheless it offers an unrivalled and hitherto unexamined insight into the workings of government and military administration in Ireland in the early nineteenth century, as well as the problems of the post-union period. Alongside these core archives, use will be made of a selection of primary sources situated in both Ireland and the United Kingdom.

The various collections examined includes several significant private collections, which have been used to compensate for gaps in other sources. Foremost among these are the private papers of senior officials, including the earl of Hardwicke (lord lieutenant, 1801-05), the duke of Bedford (lord lieutenant, 1806-07) and Charles Abbot (chief secretary, 1801-02).[36] The papers of these men flesh out much of the correspondence in which Littlehales

[34] Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive.
[35] Papers of Sir Edward Baker Littlehales (National Archives of Ireland, 2004/66).
[36] The Hardwicke archive is found in the British Library, with microfilm surrogates available in the National Library of Ireland. It is complemented by the publication of some of his correspondence in Michael MacDonagh, *The viceroy's post-bag: correspondence, hitherto unpublished, of the Earl of Hardwicke, first lord lieutenant of Ireland after the Union* (London, 1904). The Bedford archive is found in Woburn Abbey, Woburn, Bedfordshire. The papers of Charles Abbot are found in the National Archives, London and are complemented by his diaries, which were published as *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester; Speaker of the House of Commons, 1802–1817* (London, 1861).

engaged, offering a fuller picture of both decisions made and the context in which they were taken.

Of course, while they offer insights into the private thinking of key historical actors, such papers need to be augmented with official sources. This is particularly relevant for a character such as Littlehales who was a public official intermediating between military and civil agencies. As such collections like the Kilmainham papers, provide invaluable supporting detail. Housed in the National Library of Ireland, these papers record the work of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, based in Kilmainham Hospital. As a collection it is sizeable and broad in scope, addressing every aspect of the military in Ireland – both regular army and militia – from recruitment and encampment to movement and disposition of troops. These papers are critical to this study for two reasons: they offer a detailed insight into the army and how it worked at the time, and they reflect the view of the leadership of the army. How that view corresponded to the evidence in papers emanating from Dublin Castle is critical in understanding how the two entities interacted. This is particularly important for understanding the years immediately after the union, which saw considerable tension between both bodies over the interpretation of roles.[37] The papers, which encompass some 382 large volumes, cover every aspect of the military organisation in Ireland for over a century beginning in 1782 and are particularly useful in helping understand Littlehales' shifting role, as his correspondence as a military official in the army *and* as a civil administrator is represented within the collection.

Also important are the Rebellion Papers, housed in the National Archives of Ireland. Most obviously, the subject this collection relates to – the 1798 rebellion – is of direct relevance to any treatment of military affairs in Ireland for the period. However, spanning the early 1790s to 1808, the Rebellion Papers in fact offer a broader picture of both the various

[37] N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers, MS 1015-11357.

threats to the government (before and after union) and the responses offered. That they continue after the Act of Union is critical for this study. In addition, the Rebellion Papers highlight the role of a senior civil servant and contemporary of Littlehales, Edward Cooke, with whom this collection has become synonymous. Cooke's career bears some similarities to that of Littlehales: he arrived in Ireland as a private secretary, moved into the Dublin Castle administration as an under-secretary, firstly in the military function, before ultimately ending up as under-secretary in the civil department. While he was in some ways a more prominent figure, the nature of his duties and his critical role in collecting information, screening correspondence and offering analysis and proposals for action bears strong similarities to Littlehales, and the Rebellion Papers illustrate the fact that there was an information 'bleed' between civil and military offices and reinforces the notion that organisational relationships between the various departments in Dublin Castle at this time were comparatively intimate, with departments working together in a manner not commonly seen in comparable offices in London.

The Registered Papers of the Chief Secretary's Office collection, also found in the National Archives of Ireland, is an archive which is useful for the later part of the period under review, as it commences in 1818. As a collection it is varied, spanning both civil and military issues, with matters such as appointments, attempts to address unrest, infrastructure and broader considerations of law and order all in evidence. As with most other archives, much of what is recorded is based on evidence (letters, accounts and petitions) submitted to Dublin Castle and, as such, displays evidence of partiality on behalf of each source[38]. Nevertheless, these papers enable us to track the increasing prominence of the chief secretary over the period in question.

[38] Chief Secretary's Office, Registered Papers (National Archives of Ireland, CSO/RP/).

Of perhaps greater importance as a set of primary sources, however, are the governmental papers of the time and these will be instrumental in determining both the 'personality' of Littlehales in his role, but also the degree to which he supported or enabled deviation from official doctrine. In this regard, the Dublin Castle Papers in The National Archives UK coupled with those of the War, Home and Foreign Offices (in the same repository) are noteworthy.[39] Furthermore, much of the information on the 'day to day' activities which Littlehales would have been involved in (supporting infrastructure, troop supply and barracks building) can be found in British Parliamentary Papers, including accounts and the work of various parliamentary committees.

Beyond 'official sources', consideration will be given to the portrayal of both the military and its leaders in Dublin Castle as evidenced in newspapers and the more ephemeral publications of the time. Newspapers such as the *Freeman's Journal* are essential in garnering a clear sense of just how positively the military were perceived as they went about their occasionally fractious business. In drawing on these collections, this thesis will highlight the strength of the combined Littlehales Archive as a seminal source for the period but will also link it to cognate collections in both Ireland and the United Kingdom, in order to develop a more complete picture of military administration in Ireland in the early nineteenth century. This archive, located in two repositories, is exceptional but represents only one source which must be placed in a wider context. This is critical, both in terms of having the broadest possible view of military governance at the time and of the chief actors therein, but also in some cases to complete the circle of correspondence in which Littlehales engaged – both privately and professionally.

[39] Specifically, H.O. 100 and 101 series, P.R.O. 30 and W.O. 1 and 35 series.

Structure of the dissertation

The chapters that follow are broadly chronological. Within this overarching structure, they focus on Littlehales' relationship with several key characters from the administration, as well as utilising specific examples to examine both his role as well as the evolution of governance after the Act of Union. While this study is not intended as a comprehensive biography of Sir Edward Baker Littlehales, it is a study of him and his working life and as such, the study concludes with his retirement in 1819. This thesis is comprised of six chapters. The first chapter will offer biographical context, charting Littlehales' development as an officer who worked in military administration in several parts of the British Empire before his arrival in Ireland, as well as providing background concerning his personality and life in Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish context in which Littlehales operated will be considered with a review of the pre-union situation and an outline of the administrative structure of the time. While Littlehales arrived in Ireland in 1798 and worked with Cornwallis, who was acting as both commander-in-chief and lord lieutenant in addressing the 1798 rebellion, he did so in a military capacity before moving into the civil sphere as under-secretary in the military department. Chapter one will explain the context in which the military under-secretary operated, outline the variety of roles he carried out and examine the links between civil and military governance and the tensions which existed therein. To put the role of Littlehales into an appropriate context, it will also briefly examine the landscape in which he was carrying out his duties – this landscape changed dramatically with the Act of Union, though many of the changes did not occur immediately, but incrementally, as a result - not only of the effect of the legislation, but also of the subsequent reaction to it from the government, the Catholic

hierarchy, the ascendancy and the general populace. As S. J. Connolly has noted, the post-1801 landscape was 'in some respects transformed forever, in others oddly unchanged.' [40]

Chapter two will examine the Act of Union, the formative piece of legislation which set the parameters for Littlehales' civil career as military under-secretary. While much work has been done examining the genesis of the legislation and the work of politicians and administrators in both London and Ireland to get it passed, much less consideration has been given to the years immediately following its passing. This was a tumultuous period and while Littlehales played a relatively insignificant role in the lead up to the passing of the act, as under-secretary he played a sizeable role in the Dublin administration's attempts to grapple with the reality of the act from 1801 onwards. Accordingly, chapter two will consider the attempts by the Dublin administration to interpret, implement and in some cases subvert the act. As a trusted advisor of the then lord lieutenant, the earl of Hardwicke, Littlehales played a key role in this process, travelling between Dublin and London and conferring with the senior figures in the government.

Chapter three turns to the key issues which Littlehales was expected to manage in his role – those relating to internal and external security. Threats from abroad and within are considered together intentionally, as there was a strong link between them. In his role as military under-secretary, Littlehales was expected to make a leading contribution towards the management of the various military bodies based in Ireland. At a basic level the army, militia and yeomanry were involved in two key activities: defending Ireland from invasion and aiding in the policing of the country and management of unrest. From the outset, the degree to which each body was involved in each role was not clearly defined and both 'amateur'

[40] S.J Connolly, 'Aftermath and Adjustment' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, v: Ireland under the Union, 1801–1870* (Oxford, 1989), p. 1.

forces – the militia and the yeomanry – ended up participating in internal policing and defence against potential invasions. The Army, the only fully professional force, also played a role in both internal and external matters but was the primary force expected to respond to threat of landings and invasion. Importantly, Littlehales had a different role in relation to each force and was expected to focus on matters which related specifically and solely to civil administration. However, the ambiguity in the post-union years, the indeterminate role of each force, and the differing relationship of each force to the Catholic majority and Protestant Ascendancy made his work exceptionally challenging particularly given the ongoing war against Napoleon and the sporadic threat of invasion. Littlehales played a key role in coordinating defence through his involvement in administering the various military bodies in Ireland as well as the attendant infrastructure. From a military aspect, however, war was only one issue, and he had also to balance considerations of external threats with internal problems in the form of domestic unrest of both sectarian and non-sectarian nature. Such unrest could manifest in a political sense, with the spirit of rebellion persisting after 1798 into the early 19th century. There were several smaller uprisings and plots, such as Robert Emmet's failed rebellion in 1803. However, such unrest was as much to do with various other issues as with anything political. As will be shown in chapter three, while the authorities in Dublin were acutely concerned with the potential of intervention from France, unrest was as much to do with more prosaic, non-political matters such as food shortages and locally specific issues. Indeed, as will be shown Littlehales' work with Sir Robert Peel to set up a Peace Preservation Force spoke directly to this latter aspect of unrest, with an explicit intention to create a force which transcended 'local or petty interests.'[41] As noted, the internal and external existed in concert and military strategy had to consider both. Chapter three will tease out the connections between these areas by exploring a series of case studies

[41] Georgina Sinclair, 'The Irish Policeman and the Empire' in *Irish Historical Studies,* xxxvi, no. 142 (Nov. 2008), p. 174.

relating to the various military bodies, but also the ascendancy who, as magistrates and leaders, were expected to play a significant role in managing internal issues.

Following this, chapter four will focus on Littlehales' relationship with Sir Robert Peel. There are several reasons for devoting such space to Littlehales' relationship with one chief secretary. Firstly, Peel's occupation of the role was unusually long, lasting from 1812 to 1818, which was a greater duration than any other chief secretary during Littlehales' career. Beyond simple longevity, however, Peel was by some margin the most vigorous official with whom Littlehales worked, and his period of service brought considerable change in Dublin Castle, as well as highlighting some of the limitations of the administration and officials such as the military under-secretary. There is a rich archive of correspondence between the two men which provides a compelling insight into a central period in the evolution of the post-union administration. Indeed, the period can be considered an inflection point which saw the recalibration of the Irish administration around the figure of the chief secretary and, ultimately, the emergence of a more modern administrative structure. While Peel and Littlehales had limited scope in addressing issues outside of Ireland, they did endeavour to bring a more conclusive resolution to matters of unrest, notably by the development of the Peace Preservation Force under Peel.

For the second half of Littlehale's career as under-secretary Peel is undoubtedly the dominant figure with an archival footprint which dwarfs that of other characters. Such was the scale of his interactions and contribution that it also forms part of the basis for chapter five, which examines the final years of Littlehales' time as under-secretary. The final years of Peel's tenure as chief secretary brought a series of tensions as the limitations of the administration became more apparent. This was due, in part, to organisational rigidities, as both system and personnel resisted his attempts at modernisation. But the removal of the threat of Napoleon changed the entire context of the administration. Nowhere was this more

evident that in the military sphere and Peel's departure did not alter this. For several years after Peel's departure from Ireland, Littlehales remained in position under a series of other officials and this period is examined to reflect upon the sustainability of the administration in a time both of peace and of less dominant administrative voices. Finally, and following on from this, chapter six will focus on the primacy of personality. In any study of administration, it is imperative to understand the role of both system and person and the key contention of this research is that the post-union administration was unbalanced. As such, the inconclusive nature of the Act of Union allowed and encouraged an administration to evolve which gave too much weight to personality at the expense of rigorous structure and a carefully planned system. This assertion is examined through the life and work of one administrator who through his tenure interacted with many of these dominant personalities. In addition to the length of his time in Ireland, Littlehales' role makes him an ideal character to show the evolution of this administration, as he, more than anyone straddled the civil and military milieus. Accordingly, this thesis can be read as a contribution to both the administrative and military history of Ireland in the opening years of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 1: Edward Baker Littlehales: the making of a military administrator

The town of Molesey, just outside London, is notable primarily for its proximity to Hampton Court Palace. It was here that Sir Edward Baker Littlehales grew up, and from here that he would leave on travels which would see him serve in Canada and Santo Domingo before coming to Ireland. It was in Ireland that he would spend the majority of his life, but in later life he would return to England, albeit to Dorset, some one hundred miles from the area of his youth. This chapter will examine his career before Ireland – a career which saw him work in a variety of challenging and occasionally revolutionary contexts. This chapter will also consider how he became established in Ireland in a role which was occasionally precarious, but which through a series of relationships became secure and central to administration in Dublin Castle.

Littlehales was born in Holborn, London, on 26 March 1764, the son of John Baker Littlehales, and his wife Maria, née Martyn. The family were considered 'ancient' and had long established roots in Surrey.[1] Littlehales' formal education was undertaken at the prestigious Westminster School where he studied from age twelve to sixteen, at which juncture he joined the army as an ensign in the 54th Foot. Over the next twenty years he rose through the ranks, being promoted to lieutenant in 1783, and ultimately rising as high as colonel by 1800.[2] This military background would stand him in good stead in his role as military under-secretary.

Beyond rank, Littlehales had a successful and interesting military career. From 1791 to 1796 he served as private secretary to General John Graves Simcoe, the first governor of

[1] Obituary, *The Gentleman's magazine and historical chronicle*, May 1825, p. 464.
[2] *Caledonian Mercury*, 23 July 1783; *London Gazette,* 18–22 Mar. 1800.

Upper Canada. Their relationship appears to have been strong – in a contemporary account Littlehales is referred to as 'Simcoe's right-hand man' and impressions of him at this time were most favourable.[3] The French Duke de Lioncourt, who met Littlehales in 1794 wrote, for example, of:

> the civility shown us by Major Littlehales, adjutant and first secretary to the Governor, a well-bred, mild and amiable man, who has the charge of the whole correspondence of Government and acquits himself with peculiar ability and application.

'Major Littlehales appears', he concluded, 'to possess the confidence of the country.' [4]

Littlehales' time in British North America was characterised by excitement and vigorous activity, some of which he recounted in a journal 'of an exploratory tour, partly in sleighs but chiefly on foot from Navy Hall, Niagara to Detroit, made in the months of February and March 1793', which was first published posthumously in 1833 in the short-lived *Canadian Literary Magazine* and subsequently as a monograph.[5] Describing a challenging trip in inclement weather, the journal offers some insight into the relationship between the government of the province and the indigenous tribes. Notably, Littlehales discusses in detail the decision taken by Simcoe to found the city of London, Ontario as the capital city of Upper Canada. Littlehales' adventures in the wilds of Canada were recounted in other journals too, with colourful descriptions of the incipient social circles developing in Canada mixed with picaresque stories of mountainous ascents and campfire negotiations with native tribal elders.[6] This sense of adventure is further captured in the journal of Elizabeth Simcoe, the Governor's wife, who wrote of Littlehales meeting ambassadors and dashing around the province in a somewhat swashbuckling style. It was not all adventure, however, with Lady Simcoe noting he was 'an excellent official of the Crown as well as of Governor

[3] Mary B Fryer, *Our young soldier*, by Mary B. Fryer (Toronto, 1996), p. 26.
[4] E.B. Littlehales, *Journal written by Edward Baker Littlehales of an exploratory tour, partly in sleighs but chiefly on foot from Navy Hall, Niagara to Detroit, made in the months of February and March 1793* (Toronto, 1889), p. 4.
[5] Littlehales, *Journal*.
[6] Littlehales, *Journal,* p. 9.

Simcoe, in preparing plans and obtaining information respecting the newly settled country, the affairs of which his chief was called upon to administer.'[7] These years in Canada proved formative, making it clear to Littlehales that his area of expertise as a military man lay in the arena of administration. His career saw him transition from the military to the civil, but always with a focus on military administration in various guises and despite his early life in England this career would be exclusively pursued abroad.

Image 1: Portrait of Edward Baker Littlehales, taken from *the diary of Mrs Simcoe*

An island at war

Littlehales' career displays a recurring pattern of strong professional relationships with more senior officials, and Simcoe was the first evidence of this. Their relationship was solid, both professionally and personally, and when Simcoe was appointed governor of Saint Domingue on the island of Hispaniola in 1797, Littlehales accompanied him as Deputy Adjutant General, receiving a promotion to lieutenant colonel late in the same year. [8] For several years the French colony of Saint Domingue had witnessed a violent struggle for independence from

[7] Elizabeth Simcoe, *The diary of Mrs Simcoe* (Toronto, 1911), p. 93.
[8] *Belfast News-Letter,* 24 July 1797.

France, and the British were trying to take control of the colony in the hopes of maintaining their influence in the Caribbean and stopping the spread of revolutionary ideals. Saint Domingue, as one of the wealthiest colonies in the world due to its sugar plantations and slave labour, was strategically vital to both European powers and the nascent Haitian independence movement. Seeing in the uprising an opportunity to weaken France, Britain had invaded Saint Domingue in 1793, hoping to take control of the colony and its lucrative sugar plantations. Simcoe was appointed as part of the British military leadership, and his mission was to help stabilize the British position on the island. Littlehales, who was used to relatively temperate engagement with the indigenous communities in Canada, found himself working in an environment of rebellion, with British forces occupying a perilously small beachhead around Port-au-Prince.

Beyond military challenges, Simcoe and Littlehales faced the danger presented by the dreaded yellow fever which killed thousands of British troops.[9] Littlehales' work still existed mainly in the military sphere and, as in Canada, he proved to be an active and useful member of senior military staff; his work as Deputy Adjutant General in Saint Domingue was praised for its 'zeal and activity', notably by Brigadier General Maitland who had been commanding the forces there.[10] What lessons Littlehales learned from this posting are not known, but there are interesting parallels between the Caribbean context in which he briefly served and the Irish one into which he arrived in 1798. Both scenarios saw the British administration representing the interests of a minority population and both had seen interference, to varying degrees, from France. Both Saint Domingue and Ireland were in a state of unrest, but the issue of military morale in the Caribbean was far more challenging than would be faced in Ireland, with troops regarding service in the West Indies as a death sentence due to disease.

[9] CLR James, *The black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Overture and the San Domingo revolution* (New York, 1989), p. 161.
[10] *The Times,* 27 June 1798.

Saint Domingue's predominantly French imperial governance structure was not particularly relevant to the situation which Littlehales would find in Ireland, compared to, for example, Jamaica, which had a more comparable assembly of wealthy landowners, led by a Speaker.[11] And though there was an Irish presence in the form of several Franco Irish families, such as the Butlers, the Walshes and the O'Shiells, all of whom had set up very successful plantations, whether Littlehales interacted with them is not clear. The brevity of his tenure makes it difficult to examine his work there, but more broadly, it has been noted that the region is characterised by 'general invisibility in the anglophone historiography.'[12]

Littlehales' time in the Caribbean was curtailed unexpectedly when Simcoe's term of office came to an end due to ill health and they returned to England in early 1798.[13] When Littlehales transferred shortly thereafter to Ireland a cousin wryly noted to him in a letter that he tended to find service in difficult territories and observed that a rebellious Ireland 'appears perfectly at home when compared to the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario.'[14] Littlehales was to serve with the Marquis of Cornwallis in Ireland and the same letter was full of praise for Cornwallis, with Littlehales' cousin, who had been a member of parliament in London, confidently predicting that Littlehales would find him a pleasure to work with. This prediction proved accurate and Littlehales and Cornwallis worked extremely well together in the challenging circumstances of the 1798 rebellion and in the campaign to ensure the passing of the Act of Union. Evidence of Littlehales' reputation can be seen in the view of Cornwallis on his new appointee before they had met, with Cornwallis noting in a letter to Major General Ross that 'Nightingall tells me you agree in thinking that Colonel Littlehales

[11] Finola O'Kane 'Comparing imperial design strategies: The Franco-Irish plantations of Saint-Domingue' in Finola O'Kane and Ciaran O'Neill (eds), *Ireland, slavery and the Caribbean: interdisciplinary perspectives* (Manchester, 2022), p. 157.
[12] O'Kane 'Comparing imperial design strategies', p. 157.
[13] J.A. Houlding, 'Simcoe, John Graves (1752-1806)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) available at https://doi-org.may.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25554
[14] Baker to Littlehales, 3 Jan. 1799 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/870).

will be a very proper person for Taylor's situation and I think, all things considered, he will be likely to answer my purpose.'[15]

Until his appointment as military under-secretary in 1801, Littlehales worked in a military role, as secretary to Cornwallis. While Cornwallis was acting as both lord lieutenant *and* commander-in-chief, it was primarily in support of the latter function that Littlehales served. Such a role took advantage of his considerable military and administrative expertise, being concerned with managing communication to and from Cornwallis, discussing issues of military resourcing, troop disposition, defence and, inevitably, issues of patronage. His role was not an active military position: as Cornwallis' secretary he travelled with the Lord Lieutenant, coordinating correspondence to and from the various military commanders across the country. The timing of his arrival meant that Littlehales had a limited view of efforts to suppress the Wexford rising. He was, however, centrally involved in coordinating efforts against the French force of one thousand soldiers led by General Humbert which belatedly arrived in the west as well as efforts to manage the post-rising fallout.[16] Despite arriving midway through the rebellion Littlehales saw, at first hand, the scale of the threat which manifested in 1798 and understood the precarious situation in which government found itself. As an example, one of the key pieces of correspondence he managed for Cornwallis related potential for uprisings to spread across the country. Writing to General Lake in late June, the Lord Lieutenant was clear that 'at present there are many counties in Ireland in a more dangerous state than that of Wexford, and indeed it is difficult to single out the part of the Kingdom in which the seeds of Rebellion are not deeply laid.'[17]

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[15] Charles Ross (ed.) *Correspondence of Charles First Marquis Cornwallis* (3 vols, London, 1859), iii, 9.
[16] See for example: Sarrazin to Cornwallis, 28 Aug. 1798 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/8); Hutchinson to Sarrazin, 28 Aug. 1798 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/9); Bonnet to Cornwallis, 8 Sept. 1798 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/11); Humbert to Cornwallis, 15 Sept. 1798 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/13) and Liam Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare 1790–1803* (Dublin, 1998), p. 106.
[17] Cornwallis to Lake, 27 June 1798 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

While Littlehales was technically in a military position, his role in managing the lord lieutenant's correspondence meant that he was thoroughly informed not just about issues of defence, but also the measures taken to pass the union. Indeed, much of the remaining archive of his correspondence for the period shows a focus on the union as much as more martial concerns. As had been the case with Simcoe, Cornwallis, senior in both rank and age, took on the role of mentor to the younger man, and his views undoubtedly influenced Littlehales. Cornwallis had been reluctant to take on the role in Ireland and was keen to ensure that support for the Catholic majority came as part of his appointment.[18] Writing to the earl of Hardwicke in a letter which Littlehales undoubtedly saw, Cornwallis was explicit on this matter. 'I felt a most perfect persuasion that the great work would still be very incomplete and that there would be no solid security for the permanent peace of Ireland' he suggested 'unless the act of uniting the legislatures of the two kingdoms was immediately followed by the admission of the Catholics to the full enjoyment of all the privileges which were possessed by their fellow Protestant subjects.'[19] As will be shown, Littlehales could not have failed to have been impressed by such a view.

From a military perspective, Littlehales quickly warmed to Cornwallis' views on the management of unrest, which tended towards a measured reaction, working in concert with all involved rather than an immediate escalation to a strong military reaction. As an example, in late 1798, with the impact of the rising still present, Colonel John Wolfe presented an ambitious plan for pacifying Kildare. Littlehales, presumably acting in concert with Cornwallis, was quick to impress upon Wolfe the need to work in concert with the local magistracy.[20] This was a lesson Littlehales learned early in his time in Ireland, and it would serve him well in addressing issues of unrest in his subsequent role as under-secretary.

[18] Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation* (Maryland, 1992), p. 225.
[19] Cornwallis to Hardwicke, 28 Feb. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[20] Littlehales to Wolfe, 29 Dec. 1798, cited in Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare 1790–1803*, p. 106.

Beyond the military, the influence of Cornwallis' thinking on matters such as the union and religious tolerance would be evident in much of Littlehales' work in Ireland, and Cornwallis clearly held his private secretary in high esteem. Indeed, he was quick to attribute much of his success to Littlehales. Writing to Lord Spencer in 1800 he noted:

> The great assistance which I have received from my private secretary Lt Col Littlehales in the course of the arduous business in which we have been engaged in for the last eighteen months gives him the strongest claim to my friendship and gratitude and indeed I do only justice to his indefatigable industry and able and judicious application to the very extensive duties which devolved on him in saying that he has contributed most essentially to our ultimate success[21]

In Spencer, Cornwallis had found a powerful ally who could help advance Littlehales' career. In a letter dated 19 June Cornwallis wrote again to Spencer noting with gratitude his attention to his protegee's prospects and the 'immediate compliance with a request in the success of which I was truly interested.'[22] That the request related to securing Littlehales' future is clear, although it would take some time before such security was achieved.

As noted, Littlehales' military career was heavily focussed on administrative matters and this progression into administrative roles continued, as did his rank.[23] While Cornwallis resigned in 1801, Littlehales remained in Dublin as under-secretary at the military department, ultimately retiring from the army in 1802.[24] Shortly after this, he was appointed a baronet and this period of his transition into civilian life corresponded with a number of other honours being bestowed upon him in recognition of his contribution to the safety of the country during 1798.[25] These included the freedom of various cities and towns in Ireland such as Youghal, Limerick, Cork and both the city of Dublin and its liberties.[26]

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[21] Cornwallis to Spencer, 10 May 1800 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/26).
[22] Cornwallis to Spencer, 19 June 1800 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[23] *London Gazette*, 18–22 Mar. 1800.
[24] *Caledonian Mercury,* 2 Aug. 1802.
[25] *Universal Magazine,* cxi (July 1802), p. 76.
[26] See for example: 'Granting of freedom of Cork to Lt Col Edward Baker Littlehales by Philip Bennet, Mayor', 30 July 1799; 'Granting of freedom of Youghall to Lt Col Edward Baker Littlehales by Walter Atkin Hayman, Mayor', 31 July 1799; Granting of freedom of Limerick to Lt Col Edward Baker Littlehales by Frederick Lloyd, Mayor', 7 Aug. 1799. (File 1L, Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

A very favourable impression of Sir Edward is given in *Our Young Soldier*, the biography of Francis Simcoe (1791-1812), son of the general under whom Littlehales had served in Canada. Simcoe was educated at Eton, joined the Army, and was posted as a sixteen-year-old ensign to the 27th Foot. On arrival in Dublin in the spring of 1808, he was cordially welcomed by the Littlehales, among others. Sir Edward, who remembered Francis as a child in Canada, offered to organise the speedy transit of letters between Francis and his mother through his office at Dublin Castle. This was gratefully accepted and viewed as a trusted means of delivery, with Simcoe noting 'I think he (Littlehales) never knew a letter to miscarry which was sent to him since he was in office'.[27] Simcoe elaborated that Littlehales had 'very excellent apartments' in the Castle, and a fine country house in the Phoenix Park. He rode out to visit the Littlehales' residence and commented that the demesne walls were eight miles in circumference, and the view was beautiful as the house looked down on Dublin, the Liffey, and the Wicklow Mountains.[28]

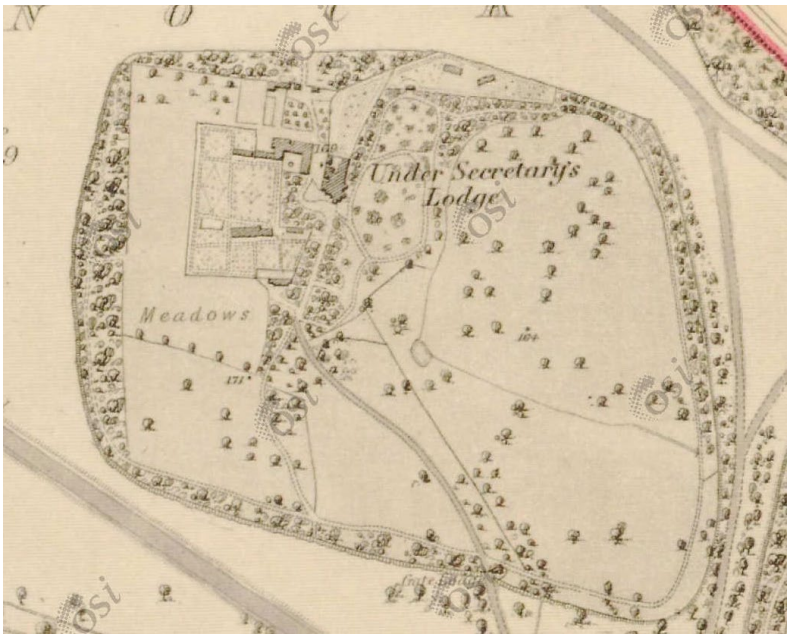

Image 2: Map showing residence of the military under-secretary in Dublin

[27] Fryer, *Our young soldier*, p. 86.
[28] Fryer, *Our young soldier*, p. 79.

Littlehales, for his part, proved to be a fine guide to Dublin and Irish society: Simcoe, although only an ensign, was present at several significant soirees and levees, not least some sizeable parties thrown by the Duchess of Richmond, wife of the lord lieutenant, in Dublin Castle.[29] As depicted by Simcoe, Littlehales appears as a character of some importance in the Dublin scene, well connected both personally and professionally.

The union wrought considerable changes in the social life of the capital. Where before 1801 Dublin had some three hundred members of the House of Commons and some eighty peers resident in the city, the cessation of the Dublin Parliament removed a cornerstone of social as well as political life. That said, the continued presence of a lord lieutenant ensured that the viceregal court prevailed and Dublin, in the words of McDowell, continued to be 'an expanding and lively place.'[30] Much of the pomp and ceremony would be diluted as the century progressed but for the duration of Littlehales' tenure, Dublin Castle saw a full viceregal court, with the lord lieutenant expected to host levees, balls and state dinners, and to attend a wide array of social gatherings.[31] As a senior member of the administration, Littlehales was often in attendance and such appearances were routinely noted in the periodicals of the day. His appearance in newspapers could range from a note about attendance, or a passing note on the birth of a new child, all the way through to commentary on Littlehales' role and function. In 1809, for example, the *Morning Post* noted that he was one of several presented to the King at a private levee, having just arrived in London. Such events were prestigious affairs and Littlehales found himself in the company of the Archbishop of York, the First Lord of the Treasury and similarly prominent characters[32] A year later, the *Freeman's Journal* gave details of a dinner which Littlehales hosted for the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, with the great and the good of Irish society, such as the

[29] Fryer, *Our young soldier*, p. 86.
[30] R. B. McDowell, *Social life in Ireland 1800–1845* (Dublin, 1957), p. 12.
[31] R. B McDowell, *The Irish administration 1801–1914* (London, 1964), p. 54.
[32] *Morning Post*, 1 June 1809.

Marquiss of Waterford in attendance.[33] Despite being English, Littlehales was quickly accepted into ascendancy society. It would have helped that, on the rare occasions that he appears to have offered any opinion on politics, his utterances were cconventionally conservative and supportive of the 'old order'. A letter to the duke of Wellington at the conclusion of the war was uncharacteristically expressive, praising the Duke's role in the 'restoration of legitimate monarchy in France, the downfall of usurpation and Jacobinism and the well-founded prospects of the security of ancient governments…'[34]

While integration was probably inevitable, it was quickened by Littlehales' marriage to Elizabeth Mary Fitzgerald, daughter of the second duke of Leinster in 1805. Their union appears to have been a happy one and they had four sons and four daughters, one of whom had the duke of Wellington as a godfather.[35] Both Littlehales and his wife Lady Elizabeth were often noted at events. Littlehales attended various meetings at the Mansion House for example, where the mayor, aldermen, high sheriff and others would assemble to discuss ways to relieve the poor. He was a subscriber to various charitable funds, such as the relief of widows and children of killed and wounded British soldiers which he joined in 1800.[36] Occasions when he and Lady Elizabeth entertained were noted, with lists of attendees.[37] His wife offered her patronage to various charitable causes in conjunction with other prominent ascendancy figures,[38] and he and Lady Elizabeth sometimes appeared in the part of the *Freeman's Journal* entitled 'Fashionable world', though such entries tended to be mundane, typically relating to their travel to or from England.[39]

[33] *Freeman's Journal,* 17 Feb. 1810.
[34] Littlehales to Wellington, 28 June 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/795).
[35] Obituary, *The Gentleman's magazine and historical chronicle*, May 1825, p.464; Wellington to Littlehales, 21 Apr. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/797).
[36] *Freeman's Journal*, 25 Jan. 1800.
[37] See for example *Freeman's Journal,* 17 Feb. 1810.
[38] See for example *Freeman's Journal,* 11 Jan. 1817.
[39] See for example *Freeman's Journal*, 9 Mar. 1809.

However, in the post-revolutionary and post-union landscape the Irish publishing landscape became ever more polarised with Hardwicke, the lord lieutenant begrudgingly noting that even those periodicals which were 'supposed to be closely connected with the Castle' were not above displaying 'a degree of independence of opinion which has at times been very inconvenient'[40] For Littlehales, this situation was accentuated by his personal life. In marrying Fitzgerald, Littlehales entered one of Ireland's most significant families. The Fitzgeralds had been one of the foremost ascendancy families for centuries, but the prominent link of Lord Edward Fitzgerald with the organisation of the 1798 rebellion had cast a shadow over the family's reputation. Thus, by marrying Lady Elizabeth, Littlehales was associating himself with a family who had long been one of the bastions of the Ascendancy, but whose influence had been compromised in light of 1798. While references to Littlehales in print were typically quite benign and the connection to Lord Edward Fitzgerald never overtly damaged his reputation, it could be embarrassing such as when he was linked to a ribald story about the capture of his rebellious in-law 'the brave son of the House of Leinster' in the *Irish Magazine.*[41] This was an excoriating article denouncing Major Sirr, who had captured Edward Fitzgerald, rather than an attack on Littlehales himself, but the under-secretary would not have been pleased to see his name in an article commentating negatively on government. Such links were to be expected however, with the *Irish Magazine* being an ardently pro-Catholic periodical with a clear editorial agenda. As such the paper had several run ins with the government during its publication, one of which saw the editor imprisoned for libel.[42] Littlehales was not unique in this; in a letter sending him some writings, the soldier and writer Colonel Maurice Keatinge, who had connections to the Fitzgerald family, begged him

[40] Hardwicke to Hawkesbury, 22 Mar. 1805 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P781).
[41] *Irish Magazine, and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Biography,* v (1812), pp 68-69.
[42] John North, *Waterloo directory of Irish Newspapers and Periodicals 1800–1900* (Waterloo, 1986), p. 277.

to ensure the item did not get published in Ireland, reasoning that 'a writer in London appears before a fair tribunal – in Ireland it is totally the reverse.'[43]

Given his status and links to the Fitzgeralds, Littlehales would have had to expect to feature in the publications of the day, but whether by design or good fortune he managed to see limited exposure in periodicals such as the *Irish Magazine* which, as noted, had a strong Catholic ethos. Conversely, the *Freeman's Journal* was at the time firmly linked with Dublin Castle and, Hardwicke's concerns notwithstanding, Littlehales' appearances tended to be at worst neutral, or occasionally positive. An example of the latter occurred shortly after Hardwicke's arrival in 1801 with a note in the *Freeman's Journal* describing how the new Lord lieutenant had been entertained by 'that much esteemed military character, Colonel Littlehales the secretary at war'.[44]

Littlehales was raised as a member of the established church, as were his wife and children. However, his sensibilities on the matter of religion were conciliatory, if not precisely pro-Catholic. Indeed, the fact that he was retained in the Castle over a twenty-year period suggests a character who kept his counsel in most personal matters. The view of the Castle as regards the Catholic faith (and its practitioners) tended to mirror the prevailing governmental view in London and no administrator could afford to be either too outspoken or too dogmatic in their sensibilities. In 1806, for example, Littlehales witnessed the arrival of the duke of Bedford as lord lieutenant who, in concurrence with the Grenville government in London, espoused a policy of conciliation.[45] The Grenville government, the so-called 'ministry of all the talents', lasted little more than a year however, and the new government, under the duke of Portland resulted in the removal of Bedford and the appointment of the duke of Richmond as Lord lieutenant. Richmond's appointment, and his subsequent words

[43] Keatinge to Littlehales, 11 July 1813 (2004/66/630).
[44] *Freeman's Journal*, 18 June 1801.
[45] Bedford to Trail, 16 Oct. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 225.

and actions, indicated a complete rejection of such policies.[46] In such a changeable environment, an under-secretary could ill afford to be too opinionated in matters of faith. For Littlehales such concerns were compounded by the connection to the Fitzgeralds of Carton House. This legacy of Lord Edward's active radicalism lingered despite the good opinion held of the second duke. As an example, a generous offer from the duke of Leinster to raise Yeomanry to help address unrest in the county in 1803 was politely declined by the lord lieutenant, which left the duke to ruefully note that he would 'wait with patience for better times when I trust my character and conduct will be impartially made known to the publick'.[47]

Within Dublin Castle, the attitude towards religion tended to be influenced by the government in London. Such attitudes were not always consistent. As noted, when the duke of Bedford arrived as lord lieutenant in 1806 his instructions for garnering the support of the Catholic community differed from those that had been given to his predecessor Hardwicke.[48] The duration of Littlehales' time as under-secretary ensured that he was in office during several such changes. The absence of religious discussion in his letters suggest a character for whom faith was a largely private affair and the changing views towards religion in the Dublin administration would undoubtedly have proved challenging for such a character. His circumspection was unusual with issues of religion and its role in the security of the country featuring far more prominently in the letters of figures such as Hardwicke, Abbot and Cornwallis. Despite Littlehales' circumspection, however, he was at one point criticised from a prominent quarter. In 1812, in a letter to the current lord lieutenant, the chief secretary, William Wellesley Pole misleadingly suggested that Littlehales' longevity was due in no

[46] Sean O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union: the politics of implementation in Ireland 1801–1815' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2014), p. 123.
[47] Fitzgerald to Littlehales, Nov. 12, 1803 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers Add MS 35743).
[48] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 10; Jacqueline Hill, 'National Festivals, the State and 'Protestant Ascendancy' in Ireland, 1790–1829' in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. xxiv, no. 93 (May 1984), p. 40.

small part to the fact that 'the worthy baronet … was *a papist*.'[49] Pole, the younger brother of Arthur Wellesley, occupied the office of chief secretary from 1809 to 1812 and at the time was considered to be 'a violent anti-Catholic.'[50] This was not a new stance for him; he was known to have been furious at the idea that the Act of Union would be accompanied by Catholic Emancipation.[51] In this regard, it is possible that Littlehales was tainted by his association with Cornwallis, one of the key architects of that proposal. Such an accusation to the lord lieutenant, even if made in jest, could have had serious consequences but clearly did not in this instance and there is no evidence of it being repeated. As an MP, Pole had previously clashed with the Dublin Administration and Cornwallis' successor Hardwicke, in particular over their management of finances, but again not to a degree that might suggest a longstanding grievance. Ironically, Wellesley Pole himself would, over a few short years, move from a conservative anti-Catholic view to being overtly pro-emancipation, and his ardent expression of his new views left him out of favour with nearly everyone, including Richmond, the lord lieutenant with whom he had raised the issue.

Beyond his own personal faith, it was, as noted, a recurring feature of Littlehales' career that he formed strong attachments with senior officials, ranging from Simcoe, through Cornwallis and on to Hardwicke. In matters of religion, it is probably the case that his views were heavily influenced by the sympathetic views held by his mentor in Ireland Cornwallis. Throughout his time as lord lieutenant and commander-in-chief, Cornwallis had shown a notable, if measured, degree of sympathy to the Catholic community, coupled with an understanding that any union should be seen to meet their needs as well as those of the London and Dublin administrations.[52] Equally, Cornwallis had no shortage of concerns about

[49] Wellesley Pole to Richmond, 4 Feb. 1812 (N.L.I Richmond Papers, MS. 63/593) [Emphasis in original].
[50] Pole to Richmond, 29 June 1812 (N.L.I Richmond Papers, MS. 60/277).
[51] Patrick Geoghegan, 'William Wellesley-Pole (1763–1845)' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/pole-william-wellesley-a7402
[52] Cornwallis to Portland, 2 Jan. 1799, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence,* iii, p. 29.

the reprisals after 1798 and his correspondence with the military commanders (which Littlehales would have seen) often stressed the need to protect Catholics from what he termed 'the violence of our loyal friends.'[53] This was a stance which put Cornwallis at odds with some senior officials in the Castle, such as Edward Cooke, the prominent under-secretary, but it would have impressed Littlehales, who found himself on more than one occasion liaising between senior Catholic figures such as the earl of Fingall and ascendancy figures who were sympathetic to emancipation, such as Lord Kilwarden.[54]

Lacking the status of his mentor, and with designs on forging a long career in Ireland, Littlehales likely realised that despite the pragmatic need to work to ensure the compliance of the Catholic majority, such sympathetic views were best kept private. Indeed, this may well have been confirmed for him following Cornwallis' departure in 1801, when questions emerged about what promises had been made to the Catholic community. Kilwarden had used Littlehales as a channel to make sure that Cornwallis realised just how much faith they had placed in him to 'carry the point' of emancipation for them.[55] Kilwarden had been a strong supporter of government and the union and clearly expected that emancipation which had been promised, would be delivered. Despite Cornwallis' efforts, emancipation was not delivered, but Littlehales who had acted in an exclusively military role at that juncture, avoided the ire of the Catholic gentry. Indeed, upon hearing that he was to remain in Ireland as military under-secretary Kilwarden had written in glowing terms to Littlehales to express his joy.[56] As a consequence of his good reputation, Littlehales was involved in discussions which were far beyond his remit, such as when Kilwarden and Lord Clare disagreed over the creation of a lay school at the new college in Maynooth. This arose originally during the Lord Lieutenancy of Cornwallis. Following his departure in 1801such issues ended up with

[53] Cornwallis to Ross, 16 Nov. 1799, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence,* iii, p. 145.
[54] Cornwallis to Castlereagh, 29 Dec. 1800, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence,* iii, p. 316.
[55] Cornwallis to Castlereagh, 29 Dec. 1800, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence,* iii, p. 316.
[56] Kilwarden to Littlehales, undated, 1800 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/716).

Charles Abbot, recently appointed as chief secretary, who quickly directed all involved to Littlehales. This was a shrewd move by Abbot as Littlehales had not only the continuity of service for several years but was popular with all involved.[57] However, perhaps fortunately, Littlehales was abroad with Cornwallis, at Amiens during this contretemps and he appears to have managed to avoid involvement in what was a tense religious discussion.

Leaving aside the political aspect of the religious dimension, what of Littlehales private religious beliefs? For a prolific correspondent it is notable how little reference there is to religious belief in Littlehales' writings and while many of the letters to him contain the various religious phrases and rhetoric of the day, his own correspondence contains nothing of this nature. This was probably a reflection of his own personal circumspection, but also his views of the precarity of his role with many of his correspondents either wealthier or more established than an under-secretary. As such, it is likely that he wished to avoid inadvertently causing offence on religious grounds, especially in light of how government views on tolerance could quickly change. It is important to stress that such circumspection did not preclude him from the prejudices of his background. Despite marrying into the Protestant Ascendancy, he remained an Englishman and his view of the majority of Irish people was not always flattering, irrespective of faith or religion. At one point he noted that 'however honourable in character, wisdom, integrity, and utility certain respectable Irishmen might be, it was quite impossible for them to divest themselves of native prejudices, partialities and animosities.'[58] Such a view, expressed so soon after the Act of Union may well have been influenced by his close view of the 'jobbing' practices which were undertaken to secure the passing of the act in the Irish parliament.[59]

[57] 'Minutes of a conversation between Mr. Abbot and Lord Kilwarden at Cork Abbey, 25 December 1801', *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester; Speaker of the House of Commons, 1802–1817* (London, 1861), p. 337.
[58] Littlehales to Abbot, 20 Sept. 1801, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* pp 317–18.
[59] Cornwallis to Ross, 8 June 1799, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence,* iii, p. 102.

With the passing of the Act of Union, the bulk of Cornwallis' work as lord lieutenant was felt to be completed and he looked to arrange his administration as best he could in the new post-union environment. While he would remain beleaguered by the need to 'settle' the various obligations which had been meted out as part of the union negotiations, he sought to ensure a viable position for Littlehales. In this he was helped by several key events. Critically, Edward Cooke, the civil under-secretary who for so long had been a figure of power disproportionate to his situation in Dublin Castle, left for a new position in London in 1801. It is hard to overstate the role of Cooke in Irish affairs prior to his departure and his role in assisting Cornwallis and Castlereagh in achieving the union was considerable. While Cornwallis was indifferent to Cooke's merits and had actively disagreed with him on the Catholic Question, Castlereagh's support for the under-secretary was consistently clear. Had Castlereagh stayed on as chief secretary, as opposed to resigning in conjunction with Cornwallis and William Pitt, Cooke may never have left. By 1801 however, Cornwallis, fatigued from both 1798 and the union negotiations had become increasingly frustrated with the political situation in Ireland, particularly the failure to implement Catholic Emancipation. Castlereagh had fulfilled his aim of achieving the union and the resignation of Pitt led him to align himself with the new administration under Henry Addington. In a time of such change Cooke was ready to resign with his colleagues but was persuaded to remain in post for a period, with a view to ensuring some degree of continuity.[60] However, when Castlereagh departed, he was replaced by Charles Abbot, who did not share his predecessor's high opinion of Cooke, and the under-secretary endured several challenging months in Dublin before himself departing with a sense of grievance which he would sustain for many years.[61]

[60] Tim Murtagh, 'Edward Cooke and the records of the Chief Secretary's Office' in *Archive Fever,* 16 Sept. 2020 p. 18.
[61] James Kelly, 'Cooke, Edward' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/cooke-edward-a2002

Appointing an under-secretary

The fact that there was already an under-secretary for military affairs did nothing to deter the lord lieutenant in his attempts to promote Littlehales. Accordingly, in November 1800 he suggested Littlehales for the role, reasoning that its incumbent, Elliot, was frequently absent, and that the scale of work involved in the department warranted additional staff. His petition went unanswered, and he was left to conclude 'that there were objections to my proposal and that it was not likely to take effect.'[62] In due course, however, Elliot moved from Dublin of his own volition, having secured a parliamentary seat, a fact which ensured that a vacancy was created with Littlehales as a likely replacement.

Littlehales was not entirely passive in his pursuit of the role and corresponded regularly with the relocated Elliot. In Elliot, he appeared to find a willing ally who offered a succinct analysis of the prospects of his former role being filled noting:

> Lord Cornwallis has, I believe been informed by Lord Castlereagh that the delay of your assignment is in consequence of an idea taken up by the King that the Irish War-Office may be made a branch of the English. Lord Castlereagh is to meet Mr Pitt at Lord Camden's in the Country in the course of next week and is prepared to suggest to him several [inconveniences] which might arise from such an attention. If it is settled that the War Office in Ireland is to remain on its present footing, I am convinced that there will be but one opinion respecting the hands in which the superintendence of the business of it ought to be placed.[63]

While Elliot may have been dissembling, there is no evidence of any antipathy in his relationship with Littlehales. Indeed, he offered continued updates to Littlehales, noting some weeks later that Castlereagh was still in discussions with prime minister Pitt with the intention that the appointment be 'satisfactorily settled.'[64]

By early February 1801, however, matters remained unresolved and with the Act of Union passed and his successor as lord lieutenant appointed, Cornwallis continued to press

[62] Cornwallis to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/33).
[63] Elliot to Littlehales, 3 Jan. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[64] Elliot to Littlehales, 16 Jan. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

for Littlehales to be appointed. Cornwallis was shrewd enough to understand that one of the clear implications of the Act of Union was the potential incorporation of certain functions in Dublin with their larger equivalents in London. Whether valid or not, this development would only reduce the available posts in Dublin, and Cornwallis made specific reference to the need to retain this office in Ireland, arguing that:

> When it comes to be considered not only that the War Office here is a great office of control on the military expenditure but that it must occasion a most inconvenient delay of the ordinary business, if the very large army serving in Ireland should be conducted through the English War Office, I am much inclined to think that it will be found expedient to fill the vacancy occasioned by Mr Elliot's resignation.[65]

This was Cornwallis at his most astute, reminding the government in London of the role of the under-secretary in *controlling* any excessive spending but also noting the potential military implications of the post being vacant or removed. With his reference to expense Cornwallis was preaching to the converted, for London was perennially perturbed by the cost of managing Ireland. Likewise, his allusion to the possible delay to 'ordinary business' was reinforced by his credibility as a military leader of some standing. Having laid out his rationale he was quick to propose that Littlehales be appointed, noting his 'very meritorious service in the station which he holds give him every claim to my [approbation] and support' and reasoning that he would 'execute the duties of serving in the War Dept in a manner that will be highly beneficial to the public service.'[66] As it transpired, Cornwallis' previous representations to Castlereagh and others were deemed sufficient and Littlehales was appointed as soon as Elliot resigned, without Cornwallis needing to send this last letter. He did, however, make sure that the new under-secretary was aware of his efforts on his behalf.[67]

It appears that Littlehales was fortunate in his supporters at the time; he had an established and trusted relationship with Cornwallis and to an extent with Castlereagh.

[65] Cornwallis to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/33).
[66] Cornwallis to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/33).
[67] Cornwallis to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/33).

Further to this, he very quickly developed a fruitful relationship with the new lord lieutenant, Philip Yorke, third earl of Hardwicke. Indeed, before Hardwicke had arrived in Ireland, Castlereagh was assuring Littlehales that all would be well, noting that 'Ld Hardwicke is perfectly prepared to make you as happy as he can, and I trust that the disposition both of the country and the govt will render the war offices as pleasing to you as it can be.'[68]

Such relationships were to work to Littlehales' distinct benefit, as there were some irregularities in his appointment as military under-secretary, which was swiftly contested by a colleague, William Marshall. As noted by Charles Lindsay (private secretary to the lord lieutenant) in a letter to the incumbent chief secretary Charles Abbot:

> I rather think you must take some immediate step about Wm Marshall. He tells me that Lord Castlereagh ought to have put him in a situation now held by Lt Col. Littlehales, of whom however he speaks in the highest terms. He observes that he has made no application to you but still would be glad to continue in his present situation in your office. That he is not connected in particular with any man but is a strenuous supporter of government and will serve you if you desire with fidelity[69]

By this juncture, the new lord lieutenant had come to rely heavily on his under-secretary's abilities and was loath to consider any rearrangement. Hardwicke felt compelled to allow his new chief secretary to have the final word on the matter and Abbot concurred offering his view in a letter in June:

> In settling the arrangement of my undersecretaries in Ireland I wish that Colonel Littlehales situation may for the present rest upon the same official footing as Lord Castlereagh had settled it between Littlehales and Elliot.[70]

Littlehales was to remain in the role in Dublin, 'with the full amount of what was intended for the office by Lord Castlereagh and Lord Cornwallis', while Elliot would remain as the secretary in London. Abbot requested that Hardwicke explain this to Littlehales as quickly as

[68] Castlereagh to Littlehales, 9 Apr. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/114).
[69] Lindsey to Abbot, 28 May 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/173).
[70] Abbot to Hardwicke, 27 June 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/173).

possible, 'as I wish that from the very outset that there should not be any shadow of misunderstanding'.[71]

It has been argued that the role of under-secretary 'was not decided by party politics back in London' but it might be more accurate to say that it was *less* dependent on events in Westminster.[72] Given the genesis of his role, it is not surprising that it would be some time before Littlehales would feel truly secure in the position. While he had built up a productive and cordial working relationship with the lord lieutenant, Hardwicke, even that did not entirely allay his concerns, which peaked in 1804 when the government led by Henry Addington fell, being replaced by a government led by the returning William Pitt. A change in government often led to significant changes in terms of the role of lord lieutenant and chief secretary, but Littlehales was deeply concerned about his own future and expressed this to Cornwallis. While Cornwallis noted that his own known allegiance with Addington would limit any engagement with the new prime minister, he did offer to 'state your services in the strongest terms and do all I can to prevent your being displaced without some adequate provision.'[73] Writing a week later he offered two points of encouragement: first, it appeared likely that the earl of Hardwicke would not be recalled from Dublin; and secondly, he had pressed Lord Castlereagh as to the need to retain Littlehales' services in Ireland. In doing so Cornwallis went a long way towards securing his friend's situation, as both Hardwicke and Castlereagh were very well disposed to him and, critically, in a position to help. Hardwicke in particular thought very highly of his under-secretary and within a few months of his arrival in Ireland the new lord lieutenant was extolling the 'intelligence good sense and discretion' of his new colleague.[74]

[71] Abbot to Hardwicke, 27 June 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/173).
[72] Murtagh, 'Edward Cooke and the records of the Chief Secretary's Office', p. 16.
[73] Cornwallis to Littlehales, 12 May 1804 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/79).
[74] Hardwicke to Pelham, 28 Aug. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke papers, Add MS 35770).

While grateful, Littlehales remained concerned about the security of his role and this worry continued for much of his early years in Dublin Castle. As noted earlier, it may have been a reason for his circumspection, but unusually for a character who tended to avoid controversy, he was the subject of a targeted attack on his reputation. At the same time as Cornwallis was working in London to support his position, Littlehales received a confidential letter warning him that 'an attack will be made on the conduct of my department.'[75] There is no evidence to show that he discussed this threat with any other friends or acquaintances but he elected to take his former superior into his confidence and in an agitated letter in early June he offered a defence of the work he had done in his role, noting that should he be investigated by Parliament they would find:

> …that I have established many salutary regulations since I came into office, reformed many abuses that existed before my time, caused the official business to be conducted with expedition which did not heretofore exist and introduced real economy in the great expenditure of the public money for military service which is under my superintendence.[76]

He went further, noting the limitations inherent in his role and insisting there was a very clear line of demarcation between his role and 'the adoption of measures for the defence of the country upon the opinion and recommendation of the Commander of the Forces.'

Although it was never confirmed, the suspicion held by Littlehales was that the 'attack' was coming from William Elliot, who he had succeeded as military under-secretary. We can only speculate as to what would have prompted Elliot to engage in such actions. As a member of parliament, he had supported the enquiry into Emmet's rising in July of 1803. Although it was militarily a failure, the Dublin Castle administration had remained largely unaware of its likelihood.[77] As such, the months which followed had seen a severe critique of the administration and as will be shown in chapter three, Littlehales suffered some

[75] Littlehales to Cornwallis, 1 June 1804 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/81).
[76] Littlehales to Cornwallis, 1 June 1804 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/81).
[77] Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare,* p. 113.

reputational damage from this, albeit not as much as some other members of the administration. There was, however, no ostensible reason for any attack from Elliot, who as a correspondent, had consistently been warm and congenial to Littlehales, having kept him informed about his situation in 1801. Despite the fallout from Emmet's rising, there was little evidence of a change of opinion; upon his being appointed Irish Chief Secretary in 1806, Elliot referred to 'how especially it will contribute to my comfort to find myself associated with a person with whom I have been so long upon times of such friendship and confidence, and who is so well qualified to give me the most effectual assistance in a very extensive and important department.'[78] However, despite his progress from an under-secretary role to parliament, Elliot's years as an MP were not as successful as he might have hoped, and as his career plateaued there is of course the possibility of resentment of his successor.[79] Ultimately, irrespective of the source, the mooted 'attack' never materialised, but its possibility served to highlight the insecurity of the military under-secretary and a tendency towards professional anxiety would never fully depart him.

Government before the union

To fully understand Littlehales' role and impact, it is essential to delve into the political context of the early 19th century, a period characterized by a degree of upheaval and transformation in government and governance in Ireland. In many ways the Act of Union represents the inflection point for this change. However, because the act represents such an epochal moment in Irish history it can be tempting to imagine that what it changed was a system of government which had been unaltered for most of the eighteenth century. This was not the case. Irish government in the decades preceding the union was nothing if not fluid. For most of the eighteenth century, much of what happened in Ireland was underpinned by

[78] Elliott to Littlehales, 10 Mar. 1806 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[79] Patrick Geoghegan, 'Elliot, William' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/elliot-william-a2904

the Declaratory Act, passed in 1719.[80] This act, which reinforced the fifteenth century legislation known as Poyning's Law, stipulated that Britain could legislate for Ireland, was a perennial thorn in the side of the Protestant elite in Ireland, some of whom were central to the 'undertaker' system where power was heavily vested in several parliamentary blocs, managed by the greater ascendancy magnates. The repeal of the Declaratory Act in 1782 offered far greater autonomy to the parliament in Dublin, by which point the central role of the undertaker had long since diminished. As the parliament grew in importance, so too did the need for a more engaged administration in Dublin Castle, to work with and ultimately manage the assembly. Typically, the chief secretary sat in the Dublin parliament as an MP, working on behalf of the lord lieutenant to ensure that any proposed legislation was passed. The fact that the secretary was invariably an appointment of the lord lieutenant in the eighteenth century exemplifies the relationship between them – at least until the union.

It would be reductive, however, to suggest that government in Ireland simply consisted of castle executive and parliament – the presence of a 'junto' of senior ascendancy figures of the day who acted as a de facto Irish cabinet, served to complicate matters further and, in some ways, preserved some aspects of the old undertaker system. The influence of this caucus was considerable – one critic, writing some years later, described their actions:

> …the King's business as they called the management of Ireland was farmed out to some great families who divided among themselves the whole patronage of the Kingdom who intercepted from the people every good which they could not render profitable to themselves and who like other agents did all they could to render it impossible that their employers should be able to dispense with their services or even learn the principles on which their administration was conducted.[81]

Historically, there had been a complicated and fractious relationship between the Dublin Castle Executive and the 'junto' and, as Bew notes, any attempt to bring change with which

[80] 6 Geo I, c 5, Declaratory Act.
[81] *North British Review,* XIX (Nov. 1848), p. 225.

this 'prevailing party' disagreed was destined to fail.[82] While the parliament in Dublin would ultimately vote itself out of existence to pass the Act of Union, such legislation with implications for administrative change in Ireland was, by definition, contrary to junto interests and unsurprisingly most members were against it. Chief among them was John Foster who had been Lord Justice and Privy Councillor and the final Speaker of the Irish House of Commons before the union. As his biographer notes, Foster was always likely to oppose the union, but several incidents served to catalyse this into the relentless and vitriolic opposition which emerged and blame rested as much with the British government and Irish Executive as with Foster.[83] Irrespective of blame, the reality for the new administration which formed in 1801 after the union was that this cabal would need to be neutralised as it was a direct hindrance to enacting some of the measures stipulated by the union. Indeed, Foster was alleged to have aspirations to being 'the most powerful man in Ireland', which would have obvious consequences for the lord lieutenant.[84] Wickham, then chief secretary noted in 1802, Foster was 'very decidedly hostile to the present administration both in England and Ireland.'[85]

Up until he assumed the role of military under-secretary in 1801, Littlehales' focus was exclusively in support of Cornwallis in his capacity as commander-in-chief. As such, his dealings with individuals like Foster would have been limited to an exclusively military operational sphere, as many of them balanced their political careers with roles in the yeomanry and militia. Having corresponded on matters of this nature with Foster before the union, Littlehales kept up regular correspondence with him in his new role as under-secretary. Their relationship was cordial and Littlehales was spared the anger which Foster often directed at other members of the castle administration. This was undoubtedly due to

[82] John Bew, *Castlereagh: enlightenment, war and tyranny* (London, 2011), p. 39.
[83] A.P.W Malcomson, *John Foster: the politics of improvement and prosperity* (Oxford, 1978), p. 80.
[84] Redesdale to Spencer Percival, 5 Nov. 1804, cited in Patrick Geoghegan, *The Irish Act of Union* (Dublin, 1999), p. 206.
[85] R.G, Thorne, 'John Foster (1740–1828) of Collon, Co. Louth' available at historyofparliament.org.

Littlehales' role which allowed him to offer assistance to Foster in military matters, not least Foster's work in raising militia and yeomanry in Louth.[86]

Various commentators, including Alan Ward, see an explicit causal link between 1798 and the Act of Union, but it might be more accurate to consider the rebellion as a catalytic event, focussing minds and undermining arguments against such legislation.[87] The rising showed that Ireland had finally become a bona fide strategic liability, not simply a theoretical one.[88] For Littlehales, what 1798 illustrated was that any military administrator in Ireland would need to be worried about two different, but linked threats. The first was the internal threat, that could range from isolated incidences of agrarian violence through to more ideological and coordinated outbreaks from disaffected groups. As Ward notes, London was as worried about issues of agrarian outrage as the more organised and ideological views of the United Irishmen.[89] The second threat was the spectre of attacks from France on a scale far greater than that of the relative small-scale invasion led by General Humbert in 1798. These twin fears occupied Littlehales for much of his career as under-secretary and will be dealt with in detail in subsequent chapters. Such fears occupied far more senior figures too, and the impetus toward union, as noted, was greatly accelerated by the 1798 rising. Where before 1798 much discussion around a union focussed on its supposed economic benefits, the rebellion and its fallout ensured a clear association between the idea of greater union and greater security.[90] It was notable that upon his appointment, Cornwallis was furnished with two key aims: quell the rising *and* deliver the union.[91] Undertaking the latter was a distasteful project with a seemingly endless series of bribes and promises required to bring

[86] See for example: Foster to Littlehales, 16 Mar 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive); Foster to Littlehales 1 May 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[87] Alan J Ward, *The Irish constitutional tradition* (Dublin, 1994), p. 28.
[88] Douglas Kanter 'British Unionism: politics, public opinion and the government of Ireland, 1740–1848' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2006), p. 83.
[89] Ward, *The Irish constitutional tradition,* p. 27.
[90] S.J Connolly, 'Reconsidering the Irish Act of Union' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, x (2000), p. 403.
[91] Geoghegan, *The Irish Act of Union*, pp 15-20.

the Dublin parliament from a position of outright rejection in 1799 to acceptance in 1800. While it has been convincingly argued that such measures were acceptable in the context of the time, they left a sour taste in the mouth of senior members of the Dublin Executive.[92] Littlehales had accompanied Cornwallis on trips to garner support for the union and while still concerned with military matters, he was close enough to both Cornwallis and Castlereagh to have seen the extent of 'jobbing' needed to ensure the success of the measure. Cornwallis found this process distasteful, noting that dealing 'with the most corrupt people under Heaven' was 'of the most unpleasant nature'. He rationalised it by reasoning that 'without a union the British empire must be dissolved' and this view doubtless influenced Littlehales greatly as regards the pragmatics of administration, but also as to the nature of the Irish people.[93] Littlehales' own views typically show a strong sense of logic and he may have felt that the removal of much of the unwieldy aspects of the Irish administration, in favour of a more streamlined system in greater harmony with London, would be attractive. What Littlehales and contemporaries could not know at the time was how incomplete the resulting union would be, hindered as it was by incomplete legislation and the failure to secure Catholic Emancipation. These issues will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Dublin Castle Administration

One key theme of the discussion to follow is the extent to which the incompleteness of the union made the tasks of the Dublin Executive proportionately harder. While the focus is clearly on the role of Littlehales, any assessment of this requires an understanding of the structure of the administration of the day, and particularly of the key senior roles.

[92] James Kelly, 'The historiography of the Act of Union' in Michael Brown, Patrick Geoghan and James Kelly (eds), *The Irish Act of Union 1800: bicentennial essays* (Dublin, 2003), p. 5.
[93] Cornwallis to Ross, 8 June 1799, Ross (ed.), *Correspondence*, iii, p. 104.

An understanding of the role of military government subsequent to 1801 requires an appreciation of its evolution up to that point, but also of its position in relation to the broader Dublin Castle Executive. While the structure of overall government changed substantially with the cessation of the Dublin Parliament, changes in the structure of the Executive were less dramatic, with the roles of lord lieutenant, chief secretary and civil and military under-secretaries all being retained. In many ways the structures of Dublin Castle did not materially change from 1801; what differed was the relationships emanating out, to the military forces, to London and to the population at large.

Historically the lord lieutenant's role had straddled the administrative and the ceremonial. As the eighteenth century progressed, the position moved from one which saw the holder live primarily in England, to one which required a presence almost exclusively in Ireland. In conjunction with this, as the undertaker system evolved and the nature of the Dublin parliament changed so too did the role of lord lieutenant, requiring the holder to be more active in the management of both executive and parliament.[94]

Edward Brynn has suggested that the role of lord lieutenant was more important than previously thought and the fact that he was the king's representative was a significant fillip to the role.[95] As such, his court served as a surrogate court offering a monarchical presence by proxy, although many senior Catholics eschewed it. In Ireland, a country with a considerably smaller population than England, the presence of a steady hand on the tiller could have great benefit, especially considering the challenge posed by slow communication routes between London and Dublin.

A key part of the role related to patronage, which the lord lieutenant as representative of the king was expected to dispense. While the absence of a parliament in Dublin should

[94] K. Theordore Hoppen, *Governing Hibernia: British politicians and Ireland, 1800–1921* (Oxford, 2016), p. 11.
[95] Edward Brynn, *Crown and castle: British rule in Ireland 1800–1830* (Dublin, 1978), p. 53.

have removed the need for tactical patronage, the passage of the Act of Union had been eased with a long list of debts and favours which remained to be satisfied and which limited the lord lieutenant's ability to redefine the position of the Castle both locally and also with regard to Westminster.[96] This was a situation which challenged both civil and military aspects of government for the first few decades of the new century and was a recurring issue for Littlehales in his role as military under-secretary.

In theory, the union brought change to the role of the lord lieutenant, but the essence of the role remained much the same for some time. The lord lieutenant remained the head of the Irish executive, holding his appointment by a royal patent. While some responsibilities had unquestionably moved to London, the pomp of the pre-union viceregal court continued, although it would gradually be eroded as the nineteenth century progressed.[97] During the period of Littlehales' tenure in Dublin Castle, however, the lord lieutenant, the representative of the King in Ireland, was a combination of both ceremonial and functional authority, as important for what he represented as what he did.

That said, the union did see several changes to his role. The issue of redefinition of roles and responsibility can be seen to be particularly acute during the tenure of Philip Yorke, third earl of Hardwicke, who acted as lord lieutenant from 1801 to 1806. Where before the union the lord lieutenant had not been responsible to the parliament in Dublin and had a considerable degree of latitude in his decision making, the immediate years after the union saw attempts at redefinition. While it had been understood by all sides that the role of Cornwallis as both lord lieutenant *and* commander-in-chief was an anomaly arising from both exigencies of 1798 and his specific suitability for both roles, it had never been clearly articulated how these two key roles would interact post-union. Upon his appointment in May

[96] S.J Connolly, 'Aftermath and Adjustment' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, v: Ireland under the Union, 1801–1870* (Oxford, 1989), pp 2-3.
[97] McDowell, *The Irish administration, 1801–1914*, p. 57.

1801, Hardwicke operated on the basis that the role of the lord lieutenant in relation to the military was little different than that of his pre-union forebears. This was at variance with the view of Lord Pelham, the home secretary who wanted to see both a reduction in the powers of the lord lieutenant, but also a direct link between commander-in-chief and Horse Guards in London. While both issues were ultimately resolved to the lord lieutenant's benefit, the lack of clarity remained and impeded the Castle's ability to enact rule. This 'redefinition' became a central issue in the first few years of Littlehales' tenure, and he became an invaluable asset in asserting the need for military control to remain in Dublin. Just how invaluable he would become will be explored in chapter two.

The limits which were ultimately agreed on the role of the lord lieutenant in many ways led to an increase in the role of the chief secretary. Historically this role had operated in close concert with the lord lieutenant, who typically appointed his secretary. The growing importance of the parliament ensured that the chief secretary would increasingly be required to represent the government's interests in parliament, managing both houses with a view to the smooth passage of legislation. Thus, as parliament grew in importance and vigour, so too the role of chief secretary grew in importance, reaching its apotheosis during the tenure of Lord Castlereagh who played a key role in ensuring the eventual passage of the union through the Irish parliament.[98]

Whereas the union would ultimately act to reduce the importance of the lieutenancy, the principles and practical implications of union would increase the importance of the position of chief secretary. The need for the chief secretary to be present in London for a considerable time was a direct consequence of union, as he no longer needed to manage the

[98] For an overview of developments in the stature of the Chief Secretary, see McDowell, 'The Irish Executive in the Nineteenth Century' in *Irish Historical Studies*, ix, no. 35 (Mar. 1955), and Peter Jupp 'Government, parliament and politics in Ireland, 1801–41' in Julian Hoppit (ed.), *Parliaments, nations and identities in Britain and Ireland, 1660-1860* (Manchester, 2003), pp 146-168.

Irish parliament, but had to ensure the passage of Irish legislation through the parliament in London. As such, the chief secretary was expected to reside in London for the duration of any parliamentary session. This constituted a redefinition in the balance of power between lord lieutenant and chief secretary, with the former 'confined' to Ireland and the latter working in concert with members of cabinet regularly.[99] This, in theory at least, brought the role of under-secretary into greater prominence, as an enabler both of communication and policy between lord lieutenant and chief secretary. While the role of chief secretary could be a platform from which to emulate Castlereagh and launch a successful political career, it suffered from a surfeit of appointees, with ten incumbents from 1800 to 1812.[100] The next appointee, however, was Robert Peel, who from 1812 to 1818 would display both zeal and astute judgement, working well with both lord lieutenant and London, enhancing both the role, and his own reputation. One constant was the fact that the personalities of the two most senior office holders in Ireland acted as a key determinant to the success of the administration. In this regard, an active chief secretary such as Peel could thrive in an environment where the lord lieutenants under whom he served were prepared to support his activity[101]. In this relationship there are clear echoes of the pre-union relationship of Cornwallis and Castlereagh as lord lieutenant and chief secretary respectively.

If the Act of Union was obviously notable for what it aspired to change it was equally remarkable in its many omissions. This paradox is seen prominently in the role of the Kilmainham Hospital based commander-in-chief and how this role would function in concert with Dublin Castle. Initially it was assumed that incumbents were to be known as

[99] Brynn, *Crown and castle: British rule in Ireland 1800–1830,* p. 47.
[100] Over the course of his career as military under-secretary, Littlehales would work with twelve different chief secretaries including: Viscount Castlereagh, Charles Abbot, William Wickham, Sir Evan Nepean, Nicholas Vansittart, Charles Long, William Elliott, Sir Arthur Wellesley, Robert Dundas, William Wellesley-Pole, Robert Peel and Charles Grant. See: Moody et al (eds.), *A new history of Ireland, ix: maps, genealogies, lists* (Oxford, 1989), pp 530-531.
[101] Brian Jenkins, 'The Chief Secretary', in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds) *Defenders of the Union: a study of British and Irish unionism since 1801* (London, 2001), p. 45.

'Commander of the Forces' and General Sir William Medows, appointed in 1801, worked under this title. The rationale for this, as noted in June of that year by Charles Yorke, the Secretary of War (and brother to Hardwicke, the lord lieutenant), was that 'the old title of commander-in-chief was withheld because it was now union policy to consider the British Army as the same army with one commander-in-chief, and that in consequence the Irish commander could not have the same title.'[102] This was a significant change and was, in effect a diminution of power for both the most senior military commander in Ireland, but also for the lord lieutenant who had, before the union, been empowered to direct military matters with considerable autonomy. While the details around title and role remained fluid for some time, it was made clear that the issue of army patronage would revert, neither to lord lieutenant nor commander, but to Horse Guards in London. Fluidity of title was but one aspect of an overall lack of clarity, exacerbated by tensions in London between the administration in the War Office and the army leadership in Horse Guards and which resulted in fractious communication between Dublin Castle and Kilmainham for much of this period. Ultimately something of an uneasy entente resulted and, as Allan Blackstock has explained, 'it was determined that the relationship of the Irish commander of the forces and the lord lieutenant was to be the same as that of the British commander-in-chief with the King.'[103]

Reporting to the chief secretary was the role of under-secretary. From 1777 to 1819 this function would be split into civil and military and while there was occasionally some bleed between roles, typically there was clear delineation. In effect the most senior civil servants in the country, the under-secretaries played a critical role in managing the day-to-day activities of government, supervising the running of civil or military offices, filtering correspondence through official and unofficial channels and analysing the various sources of

[102] Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c.1830' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, x (2000) p. 335.
[103] Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military', p. 341.

information which came to Dublin Castle, from various parts of Ireland and abroad. While before the union under-secretaries tended to stay in their role for a long period, providing critical continuity, this changed dramatically after the union. Littlehales' tenure as military under-secretary was mirrored by five civil under-secretaries during his tenure, most of whom lasted a relatively short time. The exception to this was William Gregory who would, upon Littlehales' retirement in 1819, assume the responsibility for a merged civil and military function.[104] In the role of under-secretary, it is possible to discern some of the strengths of contemporary government; under-secretaries were senior enough to take some responsibility and, as Murtagh notes, in reality much of the business of Dublin Castle fell to them.[105] Murtagh further contends that their longevity and vital local knowledge 'allowed Dublin Castle to become the sole centre of executive government in Ireland, reclaiming power from the great political dynasties within the Irish parliament.'[106] Arguably this view does a disservice to the energy of one particular under-secretary, Edward Cooke, but also to the fact that events outside of Ireland forced both the London and Dublin administrations to be more proactively involved in Irish affairs. Conversely, the under-secretaries remained too junior to act on their own initiative, especially after the Act of Union brought both greater links to London and a greater prominence to the chief secretary role.

In his position, Littlehales found himself beholden to many. Heavily involved in the complex social network of Ascendancy Dublin, he was tasked with fulfilling myriad demands and servant to many masters. And as before the union, again personalities played a key role. Thus, an alert and active under-secretary such as Cooke (civil under-secretary, 1796-1801) could use the position to forge a promising career, as did one of his post-union successors, William Gregory (civil under-secretary, 1812-1831). Despite the limitations inherent in the

[104] Patrick Geoghegan, 'Elliot, William' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/elliot-william-a2904
[105] Murtagh, 'Edward Cooke and the records of the Chief Secretary's Office', p. 5.
[106] Murtagh, 'Edward Cooke and the records of the Chief Secretary's Office', p. 6.

role, the position of civil under-secretary offered potential for considerable influence. As Brynn notes the position acted as an 'intermediary between Ireland's politically active classes and the Castle bureaucracy sometime surrogate chief secretary and supervisor of day to day official mechanism.'[107] The role of military under-secretary was more restricted and in such company Littlehales emerges as something of an anomaly: active enough to retain his position yet showing little or no signs of higher ambition and, as will be shown, increasingly marginalised in the latter stages of his career.

Overall, both before and after the union, what is apparent upon examining the organisational structures of Dublin Castle is how powerful the influence of the personality of the respective incumbents in senior positions could be, as exemplified by the strengthening of the role of chief secretary during the terms of two particularly strong figures, Robert Stewart, Lord Castlereagh (1798-1801) and Robert Peel (1812-1818). But the issue of personality was more pervasive after the union and one other thing that changed was that the political outlook in London had a greater impact on the executive than before. So, for example, the creation of a new government in 1806 brought a new lord lieutenant, the duke of Bedford, who was encouraged from London to adopt a very different approach to his predecessor Hardwicke. Beyond this, the simple fact of different styles of working ensured a change of pace, with Bedford keen to delegate as much as possible.[108] While in some ways the idea that new faces would lead to new ways of working is obvious, the scale of change had a material effect on policy in Ireland and how it would be carried out. For Littlehales, as military under-secretary, each change of lord lieutenant or chief secretary could mean a change in tack in terms of policing or defence.

[107] Brynn, *Crown and castle: British rule in Ireland 1800–1830*, p. 69.
[108] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 205.

Beyond the issue of personalities, from a structural point of view, the Irish military establishment was a multi-headed beast, with a hybrid of military and civilian departments. While the senior military figures were inevitably important, they did not always last. Some, such as Lieutenant General Abercromby, clearly felt that the posting was not befitting of their merits: he dismissed Dublin society as 'imperfectly educated, devoted to the pursuits of pleasure and political intrigue', managing to be both derisory while also quite accurate.[109] During his tenure, Littlehales would engage with eight different commanders in chief in Dublin – each with different views on how best to conduct military business in Ireland. In such a context, however, the continuity embodied by Littlehales tenure meant that he could become an administrative locus, staying in his post while various figures passed through the administration.

While internal and external threats will be discussed in depth in chapter three, it is important to understand precisely what Littlehales' role was. At a basic level he had responsibilities across the whole military function, but those responsibilities differed for each. Thus, as military under-secretary he had clear responsibility for the Yeomanry Office, which managed the Yeomanry force. A document from 1804 entitled 'Synopsis or Memoranda of the Business of the Yeomanry Office' articulates this, highlighting the role not just of the office, but also explaining that it was 'under the immediate superintendence direction and management of the under-secretary for the military department'.[110] In practice, however, his role was dramatically altered should the force be called out on permanent duty. Under those circumstances:

> The entire control of government over that institution is carried on through this office except when any of the Yeomanry are on permanent duty in which case any orders relating to the discipline or military involvement of the corps or detachment on permanent duty proceed from the commander of the forces but everything relating to

[109] James Lord Dunfermline, *Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercrombie, KB* (Edinburgh, 1861), p. 73.
[110] Unattributed letter, 24 Dec. 1804 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

> finance policy for the civil concerns of the Yeomanry remains with government and is conducted by the secretary of the military department.[111]

Littlehales' role with the militia was similar, in that it was focused on resourcing and finance and the preparation of the military estimates for parliament. A circular to all militia commanders, noting that 'in future all applications of a financial nature respecting the Militia Regiments … must be addressed to Lt Col. Littlehales, War Office' highlights this, but the different nature of the force brought different challenges. [112]

With regard to the regular army, Littlehales' role lacked the definition outlined above. That said, there was a greater degree of mediation between Dublin Castle and the army, via the commander of the forces in Kilmainham, than was present between Castle and volunteer forces. This is evident in the sources, in terms of the concentration of much of the correspondence in archives such as the Kilmainham Papers. What is also evident is the degree to which personality could alter the relationship between Dublin Castle and Kilmainham and the nature of correspondence from the military under-secretary to his colleagues in Kilmainham was always guarded and factual. Such reserve was warranted given the tensions which existed in the immediate years after the passing of the union. And the lack of precision around role definition remained – circulars or letters continued to be sent from Littlehales to instruct military commanders as to the nature of the roles in the executive. This persisted into the second decade of the century with an example from 1811 to General Sir John Floyd being typical:

> In answer to your note which I have just received, I have to remark that all the letters from the Commander of the Forces of a financial nature and those which are considered as involving questions of military regulation and detail in short the whole of the correspondence which is, generally, considered as <u>immediately</u> attaching <u>to the War Office</u> ought to be addressed to me and all communications connected with the peace of the country or embracing matters connected with the government of the

[111] Unattributed letter, 24 Dec. 1804 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[112] Circular from Beckwith to Militia Commanders, May 11, 1802 (N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers, MS 119).

> country should be directed to the Chief Secretary when in Ireland. The same rule should be observed respecting the Yeomanry Establishment.[113]

Culturally, there was a sizeable amount of movement between forces in Britain and Ireland, especially in senior roles. Littlehales, as a well-travelled former military man, would have understood the challenges this brought in terms of acclimatizing new appointees to the peculiarities of the Irish situation. At an infrastructural level, too, the union changed things quite significantly, with some parts of military infrastructure amalgamated with their British equivalents, while other areas remained uniquely 'Irish'. Again, the smaller scale in Ireland ensured that relationships between the civil and military branches of government were far closer in Ireland than in England, resulting in an inevitable 'bleed' between them.[114]

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to present an introduction to Edward Baker Littlehales, the key focus of this study. His role, as outlined, demonstrated a broad remit across the various military forces in Ireland at the time. He was, however, insecure in his position for some years, due in part to the nature of his appointment. This insecurity was allayed in time and his tenure was a long one. This longevity, coupled with the nature of his role meant that he interacted with a broad cohort of civilian and military characters, some of whom became very influential to him on a professional level.

It has been said that the events leading to the passing of the union are as much 'a study in character' as in 'high politics.'[115] This following chapters will show that such an assertion remains valid in the aftermath of the act, and particularly in the realm of military governance, where fear of the threats which had manifested before the union remained and

[113] Littlehales to Floyd, 4 July 1811 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[114] Virginia Crossman, 'The army and law and order' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith. Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 376.
[115] Geoghegan, *The Irish Act of Union,* ix.

Littlehales' ability to address them was impacted by organisational inertia, lack of clarity and, above all the force of the various different personalities who occupied the senior roles during his time. Littlehales did not have long to wait to see the impact of character on the administration; as chapter two will demonstrate, it quickly became a key aspect of trying to 'settle the union' in 1801.

Chapter 2: Implementing the union

In a letter to the then chief secretary, Nicholas Vansittart, dated 6 May 1805, Littlehales observed 'In August 1801 I was sent by the lord lieutenant to London upon a Mission relative to various important arrangements connected with the administration of the Kings Affairs in this country.'[1] This cursory update to a new member of the Castle Executive concealed a far more dramatic tale. The visit undertaken by Littlehales in 1801 was a key moment in a critical period of post-union Irish history, with the habitually reticent under-secretary occupying an unusually prominent role. Littlehales' role and the efforts of the Dublin Castle Executive to manage the implications of the union are the subject of this chapter. Given the focus of this thesis on the post-union military governance, understanding the impact of the act is critical in understanding the challenges faced by the Castle in its wake. Accordingly, this chapter will consider the rationale for the act, as well as the key role played by Littlehales in clarifying aspects of its implementation, a process which saw him interact with most of the significant figures in government, including his usual colleagues in Dublin, but also the prime minister, home secretary and secretary at war in London. Having only recently been appointed into his new role as military under-secretary, it is unlikely that Littlehales envisaged playing such a key role in the broader implementation of the act. What he and others in Dublin had not realised was how challenging it would be to take the next steps in implementing the act.

The challenges faced by Dublin Castle can be attributed to one key point: the union was poorly thought out and imperfectly implemented. The view of Jennifer Ridden is both typical of the scholarly consensus and apposite:

[1] Littlehales to Vansittart, 6 May 1805 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

> Even though it initiated a series of transformations in the way Ireland was governed for more than a century, the Act of Union did not present a practical plan for how Ireland was to be administered, or for how the various parts of the United Kingdom were to interact. Instead, these issues were resolved over the next four decades as a series of Irish administrative structures evolved which were centred on Dublin Castle, but which were imposed by a British Westminster-based government; these were similar in style to those developing in the settlement colonies [2]

As Littlehales and colleagues attempted to implement the union, they would surely have been forgiven for wondering why such a formative, foundational piece of legislation, created in a time of chronic political and military insecurity offered no practical guidance whatsoever for military administration. While there was clearly an element of haste in the preparation of the union, the absence of any military clauses is remarkable given the precarious security situation, both internally and externally.

Despite the relatively quick transition from inception to enactment, legislative union was not simply a government whim – Pitt for example had proposed a form of commercial union as far back as the late 1780s, with a strong focus on harmonising trade and both economies.[3] While his plan did not come to pass, there remained a strong focus on economic matters in the final legislation.[4] Much of the impetus towards union was commercial and constitutional and it is possible to view the union as part of a continuing move towards what Alan J. Ward terms 'responsible government'.[5] Responsible government can be seen as an increasing progression towards constitutional and representative government, unfettered from monarchical interference. Before the union the monarchy could be seen as having a disproportionate degree of influence in the administration of Ireland (not least via the appointment of the lord lieutenant); far more in fact than the parliament in Dublin.[6] The

[2] Jennifer Ridden, 'Irish reform between the 1798 rebellion and the Great Famine' in Arthur Burns (ed) *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 273.
[3] Thomas Bartlett, 'A union for empire' in Michael Brown, Patrick Geoghegan and James Kelly (eds), The *Irish Act of Union, 1800: bicentennial essays* (Dublin, 2003), p. 5; Douglas Kanter, 'The Foxite Whigs, Irish Legislative Independence and the Act of Union, 1785–1806' in *Irish Historical Studies,* vol. 36, no. 143, (2009), p 333.
[4] James Kelly, 'The Act of Union its origins and background' in Daire Keogh and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Acts of union: the causes contexts and consequences of the Act of Union* (Dublin, 2001), p. 59.
[5] Alan J Ward, 'Models of Government and Anglo-Irish relations' in *Albion*, xx, no. 1 (1988), p. 94.
[6] Ward, 'Models of Government and Anglo-Irish relations', p. 22.

union, with its attempts to integrate Ireland into the broader 'British' system could be seen as a 'logical extension of the integrationist policy pursued by England that commenced with the Anglo-Welsh union in 1541 and continued with the Anglo-Scottish union in 1707.'[7] There is merit to this interpretation in that it helps root the Anglo-Irish union in a broader trend of integration, but what would emerge in the first years after the Act, does not entirely fit with the idea of well-conceived movement towards integration. That said, while it is tempting, with hindsight, to see events as part of an evolution, it is equally credible to view the union as a series of reactions to various threats – from an assertive Irish Parliament, from internal unrest and from France. Any one of these issues would be a challenge in peace time, but as Thomas Bartlett notes, in a time of war 'an imperial strategy was being formulated … which would place a premium on central direction, unified authority and a unified general staff, and one in which there was no place for an "independent" Irish parliament, querulous and quarrelsome.' [8]

With this in mind, advocates of a union could present the measure as one which would offer both harmony and security, claiming it would 'give strength and direction to British policy, unite the resources of the two countries, end the kind of confusion and policy divergences typical of the 1790s and bring Ireland peace and prosperity under a single government.'[9] As such, it is important to consider the full breadth of what the union was meant to do – clearly it was a move towards parliamentary and legislative union, with the attendant commercial and imperial aspects. But more than that, it was a military matter, designed to make the British Isles more secure, while also ensuring a continued supply of recruits to the army. This speaks to the central paradox of the union itself, as well as the key challenge faced by those tasked in implementing it. In light of the dangerous security

[7] Kelly, 'The Act of Union its origins and background', p. 49.
[8] Thomas Bartlett, 'A union for empire' in Michael Brown, Patrick Geoghegan and James Kelly (eds), The *Irish Act of Union, 1800: bicentennial essays* (Dublin, 2003), p. 51.
[9] D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth century Ireland: the search for stability* (Dublin, 2005), p. 19.

situation in Ireland and the importance it would continue to give to security after 1800, why was the central legislation which was designed to improve security so bereft of ways to do this? Whatever its advocates might have claimed, it is hard to imagine how a union which was so vague on military issues could completely resolve issues of security. For Littlehales, as he settled into his new role as a leading figure in the administration now tasked with implementing the union, this lack of precision would be a recurring problem.

While the work of passing the Act of Union had fallen to Cornwallis, Castlereagh and Edward Cooke, it was their successors who had to grasp the nettle of post-union governance. Much of what was unresolved related specifically to military matters and Littlehales was heavily involved in in trying to determine how the various military bodies would interact with the civil administration in light of the new legislation. He did this in conjunction with Hardwicke, the new lord lieutenant. Their ability to clarify matters was restricted by several issues. At an overarching level, the union brought a heightened ambiguity to the role of lord lieutenant (and by extension to the rest of the administration). At a more specific level the administration was challenged by the twin threats of the legacy of union promises and the loss of powers of patronage. Like all lord lieutenants, Hardwicke was furnished with a letter from the king outlining his responsibilities.[10] This lengthy document listed some 27 different points of consideration for the incumbent, ranging from governance, through to taxation and matters of security. However, it offered little more in the way of clarifying Hardwicke's role, aside from making explicit that the lord lieutenant would no longer have the full breadth of powers that were bestowed upon his predecessor. 'We have', the King noted, 'thought fit to retain to ourselves the power of granting commissions to any officers in our army or to any governor for other officers of any reports and castles.'[11] This was a critical issue as, in one

[10] Instructions to Lord Hardwicke, Apr. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 3/9/136).
[11] Instructions to Lord Hardwicke, Apr. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 3/9/136).

swoop, the lord lieutenant's powers of patronage had been severely reduced. At the same time, a private letter was furnished from the King. Again, however, while it offered supplementary detail on matters such as promoting industry, supporting the collection of revenue and the established church, the only reference to military matters was a section entitled 'As to the peace of the realm', which simply encouraged due consideration in matters of martial law or the administering of a pardon.[12]

Who commanded the military?

Things were slightly more explicit in a letter from the outgoing home secretary, the duke of Portland signed 'by his majesty's command'. Reassuringly, this document noted that the new incumbent would hold 'such powers, authorities, rights, privileges, perquisites, advantages, provisos, restrictions, and clauses as were contained in our commission … whereby we constituted … Charles, Marquis Cornwallis.' However, there was also one important qualification with a line which made explicit provision for making 'such alterations therein as the now existing laws and particularly those latterly made in respect to the said United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland may necessarily require.'[13] Thus, the Act of Union itself became the key determinant of what the lord lieutenant was entitled to and for Littlehales there was one immediate military consequence, with the appointment of Sir William Medows as newly titled Commander of the Forces. This was one of the more immediate military results of the union, which saw overall responsibility for military matters vested in the duke of York in London. This arrangement was predicated on the belief that union had brought about a unification of armies. Before the union had passed, Ireland had a clear and distinctly separate army governed from Dublin; in the post-union era what was envisaged was a unified military force, with a unified command structure, led from London.

[12] 'Private instructions from King to Hardwicke' (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[13] Portland to Solicitor and Attorney General, 24 Apr. 1801 (T.N.A., H.O., 101/2).

As such, there could only be one 'Commander-in-Chief' – namely the duke of York in London. The post of Irish commander-in-chief was reconfigured as 'Commander of the Forces'.[14] While this was a change in structure, it was one which was aimed at placating both the King and his brother, the duke of York.[15] But whatever the rationale, it had a clear and unwelcome impact in Dublin. For most of the preceding century, the lord lieutenant had acted in concert with, but as a superior to, the Irish commander-in-chief and it was the clear view of Hardwicke that this should continue, irrespective of any other developments.[16]

Much of the understanding of this changed state of affairs came to Dublin via correspondence between Littlehales and the Secretary of War, Charles Yorke. In May 1801, Yorke had written to Littlehales to inform him of 'the probability of the armies of Great Britain and Ireland being soon considered and treated as one.'[17] Their fears confirmed, Littlehales and Hardwicke began the process of interpreting and implementing the military aspects of the union, albeit in a way which suited Dublin. Writing in June 1801 to Hardwicke's brother, Charles Yorke, then Secretary of War, Littlehales noted that he had updated Colonel Hope in Horse Guards, London as to secret instructions that had been issued and the disposition of troops. 'I have also conversed with him upon an arrangement which I have since laid before Lord Hardwicke for conducting the whole routine military [business] in this part of the United Kingdom on the arrival of Sir William Medows,' – everything, Littlehales concluded, to do with 'any branch of the military services' has been discussed.[18] This was important as the appointment of Medows to command the military in Ireland was decided exclusively by the duke of York, without discussion with Hardwicke, a further sign of change. Littlehales clearly wanted to seize the initiative and see Dublin reassert some

[14] Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c.1830' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, x (2000), p. 335.
[15] Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c.1830', p. 340.
[16] Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c.1830', p. 334.
[17] Yorke to Littlehales, 4 May 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/155).
[18] Littlehales to Yorke, 9 June 1801 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P784).

degree of control. Writing shortly after, Yorke was at pains to reassure Littlehales that the manner of Medows' appointment was not deliberate. His argument that 'in taking this step, his Royal Highness had not an idea that he was in the least interfering with any engagements of the Irish Government' was not compelling but he reassured Littlehales that he had ensured that 'the recurrence of similar inconveniences' to Dublin would be prevented.[19] Hardwicke leaned heavily on his under-secretary through this process and, as he explained to Abbot, the chief secretary, Littlehales' 'knowledge of this country' compelled the lord lieutenant to 'give the greatest weight to his opinion.'[20]

The result of such discussions was a memorandum that Littlehales drew up, which aimed to clarify how military administration would operate in light of the union. This document suggested a variety of areas for consideration, but what was not open for conjecture was the seniority of the lord lieutenant vis à vis the new commander. In many ways this document can be seen as Dublin Castle setting out its stall and attempting to define the post-union military landscape. Hardwicke was clear in his intentions to retain as much control of the military in Ireland as possible and to replicate, as best he could, the situation under which Cornwallis had operated – including continuing to refer to the commander as 'Commander-in-Chief' rather than by his new title of 'Commander of the Forces.' Littlehales continued to be central to this process, writing to the duke of York's secretary to assure him that, irrespective of title, such actions were 'framed in strict conformity to and upon the principles without deviation or exception of the instructions which his royal highness was pleased to issue to Sir William Medows.'[21] While Medows himself was keen to work in concert with Dublin Castle, his views on this matter varied. In March 1801 he appeared compliant in this matter and seemed to be willing to use whatever title the lord lieutenant

[19] Yorke to Littlehales, 1 July 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/160).
[20] Hardwicke to Abbot, 10 June 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771, f 7).
[21] Littlehales to Brownrigg, 13 June 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771, f II).

wished. However, unsurprisingly he was just as keen to follow the orders of the military command in London and by June he had adopted a difference stance, correcting letters which Littlehales sent to him which the under-secretary addressed to the 'Commander-in-Chief', signing and underlining them with 'Commander of the Forces.'[22] Despite his military background, Littlehales was not swayed by this behaviour and, seeing in this a larger concern, warned Hardwicke that 'the anti-unionists would rejoice to see their idea realised of a government without power and splendour and an army without a *commander-in-chief'*. This, Hardwicke duly reported to his brother the secretary at war in London.[23] Littlehales was clear in his concerns and uncharacteristically alarmist in his language to his superior, writing of the 'effect which might be produced in the publick mind on the troops in general and more immediately the militia and the yeomanry corps if there was any apparent diminution of authority.' Such a move he suggested would leave 'Ireland degraded, humiliated and debased in being governed by lords' justices and its army left without a commander-in-chief'.[24] Clearly, the military under-secretary was in complete agreement with the lord lieutenant and, for such a deferential character, deeply exercised by the potential changes.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Littlehales' initial dealings with the new military commander were challenging, but by late 1801 Charles Abbot, the chief secretary, had observed an improvement, noting in a memorandum 'Sir William Medows cordially cooperating with the lord lieutenant' and, by extension, his under-secretary.[25]. Despite the potential for a good working relationship between the civil and military administration in Dublin, the reality was that senior figures in London sought to dictate how the new administration would function. As an example, Medows was furnished with a letter, ostensibly from the King, but written

[22] Medows to Littlehales 23 June 1801 (N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers, MS 1015).
[23] Hardwicke to Yorke, 13 June 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35701).
[24] 'Littlehales memorandum', 13 June 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771).
[25] 'Abbot memorandum', *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester; Speaker of the House of Commons, 1802–1817* (London, 1861), p. 287.

and signed by the new home secretary, Lord Pelham, which transferred the ability and right to hold court-martials from the lord lieutenant, placing them explicitly under the Commander of the Forces.[26] In conjunction with this, it was made explicit to Hardwicke that the situation had changed from earlier in the year. In March, it had been made clear that the military commanding officer in Ireland needed to confer with the lord lieutenant and receive his 'directions'. By October such discussions were to bypass Dublin Castle in favour of London.[27]

Thus, in only a few months, the situation had changed demonstrably. For Dublin Castle, the most challenging outcome of such changes was a loss of military patronage which had been a key resource for previous lord lieutenants in their management of the various competing interests in Ireland. Patronage had long been a strategic asset in the creation and sustenance of alliances which were critical to maintenance of security in Ireland. This was a critical loss and one which would still be causing difficulties for senior figures such as Robert Peel and Viscount Whitworth over a decade later. [28] For Littlehales, the loss of patronage was an immediate impediment to his role, as he continually received a litany of requests for the lord lieutenant's favour and never more so than in the aftermath of the union. Many of these related to requests for situations as barracks masters, such as that forwarded to Littlehales by then MP (and subsequently chief secretary) William Elliot, on behalf of a Major Edwards who was quick to assure Littlehales that he desired 'to recommend him to his Excellency's favour' only 'if he should be thought properly qualified for the Employment and if at some future period his Excellency should be able to comply with his request without postponing the solicitations of others whose claims are more pressing.'[29] Despite being under-secretary

[26] Pelham, 'Warrant to General Sir William Medows K.N Commander of the Forces in Ireland' no date (T.N.A., H.O., 101/2).
[27] Instructions to Commander of the Forces, 17 Oct. 1801 (T.N.A., H.O., 100/101).
[28] D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds) *Defenders of the Union: a study of British and Irish Unionism since 1801* (London, 2001), p. 45.
[29] Elliot to Littlehales, 27 Jan. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

for military matters, Littlehales also fielded requests in the civil arena such as a request from Lord Clonbrock, who hoped Littlehales 'would not consider it an intrusion' to review his request to be appointed a county governor.[30] Such language was typical of these requests, but irrespective of how well they were phrased, Littlehales was rarely in a position to help. While his ability to make recommendations to the lord lieutenant was not diminished, it had effectively become close to redundant.

The rationale for the reduction in patronage was that the removal of a local parliament reduced the need for a lord lieutenant to have such power.[31] In some ways there was a logic to this. A unified government managing an assimilated Ireland would not need the bulwark of a Dublin Executive operating with the same degree of independence of role as had existed before the union. However, where the logic fell asunder was in the idea that assimilation was attainable, and more crucially, that the proposed model could adapt to the local nuances of the Irish situation. Irrespective of the role of London, any form of government in Dublin had to be familiar with the ebb and flow of the Irish system, the nuances of familial networks and the history of grievance which often existed between these groupings. These characteristics did not vanish when a new mode of government was instituted, and as subsequent chapters will show, the need for the support of the local gentry remained constant in matters of internal and external security. As has been noted 'The British governed Ireland, as they governed India and much of Africa, in conjunction with local elites' and the removal of patronage was a significant blow to Dublin Castle, who had wielded it to ensure compliance in the past.[32]

[30] Lord Clonbrock to Littlehales, 8 June 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[31] Trevor McCavery, 'Politics, Public Finance and the British-Irish Act of Union of 1801' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* x (2000), p. 362.
[32] Alvin Jackson, 'Ireland, the Union and the Empire, 1800–1960' in Kevin Kenny (ed.) *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2004), p. 130.

Legacy of the union

While the loss of patronage would be a problem at any juncture, through no fault of his own the first lord lieutenant appointed after the union arrived in Dublin to find a considerable legacy of unfulfilled obligations for patronage. As detailed in a letter from his predecessor Cornwallis, this had been part of the price of securing the union and offered Hardwicke little room for manoeuvre:

> I am, therefore to request your Grace will take the earliest opportunity of conferring with His Majesty's Ministers upon this subject and that you will furnish me with an official authority to assure all those gentlemen who have any promise of favour in consequence of the Union that they will be fully provided for according to the extent of the engagements made with them, and that no new pretensions will be allowed to interfere with their prior and superior claims.[33]

The scale of this legacy was considerable, with the new lord lieutenant moved to note that 'there is scarcely any considerable town in Ireland where some claim of [recommending] to the offices in the disposal of Government does not exist.'[34] Having to uphold all claims on the 'List of Union Engagements' curtailed Hardwicke's ability to utilise his remaining powers of patronage tactically. As Sean Connolly notes, there was an 'obsession' with patronage and addressing it occupied much of both Hardwicke's and Littlehales' first few years in the Castle.[35]

It was, Hardwicke believed, reasonable to retain at least some military patronage, albeit less than had been available to his predecessors. Typically, patronage was the purview of the lord lieutenant but the problems facing Hardwicke in this area were essentially passed down to Littlehales, with mediating and facilitating requests for favours part of his new role. His views echoed those of the lord lieutenant. By the middle of 1801 he was finding the

[33] Cornwallis to Hardwicke, 19 Feb. 1801, in Michael MacDonagh, *The Viceroy's post-bag* (London,1904), p. 8.
[34] Hardwicke to Pelham, 28 Nov. 1801 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P780).
[35] S.J Connolly, 'Aftermath and Adjustment' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, v: Ireland under the Union, 1801–1870* (Oxford, 1989), p. 2.

situation challenging and offered the view that if clarity and a degree of autonomy could be afforded to the Dublin administration 'all the benefits which are reasonably expected to flow from this Union will naturally begin to work and a solid, just and [upright?] system may be established which, if adhered to, nothing will be able to shake.'[36]

As an example of how this could play out, Hardwicke had to honour the promise to a Lieutenant Colonel John Creighton, a member of the Irish House of Commons, who had initially opposed the union. Creighton, having been promised a suitable military situation, was offered (and accepted) the post of Governor of Ross Castle in mid-1801. Unbeknownst to Hardwicke, however, the duke of York in his role as commander-in-chief in London had already settled this position, without any communication to the Irish Executive.[37] Hardwicke petitioned the prime minister, Addington, for support in this matter and in an early display of support for his military under-secretary noted that 'as Colonel Littlehales who was acquainted with all the transactions at the time of the union has written fully to my brother Mr Yorke, I wish particularly to refer you to his letter.'[38] Such contradictory activity summed up the challenges faced on both sides of the Irish Sea and accentuated the need to come to a consensus as quickly as practicable.

Initially, Hardwicke and Littlehales had an ally in Lord Pelham, the new home secretary, who was convinced of 'the propriety of leaving a power in the lord lieutenant over the army'.[39] However, this was to be the only time that lord lieutenant and home secretary were in concurrence, and the remainder of 1801 saw an increasingly fractious intercourse, with the lord lieutenant trying to preserve the totality of his role. Hoppen has observed that it was an abnormality that Ireland was effectively under the superintendence of the Home

[36] Littlehales to Yorke, 27 June 1801 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P784).
[37] MacDonagh, *The Viceroy's post-bag,* p. 68.
[38] Hardwicke to Addington, 27 June 1801, in MacDonagh, *The Viceroy's post-bag,* p. 71.
[39] Hardwicke to Abbot, 15 July 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771, f. 32).

Office.[40] Although a historical anomaly, it was the reality for the Dublin Executive and had been reinforced in the private instructions which Hardwicke had received. As a result, achieving some degree of consensus with Pelham was understandably important. Pelham, however, saw a clear logic in the amalgamation not only of parliaments, but of executives.[41] In the 1790s he had served as chief secretary in Ireland and, while it equipped him with a knowledge of many of the issues which the Executive faced, this left him with a distaste for many aspects of this work, and he retained a long-standing antipathy for patronage in particular. Writing some years after his tenure he claimed, 'I had rather work at the plough all the rest of my days than engage in that dirty traffic of patronage.'[42] Nonetheless, this personal animus did not stop him from seeking to bring patronage over to London. Given how important the role of home secretary was at this time of re-definition, any aversion to the management of patronage was always going to be problematic.

It was with a view to trying to curb the reduction in autonomy that Littlehales was dispatched to London to negotiate on behalf of the Dublin Executive. The newspapers noted his travel with the *Freeman's Journal* referring to his arrival in London and 'immediate audience' with the secretary at war.[43] More privately, in a letter to Pelham in late August, Hardwicke had outlined his position and emphasised the role of Littlehales:

> In consequence of the changes which had already taken place since the Union in the transaction of the publick business in this country, I had determined upon sending Lieut. Col Littlehales to England in order to discuss such points as cannot well be explained by letter. From the confidential situation he has held in this country during the discussion and management of the Union and the situation he now holds as under-secretary in the military department he is perfectly acquainted with the courses of business between the different offices in the country as well as with those on your side of the water

[40] K. Theodore Hoppen, 'A question none could answer: "What was the viceroyalty for?" 1800-1921', in Gray and Purdue (eds.), *The Irish Lord Lieutenancy* (Dublin, 2012), p. 141.
[41] K. Theodore Hoppen, 'An incorporating Union? British Politicians and Ireland 1800–1830' in *English Historical Review,* cxxiii, no. 501 (2008), p. 330.
[42] Pelham to Camden, 1 Dec. 1795, quoted in K Theodore Hoppen, *Governing Hibernia: British Politicians and Ireland 1800–1921* (Oxford, 2016), p. 13.
[43] *Freeman's Journal*, 10 Sept. 1801.

> He is furnished with regular instructions upon the different points which I conceive will require consideration and from his intelligence, good sense and discretion your Lordship may safely place the fullest confidence in the explanations he will give of any subject upon which you may wish to converse with him. I therefore recommend him to your Lordship as very deserving of every attention you may be so good as to show him.[44]

Reflecting on this period of his career, Charles Abbot, then chief secretary, noted that 'during the same two months of August and September we had some very important matters to transact respecting the future system of government in Ireland, in which we were counteracted by Lord Pelham and the duke of Portland in England and by Lord Clare and Mr. Cooke (then my under-secretary for civil department) in Ireland'.[45] He went on to outline how 'Lord Pelham sent over a most extraordinary proposition (nominally with the approbation of the Cabinet) for reducing the lord lieutenant (in Lord Pelham's phrase) to a mere lord-lieutenant of a county; and for transferring all the business and patronage to be executed and administered by the Secretary of State for the Home Department.'[46] After the broader discussions around patronage and the role of the lord lieutenant matters had catalysed into a genuine crisis, what followed was an existential question as to the role and viability of the Lord Lieutenancy and the Dublin Administration. Unsurprisingly alarmed at this turn of events, Hardwicke quickly dispatched Littlehales to London with a view to 'controverting the proposed plan.'[47]

'…his intelligence good sense and discretion': Littlehales in London

Hardwicke's concerns were various, ranging from the removal of certain powers of the lord lieutenant, through to the broader issue of governance. His instructions to Littlehales were detailed and wide ranging, requiring the under-secretary to meet with the home secretary, the Secretary of War, the commander-in-chief (the duke of York), the Treasury and the prime

[44] Hardwicke to Pelham, 28 Aug. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers Add. MS 35570)
[45] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* i, p. 277.
[46] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot*, i, p. 278.
[47] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot*, i, p. 278.

minister.[48] While there was to be some discussion around financial and commercial matters, the vast majority of subjects related to either the role of the lord lieutenant or to military matters, including military patronage, responsibility for barracks and defenses, as well as distribution of the military forces in Ireland.[49] This focus was a clear reflection on the nature of the Act of Union itself, which had offered detail only on some aspects of the union, but was inexplicably vague on others. Accordingly, it was for Littlehales to attempt to fill in the blanks.

Littlehales had to proceed with caution in these negotiations as Hardwicke, his new master, was undoubtedly stung by the attempted revisions to his role. Despite this, the new lord lieutenant made it clear to Littlehales that his intentions were pragmatic and that he sought to make the best of the new environment and avoid some of the legacy of the recent past. In a letter to Littlehales, written at the height of the negotiations, he gave the under-secretary a clear rationale for the negotiation, stating:

> It is equally clear, that the power of authority which is to be left to the Office, should upon Union Principles be fully equal to the Government of this Country's and that with a view wither to remedy or prevent abuses the existence of which have made the Government unpopular, the control over the different Departments should remain complete [50]

While the failure to clarify this matter in advance of union is difficult to justify, attempts to determine a suitable mode of governance in the aftermath of the Act were problematic, not least because of the weight of responsibility upon all involved. As noted by Hardwicke 'it should be recollected, that what is now to be settled is intended to be a permanent system' – put simply, all involved needed to get it right.[51] This, however, can be seen to contrast dramatically with the stop-start, and occasionally experimental manner in which greater

[48] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 28 Aug. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[49] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[50] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[51] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

harmonisation was brought in. Indeed, Hardwicke's dogged resistance to changes in patronage and military control effectively ensured that evolution would be sporadic.

Clearly the situation was a delicate one. What, then, are we to conclude from the fact that Littlehales was selected to undertake these important negotiations? There are a number of explanations, all of which revolve around the personalities of the various actors. Firstly, Littlehales had clearly developed a good relationship with Hardwicke in a relatively short space of time. This is evidenced by the ongoing warmth in communication between the two men. Beyond this, however, there were challenges with the other potential candidates. The role of civil under-secretary was still occupied by Cooke, who was known to be a strong advocate of the union, and who was by now settled in London where he spent most of his time telling all who would listen how little he thought of Abbot, the chief secretary.[52] Unfortunately, the audience for Cooke's pique included Lord Pelham and this may go some way to explaining why Littlehales was the preferred candidate to attend London. Abbot, understandably, was not enamoured of Cooke and his diary reflects this, noting Cooke's 'insolent and froward manner'.[53] Abbot was also not to remain as chief secretary for long: in late 1801 he was appointed to the post of Speaker of the House, bringing to an end a tenure which had only begun earlier that year. In addition to Abbot's impending departure, it was clear that Cooke could not return to Dublin as civil under-secretary. Where Hardwicke wanted Alexander Marsden to replace Cooke, Pelham was quick to advance the claims of Sir George Shee, an official who was steadfastly loyal to him.[54] Such a move was of clear concern to Hardwicke and may go some way to explaining why his relationship with Littlehales formed as strongly and as quickly as it did. Littlehales, coming with the recommendation of Lord Cornwallis, had been in Ireland before the union, but in a

[52] Sean O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union: the politics of implementation in Ireland 1801–1815' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2014), p. 85.
[53] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* i, p. 279.
[54] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 89.

predominantly military role, and appeared disarmingly free of loyalties beyond those to Cornwallis, who Hardwicke considered an ally.[55] Abbot's successor, William Wickham, did not take up his situation until January 1802 and showed no appetite for being a point of liaison between Dublin and the home secretary.[56] Discussions about Cooke and his replacement concluded in a wary détente, with Marsden being appointed civil under-secretary and Cooke receiving a pension.[57] In such a context, Littlehales therefore offered a degree of much needed continuity at a time when many other posts were in flux. While this can be seen as an early victory for the new Dublin administration in terms of their autonomy, it proved to be just another salvo between the new lord lieutenant and the home secretary.

Writing of this time in his diary, Abbot noted that Littlehales was dispatched 'with written instructions upon the general question and upon numerous points of detail *for immediate adjustment* with Mr. Addington, Lord Pelham and the duke of York.'[58] It was made clear to the under-secretary that the prime minister was the key in such discussions and Littlehales was specially told to confer directly with Addington. Attempting to ensure a strong understanding with the prime minister was a delicate matter and Abbot, the chief secretary, furnished Littlehales with a letter which attempted to facilitate this:

> If you can indulge Colonel Littlehales with an evening's conversation at Wimbledon, he will put in you possession of all the facts requisite to form your judgement upon the subject of his mission. He need not occupy your time with technical details; but there are paramount questions of policy on the principles of governing Ireland which are emphatically for yourself and scarcely any others' deliberation.[59]

While Littlehales undoubtedly understood the nuances of power in London, he did however make one specific request of Hardwicke – 'that I should confer with the Secretary of War

[55] Cornwallis to Hardwicke, 28 Feb. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive); Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[56] Michael Durey 'When Great Men Fall Out: William Wickham's Resignation as Chief Secretary for Ireland in January 1804' in *Parliamentary History,* xxv, pt. 3 (2006), p. 345.
[57] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* i, p. 279.
[58] Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* i, p. 278.
[59] Abbot to Addington, 28 Aug. 1801 in George Pellew *The life and correspondence of the Right Hon. Henry Addington* (London, 1847) p. 435.

upon the subject of assimilating in power and practice the financial concerns of a military nature between the two countries, as far as local circumstances would permit.'[60] This can be seen as in keeping with the cordial discourse he had already had with the Secretary of War, Charles Yorke, but equally it was a well-intended attempt to continue to establish the 'solid, just and upright system' that Littlehales had suggested could be realized by the union.[61] As it transpired, this suggestion proved inspired.

While the most pressing concerns for the Dublin Executive related to matters of autonomy in management of the military and patronage, this was only part of the problem, as was evident from the sizeable breadth of topics Littlehales was authorized to discuss with various officials in London which included finance as well as the full panoply of military matters. Littlehales' instructions suggest a genuine attempt to begin the process of harmonization and, where appropriate, amalgamation and were framed as such to the London authorities. In this area, much of what Littlehales was tasked with was simply to initiate discourse with a wide range of officials including the home secretary, the Lords of the Treasury, the secretary at war and the commander-in-chief. This was a broad remit, but in some cases Littlehales was simply tasked with informing officials of progress in Dublin. In other cases, relating to military matters, he was directed to get clarification on how military matters were to be managed in light of the Act of Union. Littlehales made sure to keep Hardwicke constantly updated and the lord lieutenant was clear that his under-secretary had latitude in his dealings, reminding him to offer his 'unreserved opinion' on the Irish situation to those in London.[62] This was sound advice, and probably necessary given Littlehales natural tendency towards deference. Hardwicke had clearly placed his faith in him.

[60] Littlehales to Vansittart, 6 May 1805 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[61] Littlehales to Yorke, 27 June 1801 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P784).
[62] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 15 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

For Littlehales clarification and change was essential and his desire for these extended beyond any simple directive from Hardwicke. Having served under Cornwallis during the 1798 rebellion, he had a less than sanguine view of how business had been managed. Some years later he confirmed this in a letter to Vansittart, then chief secretary, where he managed to be both vague and damning, noting 'I abstain from any remark as to the want of system in the mode of conducting before the union the very important and extensive branch of duties which the Military Department embraces, lest it might appear invidious.'[63]

As he travelled to London to negotiate, Littlehales could not have supposed just how unclear, if not divergent, views on the union were in London. A memorandum drafted by the home secretary in September does, however, make this lack of certainty clear. While it began with the observation that 'The union would seem to create the necessity for a very determinate change in the political situation of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary', the memorandum conceded that the new lord lieutenant was operating 'under instructions nearly similar to those which governed the conduct of his immediate Predecessors' and that the chief secretary 'possess the same authority that the former secretary held.'[64] This simple fact – that Hardwicke had been appointed lord lieutenant under a royal patent similar to his predecessors - made any attempt to make substantial change extremely challenging. Nonetheless, the memorandum drafted by Pelham outlined a rationale for decisions related to Ireland 'to originate in the British Cabinet or in some power in England.'[65]

One of the key arguments contained in the memorandum was that in the pre-union period, the power of the lord lieutenant grew as a direct response to the 'dangers to which the

[63] Littlehales to Vansittart, 6 May 1805 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[64] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[65] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).

state was exposed by disturbances in different parts of the country.'[66] This was a critical clause, as it made an explicit link to the importance of the lord lieutenant in addressing issues of domestic unrest. Consequently, while the same document put forward the argument that the Act of Union meant that 'the two stations of Lord Lieutenant and Secretary are reduced' this was aspirational. The memorandum was, however, on stronger ground with patronage, observing that the removal of the autonomy which had existed in Dublin before 1801 meant that 'Ireland cannot require more than a small proportion of the patronage which it before found necessary, considering it as it always should be the means only of carrying on Government, not a right.' What this actually meant was vague, and it was acknowledged that 'to define with precision the extent of this Patronage is impossible.'[67]

Beyond patronage, the view of government in the memorandum struck a conciliatory note which reinforced the centrality of Dublin Castle in managing Ireland, albeit with the reiteration of the newly increased role for London. Such ambivalence was exemplified in the line 'The situation of Ireland considered with reference to the disposition prevalent among the inhabitants and its distance from the seat of government requires a strong vigilant and energetic local executive directing its chief attention to the police of the country but acting in immediate subordination to the General Executive Government of the Empire.'[68] How this could be managed was not made clear and it was notable that the document envisaged a situation where the lord lieutenant retained the autonomy to determine which issues were 'of importance sufficient to merit the attention of the Imperial Government.'[69] This was a broad caveat, and it was buttressed by the direction that Dublin had 'discretionary authority to act

[66] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[67] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[68] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[69] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).

without communication … where promptitude and immediate decision was to be deemed by him indispensably necessary.'[70] Unfortunately for the Dublin Executive, the person in the Imperial Government to whom such matters were to be directed was the home secretary, Pelham.

Having made a clear link between the Dublin Executive and the policing of the country, the memorandum then proposed the removal of all responsibilities relating to 'military concerns' with the caveat that the lord lieutenant might be allowed to retain the right 'of ordering the movement of Troops for the purposes of preserving the peace.'[71] The memorandum concluded with a blunt assessment which was far from what Hardwicke would have imagined when he was appointed:

> The patent and instructions must be altered in every point which gives a separate and independent authority especially in military concerns, and he must in consequence of such alterations be released from all responsibility in these points.[72]

While it purported to represent the views of government generally, Littlehales quickly realised that this was not the case once he arrived in London. There was a spectrum of opinion on the union and its implication across cabinet and beyond. Unlike the home secretary, Pelham, the view of Charles Yorke, then secretary at war, was pragmatic, and while clarification was important, there was little appetite in either the civil or military administration in London for a complete incorporation of the Irish military administration into the British. Years later, Littlehales recalled that Yorke had 'impressed upon my mind the subject of keeping the administration of the Army in Ireland especially its pecuniary concerns distinct and separate from the control of its Discipline and Command.' [73] Thus, the overarching principle of assimilation which was a central theme of the union was one which

[70] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[71] 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[72] Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, 20 Sept. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[73] Littlehales to Peel, 24 Apr. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

became remarkably difficult to put into practice in terms of military administration and even attempts to embed parity in specific areas of the military proved challenging. Writing in early 1801, in the draft of a plan for 'the eventual incorporation of the Civil and Military Branches of the Ordnance Departments of Great Britain and Ireland', the duke of Portland, who was Pelham's predecessor as home secretary, noted that it was 'a subject that is more complicated in execution than it appears in theory'.[74] In this view he was certainly not alone, with Littlehales and Hardwicke showing no desire to see a level of amalgamation which would reduce their ability to manage things locally. As such, Hardwicke directed Littlehales to explicitly rule out such a move in discussion with both Lord Pelham and Colonel Hope, the Adjutant General.[75]

The soft war between Hardwicke and Pelham overshadowed much of the rest of the discussion in which Littlehales was involved. He spent considerable time with the prime minister discussing various matters and was pleased to report to Abbot that Addington agreed:

> that any alteration in the present form of Government in that country was entirely, at this period, out of the question; and, on my observing that it seemed requisite not to diminish the due and proper weight, influence, and dignity, which ought necessarily to attach to the Viceroy, as any degradation of actual authority would tend to lessen the King's interests in Ireland, he stated generally, that his opinions went to strengthen, as far as was consistent and right, the consequence of the Lord-Lieutenant, to enable him to administer impartially, and with temperance, energy, and decision, the public concerns of that country[76]

This was an encouraging step, but the issue of patronage continued to be a thorn in Littlehales' side. The real focus of his attention in this regard was the military command in Horse Guards. Again Littlehales, recently of the military, was the ideal representative for Hardwicke but he did not see much success in this regard. Convincing the commander-in-

[74] Portland to Littlehales, 26 Feb. 1801 (N.L.I, Kilmainham Papers MS 1118).
[75] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[76] Littlehales to Abbot, 24 Sept. 1801, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot* (London, 1861), p. 318.

chief of the merit in Dublin retaining the full privilege of patronage was a battle that could not be won. That said, for Littlehales and Hardwicke the loss of patronage to the military was preferable to ceding it to Pelham in the Home Office.[77] This was not mere pique on their part; the army command, somewhat removed from parliament and civil government, was, in theory, more objective and less susceptible to 'the interests of ministers' than the Home Office might be.[78]

Beyond patronage, Littlehales raised a variety of other military issues, relating to ordnance, barracks and fortifications. On the matter of ordnance, Littlehales was clear that Dublin needed to retain control, and he outlined both the primacy of the civil administration, but more particularly his own office, noting that ordnance was to be 'under the immediate direction of the Commander of the Forces, subject to the Ultimate Authority of the Lord Lieutenant to be conveyed in his Excellency's name to the respective Officers through the medium of the Irish War Office.'[79] Conversely, and paradoxically, he explicitly proposed an amalgamation of the Irish and British Barracks Departments. Indeed, his instructions reasoned that 'As the Army of the two Countries has been united, it is conceived that the Military part of the Barrack Department in Ireland should (so far as local circumstances will admit) be consolidated with the Barrack department in Great Britain'[80]

If amalgamation was to proceed further, such harmonisation was a logical move, but it is unclear why the Dublin Executive were contradicting their own espoused viewpoint in suggesting it. It is possible that it was offered as a conciliatory move, with Hardwicke and Littlehales satisfied that an amalgamation of the barracks departments would both show a willingness to harmonise, without doing so in a way that might prove inimical to their

[77] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 15 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[78] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[79] 'Instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Littlehales on his mission to England from his Excellency the Earl of Hardwicke the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,' 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[80] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

agenda. Ironically, in this case even Pelham, the one voice clamouring for consolidation, appeared to have a limited appetite for harmonisation of the barracks departments and offered the view that:

> Any alterations in the administration of this Department should be recommended or suggested by the Lord Lieutenant to the Secretary of State. The Union does not of necessity consolidate these Departments. There have been independently Barrack Masters General in America, Flanders etc.[81]

With regard to fortifications, while Hardwicke had only recently arrived in Ireland, Littlehales was present during the 1798 rising and the Dublin Executive could not have been clearer on the need for additional fortification. Citing the 'naked and defenceless state of this country' Littlehales was instructed to make the link between the 'spirit of dissatisfaction' among the people and the attendant opportunity for an invader explicit to Haddington and his government in London.[82] While some in London may have considered that the union had settled matters, Littlehales was prepared to convey the need for the construction of additional fortresses to begin as soon as possible.

Even at this early juncture it was clear that resolving precisely what the union meant for the governance of the military was not straightforward. As Joanna Innes has shown, attempts to harmonise some parts of the military, but not others led to a rise in military legislation relating to Ireland after the Act, despite most other Irish legislation diminishing.[83] The attempts by both Dublin and London to understand what to assimilate and what not to, would take decades to resolve and was not concluded until long after Littlehales retired.[84] In the short term, however, these meetings in autumn 1801 were absolutely critical in terms of

[81] Pelham, 'observations on Lord Hardwicke's instructions to Col Littlehales', 20 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive); (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771 ff 100-101).
[82] 'Instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Littlehales on his mission to England from his Excellency the Earl of Hardwicke the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland' 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[83] Joanna Innes, 'Legislating for three kingdoms: how the Westminster parliament legislated for England, Scotland and Ireland, 1707–1830' in Hoppit (ed.) *Parliaments, nations and identities in Britain and Ireland, 1660–1860 (*Manchester, 2003) pp 21-22.
[84] Jupp, 'Government, parliament and politics in Ireland 1801-41' in Hoppit (ed.) *Parliaments, nations and identities in Britain and Ireland 1660–1860*, p. 148.

clarifying the various roles of all actors in the post-union administration on both sides of the Irish Sea. With the prime minister, Littlehales was directed to clarify the role of the lord lieutenant. On the one hand, Hardwicke was clear that the process of harmonization was to begin, on the other Littlehales was directed to clarify 'the latitude for the Lord Lieutenant to act without recourse to London.'[85] Hardwicke elaborated on this in his instructions to Littlehales, detailing his view on 'the principle of government' as follows:

> As the Government of Ireland has [now] delegated to the Lord Lieutenant, He must necessarily be entrusted with the exercise of so much of the Prerogative of the Crown as will make that Form of Government effectual. And it will appear, by his public conduct and official correspondence, how far those powers have been truly and faithfully applied to their proper object, the real interests of the King's service. Unless such weight and influence are granted to the Lord Lieutenant for the time being, that form of Government cannot either merge the political concerns or promote the local welfare of the Country; and no person will feel any motive, inducement or advantage in addressing himself to the King's Representative there. The inevitable consequence of rendering the Office of Lord Lieutenant inefficient, will be the transfer of the powers of Government to some of the principal Individuals or Families in Ireland, whose local passions peculiarly disqualify them, however honourable in character, from governing their Countrymen; and the aversion to the Union which [obtained] very strongly in many parts of Ireland still continues unabated will be unhappily confirmed to the incalculable injury of the Empire.[86]

The first sentence of this passage is critical; the lord lieutenant took it as a fait accompli that he was to be the key actor in the 'government of Ireland'. This was in direct contrast to some of the more senior figures, notably Lord Pelham, who, as Allan Blackstock notes, wanted to see a sizeable curtailment in the power of the lord lieutenant.[87] By sending such instructions to Littlehales in advance of his conference with the prime minister, Hardwicke was effectively going above Pelham's head.

Hardwicke was shrewd enough to place such arguments in a pragmatic context, with a clear implication that if the lord lieutenant was not sufficiently empowered, there was a risk of returning to the old undertaker system whereby power resided in some of the 'principal

[85] Hardwicke to Littlehales, Aug. / Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[86] Hardwicke to Littlehales, Aug. / Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[87] Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801-c.1830', p. 333.

individuals or families' who did not favour the union.[88] Hardwicke sought to allay such concerns by making several claims of what could be done by an active, empowered lord lieutenant in areas such as revenue collection and security. His final instruction to Littlehales for discussion with the prime minister was succinct, but critical. 'It seems requisite', he noted, 'that some latitude of action should be recognised as belonging to the Office of Lord Lieutenant in any unforeseen situation to arise his Instructions may not specifically apply, and on which he may be prevented by circumstances from receiving His Majesty's Commands from England.'[89] If Littlehales could garner some degree of consent from the prime minister on these issues, it would put the lord lieutenant in a stronger position when dealing with Pelham, to whom he instructed Littlehales to make the same argument.[90]

Chief among Littlehales' instructions for discussion with the home secretary, was the need for an enhanced Irish Office. While there had been an office relating to Irish affairs before the union, Hardwicke was convinced that a more developed and effective Irish Office in London was essential with 'an extended scale of duties' especially in light of the requirement for the chief secretary to now spend the bulk of the year in London. In his instructions to Littlehales, Hardwicke linked this requirement clearly to the union, portraying it as 'indispensably necessary.'[91] Furthermore, he was clear, via Littlehales, that the union had only accentuated the need for a well-established office, which he considered should manage all relevant correspondence, act as a 'repository of information' and allow the chief secretary to manage both Irish parliamentary business (and Irish MPs) as well as the daily communication with Dublin. Pelham was completely opposed to the retention of an Irish Office, describing it as 'totally unnecessary' in his reply to Hardwicke.[92] However, relief

[88] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[89] Hardwicke to Littlehales, Aug. / Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[90] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 29 Aug. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[91] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[92] Pelham, 'observations on Lord Hardwicke's instructions to Col Littlehales' 20 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive); (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771 ff 100-101).

came in the form of the duke of York. While the commander-in-chief was reluctant to relinquish his enhanced role in patronage and appointments to the degree that Hardwicke hoped, Littlehales' dealings with him yielded a sizeable boon with the Duke agreeing that he would take the lord lieutenant's advice on patronage. He further agreed with the proposal that the Irish Office in London could act as the route through which Hardwicke could make such recommendations for patronage.[93] This represented a qualified success, but both Hardwicke and Littlehales were clear that the retention of patronage was not just an enabler to good government in Ireland, it was also, as Hardwicke put it 'the best chance of security.'[94]

By this juncture, Hardwicke had accepted that there would have to be some reduction in what he could do in this arena but his reasons for retaining some element of patronage, as noted earlier, were clear. The rationale outlined by London, that removal of a large degree of patronage was an inevitable consequence of union, was accepted. Despite his other concerns, Hardwicke himself acknowledged the new reality and requested that Littlehales inform the prime minister that:

> With a view to the just distribution of the promotions in the Army, no difference can upon principal be made between those Corps serving in Ireland and in any other parts of the Empire; and consequently, the Office of Lord Lieutenant has been divested of the exclusive recommendatory power which he enjoyed before the Union.[95]

But as part of his instructions to Littlehales, Hardwicke put forward what he considered to be a reasonable accommodation; the lord lieutenant would retain the ability to appoint ensigns and coronets, which would give Dublin the influence it felt was needed to 'strengthen the influence of Government', without impeding the 'authority, dignity and necessary weight of the Commander-in-Chief'.[96] This privilege, it was suggested, would be retained by the lord lieutenant 'for the purpose of rewarding the zealous and loyal supporters of the King's

[93] Littlehales to Hardwicke, 4 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771).
[94] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[95] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[96] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

authority.'[97] Shrewdly, Hardwicke consistently linked the need for patronage to matters of security, the need to prevent 'injury to the empire' and the reinforcement of the dignity of the King, which made it all the more difficult to argue against. The other supporting argument Hardwicke could make related to the legacy of union promises, and he was quick to do so, telling Addington about his concerns of 'the effect which would have been produced in the publick mind by so strong a proof of the inability of the Irish Government to fulfil its engagements'.[98]

It should be noted that, for the ever-dutiful Littlehales, clarifying these matters was a matter of some conviction – as noted earlier, he firmly believed that given the scale of obligations incurred by carrying the union and the potential of interference from London to be disruptive, some degree of continuity in the role of lord lieutenant was critical. This again was not a sense of loyalty from a civil servant used to working in a hierarchy. Having been in Ireland for some time, Littlehales had come to an understanding of the nuances of both the political and familial networks. Critically, he understood that patronage was not simply a weapon to be deployed to mollify an irate parliament; it played a key role in ensuring the loyalty of the ascendancy to the Castle and there was nothing in the Act of Union which had obviated this need. This swiftly became clear to his new lord lieutenant, who in a letter to Littlehales in advance of his trip to London noted the risk:

> The inevitable consequence of rendering the Office of Lord Lieutenant inefficient, will be the transfer of the powers of Government to some of the principal Individuals or Families in Ireland, whose local passions peculiarly disqualify them, however honourable in character, from governing their Countrymen; and the aversion to the Union which [obtained] very strongly in many parts of Ireland still continues unabated will be unhappily confirmed to the incalculable injury of the Empire. [99]

[97] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[98] Hardwicke to Addington, 7 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35570).
[99] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 28 Aug. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

While Hardwicke demonstrated a strong aversion to excessive amalgamation in the military arena, he was in favour of making the union work where he saw the logic of it. One such area, resolutely in the civil arena was bible printing. Hardwicke, working on the basis of Ireland being incorporated into the United Kingdom, suggested to Pelham that it was therefore logical to consider 'the extension of the privilege of printing bibles, exercised by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, to that of Trinity in Dublin'.[100] In making this argument he was clear to Pelham that such a view was for him part 'of the general policy of assimilating as much as possible, upon union principles, the public establishment of the two countries.'[101] Thus while such an issue was not nearly as strategically important as military issues, Hardwicke could argue that he was making every *reasonable* attempt to promote the tenets of the union to a successful conclusion.[102]

From the perspective of hindsight, while there was a logic to the greater harmonisation of patronage and military matters proposed by Pelham, he failed to account for the specifics of the Irish situation. While the military aspects were to the fore for Littlehales, the reality was that the Irish context was different in almost every aspect from Great Britain. This was acknowledged by Hardwicke in a letter to Littlehales in which he bemoaned that 'points relating to Ireland are more frequently misunderstood in England than any other power'.[103] As an example, taxation was lower than across the Irish Sea and was a highly contentious issue. The growth of taxation, coupled with other economic challenges, has been shown to have contributed, if indirectly, to the 1798 rebellion and the Dublin Castle administration were understandably wary of being seen as the focal point of such discontent.[104] For Hardwicke, a degree of continuity was imperative and, in an explicit

[100] Pelham introductory paper', [15 Sept. 1801] (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771, ff. 98-99).
[101] Hardwicke to Pelham, 19 Oct. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771).
[102] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 114.
[103] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 15 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[104] David Dickson, 'Taxation and disaffection in late eighteenth-century Ireland' in Samuel Clark and James Donnelly (eds), *Irish peasants* (Dublin, 1988), p. 57.

repudiation of Pelham's proposal, he went as far as to assert that union could only happen '…by continuing to govern Ireland on the liberal and enlarged principles of policy which have hitherto actuated HM's councils and not by considering it as an English County.'[105]

By late September 1801 Littlehales had returned to Dublin with Pelham's observations, which were stark. In addition to completely disagreeing on the matter of the Irish Office, Pelham went further, claiming that the lord lieutenant should liaise directly with the home secretary on matters of Irish interest.[106] In a similar vein, he sought to limit the role of the chief secretary, stating that Abbot and his successors should 'correspond officially with no one except in the name of the Lord Lieutenant'.[107] While it has been suggested that this may have been an attempt to prevent the rise of another dynamic secretary, similar to Castlereagh, it is as likely to reflect Pelham's genuine conviction that, in light of the Act of Union, a clear, redefined hierarchy should exist both in Dublin, but also between Dublin and London.[108] He struggled, however, to articulate how this could work, conceding that a 'strong vigilant and energetic' administration was still required.[109] This was the central paradox of the post-union relationship; the sheer lack of clarity offered by those who developed the act made imposing such a dramatic alteration impossible. During his time in London, Littlehales was tireless on this issue, pressing the matter with the prime minister, the commander-in-chief and other senior figures.[110] The under-secretary was energetic, but he was not overly optimistic of success. Part of the reason for his pessimism was the fact that most of his arguments were based on precedents which predated the union – and so took place in a different context. This was adverted to by the Secretary for War who was sympathetic to the

[105] Hardwicke to Pelham, 8 Feb. 1803 (T.N.A., H.O.,100/112 f 61).
[106] Pelham, 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and his Chief Secretary', 20 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45031, ff 52-65).
[107] Pelham, 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and his Chief Secretary', 20 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45031, ff 52-65).
[108] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 117.
[109] Pelham, 'Considerations upon the situation of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and his Chief Secretary', 20 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45031, ff 47-48).
[110] Abbot to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/166).

needs of the Dublin administration and not least his brother who led it, but who was clear to Abbot that the union had to 'bring on the necessity of material changes in the former mode of conducting the business of Ireland.'[111] The other reason for Littlehales' pessimism continued to be Lord Pelham. In a letter to Abbot, Littlehales outlined at length the degree to which Pelham was seeking to constrain the autonomy of the Dublin Executive. Pelham's intent was summarised by Littlehales who noted that 'his Lordship said that every communication on the part of the Lord-Lieutenant which was not made directly to the Secretary of State for the Home Department was apparently informal.'[112] For Pelham, it was clear that he and his department were to be the sole effectual conduit for decision making between the London and Dublin civil administrations. As it transpired Pelham's radical view was at obvious odds with the thoughts of Hardwicke, but critically also with the more relaxed and pragmatic views held by the other senior officials in London, with whom Littlehales had engaged so successfully.

Having convened with his seniors and taken advice, Littlehales returned to London and quickly gave indication to Abbot of negotiations taking on a 'promising appearance.'[113] Hardwicke was clear in his approval, noting 'I am also very sanguine from the Reports you have made of your conversations with Lord Pelham & Mr Addington that everything will be settled upon a proper footing in [?] & the degree of authority to remain with the Lord Lieutenant'[114] But while Littlehales could point to successful and positive discussions with the prime minister, the commander-in-chief and the Secretary for War, it remained the case that discussions with the home secretary continued to prove challenging. At his final meeting with Lord Pelham at the end of October Littlehales again pressed the issue of patronage. While his report was of an amicable meeting, he reinforced the message that retention of

[111] Yorke to Abbot, 12 Oct. 1801 *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot* (London, 1861), p. 364.
[112] Littlehales to Abbot, 9 Sept. 1801 *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot* (London, 1861), p. 316.
[113] Abbot to Littlehales, 8 Sept. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/167).
[114] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

patronage to a substantive degree was felt to be essential for the 'due administration of the King's government in Ireland'.[115] Hardwicke however was not deterred and, building on the work Littlehales had done with other members of the administration, by-passed the home secretary completely. Another fortuitous event occurred when Lord Cornwallis, who had been appointed chief negotiator for the peace talks at Amiens, requested that Littlehales be seconded from his role to join him as an official delegate. Littlehales' longstanding relationship with Cornwallis was critical here and Hardwicke's communication with Cornwallis on this matter offered an opportunity to engage Cornwallis' support for his lord lieutenancy.[116] This he did, with Littlehales' concurrence, as part of the broader discussion about releasing Littlehales, and Cornwallis duly spoke to the prime minister.

Littlehales was given a reply to deliver to Pelham, but which was also furnished to the Cabinet.[117] This reply, containing Hardwicke's 'observations', suggested a need to ensure that the views of any official be 'consistent with his majesty's interests, and the due administration of his affairs in Ireland.'[118] Hardwicke went further and made a clear link between autonomy and safety and bypassing any ideological considerations they suggested a simple need for 'the best practical mode of administering the Kings Government in and for this part of the United Kingdom.'[119] The reply, delivered by Littlehales, was clever, with an overt acceptance of any proposal which Hardwicke agreed with, such as 'the power of ordering the movement of Troops for the purpose of preserving the Peace', which Pelham had meant as a statement qualifying the power of the lord lieutenant in this area in favour of the

[115] Littlehales to Hardwicke, 31 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[116] MacDonagh, *The Viceroy's post-bag*, p. 70.
[117] 'Hardwicke observations', Hardwicke to Pelham 24 Oct. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45301, f 86).
[118] 'Hardwicke observations', Hardwicke to Pelham 24 Oct. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45301, f 52).
[119] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O., 03/9/136).

Commander of the Forces.[120] Where Hardwicke could not find an interpretation which he agreed with, Littlehales was instructed to offer a polite but firm rebuttal.

On the matter of patronage, the concerns of Littlehales and Hardwicke were framed objectively and they asserted that removal of this privilege would undermine the good work of the union as it 'would soon oblige the minister to resort to the assistance of some of the Chiefs of the Country', which could only lead to Ireland being subject to the challenge of 'party and cabal.'[121] This was shrewd, as it placed the post-union executive as a necessity against the risk of returning to the old undertaker system, which no one in either London or Dublin Castle wanted. Further to this, Hardwicke simply confirmed to Pelham his understanding that all civil appointments in Ireland 'shall be vested exclusively in the Lord Lieutenant.'[122] This was an extraordinary response that completely refuted Pelham's proposal and left Littlehales in an invidious position in London.

With this in mind, Littlehales was tasked with meeting Addington, the prime minister, to try to garner support for Hardwicke's counter proposal. Here Littlehales' role became more evident and his capacity for relationship building, with Hardwicke subsequently confirming 'I had no doubt that Colonel Littlehales would conduct himself entirely to your satisfaction and to that of other members of the administration with whom had had occurrence more particularly to communicate.'[123] Again, Hardwicke laboured the importance of patronage, citing it as explicitly correlated to good government in Ireland, but also flattering Addington and stating that, as he saw his role, it was as 'agent of the Prime Minister in the disposal of patronage and the proper application of influence.' He went further, stating

[120] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O., 03/9/136).
[121] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O.. 03/9/136).
[122] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O.. 03/9/136).
[123] Hardwicke to Addington, 24 Oct. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O., 03/9/136).

his assumption that the prime minister and he were of like mind on the 'proprietary of maintaining at least for a considerable time, the form of government which is now established.[124] Addington, who Littlehales made Hardwicke's representations to, was slowly coming to a similar conclusion.

At the time, Littlehales had found these particular meetings to be positive and had said as much to Abbot, so there was cause for a degree of optimism in Dublin.[125] Hardwicke's communication again raised the spectre of an 'enfeebled' lord lieutenant being unable to manage the security of the country [126] Such an argument, articulated over a series of letters in October and November, built on the work done by Littlehales and carried enough weight to persuade the prime minister that the post-union administration should continue as Hardwicke, rather than Pelham, envisaged. Again, however, there was paradox as the prime minister had explicitly limited the role for the lord lieutenant in appointing peers, bishops, and other senior figures just several months before, on the basis that such a move deviated from the 'principle of union'.[127] Such a contrary position can be explained by the content of the act itself – where there were specific guiding principles in the case of such appointments, it was clear that these should be adhered to. However, in the case of military matters, the complete lack of guidance in the legislation meant that matters were more open to negotiation. Such negotiations went in favour of Dublin and Littlehales could reflect on a job well done.

By this juncture, Littlehales was bound for Amiens, to join Cornwallis. His work in London was finished and could be considered a success. Addington, the prime minister, in a letter to Hardwicke offered an unambiguous endorsement stating, 'Colonel Littlehales has conducted himself entirely to the satisfaction of those members of the Administration with

[124] Hardwicke to Addington, 24 Oct. 1801 (T.N.A., P.R.O., 03/9/136).
[125] Littlehales to Abbot, 24 Sept. 1801, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot*, i, p. 318.
[126] 'Hardwicke observations', Hardwicke to Pelham, 24 Oct. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45301).
[127] Littlehales to Abbot, 6 Sept. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45301).

whom he has communicated.'[128] This was not simple rhetoric – Addington was clear with Abott that he expected that Littlehales' absence from Dublin would require the chief secretary to spend more time in that city.[129] Hardwicke was equally effusive, telling Littlehales that he was 'truly grieved to lose you from this service'.[130] Hardwicke was clear in his appreciation for the work that Littlehales had done stating 'I am most indebted to you for the zealous manner with which you have endeavoured to bring all the various points upon which it was become necessary to have distinct & final instructions to a clear issue and I am confident that the best effects will arise from your having undertaken the mission.'[131]

The departure of Cornwallis and Littlehales to France was highly publicised and served as an end point to the initial negotiations around the union, which constituted a challenging if productive few months during which the initial modes of governance for Ireland in the post-union era had been agreed. Pelham's attempt to reduce the influence of the Dublin administration and the lord lieutenant in particular had met with some success, albeit mainly related to some aspects of patronage. Hardwicke himself was magnanimous on this concession, positioning himself as 'perfectly disposed to admit the necessity upon true union principles of abridging in some degree the patronage which had hitherto been annexed to this office.' [132] While they lost military patronage, Hardwicke and by extension Littlehales had retained much of their capacity for independent action in terms of directing the military in Ireland, and retaining enough patronage to attempt to fulfil the legacy of union promises. This gave them a foundation to assert control over matters in Dublin. However, it also meant that the opportunity to truly redefine what was to happen in light of legislative union was

[128] Addington to Hardwicke, 8 Oct. 1801 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P780).
[129] Addington to Abbot 16 Oct.1801, George Pellew *The life and correspondence of the Right Hon. Henry Addington* (London, 1847).
[130] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 45301).
[131] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 10 Oct. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[132] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O., 03/9/136).

missed. Hardwicke and Littlehales were concerned less with systemic change, and more with having a functional administration which would meet the needs of the country. They achieved this and the documentary evidence serves to contradict the view of Hardwicke and his administration as somewhat indolent. This view was put forward early in the twentieth century by Charles O'Mahony, who claimed the lord lieutenant adopted a 'policy of doing nothing and doing it well.'[133] A more reasoned view is offered by McDowell who judged Hardwicke to be a 'very conscientious, at times indeed fussy viceroy.'[134] Hardwicke had to spend more time cementing the union that he might perhaps have imagined and this achievement on its own was notable considering the challenges he faced. Furthermore, the esteem in which Hardwicke held Littlehales was evident given the importance of his mission and the responsibility that came with it, and he was a very supportive presence to the new under-secretary.

Littlehales had learned a lot from Hardwicke who in his first year as lord lieutenant had proved to be a shrewd political operative, marshalling all his resources to stymie the intentions of the home secretary. Given his leading role in this work Littlehales emerged from this episode with an enriched reputation, which was further enhanced by his role with Cornwallis in Amiens. While the episode can be seen as a victory for Hardwicke and Littlehales, it was as much a consequence of a degree of conservatism in the thinking in Westminster, with only Pelham considering in any way adventurously about what union actually meant, something which effectively cost him his role.[135] More broadly, however, the sense of conservatism had long-term consequences, in that it ensured that the ill-defined nature of the union was firmly put into a context of personality and personal relationships, not clear objective structures of governance. Much depended on the personality of the lord

[133] Charles O' Mahony, *The viceroys of Ireland* (London, 1912), pp 210-211.
[134] R.B. McDowell, *The Irish administration 1801-1914*, p. 53.
[135] Hoppen, 'An incorporating Union? British Politicians and Ireland 1800-1830', pp 141-2.

lieutenant, the chief secretary, the commander of the forces, and the home secretary. The pattern of governance established in the first years after the union testified to this primacy of personality, with Hardwicke trusting Littlehales to build good relationships on his behalf. Such relationships were in turn leveraged to ensure that, on balance, the view of Dublin trumped that of the home secretary. And yet, it can be argued that only Pelham, as home secretary was approaching the union from a systemic perspective, although this must be balanced with the fact that his time in Ireland had clearly influenced his views. Pelham's influence on Irish affairs would, however, diminish and in 1803 he was replaced as home secretary by Charles Yorke, Hardwicke's brother. Such a familial connection could only reinforce the role of both personality and informal networks and augured well for the Dublin administration, not least Littlehales, who had a strong relationship with him. The primacy of personality over structural matters continued and as Littlehales worked to manage the threat of internal and external discord, the impact of personalities both in the form of the lord lieutenant and the Commander of the Forces, but also those of the magistracy would be to the fore.

Chapter 3: Policing and defending the nation

While the union was secured and was being implemented, however imperfectly, the threats faced by the Irish administration had not receded. Indeed, for the majority of Littlehales' time in Ireland he would be living in a state which was at war with France and subject to recurrent outbreaks of internal unrest. This chapter will examine the nature of this twin threat and the role of Littlehales in managing the forces of law and order that were tasked with defending Ireland against such threats. For Littlehales, this meant the militia, the yeomanry and the regular army. In reality the threat from abroad was somewhat chimeric in that the risk of invasion was increasingly limited, but the threat of internal unrest was constant and occupied more of Littlehales' time. The previous chapter highlighted the work he undertook to clarify the application of 'union principles' in terms of how military forces would function, but in practical terms the difficulties in terms of harmonising and clarifying the roles shown in the previous chapters continued and were reflected in attempts by government to guard against threats and address unrest in Ireland.

Dealing with such threats occupied much of Littlehales' time and in order to examine his role, it is necessary to first consider the various forces which were tasked with managing internal unrest and Littlehales' role in relation to them. These various forces provided a framework for peacekeeping which government needed to operate in. By examining a series of episodes over the first decade of his tenure, it is possible to discern how Littlehales' role in peacekeeping evolved and interacted with broader government concerns such as security from external threats. As under-secretary Littlehales grew in confidence as the decade went on and an examination of several case studies centred around a series of episodes of unrest highlights this. Accordingly, this chapter will examine three case studies, from 1803, 1806 and 1808, which focus on internal unrest in various parts of the country. These studies

demonstrate the critical importance of information in tackling unrest and the challenge involved in obtaining the correct information. They also serve to show the degree to which addressing such matters was influenced by the personalities of those involved and how these traits had a palpable real-world impact on peacekeeping efforts.

Unrest in the aftermath of 1798

To the modern historian looking back at issues of law and order in the period immediately following the Act of Union, there is a clear connection with broader social history.[1] While Dublin Castle and the civil under-secretary had a role in policing more generally, the military under-secretary was required to focus on matters of persistent internal unrest, which were considered worthy of a response by either army, yeomanry or militia. Among historians there remains a lack of consensus as to whether there was continuity linking the 1798 rebellion and the largely agrarian unrest of the first decades of the nineteenth century, with James Patterson seeing a continuity of disaffection from 1798 into the early nineteenth century. Marianne Elliot conversely considers there to be a clear distinction between the radicalism of the United Irishmen and the unrest of subsequent years. [2] What is indisputable is that the period during which Littlehales served as under-secretary saw 'a dramatic increase in the level of physical violence' which manifested in rural movements irrespective of the stimulus.[3] There were several specific drivers for this. The economic well-being of the people had a clear impact, with a causal link between times of hardship and unrest.[4] Religion could be an issue, and the government was increasingly aware of the need to avoid unnecessary provocation of the Catholic majority. What this meant was that the scale of involvement by officials such as Littlehales in managing unrest had a clear connection to the broader state of the country. The

[1] Georgina Sinclair, 'The Irish Policeman and the Empire' in *Irish Historical Studies,* xxxvi, no. 142 (Nov. 2008), p. 174.
[2] Marianne Elliot, *Partners in revolution: the United Irishmen and France* (Yale, 1990), p. 243; James Patterson, *In the wake of the Great Rebellion: republicanism, agrarianism and banditry in Ireland After 1798* (Manchester, 2008), p. 5.
[3] Patterson*, In the wake of the Great Rebellion*, p. 10.
[4] Galen Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force' in *Journal of Modern History, xxxiii*, no 4 (Dec. 1961), p. 363.

third driver however was external in the form of the threat of invasion.[5] This risk had been acknowledged by Dublin Castle for some time. Cornwallis, accepting this reality was keen to observe that he was not concerned by the potential of an invasion per se, rather the potential of an invasion of sufficient scale and threat that might inspire the disaffected in Ireland. He articulated this in a letter to Portland in autumn 1800, explicitly making clear that the primary concern was, for him, an invasion 'with such an army as might afford to the disaffected a reasonable prospect of success in overturning our government.'[6] This was the practical view of a career military figure, but more broadly there was great alarm in the administration and Ascendancy society at the spectre of an invasion from France; equally, in other quarters such an event was anticipated with pleasure. As Patterson has noted, there was a demonstrable reduction in evidence of internal unrest during the period of the Peace of Amiens, which supports the contention that there was a clear link between local unrest and the prospect of support or encouragement from France.[7] While this fear receded somewhat after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, it never fully dissipated and the view offered by Major General Mackenzie that internal unrest left 'little tranquillity, no safety for the well-disposed, and no security against the disaffected in the event of an enemy's landing amongst us' would not have been exceptional.[8]

There was therefore a clear link between internal and external threats, and neither was sufficiently addressed by the Act of Union, a point noted by Hardwicke who, in a letter to Pelham, stated the clear need to retain 'a very powerful military force … for a considerable length of time and on a scale much beyond the limits of any former Peace Establishment'.[9] Such a force would have to be mixed as the growing commitment to prosecuting war on the

[5] James Patterson, 'Republicanism, agrarianism and banditry in the west of Ireland, 1798-1803' in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. xxxv, no. 137 (2006) p. 29.
[6] Cornwallis to Portland, 2 Sept. 1800 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/27).
[7] Patterson, *In the wake of the Great Rebellion*, p. 98.
[8] Mackenzie to Richmond, 1 Oct. 1807 (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS. 59/161).
[9] Hardwicke to Pelham, 14 Nov. 1801 (N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers, MS 1015).

Continent was reducing the ability of the United Kingdom to defend itself against attack. Indeed, this point was made by the duke of York when writing to Lord Liverpool (War Secretary) in 1811.[10] While London seemed to have a never-ending appetite to remove regular troops out of Ireland towards the continental effort, the fear of internal security issues meant that complete removal of the regular army could never be contemplated. The gradual reduction of the threat of invasion and the increasing presence of British Militia, who often exchanged with their Irish counterparts, and were seen as more impartial in managing internal matters, enabled some further reduction in the army. Despite this, army numbers were kept at a level which provided sufficient security in Ireland.

Littlehales' tenure coincided with the beginning of a far more proactive and interventionist approach to policing than had hitherto been considered.[11] There were several reasons for this. Firstly, there was a move towards the appointment of senior officials who had political experience, which was followed by an increase of civil service appointees with military experience. This ensured a more professional bureaucracy, which allowed for greater coordination across the various forces and more calibrated interventions to address unrest.[12] Secondly, the removal of the Parliament in Dublin took away a counterbalance to the power of Dublin Castle (and, to a lesser extent, Kilmainham). Finally, and perhaps counter intuitively, despite the union the expanded United Kingdom remained very decentralised and 'a great deal of power and initiative customarily lay in local hands.' [13] In essence, Dublin could still take the lead in such matters should it be felt that ongoing unrest required military intervention from the Irish capital rather than from London, where the

[10] York to Liverpool, 7 Dec. 1811, Kevin Linch, 'The recruitment of the British Army 1807-1815' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Leeds, 2001), p. 65.
[11] Virginia Crossman, 'Growth of the state in the nineteenth century' in T. Bartlett (Author) & J. Kelly (Ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 542.
[12] R. B McDowell, *Social life in Ireland 1800–1845* (Dublin, 1957), p. 82.
[13] Jacqueline Hill, 'National festivals and 'protestant ascendancy' in N.C Fleming and Alan O'Day (eds) *Ireland and Anglo-Irish Relations since 1800: Critical Essays* (Hampshire, 2008), p. 49.

commander-in-chief resided. There were few things which successive administrators agreed on, but the need for a strong military presence, noted by Hardwicke in 1801, was endorsed by various successors, and most bluntly by Robert Peel who in 1813 offered a similar view to Littlehales when he noted that 'In a country like Ireland where the army is a mere body of Police', and often employed on policing matters, 'the safety of life and property' was contingent on a strong military presence.'[14]

For Littlehales, the ultimate manifestation of this policing presence would be the Police Preservation Force which he assisted Robert Peel in developing in 1814, but working in concert with others to address matters of unrest was a constant part of his role. There were several reasons for this, but the most prominent was the system of law enforcement which relied heavily of the magistrates of the locality. Such a system mirrored that which had evolved in England, but the degree of unrest which occurred in Ireland had no equal across the Irish Sea. Virginia Crossman is correct in her assertion that a range of administrative structures were eventually implemented in Ireland that had no English equivalent, but the early years of Littlehales' tenure saw the administration endeavour to keep the peace within an English style framework which was not fit for purpose.[15] Much of this administrative structure had been set up in the eighteenth century with the creation of rural and city police forces supported by the magistracy.[16] Such efforts were made all the more complex by the rise of the Volunteer movement which formed in the 1770s and persisted in various forms until the 1790s. From initially being a force to defend against invasion, the Volunteers became increasingly associated with demands for legislative independence.[17] Until their demise in 1793, the Volunteers' size and active presence showcased just how inadequate the

[14] Peel to Littlehales, 4 Dec. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[15] Crossman, 'Growth of the state in the nineteenth century', p. 548.
[16] Kevin Boyle, Police in Ireland before the Union in *The Irish jurist,* 8.2 (1973), p. 324.
[17] Thomas Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1791-1815' in James Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland*, *1730–1880* (4 vols, Cambridge, 2018), iii, p. 78.

establishment's capacity to manage such bodies was. While predominantly a Protestant affair, the induction of a small number of Catholics into the Volunteers gave them both experience in the use of arms, but also a degree of self-confidence which was viewed with trepidation by the government. [18]

The post-union administration in which Littlehales served inherited many of the problems of its predecessor, and the long tradition of unrest which the pre-union administration had grappled with continued into the new century. As Thomas Bartlett notes, economic factors continued to be a key driver of internal unrest and the activities of groups such as the Whiteboys and the animal mutilation by the 'houghers' were influenced by downturns in agrarian economic fortunes.[19] This pattern persisted also in the arena of religious unrest. The years before the 1798 uprising had seen an increase in disorder based around religion with groups such as the Catholic Defenders and the Protestant Peep O' Day boys clashing regularly and in numbers. Dublin Castle was particularly alarmed at the rise of the Defenders, with Cooke, the civil under-secretary referring to them outright as an 'insurrection' in 1793.[20] The real insurrection would of course come several years later with government seeing clear links between the United Irishmen and the Defenders. As will be shown, such problems persisted stubbornly into the new century and in the post-union structure addressing them was a constant challenge for Littlehales.

In the absence of a fully functional, national policing force the task of managing internal unrest fell to several different bodies: the Yeomanry, the militia, and the regular army. It has been argued that both yeomanry and militia forces served as inheritors of the voluntary military tradition encapsulated by the Volunteers whose demise in 1793 coincided with the

[18] Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 81.
[19] Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 77.
[20] Cooke to Nepean, 8 Feb. 1793 (T.N.A., H.O., 100/39 f 82).

establishment of new 'amateur military' forces in the militia, founded in 1793, and the yeomanry, founded in 1796. [21]

Historically, there has been a blurring of the perceived roles of the Yeomanry and the Militia. This has ranged from the assumption that the Yeomanry were primarily a counter insurgency force, with the militia focussing more on matters of defence, through to viewing the yeomanry as responsible for the defence of the island against external threats. Such confusion was occasionally present at the time; in 1798, for example, both groups were tasked with the defence of Ireland, albeit in different ways. Even the official legislation takes care to refer to the full gamut of 'Invasion, rebellion or insurrection'.[22] A clear delineation would never be fully concluded during Littlehales' tenure and on more than one occasion he found himself drafting requests to Yeomanry to undertake duties which typically fell to the Militia when the latter force was 'elsewhere required'[23] Given this ambiguity, coupled with the role of the regular army, it is essential to understand the role of the military under-secretary in relation to each force.

The Militia

The formation of the militia in particular can be seen as a direct consequence of the suppression of the Volunteers in 1793.[24] It is legitimate to view both the militia and yeomanry as alternatives to the regular army, with the late eighteenth-century iterations of each having some similarities in origin and both falling broadly under the auspices of a 'citizen army'. With the passing of the Act of Union, which saw the end of the Irish Parliament and the creation of a United Kingdom of Great Britain, bodies such as the militia

[21] David Miller 'Non-professional soldiery c1600-1800' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith. Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland*. (Cambridge, 1996), p. 332.
[22] 42 GEO III c 68 vi. Yeomanry Act, 1802
[23] Littlehales to Peel, 11 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[24] T. Bartlett, 'An end to moral economy: the Irish militia disturbances of 1793' in *Past & Present*, no. 99 (May 1983), p. 46.

became a critical factor in the relationship between the civil authority in Dublin Castle and the army command in Kilmainham, with both parties endeavouring to redefine their position under the new union. Importantly, the decision as to whether the militia was to be 'permanently embodied' and serving as a full-time force was one which was taken by civil government in Dublin Castle, not by the military.[25] This was a role that Littlehales was centrally involved in, but beyond such strategic matters he also was involved in the daily management of the force. As such he quickly gained a sense of the political aspects of the force, and its links to the Gentry. These were less obvious than might be the case with the Yeomanry, but the militia were often raised by a ballot system, which local gentry were expected to manage. Dublin Castle frequently had concerns about the efficacy of such a system and for Littlehales the diminished importance of the ballot was as much to do with 'practical difficulties rather than political decision-making'.[26] However, it remained in various forms through the time of Peel.[27] Littlehales' role with the militia was further complicated by the periodic need to incentivise transfers from the militia to the regular army. There were merits to this, but it also ensured that as military under-secretary, Littlehales faced a significant volume of work, and it was possible for those who enlisted into the militia and then into the army to avail of two financial bounties. Hardwicke, writing to his former colleague notes this practice stating, "I believe the men who intend to go into the army have discussed the advantage of first passing thought the Militia and that few are now obtained by ordinary recruiting."[28]

In terms of religion, the militia, while retaining an ascendancy-led command structure, counted significant numbers of Catholics in its ranks. While there were obvious risks in arming the Catholic community, there was also an opportunity to create a sense of

[25] Ivan Nelson, *The Irish militia 1798–1802- Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007), p. 51.
[26] Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1803,* p. 67.
[27] Robert Shipkey, *Robert Peel's Irish policy, 1812-1846 (*New York,1987), p. 109
[28] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 25 Aug. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

identity and loyalty beyond religion, which could then be harnessed by government.[29] A critical role for Dublin Castle was to facilitate this by creating an environment which would allow strong leadership to grow in militia regiments which could then create a viable, functional, and loyal unit. One of the key enablers of this was the fact that, post-union, the lord lieutenant still retained some power of patronage, while one of the challenges was the fact that prejudices of the commanders towards their largely Catholic ranks remained. These prejudices were not helped by the evidence of infiltration of the militia by radical militant bodies such as the United Irishmen and Defenders before 1798 and the mixed performance of the militia during the rebellion itself.[30] Even after the union, questions of loyalty would always haunt the militia and it could be argued that the presence of so many Catholics in its ranks would ensure that doubts would always remain. The 18th Knight of Kerry, Maurice Fitzgerald, was not alone in his reservation when he noted, in a letter to Littlehales written in July 1803, 'You have in Ireland no regular force – you have probably 18 thousand Militia who are at last but Militia and are they beyond doubt to be trusted?'[31] Such concerns were typical and were one of the key reasons why militia corps were never asked to operate in their own locality. Despite these misgivings, however, the force was too valuable to be dispensed with and the plans drawn up before his departure in 1801 by the then lord lieutenant and commander-in-chief, Lord Cornwallis, no great friend to the militia, reflect this reality, with the militia being incorporated in these plans. Cornwallis was blunt in his assessment and noted that there was a 'melancholic necessity of considering the majority of the Irish people as our enemies and employ[ing] a large portion of the force which ought to act against a foreign invade[r] to keep our own countrymen in subjection.' The militia, he observed, were

[29] Catriona Kennedy, 'True Britons and real Irish: Irish catholics in the British Army during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars' in Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (eds), *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke, 2013), p. 47.
[30] Catriona Kennedy, *Narratives of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: military and civilian experience in Britain and Ireland* (New York, 2013), p. 138.
[31] Fitzgerald to Littlehales, 30 July 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

impacted by the transfer of men to the regular forces, but his greater concern was the lack of competent officers 'capable of conducting them against experienced and skilful veterans.'[32] Cornwallis was pragmatic enough to distinguish between what he would have liked and what he had, and he knew that he had limited options. As Ivan F. Nelson has noted: 'The plain truth is that the commander-in-chief could not do without the militia, as there were never enough troops to provide for the defence of Ireland, the defence of Great Britain and to provide a field army'.[33]

The fact that the militia ultimately became a mixed force (albeit a predominantly Protestant-led one) served not only to differentiate it from the yeomanry, but also to ensure that it had a fundamentally different relationship with a government, which was trying to navigate the new realities of post-union Ireland. Where the yeomanry was very much 'an ascendancy army', the militia was a broader church, originally conceived as a force which would concentrate on home defence, and it evolved into a 'nursery' and proving ground for prospective regular troops. As Bartlett notes, this ensured that there was both a ready-made supply of recruits who already had some degree of military training, and a consistent process whereby Catholics, who were skilled in arms, were removed from their local situation.[34] In time, this latter aim would be expanded via the Militia Interchange, which began in 1811 and which saw Irish militia corps stationed in England and vice versa. Littlehales was a great proponent of this system which he felt reduced any potential issues of loyalty. Indeed, he was at pains 'to send as large a proportion of our Militia as the Law will permit,' across the Irish sea and prevailed on Peel to see up to one third of the force transferred.[35] However, while it was not their original purpose, and despite the better judgement of senior military and civil

[32] Cornwallis to Portland, 2 Sept. 1800 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/27).
[33] Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1803*, p. 245.
[34] Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 75.
[35] Littlehales to Castlereagh, 10 Aug. 1811 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

leaders, the militia ended up playing a role in policing.[36] As such, while an interchange was a welcome innovation, there were concerns that any potential reduction in the size of the force would inevitably impact upon the policing role as much as on the role of defence from external threats with which they were commonly associated. Indeed, they became so central to managing the internal state of the country that measures to reduce their number or disband them tended to be viewed with alarm by senior military figures in particular. Writing to Littlehales in 1804, Sir John Hope, then a senior commander in Ireland, expressed his concern at moves to reduce the force, urging Littlehales to ensure that such efforts proceeded 'as gradually as we please'. Hope, a military man, was urging restraint on Littlehales, despite the initial direction coming from the duke of York, a fact which evidences just how concerned military leaders in Ireland were. [37]

The Yeomanry

While the Yeomanry and Militia evolved from the amateur military tradition they became very different forces.[38] Where the militia were principally Catholic and stationed away from their homes, the yeomanry were predominantly Protestant and served in their immediate locality. In some ways their origin resulted from the question of loyalty in the militia. Camden, when lord lieutenant in 1796, directly noted this, stating that such a force was needed for the protection of loyal landlords and the country.[39] Again, as with the militia, part of the thinking around this force was that it would free up regular military forces, but it also functioned as a display of support for the Ascendancy. This made them a different force, not

[36] Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1803*, p. 257; McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793-1816*, pp 196-197.
[37] Sir John Hope to Littlehales, 26 July 1804 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/388).
[38] Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry 1796–1834* (Dublin, 1998), p. 175.
[39] Camden to Portland, cited in Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 89.

just from the militia, but also from the Volunteers in England, who came from a similar social background.[40]

Given this background, it was not surprising that the yeomanry force was not viewed with quite the same suspicion by Dublin Castle – in their case, concerns tended to focus on issues of discipline, rather than loyalty. One of the persistent narratives ascribed to 1798 is that of a yeomanry force engaged in excessive reprisals. Contemporary accounts offer some support for this idea. Cornwallis, while acknowledging that the yeomanry had indeed saved the country, also noted that they led the way in 'rapine and plunder'.[41] He had been forced to issue a clear order calling on the officers to 'assist him in putting a stop to the licentious conduct of the troops.'[42] Chastened in his views of local defence forces from his experiences in the American Revolution, Cornwallis was extreme in his views. But he was far from alone in worrying about the Yeomanry's excesses, with Sir John Moore, who reported to Cornwallis, seeing a clear tendency towards reprisals in the force and noting in his diary that 'Their presence would do much if they were under the control of prudent military officers; but, if left to themselves, they are too apt to revenge past injuries.'[43] Littlehales' predecessor as military under-secretary, Wiliam Elliot, also expressed concerns, but they related more to what he saw as the untenable expense of the force, with his pithy observation that they did not provide 'a cheap defence of nations.'[44] Interestingly, a less than positive appraisal of the merits of the force was also offered by the Irish rebels who supported the French in 1798: a letter seemingly from the prominent radical Thomas Gibbons suggested that the force lacked proficiency in specific roles. Such roles Gibbon suggested were better carried out by 'experienced soldiers' with the Yeomanry force lacking resilience: 'the flight of one', he

[40] Linda Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, 1992), p. 288.
[41] Cornwallis to Ross, 24 July 1798, quoted in Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 12.
[42] William Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century* (London, 1878), p. 94.
[43] John Maurice (ed.), *The diary of Sir John Moore* (London, 1904), p. 302.
[44] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army,* p. 123.

noted, 'often brings on that of the whole regiment'.[45] If potentially ill disciplined, the yeomanry were nevertheless important; as noted, despite his misgivings Cornwallis conceded that the force had 'saved the country'.[46] His misgivings never left him however and in a General Order of September 1798 he noted:

> The corps of Yeomanry in the whole country through which the Army has passed have rendered the greatest Services and are peculiarly entitled to the Acknowledgements of the Lord Lieutenant, from their not having tarnished that Courage and Loyalty which they displayed in the Cause of their King and Country by any Acts of wanton Cruelty towards their deluded Fellow subjects. [47]

While there is no explicit evidence of Littlehales's view, as was so often the case it is likely that they echoed those of his mentor at the time. That said, the nature of his roles both before and after the union meant that he received correspondence offering a spectrum of opinion. The view of Cornwallis and Sir John Moore were at one extreme, but Littlehales was privy to other views. As an example, when secretary to Cornwallis he received briefings such as that offered by Major General Moore in Athlone, who expressed satisfaction with the Yeomanry's behaviour, asking Littlehales to assure Cornwallis that, under his aegis, the town was 'perfectly protected' with the force conducting itself well.[48] Whatever Littlehales' personal opinion, it was clear that there was no consistent view on the Yeomanry across the administration. Allied to this was the reality that by the beginning of his tenure as military under-secretary the yeomanry made up approximately half of all 'military' forces in the country.[49] For Littlehales, it was clear that he, and both civil and military leaders in Dublin, had to be able to work with the force. In both scale and centrality to the Ascendancy, the force was just too critical. This would be a constant for most of Littlehales' time as under-

[45] 'Explanation and observations on the letter signed by EG to Citizen Gannon', 9 Oct. 1798 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/22).
[46] Cornwallis to Ross, 24 July 1798, quoted in Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 148.
[47] General Orders Sept. 9th, 1798. Collected in Government Bulletins on the Irish Rebellion 1798, Dublin 1798 p. 81.
[48] Moore to Littlehales, 1 Mar. 1799 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/592).
[49] Thomas Bartlett, 'Defence, counter insurgency and rebellion: Ireland 1793-1803' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 249.

secretary. Over his years in Dublin, Littlehales would not find working with the Yeomanry too onerous, but he was at times required to work with Kilmainham and others in addressing the sporadic disciplinary issues which inevitably arose with the force. The difference between what was reported to Littlehales as issues of ill-discipline and what he ultimately had to address was considerable and highlights the tendency of correspondents to raise alarm without evidence.

In this Littlehales was faced with competing vested interests and while it has been noted that there was no consistent view on the Yeomanry in the administration, the military command tended to have an unenthusiastic view of the force at best and Littlehales was aware of this. It was a view which was prevalent for his entire time in Ireland. In 1800, Cornwallis offered the opinion (which Littlehales was aware of) that the force was 'by no means calculated to serve with an army in the field against a regular army.'[50] Years later in a very different environment, military command shrank from any proposals to further integrate yeomanry with regular forces as exemplified when Sir John Hope politely but firmly refused the offer of the former force taking on the duties of the latter for a two-month period. While Hope was polite, Littlehales' report on the discussion was unambiguous and he noted that the commander 'appears to be decidedly of opinion that nothing can render our Yeomanry useful or efficient.'[51] This view permeated beyond military command; Dublin Castle regularly received criticism of the force from confidential informants, such as 'J.W.', who informed the civil under-secretary that the force was 'more prompt than any others in abuse of Government'.[52] Faced with such views there was a clear need for both under-secretaries to recognise the rationale for such assessments, but be pragmatic enough to know when to give

[50] Cornwallis to Portland, 2 Sept. 1801 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/27).
[51] Littlehales to Peel, 3 May 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[52] 'J.W' to Marsden, 20 Aug. 1801, quoted in Michael MacDonagh, *The Viceroy's post-bag* (London,1904), p. 257. 'J.W' was an alias of the informer Leonard McNally.

them less credence. As will be shown, such discrimination of thought would also serve Littlehales well when he assessed reports of unrest from around the country.

Undeniably as time went on the yeomanry became more central to Ireland's defence Their increasing numbers and largely Protestant make up placed them in the ascendancy over the largely Catholic militia. While Catholics could join, and in some cases did, the view of the earl of Clanricarde that even loyal Catholic gentry had little inclination to join the force were typical. For Clanricarde, this was as much to do with the role of government as the nature of the force itself – as he noted to Littlehales 'those expectations which (as they conceive) were held out to them were stifled.' [53] The Act of Union and the subsequent denial of Catholic Emancipation had confirmed this trajectory. As Bartlett notes: 'The avowedly Protestant state created by the union could not feel at ease so long as its protection lay largely in the hands of a Catholic force. Inevitably that state came to rely on the Yeomanry'.[54]

That said, the relationship between the various actors was not entirely an easy one. In 1802 Littlehales had to mollify concerns among the senior government figures as to the loyalty of the force. Lord Redesdale, then Chancellor, did not mince his words when he suggested that the force 'may hesitate when required to engage to march over Ireland whenever called upon to suppress an insurrection'. Ultimately, though, he concluded it could only be hoped that 'men will trust to the discretion of Government' and in the years immediately after the union government came to see the Yeomanry as an increasingly important point of leverage.[55] The earl of Hardwicke, for example, lacked the disdain for the yeomanry, which was evident with military men such as Cornwallis, and quickly concluded that the force was both a useful instrument for patronage, and also a useful tool as he tried to devise a working relationship with senior military command in Kilmainham. Pragmatically,

[53] Clanricarde to Littlehales, 3 Apr. 1803 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/741).
[54] Bartlett, 'Defence, counter insurgency and rebellion: Ireland 1793-1803', p. 292.
[55] Redesdale to Littlehales, 30 May 1802 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/203).

he also appreciated the role of the force as a channel for loyalism among the Ascendancy. As he informed Wickham, 'some of the individuals who are now in their embodied state, preservers of the peace of the country, may hereafter become disturbers of the public tranquillity.'[56] Accordingly, Hardwicke resisted any attempt to diminish the role of civil government in the force, or to reduce the size of the force.[57] Tellingly, when Littlehales was in London at the lord lieutenant's behest in 1801, he attempted to steer discussions about any potential reduction in military forces away from the Yeomanry, and towards the militia and regulars.[58] There was a logic to this, in the sense that the prospect of peace with France would lessen the external threat but not necessarily the internal policing issues which the Yeomanry were heavily involved with, but it also reflects the clear sense of how important the Castle viewed the force to be at the time.[59] Littlehales' argument that the force was essential to peacekeeping in Ireland was reinforced by the lord lieutenant who made it clear that he wanted to retain control of the force and saw no merit in its reduction. This was a valid contention, but the reality was that the Yeomanry was a force over which Dublin Castle had control, as well as the privilege of dispensing patronage.[60] As peace became a reality in 1802, Hardwicke defended the need for the force in his correspondence with Pelham, going as far as to quote liberally from their prior correspondence as well as citing the example of the continued presence of a strong yeomanry force in England under the command of Lord Hobart. From this Hardwicke concluded:

> …considering the circumstances in which this Country was so recently placed and how much is due to the spirit and zeal of the volunteer corps, I am inclined to think that it will not be prudent to suffer the Institutions to drop at once, by the disbanding and disarming of all the Volunteer and Yeomanry Corps without exception, throughout Ireland. Though the country in general is at present in a state of tranquillity, yet there certainly are some districts where the sudden removal of every species of Force in consequence of the reduction of the Army and the disembodying of the Militia and

[56] Hardwicke to Wickham, 7 Apr. 1802 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35771).
[57] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 188.
[58] Charles Abbot, *The diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot* (London, 1861), i, p. 374.
[59] Hardwicke to Littlehales, no date (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[60] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 188.

> Fencible Regiments, might occasion not only jealousies and apprehension in the minds of His Majesty's loyal subjects, but real alarm and inconvenience.[61]

If Hardwicke was quick to outline his concerns about the potential risk to 'publick tranquillity' involved in standing down the Yeomanry, he and Littlehales had a strong ally in Charles Abbot who urged caution in any proposed reduction. 'The Yeomanry', he noted in a letter to Littlehales, written in May 1802, 'is a considerable force and requires much previous consideration before you finally disperse of such a force'.[62] While Hardwicke and Littlehales had been obliged to consider the impact of peace on all forces, their views on the risks inherent in too great a reduction won the day. This success in late 1801 saw them retain control of the Yeomanry, with an agreement that the force would not be reduced, but it would have its exercise days reduced.[63] This was a minor concession in light of what they had retained and as it transpired, peace did not last and the Yeomanry as a force was enhanced both in scale and in terms of the control afforded to the Castle.[64] The importance of the force beyond simple peacekeeping remained unabated for the duration of Littlehales' career,

The Army

Historically the army in Ireland had been required to focus its attention on both the maintenance of civil order and the defence of the country against the threat of invasion. As such it was a nexus between civil and military affairs and its deployment was as much a political act as a military one. By deploying the army, government was making two political statements. The first was that the Irish could not be trusted to police or defend themselves, something which would be reinforced with the initiation of a Militia Interchange in 1811. The second was a broader statement about imperial priorities. By retaining a standing army in

[61] Hardwicke to Pelham, 7 Apr. 1802 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS 35770).
[62] Abbot to Littlehales, 16 Mar. 1802 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/189).
[63] Abbot, *the diary and correspondence of Charles Abbot,* i, p. 292.
[64] Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c.1830' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, x (2000), p. 337.

Ireland of troops which were badly needed to prosecute the war abroad, government was making a statement about where Ireland stood as a priority and a risk.

Despite the growth and increasing importance of the militia and yeomanry, regular army forces remained the pre-eminent military resource in the country – certainly in terms of 'competence', if not numbers. While the size of each force varied over time, the army tended to be similar in size to the militia, operating between 20,000 and 30,000 men.[65] Both forces were however dwarfed by the Yeomanry which rarely dipped below 40,000 men during Littlehales' time and went as high as 71,000 in 1810.[66] Such figures show a comparable trend to that of the British military establishment more generally, with the growth of forces outside the regular force being considerable.[67] Compared to the militia and yeomanry, the army, a 'professional' force, commanded greater respect from both Kilmainham and Dublin Castle, although in the latter case it might be more accurate to state that the army was seen as simply *less problematic* than the other military bodies. While it might be considered that having several different forces in Ireland would ensure a degree of clarity in role and function, in reality the opposite tended to occur. The role of the army was anything but straightforward and it was required to undertake various different responsibilities. It was embedded throughout the country, carrying out a range of military actions, many of which, such as the suppression of illegal distilling and attending public gatherings where breaches of the peace could occur, could reasonably be described as 'policing'. As Crossman notes, 'Assisting the civil power to preserve the peace was an accepted function of the army second

[65] Return of the Military Force stationed in Ireland, in the Years 1782, 1783; 1801, 1802, and 1803. H.C. 1813-14 (333) VII, 439.
[66] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 116.
[67] 'An Account of the Number of Effective Volunteers in Great Britain and Ireland Respectively, on the 1st of January and 1st of July in the Years 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, and on the 1st of January 1808;-Distinguishing Cavalry, Infantry, and Artillery', in *House of Commons Papers; Accounts and Papers* (1808), VII, p. 223; 'Return of the Effective Strength of the British Army, in Rank and File, in Each Year from the Year 1804 to the Year 1813, Inclusive;--Distinguishing Cavalry, Artillery, Infantry, and Militia, and British from Foreign and Colonial Corps.', in *House of Commons Papers; Accounts and Papers* (1813), XI, p. 269.

only to the defence of the realm'.[68]

Beyond its core function, the army had an economic and social role with the presence of a regiment or unit guaranteed to bring money and a degree of gaiety into a region. While it can be argued that the period in question saw some attempts at separating the army from society, through actions such as accommodating the forces in separate and distinct barracks, as opposed to billeting, there is sufficient evidence to show that, in Ireland, the regular army continued to engage at various levels with society at large. This can be seen as part of a broader acceptance of the army which, as Colley notes, permeated the British Isles in the latter stages of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth.[69] This engagement ranged from the social, with the hosting of balls and galas, through to the economic, with the presence of a regiment or battalion bringing money into a region, at least for some. This social capital was considerable and again much more pervasive than simply that of an occupying force. While the issue of barracks is more broadly considered later in this chapter, it is important to note that for many, the presence of a barracks in a town was a major boon and something to be ardently petitioned for. Whatever about the various roles it might have to perform, the army was, for many, a welcome presence. During times of upheaval, requests for the situation of barracks tended to come from residents feeling under threat and these tended to come to both military and civil authorities, often with descriptions of the threat being faced. This was an issue faced by every lord lieutenant in Littlehales' time, with Hardwicke summing it up as 'representations on ulterior motives.' [70] However, it is important to note that the location of barracks and other military infrastructure was not predicated solely on clear military imperatives. As noted earlier, the reality was that having a barracks could bring significant economic benefit to an area and both Dublin Castle and

[68] Virginia Crossman, 'The army and law and order' in Bartlett and Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 358.
[69] Colley, *Britons,* p. 284.
[70] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 18 Dec. 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Kilmainham would see a succession of petitions from landowners and others trying to influence the location of prospective barracks for this very reason. An example can be seen in the petition of politician and judge Robert Day who requested a barracks for Tralee, highlighting the current risks to law and order while emphasizing the benefits for troops and for government:

> Whatever opinion might heretofore have been entertained upon that subject, it is now evident that in the County Town situated near the centre of the County from whence a force might be rapidly brought to bear upon every point of it, one of the best market towns in Ireland inclosed [sic] on one side by a fine limestone country and on the other by the sea, it is evident I say that a large military force had better be so situated than to be perpetually resorted to distant garrisons for assistance. Then if such a Force be necessary in Tralee, the next question to be asked is whether it would be more advisable to Quarter them in a spacious commodious Barrack accommodating men and officers together, with a handsome parade in front, the whole to be inclosed and surrounded by a high wall, or to billet them as all the officers and a large proportion of the private now are upon the town corrupting and corrupted by the people. This question I flatter myself that you who have the morality of the people and the discipline of the army deeply at heart will have no difficulty in concurring with me upon.[71]

Littlehales was able to adopt the role of 'honest broker' in his reply, noting the critical role of the Commander of the Forces, Lord Harrington but undertaking to 'again renew the subject' with the commander.[72]

In her work *Britons*, Linda Colley has rightly noted that there are risks in generalizing a population as broadly loyal or disloyal and this observation applies to Ireland despite her neglect of the island in her research.[73] Recruitment occurred at a level which certainly does not support the idea of a region of universal disloyalty. Out of twenty-four recruiting districts, five were located in Ireland and despite an increasingly regularised system, with more robust standards of criteria for acceptance, the sheer need for bodies to fill the ranks ensured that such standards were not always upheld. Furthermore, the average Irish recruit

[71] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[72] Littlehales to Day, 20 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[73] Colley, *Britons,* pp 296-301.

stood a high chance of being sent to various stations in the West Indies – a posting which even contemporary publications noted brought with it a high chance of death from disease.[74] Yet enlistment continued apace, with the exception of the period around the 1798 rebellion.[75] As noted by James Deery, Ireland contributed proportionately more men than almost any other region in the United Kingdom in the early nineteenth century.[76] For many Irish Catholics a life in the army, notwithstanding the attendant risks, offered excitement and adventure and a chance to redefine one's life and station. [77] By its active recruitment in Ireland, the army offered opportunity or temptation to citizens and removed a sizeable number of Irishmen who might otherwise have contributed to unrest. Indeed, so great would recruiting figures climb to, that Daniel O Connell would bemoan the success of military recruiting, claiming in 1812 that it was 'taking our native army from us.'[78] There is a kernel of truth in this: a letter from the prime minister, Lord Grenville, to William Elliot in 1806 noted 'we need the men; Ireland wants a vent for its superabundant population; could not these two wants be reconciled?'[79]

As Crossman has shown, generally speaking the army in Ireland can be seen to have been impartial in matters of policing.[80] In no small part this related to the perception that, of all the potential agents of policing, the regular army, with its hierarchical, depersonalising structures, and its members reporting to a military command, was as removed from local issues and influences as possible. What also has to be acknowledged is that the army rarely,

[74] A.M Tulloch, 'On the Sickness and Mortality Among the Troops in the West Indies' in *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 1, no. 3 (1838), p. 430.
[75] E.M. Spiers 'Army organisation and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith. Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland*, p. 335.
[76] James Deery, 'The contribution of the Irish soldier to the British Army during the Peninsula campaign 1808 – 1814' in *The Journal of Military History and Defence Studies* Volume 1 Issue 1 (Jan. 2020), p 6.
[77] Peter Karsten 'Irish Soldiers in the British Army 1792-1922: suborned or subordinate' in *Journal of Social History* XVII, No. 1 (1983), p. 36.
[78] Karsten 'Irish Soldiers in the British Army 1792-1922', p. 36.
[79] Karsten 'Irish Soldiers in the British Army 1792-1922', p. 38.
[80] Virginia Crossman, 'Preserving the peace in Ireland: the role of military forces 1815–45' in *The Irish Sword,* xvii, no 69 (Summer 1990), p. 271.

if ever, got involved in the prosecution of crime – their role internally was maintenance of the peace. And their success in this arena was one of the reasons that the magistracy and local aristocracy were so quick to call on them, often using legislation such as the Insurrection Act.[81] Speaking in Parliament some years later in the century, Henry Grattan, MP for Meath, observed that 'advantage was always derived to the peace of the country by employing them (the soldiers) in preference to the constabulary, in consequence of the latter being more immediately under the control and responsible to, a partial magistracy.'[82] His peers earlier in the century would no doubt have agreed.

Littlehales and the army

Much of the detail of Littlehales' interactions with these forces (and, by extension, his involvement in policing) was worked out in the first year after the union. For the army, the key aspects were teased out in Autumn 1801, when Littlehales was despatched to London to meet with the senior members of government with a view to bringing some clarity to proceedings. As with most other aspects of the union, things were not resolved to anyone's satisfaction, but the management of the army (for both police and defence) was clarified to some extent. What emerged was an uneasy and somewhat dysfunctional tripartite relationship between Horse Guards in London, the Irish military command in Kilmainham and Dublin Castle, which saw Littlehales with an increasingly well-defined role in support of the army. In particular he was required to engage with 'all measures that require the immediate interference or sanction of Government that are productive of expence or that in any respect materially alter the Military System.'[83] This was a broad role, but it was felt that some degree of definition would facilitate the increasing harmonisation of the force between

[81] 47 GEO 3 C 13 Insurrection and disturbances (Ireland) Act.
[82] Henry Grattan, Hansard 3 XXVI, 907, 12 Mar. 1835.
[83] 'Synopsis or Memoranda of the Relative Duties of the Irish War Office with various Departments in England and Ireland' undated (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Ireland and Britain and where Littlehales had resisted intervention in the Yeomanry, he was amenable to this. By March 1802, the military under-secretary could note that 'a general plan for the assimilation of the military financial business between the two countries' was en route to London.[84] A year later, in November 1803, the earl of Clanrickarde would note in a letter to Littlehales in 'pas à pas I have little doubt but that military concerns from all parts of the Empire will concentrate at the Horse Guards.'[85] He would be proven to be correct, but it would take time for a full assimilation. This was due in part to the sheer scale of subsuming one system into another, but it was equally to do with the ability of different personalities to influence proceedings. After a challenging start, a degree of understanding had emerged between Dublin Castle and Medows, the new commander in Kilmainham, and Littlehales' colleague Marsden, the civil under-secretary, would note that things resolved to the degree that a communication from him or Littlehales 'procured us what we wanted'.[86]

For Littlehales, the Yeomanry and Militia being recently raised forces meant that they lacked the legacy and various precedents of the regular army. As such, where the role of the military under-secretary was quite clearly defined in relation to the yeomanry and militia, his role vis à vis the regulars was more challenging. Littlehales' career in Ireland saw him move from a longstanding and successful military career into an administrative / civil role, albeit one intractably connected to the military in all its aspects. As noted by Crossman, relationships between the civil and military authorities were much closer in Ireland than in England and as Littlehales settled into his new role, he could hardly have failed to be cognisant of this reality.[87] Further complicating matters, however, was the fact that the civil under-secretary *also* had a role in matters of policing. Where Littlehales was a member of civil government, with responsibility for the three military forces, his civil peer had a more

[84] Littlehales to Abbot, 9 Mar. 1802 (B.L., Hardwicke papers Add MS. 35745).
[85] Clanrickarde to Littlehales, 27 Nov. 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[86] Marsden to Castlereagh, 22 Nov. 1803 (P.R.O.N.I., Castlereagh papers, D3030/i84x).
[87] Crossman, 'The army and law and order', p. 376.

overt role in relation to actual police forces, especially in light of the passing of the Dublin Police Magistrates Act, in 1808.[88] This legislation gave a much more direct role to Dublin Castle in matters of policing in the city. What was challenging was managing to ensure continuity, given that matters which might be defined as 'policing' could involve a variety of different forces, who might, in various permutations, report to a military under-secretary, a civil under-secretary, the Commander of the Forces in Kilmainham and ultimately to the lord lieutenant. Such a complex system was almost designed to create issues of communication and coordination, especially given the need to consult with local communities and magistracy also. It is notable that Littlehales' most effective role in such matters, which will be considered later in the chapter, occurred when there was a harmonious relationship with Kilmainham and there was no civil under-secretary.

In chapter two Littlehales' involvement in clarifying aspects of the Act of Union through 1801 was considered. The implications of the union for the various military forces were mixed and showed how little thought had been given to what the consequences of the union were for all concerned. As time passed London's erratic views of what was practicable conformed to this pattern. Initially, in the immediate aftermath of the act's passing, it was decided that the ordnance would serve as a test case and Portland, the home secretary communicated this to Dublin when he informed the administration that it was clear that a plan for 'the eventual incorporation of the Civil and Military Branches of the Ordnance Departments of Great Britain and Ireland' was needed.[89] Such moves, taken in the afterglow of the passing of the Act of Union were, however, premature and Hardwicke's strong feelings on the diminution of his power, detailed in the previous chapter, extended into the military. In his instructions to Littlehales he noted:

[88] 48 GEO 3 c 140 Dublin Police Magistrates Act, 1808.
[89] Portland to Littlehales, 26 Feb. 1801 (N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers, MS 1118).

> It is apprehended that the most serious inconvenience will arise to his Majesty's Service, if the whole of the Military branch of this department be not forthwith placed under the immediate direction of the Commander of the Forces, subject to the Ultimate Authority of the Lord Lieutenant to be conveyed in his Excellency's name to the respective Officers through the medium of the Irish War Office: and it is conceived that all orders respecting the Financial concerns Civil and Military of this Department must be issued by the sole command of His Excellency through the same channel.[90]

The reply from London was terse but unambiguous, noting 'The Ordnance has been settled by abolishing the Irish Board of Ordnance and making a Master General and Board for the United Kingdom.'[91] This new system would see the London-based board operate in Ireland through a system of 'Respective Officers' who did not report to the lord lieutenant but to London, via the Commander of the Forces. In reality, there were advantages to this in terms of a more coherent strategy and the prospect of greater financial resourcing.[92] For Hardwicke and the Dublin Executive, however, it was a bitter loss, and one which they were loath to acquiesce to. The prior arrangement ended unceremoniously, with confusion reigning over the initial legality of 'his Majesty's letter…for revoking, determining, and making void' the letter patent which had appointed senior figures in the Irish Board.[93] This may have simply been a game of brinksmanship by Hardwicke, using legal nuances to delay the inevitable, but considering it was concurrent with Littlehales' broader negotiations in London, it was unnecessarily provocative and tensions around control of Ordnance persisted for years.

For Littlehales there was a material consequence in the reduction of his role in such matters as ordnance, which had an impact on all aspects of defence and policing. As an example, the raising of the Yeomanry continued to be subject to control in Dublin, but the issuing of arms for a raised corps did not. An example from 1808 showed this system at its most convoluted, with the difficulties facing the Irish administration in obtaining additional

[90] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[91] 'Observations on Lord Hardwicke's instructions to Col. Littlehales' undated (B.L., Shee Papers, Add MS 60338).
[92] J.H. McEnery, *Fortress Ireland* (Bray, 2006), p. 8.
[93] Hardwicke to Pelham, 22 Oct. 1801 (T.N.A., H.O. 100).

arms for increased numbers of Yeomanry requiring a protracted correspondence to address. Writing on October 14th to Jenkinson, parliamentary under-secretary for the Home Department, in London, Littlehales noted an immediate need for arms which had arisen due to an increase in Yeomen 'to the amount of ten thousand men.' However, he was clear that this was the first of several requests which made clear the necessity for a much-increased supply of arms and asked Jenkinson to solicit the assistance of the then Lord Hawkesbury, soon to be renamed Lord Liverpool, the War Secretary:

> Many other Proposals to increase the Yeomanry force have been received, a selection of which His Grace intends to accept to an extent probably of two or three thousand men in order to carry the effective strength to about sixty thousand men conformably to the correspondence which has already passed between His Grace and Lord Hawkesbury on this point, but His Grace will postpone his Instructions for carrying this measure into effect unless under particular circumstances & partially until it may be more convenient to issue a further supply of arms.[94]

The reply from Jenkinson, some ten days later, was a classic example of government bureaucracy, subtly summarising the role and power of the Irish Lord Lieutenant in such matters:

> Dear Sir
>
> I should have acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 14th Oct, sooner had not some difficulties occurred as to the possibility of issuing the arms required for the accoutrements of the additional Corps of Yeomanry; by the additional Corps of Yeomanry; by Lord Hawkesbury's directions I went to the Ordnance & spoke with Mr Ashley Cooper who assured me that the issue of arms had been so very considerable lately that it would be necessary for Lord Hawkesbury to have some further private communication with Lord Chatham before the Publick [*sic*] communication should take place between this issue & the Board of Ordnance. I have informed Lord Hawkesbury of the circumstances & doubt not that as he comes to town from [Halmer] this evening he will seize the opportunity of arranging this business.[95]

This, Lord Hawkesbury duly did and some days later Jenkinson was pleased to note:

> Lord Hawkesbury having communicated privately with Lord Chatham respecting the issue of arms which the late increase of the Irish Yeomanry has rendered necessary I have the pleasure to inform you that his Lordship agreed with my Brother in the

[94] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 14 Oct. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[95] Jenkinson to Littlehales, 24 Oct. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

> propriety of an issue to the amount of 10 [thousand] taking place & the necessary steps have been accordingly taken to authorise the proceedings of the Board of Ordnance upon this command.[96]

Thus, an administrative move to make ordnance matters more efficient and adapted to the idea of 'union principles' made life more challenging for the Dublin administration and for Littlehales in particular.

Where the Ordnance amalgamation went ahead, despite the misgivings of the Dublin Executive, something completely different happened with the Barracks department. At the point of implementing the Act of Union the view of Dublin Castle on the question of Barracks amalgamation could not have been clearer. Where he had been loath to give ground on many proposed consolidations, Hardwicke was far more conciliatory on this matter, and struck a far more agreeable note to Littlehales:

> As the Army of the two Countries has been united, it is conceived that the Military part of the Barrack Department in Ireland should (so far as local circumstances will admit) be consolidated with the Barrack department in Great Britain, it is therefore proposed as a necessary consequence, that the warrant of Barrack Master General should be empowered to execute all the duties incident to this service, subject to be conveyed in the usual course of proceedings through the Irish War Office, under additional and proper checks, which are fully expressed and laid down in the regulations submitted by Colonel Napier and strongly recommended as hereinbefore stated. [97]

Why Hardwicke instructed Littlehales to offer this to London while resisting the amalgamation of the Ordnance is not clear, as amalgamating the Barracks departments was just as likely to bring even greater distance to the decision-making process, accentuating the challenges already faced in Ireland. As it transpired, the feeling from London was unexpectedly ambivalent, with Pelham's department refusing to take up this opportunity. London's rationale for turning this opportunity down as explained to Hardwicke did not chime with the view on ordnance and it was stated that 'Any alterations in the administration

[96] Jenkinson to Littlehales, 27 Oct. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[97] Hardwicke to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

of this Department should be recommended or suggested by the Lord Lieutenant to the Secretary of State. The union does not of necessity consolidate these Departments. There have been independently Barrack Masters General in America, Flanders &c.'[98] As a result of this refusal to merge, the Irish military deployment continued to be based around a dispersed network of small barracks across the country, which lent itself to agile and responsive policing, but not to managing the threat of a sizable invading force. This was a longstanding challenge – in 1803, General Fox noted the importance of keeping regiments of the line concentrated so as to be able to focus their force at any point of invasion.[99] Littlehales would have understood this from his own military career, but as under-secretary he was obliged to consider the role of the army as a tool for the policing of unrest versus the threat of invasion. The need for barracks was not just to facilitate deployment in the face of invasion, it was critical in maintaining discipline. Writing in 1803, General Anstruther, the Adjutant General, made this clear to Littlehales.[100] He told Littlehales of the 'total want of barrack accommodation and of the consequent unpleasant and dangerous situation' which the troops faced in some parts of the country.[101]

Troops stationed in Ireland certainly needed discipline as there was no shortage of unrest in Ireland during Littlehales' tenure, with any hope that the union might quell disaffection quickly quashed. While it can be argued that the majority of the disaffection was simply social unrest linked to agrarian concerns, there are intriguing signs of politicisation also.[102] Whatever the source, a bewildering array of groups were present during Littlehales' tenure, such as the predominantly agrarian focussed Whiteboys, and the more sectarian Ribbonmen but also the remaining vestiges of the Defenders, a confessional group.[103]

[98] 'Observations on Lord Hardwicke's instructions to Col. Littlehales' undated (B.L., Shee Papers, Add MS 60338)
[99] Anstruther to Tarleton, 12 Sept. 1803 (T.N.A., W.O. 35/24).
[100] Anstruther to Littlehales, 30 Aug. 1803 (T.N.A., W.O. 35/24).
[101] Anstruther to Littlehales, 1 Sept. 1803 (T.N.A., W.O. 35/24).
[102] Patterson, 'Republicanism, agrarianism and banditry in the west of Ireland, 1798-1803', p. 18.
[103] Jessica Lumsden Fisher, 'The Rise and Fall of the Ribbonmen' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Notre Dame, 2018), p. 6.

Moreover, on occasion the supposed tools of security failed quite dramatically, with both yeomanry and militia regiments participating in feuding and outright violence.[104] This could range from situations where one of the forces fought with civilians, or occasionally, with each other.[105] For Dublin Castle, it was often challenging to get accurate information on an episodes of unrest in order to formulate an appropriate response. As an example, an affray which occurred in Omagh in August 1808 between the Kings County Militia and the local Yeomanry was reported very differently in different newspapers. The *Freeman's Journal* published a report which spoke of Orangemen rather than Yeoman and clearly considered them the aggressors, noting that 'the country people had risen in support of the militia'. [106] The *Belfast Newsletter* on the other hand suggested that the initial aggression had come from the militia.[107] Discerning the truth in such circumstances was challenging.

Accentuating this problem was the concern over the possible role of France in fomenting discord. The threat of invasion waned as the first decade of the new century progressed, but it was frequently acute. Even an experienced character like Alexander Marsden was not immune. In a letter to Littlehales written in September 1800, he noted that reports he had received suggested 'we shall have all our friends here soon'.[108] Many of the letters Littlehales received regarding unrest were quick to suggest a French link. A typical example was sent to him in March 1803 from Lord Bantry, who noted a 'change in the lower order' in his locality. Bantry also observed that nineteen individuals had arrived in the guise of sailors and pedlars 'for the purpose of sedition' and that it was generally believed that a landing would be made by the French in the next month. While he assured Littlehales that if he was told the wishes of the government, 'in so far as in my power I will obey them' he

[104] Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 97.
[105] Pádraig Ó Snodaigh, 'Notes on the volunteers, militia, yeomanry and orangemen of County Monaghan' in *Clogher Record*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1977), p. 155.
[106] *Freeman's Journal*, Wednesday, Aug. 23, 1809.
[107] *Belfast News-Letter*, Friday Aug. 18 1809.
[108] Marsden to Littlehales, 26 Sept. 1800 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/106).

quickly followed this with an overt request for a regiment to be stationed in Bantry.[109] This desire from a nervous representative of the gentry to have the reassurance of military support was a typical aspect of such communications and made it harder for Littlehales to distil credible communications on such matters. As the risk of invasion diminished after Trafalgar, many of the reports could be discarded as either spurious, or as attempts to elicit a greater response from Dublin, but some remained worthy of investigation. In 1808, for example, Littlehales received substantial and evidently credible information from the Solicitor General, that an agent had arrived in Dublin 'on a treasonable mission.'[110] Ultimately Charles Bushe, the Solicitor General, found nothing of substance. Possibly what gave these reports weight was the fact that a Michael Boucain had been arrested in Askeaton several months earlier.[111] Ultimately Boucain was dismissed as a threat, with Littlehales advising colleagues in London that:

> it is however to be observed that the state of poverty and disease in which this foreigner appears to be, almost precludes the Supposition of his having been sent here for mischievous purposes; His Grace has nevertheless deemed in proper to confine him for the present to a separate apartment in Kilmainham under the Alien Act and proposes to transmit him to the Agents for Prisoners at the nearest Sea-port in England; as it seems, at all events, expedient that he should not be suffered to remain in this Country.[112]

Such incidents tended to happen in phases, and often, inevitably, in conjunction with periods of domestic and agrarian unrest.

On occasion, even the absence of a specific threat from France was a cause for alarm. In early 1808, Littlehales was fielding concerned communications from the Chancellor, Lord Redesdale, who feared the prospect of British success in Portugal and Spain might spur an Irish insurrection. 'The malcontents there may' Redesdale wrote, 'be so desperate having lost

[109] Bantry to Littlehales, 31 Mar. 1803 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[110] Bushe to Littlehales, Dec. [no date] 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[111] Littlehales to Beckett, 6 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[112] Littlehales to Beckett, 6 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

all hope of French assistance as to try their own strength. I think therefore Government cannot be too watchful.'[113]

Given the scale of these issues, it seems remarkable, in hindsight, that discussions around reducing the forces of law and order were even contemplated. Such discussions highlight both a lack of understanding of the Irish situation by London, but also the degree to which external (rather than internal) threats drove such discussions. In London's mind, the removal of regular forces in support of the war effort was a necessary evil, and one whose consequences were lessened by the presence of militia and yeomanry forces. This lack of understanding was critical in exacerbating what was already a challenging situation, and it manifested in several ways.

Firstly, and most obviously, there was the question, alluded to above of resourcing. The regular army grew exponentially in scale during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and this created a demand for recruits from Ireland but also for regular forces to be transported from Ireland in support of the war effort. As a result, the most professional and expert force available in the country tended to be no larger than the militia and often smaller, while being dwarfed by the scale of the yeomanry. It was constantly threatened by the need to remove soldiers to prosecute the war on the continent and man the permanent garrisons across the breadth of the Empire.[114] Conversely, the Yeomanry became very much the favoured child of the post-union Dublin Executive and saw increased support from government both in Dublin and London. By late 1803, the force stood at 65,000 strong, growing to nearly 80,000 strong by 1810. [115] The militia figures were smaller and were in a constant state of flux, never dropping below 10,000 but never growing beyond 30,000

[113] Redesdale to Littlehales, 22 July 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers 2004/66/212).
[114] Kevin Linch, 'The recruitment of the British Army 1807-1815', pp 57-58.
[115] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 116.

men.[116] Furthermore this flux was exacerbated by the tendency for up to 5,000 militiamen a year to leave the force to join the regular army.[117] As noted by Deery, Ireland contributed proportionately more men than almost any other region in the United Kingdom to the regular forces, and the militia quickly became a significant channel for this.[118] The second issue was the perennial lack of consistency in approach from both London and Dublin Castle. This is harder to quantify but is arguably more important.

The ill-defined post-union military establishment in Ireland offered little clarity on how the various forces were to be managed, with the commander of the forces in Ireland reporting to the lord lieutenant, who answered to the home secretary, *and* to the military hierarchy based at Horse Guards in London, who answered to the duke of York as commander-in-chief. Such a situation ensured a role for civil government in military matters, which was important, but left a lot open to interpretation and to positive personal relations between all key actors, which was not always a given. This lack of clarity, which Littlehales and Hardwicke encountered (and to an extent exploited) in the immediate aftermath of the union was the pre-eminent issue, and there was a clear concern on their part that the role of lord lieutenant might be 'reduced to a mere superintendent of police.'[119] This was resolved and by 1802 the role of both actors was clear, at least in relation to the yeomanry and militia. Hardwicke had retained patronage, which gave him a critical tool to mollify the concerns of the Ascendancy and reiterate the importance of the lord lieutenant function. Littlehales had 'superintendence direction and management' of Yeomanry, *except* when they were called out on permanent duty'.[120] With the militia, things were less clear, with the lord lieutenant

[116] Kenneth Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland from the restoration to the Act of Union' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1981), p. 149.
[117] Bartlett, 'Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars', p. 75.
[118] James Deery, 'The contribution of the Irish soldier to Wellington's Peninsula army, 1808-1814', p 6.
[119] 'Comments by Lord Hardwicke on paper relative to situation of Lord Lieutenant sent by Lord Pelham to Colonel Littlehales' (T.N.A., P.R.O. 30/9/136).
[120] 'Synopsis or Memoranda of the Business of the Yeomanry Office.' undated (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

having exclusive 'superintendence' when regiments were called to serve on a full-time basis. This point is of importance, as it allowed the lord lieutenant to retain some control over a sizeable military body at a time when his powers of patronage had been reduced by both the tenets of the Act of Union, but also by the fulfilment of the legacy of pre-union patronage obligations. Littlehales had a clearly defined role in drafting the relevant legislation to embody the force as well as in matters relating to its financing and promotions, which required direct engagement with the colonels of the militia brigades.[121] The force was, however, more closely integrated with the regular army than the Yeomanry, and where Littlehales managed a dedicated 'Yeomanry Office' no such demarcation was given to the militia. This integration meant that Littlehales frequently communicated with senior military figures on matters relating to both regular forces and militia at once.

Regarding the army, Littlehales' department had an extensive role, but it was administrative and supportive, rather than operational. This was made explicit in a memorandum which was drawn up in 1804 to explain how Littlehales' office interacted with others. Under the heading 'Commander of the Forces in Ireland' the memorandum pointedly noted that 'in all measures that require the immediate interference or sanction of Government that are productive of expence or that in any respect materially alter the Military System, the Lord Lieutenant's pleasure is communicated thence thro the medium of the War Office.'[122] This was clearly an attempt to delineate Littlehales' role, and to ensure that there was one agreed channel for military matters to be conveyed between lord lieutenant and Kilmainham. Balancing the demands of policing, mediated through three very different forces, each of which required him to operate in a different manner, would occupy much of Littlehales' time as military under-secretary. Much of the activity and communication between Dublin Castle,

[121] 'Synopsis or Memoranda of the Relative Duties of the Irish War Office with various Departments in England and Ireland' undated (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[122] Unattributed letter, 24 Dec. 1804 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Kilmainham and London was routine, involving discussion around matters such as finances, foraging subventions, housing of troops and the purchase or arms and uniforms. On occasion, however, unrest would escalate to a level where all key actors would need to be involved and there are several examples which highlight both the limitations of Littlehales' role, as well occasions when he was able to work at his most effective. Tellingly, in each incident, the involvement of others in both military and civil roles acted as either an enabler or impediment, offering insight into the tensions inherent in the structure of the post-union government.

Emmet's rebellion

The failings of the multifaceted approach to policing were never more apparent than during Emmet's rebellion in 1803. While little more than an urban skirmish, this episode has assumed a near mythical status, due in no small part to the charisma of its leader and his famous speech from the dock, and has been the subject of considerable historical analysis, particularly at the time of its bicentenary.[123] More relevant to this study is the fact that a relatively minor incident in Dublin, which did not elicit nationwide support, constituted a genuine law and order risk, due to the state of policing at the time and the fractured system of command which existed between Dublin Castle and Kilmainham. That this was exacerbated by the complacency of various figures (and Littlehales cannot be held as without blame) is true, but the reality is that the ability of authorities to respond to such an event was severely impeded by the structure of military governance.

While the events of the rebellion, which saw relatively minor disturbances in Kildare and an evening of carnage in Dublin involving several hundred insurgents on 23 July 1803, are well known, an examination of the role of Littlehales is illuminating. As military under-

[123] See for example *Robert Emmet: a life* (Dublin, 2002) by Patrick M. Geoghegan and *Robert Emmet and the Rising of 1803* (Dublin, 2003) by Ruan O Donnell.

secretary his ability to influence the militia and yeomanry was considerable and in theory these two forces would complement the regular army. However, the militia, having been effectively on hiatus during the Peace of Amiens were a skeletal force and, having agreed as much with Hardwicke, Littlehales attempted to strengthen the Yeomanry in early July. His attempts met with mixed success.[124] At the same time General Fox was directing the Army and there is very little evidence that he did so in concert with Dublin Castle.[125] Indeed, by the time Fox was summoned to the Castle on the day of the rebellion, once it was clear that Hardwicke, Marsden and Littlehales needed a degree of cooperation from the Commander of the Forces, the structural failing of the Act of Union had already restricted the ability of all involved to prepare for the conflict which they believed was coming. The scale of any potential turmoil remained unclear, with both Hardwicke and Fox leaving the Castle for viceregal lodge and Kilmainham respectively. As the evening wore on, Littlehales worked in concert with Marsden in a desperate but largely unsuccessful attempt to get letters to senior military commanders.[126] Littlehales did manage to reach the lord lieutenant in the Viceregal Lodge, sending a letter at eleven pm in which he warned that 'a very serious degree of insurrection' had arisen which was 'beyond what was calculated upon.'[127] For all involved in the Dublin civil and military administration, the rebellion represented a breakdown in operations. Who specifically would be tainted with such failure became the pressing political question in the months that followed. Although the surviving papers reveal relatively little of his role during the rebellion itself, they do allow for an examination of the aftermath.

While the government in its entirety was tarnished by the rebellion, blame fell mainly on Littlehales' colleague Alexander Marsden, the civil under-secretary. To an extent, this was warranted: George Atkinson, a Justice of the government, who, writing, with some chagrin to

[124] State of the Yeomanry Corps, Mar. 1803 (T.N.A., H.O. 100/111/33).
[125] O Donnell, *Robert Emmet and the Rising of 1803*, p. 53.
[126] Marsden to Hardwicke, Sept 1803 (N.A.I., Rebellion Papers 620/11/131/2)
[127] Littlehales to Hardwicke, 23 July 1803 (T.N.A., H.O., 100/112/127).

government some years later, noted that in 1803 he had advised Marsden 'of the night on which it [Emmet's rebellion] would take place' and made clear his views on Marsden's 'negligence and 'inattention'.[128] A more prominent and voluble voice of castigation came from John Foster, former MP, anti-unionist and determined opponent of government, who concurred with Atkinson, noting that government had ignored 'every information which poured in on them'.[129] While Marsden was culpable, he had attempted to prevail on both Fox and Hardwicke to move with greater alacrity – but his argument had not been carried. However, given that many of the policing failures related to the yeomanry, it follows that there were issues relating to both Littlehales and the military command in Kilmainham. The uprising itself, and its immediate aftermath, highlighted a variety of problems as regards the command structures of the yeomanry force, which experienced mixed fortunes at best. This was due in no small part to the prevarication evident among many of the key figures. A pertinent example of this was that martial law was not declared, a fact that meant that the force could only act under control of the civil authority.[130] There is an irony here in that retention of control of the yeomanry force had been a central tenet of the Hardwicke and Littlehales policy since the union, but the retention of control required them to either exercise this control or cede as appropriate to the military. The decision not to introduce martial law epitomised the lack of clarity permeating the upper echelons of government, but it was not exclusively a failing of the civil powers; it was undoubtedly exacerbated by the lassitude of the commander-in-chief, General Fox, who upon leaving Dublin Castle at approximately 4.30 pm on the day of the rebellion issued no further orders to his staff.[131] In Dublin Castle, Marsden, the civil under-secretary, deemed it prudent to delay calling the Yeomanry Corps to

[128] *Burke's Irish Family Records:* Genealogical Histories of Notable Irish Families. 5th (Buckingham, 2007), p. 39, Atkinson to Wellesley, 20 Jan. 1809 (Armagh County Museum ARMCM.9.2014.235).
[129] Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: a life*, p. 189.
[130] Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: a life*, p. 168.
[131] Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: a life*, p. 168.

assemble in case it might inadvertently raise further alarm. This action, however, was compromised by the fact that General Fox, in a classic example of the lack of coherence between Dublin Castle and Kilmainham, had previously confiscated the arms of the Dublin Yeomanry and attempts to retrieve them descended into farce. [132] The periodic discord between Dublin Castle and Kilmainham, which had previously manifested primarily through written communication, here yielded a tangible and dangerous outcome and left the authorities poorly prepared to deal with any escalation of the uprising. Realistically, had Emmet met with more success, the authorities would have been ill equipped to respond and a rising which was nowhere near the scale of 1798 would have become a genuine threat to the security of Dublin at least.

While Littlehales may not have been as culpable as others, his role was initially targeted, with Cobbett's *Weekly Registry* excoriating both him and Marsden, noting 'It will further appear that Marsden the civil secretary dismissed all his office clerks to sleep in the country, and that his military secretary Sir Ed. Baker Littlehales gave a large carousing dinner in the Castle.'[133] Here though, the language is pointed, with a suggestion that Marsden was in some way responsible for Littlehales as 'his' secretary. More broadly, Cobbett was overt in determining that this was a failing of civil government, going so far as to note that an inquiry was needed 'all fixing censure on Lord Hardwicke, all exculpating General Fox.'[134] By this stage of his career William Cobbett had adopted a broadly anti-government position in his writing, so such a view was not entirely surprising.[135]

Why then did the blame end up with Marsden? Perhaps because it was seen as a failure of policing, in the civil arena, rather than a military breakdown. Wickham, the chief

[132] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 192.
[133] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register,* 29 Oct. 1803.
[134] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register,* 29 Oct. 1803.
[135] Ian Dyck, 'William Cobbett' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) available at https://doi-org.may.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5734

secretary had been in London and, while the King was kind in his view that 'there had been no remissness whatever on the part of the Irish government', it was clear that blame had to land somewhere. Marsden, a longstanding ally of Cooke, might have made the most convenient scapegoat, and this fact coupled with Littlehales' close links to Hardwicke may have ensured that blame rested away from the military under-secretary. Writing from England, Cornwallis noted 'I have only received a few lines from Littlehales not saying so much as is stated in the newspapers. I am vexed about my friend Marsden who will undoubtedly be blamed for not having better channels of intelligence'.[136] The other victim was the Commander of the Forces, General Fox, whose lassitude was perhaps the key reason for the confusion which reigned and for the degree of disruption the 'insurrection' actually achieved.[137]

In time, through the assiduous work of Wickham, the chief secretary, Hardwicke was able to use the rebellion as an opportunity to reiterate the need for a refined security and military outlook. If Emmet's failed revolt showed anything, it was that the issues which had bedevilled Ireland before the union had not been solved by the change in government and that dissatisfaction in both urban and rural areas remained. Most of the unrest which would follow was linked to agrarian issues rather than political, but what Emmet's rebellion provided was clear evidence that how the government addressed such issues was not satisfactory, lacking the coordination needed in such a multi-faceted structure. One of the paradoxes of the rebellion is that, despite the clear accusations of lack of preparedness aimed at the government, it served to reaffirm the need for some manner of civil and military government in Dublin – as opposed to at a remove in London.[138] The necessity of harmony between civil and military leaders was equally confirmed and Littlehales continued to operate

[136] Cornwallis to Ross, 1 Aug. 1803 in Charles Ross (ed.) *Correspondence of Charles First Marquis Cornwallis* (3 vols, London, 1859), iii, p. 498.
[137] Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: a life*, p. 168.
[138] Michael Durey, 'When Great men fall out' in *Parliamentary History* vol. xxv, pt 3 p. 346.

as a nexus between the two. Ultimately, the rebellion strengthened the role of the civil government, with Fox soon being replaced as Commander of the Forces by Lord Cathcart, who would prove to be a more amenable character. For Littlehales, despite the slight damage to his reputation, a clear outcome was the strengthening of the reputation of the Yeomanry in particular, which Foster and others noted might well have saved the kingdom.[139] However as his tenure continued, it would become evident that most policing matters would occur not in Dublin, but in the country.

The duke of Bedford in the west of Ireland, 1806

In 1806, a series of incidents in the west of Ireland alarmed Dublin Castle, and the new lord lieutenant, the duke of Bedford, in particular. Bedford was not short of examples, which ranged from the pursuit and capture of 'banditti' in Sligo, through to a government informer being tortured, by carding, by rioters in the same county.[140] More generally however, the government received widespread if less specific reports of alarm. In some regards this was not new, with Mayo in particular having a lingering vestige of rancour lasting even after the failure of Emmet's rebellion.[141] Indeed Littlehales and others had been receiving correspondence from senior figures in Mayo for some years which suggested a link between unrest and smuggling, but also a strong feeling of support for the remaining rebels from 1798. In 1803, the largest landowner in Connemara, Richard Martin, had written to Littlehales in some alarm to inform the under-secretary that one of his larger tenants often 'entertained the chiefs of the Mayo rebels in his house both during and since the rebellion.'[142]

During the lord-lieutenancy of the earl of Hardwicke such reports did not prompt great action. But where Hardwicke, concerned primarily with implementing the union, had

[139] Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: a life*, p. 189.
[140] Bedford to Elliot, 16 Sept. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 190.
[141] Patterson, 'Republicanism, agrarianism and banditry in the west of Ireland, 1798-1803', p. 37.
[142] Martin to Littlehales, 1803 (N.A.I., Rebellion Papers 620/64/30).

been somewhat passive in his consideration of such reports of unrest, Bedford was much more concerned. In part, such alarm was undoubtedly linked to his very recent appointment as lord lieutenant, but he was also concerned by the diminution in army numbers which was occurring. Despite having only newly arrived in Ireland, Bedford had grasped the challenge posed by a relatively passive body of magistrates, claiming to the new civil under-secretary William Eliot that 'nothing shall be omitted on my part to rouse the magistrates to activity and a sense of their duty.'[143] Littlehales, however, had by now spent some years receiving notice of unrest from various parts of the country and did not share the lord lieutenant's alarm.[144] His calm was echoed by that of his colleague, James Trail, the then civil under-secretary, who had a role in policing and also in the Secret Service, and who filtered many of the reports of unrest which were transmitted to the Castle. What was notable in this situation was that the standard modus operandi of information arriving at the Castle and being sifted and considered before a course of action was recommended and enacted was contravened by the actions of the new lord lieutenant. Frustrated at the lack of certainty in the reports he was receiving and wanting to stimulate the magistrates to 'activity and exertion' Bedford set off to Mayo in early October.[145] He visited Limerick initially, then made his way north through Galway, Mayo and Sligo, where there were widespread, if sporadic disturbances. Robberies and agrarian violence were noted in a range of areas such as Limerick City, and north to Ballinasloe. That these were troubled areas is suggested by the comments of *Finn's Leinster Journal* which noted 'that these counties are in a most alarming situation in consequences of the proceedings of the peasantry.'[146] As O'Reilly has shown, Bedford was minded to follow a path of conciliation, but being present, not just at the point of unrest, but among the alarmed

[143] Bedford to Eliot, 16 Oct. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 228.
[144] Sean O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union: the politics of implementation in Ireland 1801–1815' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2014), p. 269.
[145] Bedford to Elliot, 27 Sept. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), pp 203-204.
[146] *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 15 Oct. 1806.

ascendancy classes seems to have catalysed a sense of panic which might not have manifested had he remained in Dublin.[147] It was notable also that, despite being in the region, he struggled to get clear information, not just from the gentry and magistracy, but also from the military command on the ground. Bedford was shrewd enough to appreciate that the 'loose and unauthenticated' information which was coming his way could not be treated as gospel and this point was reiterated to him by various senior figures including Littlehales, Trail and the attorney General William Plunkett.[148] However, with the lord lieutenant being close to some of the areas of unrest, there was a general struggle to distil the information in a way that might lead to clear action.

It has been noted that such episodes of unrest were not necessarily 'political' but were a reflection of a disparate series of grievances related to the poverty of rural life.[149] But, as always, there was concern for the government that external forces might be involved. Efforts to determine if this was the case were typically undermined by the variance in reports from different sources and, as Connolly has observed, the was a risk that members of the administration would 'invest rural protest with an ulterior political motive.'[150] It is to Bedford's credit that he was prepared to visit the country and his stated view that it was important to adopt 'every other means' before coercion would have chimed with Littlehales, who had learned the virtue of avoiding precipitate action from both Cornwallis and Hardwicke.[151] But throughout the extended period of unrest, Littlehales continued to be phlegmatic and, unusually for him, loathe to proceed as directed by his superior.[152] His views were echoed by commentators in newspapers such as *Finns Leinster Journal*, which was

[147] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 270.
[148] Bedford to Elliot, 23 Sept. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 201.
[149] D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth century Ireland: the search for stability* (Dublin, 2005, p. 25.
[150] S.J Connolly, 'Aftermath and Adjustment' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, v: Ireland under the Union, 1801–1870* (Oxford, 1989), p. 18.
[151] Bedford to Trail, 16 Oct. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 225.
[152] Littlehales to Bedford, 6 Oct. 1806 (BEA 6D-Ireland-2-4).

quick to suggest that reports were 'exaggerated.'[153] Other newspapers corroborated this view, with the *Freeman's Journal* referring to 'some acts of turbulence which have existed for a short period of time in the Counties of Sligo, Mayo etc' but qualifying this with the assertion that overall the country offered a 'peaceable and tranquil demeanour.'[154]

On his travels Bedford had developed a friendship with Denis Browne, Marquis of Sligo and consulted heavily with him and his brother Lord Sligo on the unrest in Connacht. Browne in particular was a long-standing proponent of military coercion in the region.[155] Despite their reports lacking detail, Bedford was more supportive of their attempts to manage the unrest in the west and directed that they should have military support and money from the Secret Service Fund, which government used for spying and similar activities.[156] Why he did this can only be a matter for speculation, but it is likely that Bedford sought to form alliances with strong members of the gentry and there may have been genuine admiration, with the lord lieutenant noting 'Lord Sligo and Mr. Browne have certainly been active in keeping the disturbances from spreading in their part of the country, and with great success.'[157] This alteration in approach caused as many problems as it solved, however. Trail, the civil under-secretary was working in concert with Littlehales on verifying the reports which the lord lieutenant was sending to them, while having to deal with the sensitivities of the Browne family who had successfully courted Bedford and were quick to press their concerns, valid or not to him. In September, Trail received a letter from Sligo who was clearly put out by the lack of consultation from the local senior military figure General Dunne. Rather than reflecting on the role of all involved and considering whether his own actions were exacerbating matters, the lord lieutenant's instinct was to ask his military under-secretary to

[153] *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 15 Oct. 1806.
[154] *Freeman's Journal,* 2 Dec. 1806.
[155] James Quinn, 'Browne, Denis (1763-1828)', in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/browne-denis-a1021
[156] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 267.
[157] Bedford to Trail, 16 Oct. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 225.

intervene. In a letter of 20 September 1806, he asked Littlehales to raise it discretely with Dunne, offering the rationale that 'sure I am that if the resident gentry & magistracy are not disposed to act cordially and zealously with the present officer in whom the force now complies little hope of a restitution of tranquillity is to be indulged.'[158] As an example of the soft power which Littlehales possessed this is illustrative, but an event immediately following highlighted just how murky the network of relationships he operated in was. By early October, Bedford had agreed to furnish Littlehales' brother with 'the living of Ballyadams' – something which greatly pleased Littlehales.[159] It is hard to see how even a character as proper as Littlehales could maintain objectivity in his dealings with the lord lieutenant in light of this.

By early November, Bedford was still vexed by matters of unrest but again seemed loath to interrogate the reports he was receiving to ensure they were accurate. Noting reports from local gentry of unrest which was of 'increasing magnitude', he suggested to Littlehales that 'a permanent and general rather than a temporary and partial remedy to the unsatisfactory and lawless state of Connemara is worthy for attentive assessment.'[160] Though laudable, this was naïve, and while there is no record of Littlehales' reply the limitations on troops, coupled with the fact that Littlehales had frequently rebuffed requests from the Browne family for military aid, ensured that there was no immediate solution of this sort. Many years later, Littlehales had reason to query Charles Bushe, Solicitor General at the time, on the various incidents, and Bushe's recollection confirms that no special measures had been implemented.[161]

While the activity of the lord lieutenant in travelling to affected areas undoubtedly had a pacifying and supportive effect, the reality was that the view of his under-secretaries

[158] Bedford to Littlehales, 20 Sept. 1806 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/243).
[159] Littlehales to Bedford, 9 Oct. 1806 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/244).
[160] Bedford to Littlehales, 30 Nov. 1806 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/248).
[161] Bushe to Littlehales, 9 Mar. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

was right, and the unrest diminished as autumn progressed. Perhaps most instructive to Littlehales was the lesson that attaining genuinely credible information from the locations of unrest remained of critical importance in terms of informing appropriate and proportionate actions. As it transpired, Bedford appeared to learn this lesson too, and subsequent reports of unrest saw him give clear directions to Littlehales with a stated reluctance to 'rely too implicitly' on reports which were given to him.[162] He had clearly learned the lesson of a coherent approach and he expressly directed Littlehales to confer with senior military figures.[163] Given the heterogeneous array of sources ranging from local officials, regional gentry and the military obtaining and acting on credible information was no small endeavour for Littlehales, but he would show how well he had learned this lesson two years later.

Munster 1808

In late summer 1808, word reached Dublin Castle of disturbances ranging across Kerry and Limerick, with reports of large groups of well-armed insurgents destroying property and livestock and threatening the gentry.[164] Disturbances linked to agrarian violence and outrage were not uncommon and the government was always aware of the potential for such activity to be linked to revolution – as Galen Broker has noted 'Almost every winter brought a fresh series of incidents which the government anxiously investigated for signs of 'insurrectionary activity of a political nature'.[165] That said, Munster had retained a reputation for agrarian unrest having a more politicised colour and this coupled with the fact that unrest was taking place during the summer, suggested that a comprehensive response was required.[166] Writing to John Beckett, under-secretary in the Home Department in London, on the evening of 27 August 1808, Littlehales noted that he had already sent 'letters to Lord Harrington the

[162] Bedford to Littlehales, 11 Apr. 1807 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/253).
[163] Bedford to Littlehales, 11 Apr. 1807 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/253).
[164] Bushe to Littlehales, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[165] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 363.
[166] Patterson, *In the Wake of the Great Rebellion*, p. 85.

General Officer commanding in that district, Yeomanry Brigade Majors and the Militia General as to the previous steps which it appears necessary to adopt towards the suppression of these outrages and the punishment of the offenders'.[167] Littlehales further observed that he had communicated with Brigadier-General Lee in Limerick requesting the 'calling out and placing on permanent duty such portion of the Yeomanry Force as may be considered necessary'.[168]

Writing again to Lee, on August 27, Littlehales confirmed that two corps of yeomanry should be placed on permanent duty, noting that it may be necessary to do more. Critically, although he adverted to the role of both Brigadier Lee and indeed the Commander of the Forces (which was proper, as once the yeomanry were placed on permanent duty, they reported to military command), he also noted the need for the exercise of the 'forces under your command' to be undertaken 'in cooperation with the magistracy.' More specifically, he asked Lee to confer at once with the Chief Baron and other significant figures in the locality as a matter of urgency. In addition to regular forces, there was a logic in empowering the yeomanry in such a scenario, as they belonged to the same class as the magistracy. But there was a risk also – the magistracy were notorious for over exaggerating the dangers evident in their communities and the yeomanry, unlike the militia acted in their general region.[169]

This was not a new problem for Littlehales and in every communication to Lee he reiterated the need to acquire clear evidence of the level of outrage. In this he clearly had learned how often reports, however well intentioned, tended to be exaggerated by the local gentry. But ascertaining the veracity of such reports was critical; in theory, the magistrates, as traditional leaders of the community, should have been able to work to moderate any

[167] Littlehales to Beckett, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[168] Littlehales to Beckett, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[169] Littlehales to Lee, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

disturbance in their communities and a clear knowledge of facts could only encourage this.[170] Achieving this degree of cooperation was a perennial challenge for the government and for Littlehales there were two related and somewhat oppositional issues. First, as noted earlier, the magistracy system was ill-suited to the Ireland of the time: magistrates were fewer in number than ideal, and they were expected to quell outrage while continuing to live among those who had been suppressed. Secondly, however was the fact that the magistracy had undoubted peacekeeping value, with the involvement of influential local persons being seen as essential to the success and credibility of any policing activity involving the regulars, the militia, and critically the yeomanry.

Thus, the challenge was always one of working with but not *for* the local magistrates and some years later Littlehales would assist Robert Peel as chief secretary in the creation of the Peace Preservation Force, with a view to achieving this. However, even at this juncture the Castle was acutely aware of the tendency for outrages to be exaggerated. One of the reasons for this was that, should the reported disturbance in an area be deemed sufficiently serious, government could enable the Insurrection Act (1807) which would restrict civil liberties and allow for the quick and effective restoration of tranquillity. An unforeseen side effect, however, was that using the act allowed the magistrates to effectively evade their responsibilities.[171] The legislation, while well intentioned, placed the majority of responsibility for the restoration of peace on the government in Dublin, as well as clearly imposing the cost of such measures on 'the Lord Lieutenant or other Chief Governor or Governors of Ireland'.[172]

Such an ambiguous situation could only be challenging to government and consequently a request from Littlehales to Lee to move beyond the 'communication of

[170] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 365.
[171] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 367.
[172] 47 GEO III, c 13, xxxvi, Insurrections Act, 1807.

Sentiments and Opinions, however respectable' and to 'to obtain detailed information upon this important subject, and to discover the origin, nature and extent of the Evil, transmitting as far as practicable, a detail of all the particulars, for His Graces consideration with your opinions thereupon' was both sensible and not unusual.[173] At the same time, Littlehales sent word to Charles Bushe, the Solicitor General, who was already in Munster, again noting that 'though every attention is due, and has as you will perceive been paid, to the highly respectable opinions which you have quoted, nevertheless there is no specification of Facts, no Depositions, no Information which can lead Government to the vigorous adoption of measures which may remedy the Evil.' Bushe was requested to try to ascertain more detail about the disturbances and, in conjunction with Lee and the Chief Baron, 'to suggest the most effectual mode of suppressing them'[174]

The response to this was telling. By 1 September, further correspondence between Littlehales and Bushe confirmed that both he and General Lee were of the opinion that a combination of regular troops and detachments of yeomanry 'are fully sufficient to suppress the Outrages and restore tranquillity *if the Magistrates will only act with the Necessary Vigour'*.[175] This theme continued with Littlehales noting to his colleague Beckett, under-secretary in London, that requests for putting the Insurrection Act into force in the region should be considered premature and would therefore not be heeded. Again, the role of the magistracy is apparent, with Littlehales noting 'a disposition to inactivity and supineness'.[176] Only a few days later however, by September 6, Littlehales was more confident, and he suggested to Beckett that 'the measures taken by the Commanding Officer of the District / in

[173] Littlehales to Lee, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[174] Littlehales to Bushe, 27 Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[175] Littlehales to Bushe, 1 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[176] Littlehales to Beckett, 3 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

concert with the Chief Baron / seem calculated to give a speedy and effectual check to them, and with the aid of the Magistracy to restore tranquillity to that part of the Country'.[177]

The question of ascertaining the exact details of the disturbances was not left exclusively to 'official' persons. Littlehales had also communicated with Robert Day, a local politician and judge (and presumably a figure trusted by the Castle) with a view to obtaining an impartial opinion. In a letter of September 14, Day offered considerable detail to Littlehales and noted that there appeared to be a political aspect to these events, with gatherings seeing the administering of oaths before theft and burning of houses. Outlining the scale of destruction, Day informed Littlehales that the 'insurgents' as he termed them:

> break open Houses for guns and powder and flog such as presume to dispute their mandate, to burn houses and hough cattle, and to some four or five assassinations. Never was the system of terror caused to a greater length.[178]

Day further noted that he had been zealous in reminding the magistracy of their duty and 'exhorting them to shake off that indolence and temper' which he saw as a direct cause of the outrages, but he was not optimistic with much of the area gripped by the 'terror of immediate destruction.'[179] Day's suggestions for how to address the current problems did not differ substantially from those of Lee or Bushe, but he gave particular prominence to the Yeomanry noting that they 'have always been found particularly efficient in seasons of commotion' and that those corps that had been called out were proving effective in the suppression of outrages.[180]

Bushe, the Solicitor General had met with Day during his trip to Munster, and he attributed this particular episode of unrest to the acquittal of 'insurgents' at a recent assize, which he informed Littlehales, came about due to the juries being either 'influenced by terror

[177] Littlehales to Beckett, 6 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[178] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[179] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[180] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

or worse motives.'[181] This was likely linked to the flogging of one Jame Rice who had been convicted of being a Whiteboy at the previous court assizes.[182] Bushe unequivocally laid the blame for this incident and the subsequent uproar at the feet of the local magistrates who he considered 'almost universally inactive.'[183] Having conferred with Day, as well as Day's nephew the high sheriff and various military figures, Bushe was clear that the trouble would spread and again was unambiguous in his assessment that the troublemakers took 'Greater encouragement derived from the indolence of the greater part of the Magistrates and resident Gentlemen; their torpor is most shameful -they seem to have no sense of public duty'[184] He was not alone in this view; the *Freeman's Journal*, which reported Rice's flogging, called on the local magistrates 'for a vigorous and wise exertion of that power with which the law has vested them' reasoning that if they did so 're-establishment of the tranquillity of this country would most undoubtedly follow.' [185]

The proposal to place the Yeomanry on permanent duty was not a speculative one and Bushe was keen to position it as a proven first step, noting that 'this was the first measure that was attended with effect in Connaught when alarmingly circumstanced in 1806 and 1807.'[186] He noted that the Yeomanry in particular was 'peculiarly adapted' to such service due to the composition of the force. Engaging the Yeomanry, he felt, would act as a 'rallying point' to the upper and middle classes 'whose present inactivity is to be attributed to fear' and, as a consequence of the support of the Yeomanry, 'might acquire confidence and act a different part.' [187] In a few lines Bushe laid out the merits of the Yeomanry as a policing force and notably used the precedent of Connaught two years before to show how this action might

[181] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[182] *Freeman's Journal*, 15 Sept. 1808.
[183] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).
[184] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).
[185] *Freeman's Journal*, 15 Sept. 1808.
[186] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).
[187] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).

prove effectual. Littlehales was of like mind, and the force was placed on duty shortly after. However, a contingency was also planned, should the local magistracy not become more active, which was to bring in magistrates from outside the region who were 'experienced in police business' to act in conjunction with the Insurrection Act. Bushe was clear to suggest this as a step which should only be taken if the prior actions failed. Importantly, Bushe also reassured Littlehales (and by extension the lord lieutenant) that he considered such disturbances, while challenging, to be a completely local affair and not subject to 'foreign interference'.[188] Such disturbances, he suggested, 'will not be found to be deeper than the very miserable and abject distress of the common people in most parts of the country.'[189]

The situation in Munster was a challenging one and took time to address. At the time, the chief secretary Sir Arthur Wellesley was abroad although Littlehales made sure to keep him informed via letter and memorandum. How much time Wellesley, in Portugal had to reflect on what Littlehales informed him constituted 'a system of terror' can only be speculated on, but his absence may have enabled a greater degree of initiative from the normally deferential under-secretary.[190] In Wellesley's absence, Littlehales corresponded directly with Beckett, who, who was Acting chief secretary in the Home Department in London and as such had a direct link to Lord Hawkesbury, the home secretary. Both officials were left in no doubt of the commitment in Dublin that 'every attention shall be paid to the important object of restoring tranquillity.'[191] Such initiative was in any case necessary, as relying on direction from London resulted in considerable delays. Letters from Jenkinson, the under-secretary in London were frequent, but beyond a request that Lord Hawkesbury, the

[188] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).
[189] Bushe to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/276).
[190] Littlehales to Wellesley, 1 Dec. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[191] Littlehales to Beckett, 1 Sept. 1801 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

home secretary 'be informed as regularly as possible' there was little further direction that could be given.[192]

Things did not improve immediately, and early October saw a local gentleman, David Murphy attacked with clubs and ultimately killed by a pistol. This murder was reported by newspapers as being Whiteboy related.[193] Reports in newspapers noted further attacks on people and property throughout October and into November.[194] With the situation unresolved and with the concurrence of the lord lieutenant and chief secretary it was decided to send two magistrates to the disturbed region, as mooted by Bushe several months earlier. Significant figures such as Bushe, Day and the High Sheriff continued to place the blame on the local magistracy until well into the winter, a view which chimed with that expressed by the senior military figures such as Brigadier General Lee. Littlehales could not fail to acknowledge this and, writing to Jenkinson in London, noted the disdain among such characters for the 'ineptness and pusillanimity of the generality of magistrates.'[195] He lost no opportunity to reaffirm the merits of the plan (which he was central to) of sending magistrates from outside the disturbed area. Towards the end of the year Wellesley was taking a more proactive stance and there was agreement in Dublin Castle that an escalation in response was not required and, critically, that the Insurrection Act should not be put into force, despite the wishes of the local gentry.[196] Ultimately the unrest would diminish and revert to the 'normal', if troublesome, sporadic disputes.

This type of incident can be seen as an exemplar of the peacekeeping challenge faced by the government in Ireland at the time, although, as noted earlier, such events tended to

[192] Jenkinson to Littlehales, 18 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/288).
[193] *Belfast News-Letter,* 14 Oct. 1808.
[194] See as an example reports of hay and oat burning, *Dublin Journal*, 11 Oct. 1808, and attacks on yeomanry and private persons, *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 26 Nov. 1808.
[195] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 23 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/294).
[196] Littlehales to Beckett, 3 Sept. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

occur during winter. The response of government is telling for several reasons. First, the central role of the local gentry cannot be overstated: as Day had noted, the presence of 'men of influence and authority … would operate in a very powerful manner'.[197] By the same token, the absence of this leadership was contributing directly to further disturbance. This was not mere supposition; Major General Mackenzie writing to the lord lieutenant was explicit in noting that 'apathy and want of energy … amongst the gentlemen residing in the country' was a key contributor to 'most of the evil and outrage which took place'.[198] For Mackenzie, these disruptions had a clear potential to evolve into something more than just rural disturbance and in the same letter he was quick to impress on the lord lieutenant that such incidences would serve to distract the military with the consequence of 'no security against the disaffected in the event of an enemy's landing amongst us.'[199] While many took the view that victory at Trafalgar in late 1805 had greatly reduced the risk of invasion, London and Dublin remained concerned. In 1806, the newly installed lord lieutenant, the duke of Bedford had continued to express concerns, similar to those earlier articulated by Hardwicke, about the threat of invasion and the danger of reducing the force available in Ireland. In a letter to the home secretary in London, he expressed concern at the 'considerable diminution' of the force and stressed that 'the important victory of Trafalgar' should not lead to complacency as, in his view, Napoleon would 'never cease to direct his hostile and ambitious views to this venerable part of the British empire.'[200] Such views would undoubtedly have been informed by discussion with Littlehales and no doubt reflected the under-secretary's caution.

Secondly, the reluctance of government to use the Insurrection Act suggests that Dublin Castle was concerned that using the regular military in such activity would escalate

[197] Day to Littlehales, 14 Sept. 1808. (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[198] Mackenzie to Richmond, 1 Oct. 1807 (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS 59/161).
[199] Mackenzie to Richmond, 1 Oct. 1807 (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS 59/161).
[200] Bedford to Spencer, 18 Apr. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 8-9.

the situation, but also that Littlehales and others agreed with Day's opinion regarding the efficacy of the yeomanry force in restoring order to the region. As noted earlier, calling out the yeomanry on permanent duty effectively involved the Castle ceding a certain amount of responsibility to the Commander of the Forces, an action which might have caused consternation a few years earlier, but which seems to have been acceptable by 1808. The importance of the Yeomanry in Munster at this time is a significant point and arguably runs counter to the established narrative of the force, which suggests that, due to relatively low numbers, their effectiveness was limited outside of Ulster. As an example, the yeomanry force in Kerry, in 1803, totalled some 793 persons, climbing to 1223 by 1810. [201] Perhaps Kerry was unusual in its ability to incorporate the Yeomanry in this way, as the figure quoted for 1803 was almost exclusively Catholic.[202] Beyond their exact composition, however, it was evident that the Yeomanry were seen to have a clear role in policing unrest. This was understood by the civil government, and by the senior commanders in Dublin, although they never fully lost their aversion to the force. However, by 1808 there was clear appreciation of the merits of the force among military figures on the ground. Writing to Littlehales in August of that year, Brigadier Lee passed the opinion of his colleague Brigadier Major Harding who, upon reporting a disturbance in Tarbert, 'mentioned to me, verbally that were the Corps of Yeomanry there placed on permanent duty, every part of the country would be kept quiet. If this step can give security to the Gentleman residing in the District of County, I consider it a most advisable measure'.[203] Conversely, the militia were marginalised, and as late as November Littlehales noted that he had been informed that 'a feeling of general uneasiness prevails' in relation to the militia corps which were present.[204]

[201] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 118.
[202] Allan Blackstock, 'A dangerous species of ally: Orangeism and the Irish yeomanry' in *Irish Historical Studies* vol 30, no 119 (May 1997), p. 399.
[203] Lee to Littlehales, Aug. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[204] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 23 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/294).

What is notable throughout all these communications is how central the military under-secretary was and how much effort was made both to coordinate efforts in terms of collation of information and the taking of actions, as well as ensuring a consistency of communication across the network of correspondents. The image of Littlehales that emerges from this episode is that of a dynamic government official, skilfully managing the various threads of a policing operation, coordinating with officials on the ground and fact checking accounts, while also liaising with military figures and acting as a critical conduit, ensuring consistent communication with his seniors, both in Dublin and London as appropriate.

It was noted that the absence of the chief secretary may have allowed Littlehales to have a freer hand than normal, but it is also possible that his actions were undertaken to chime with what he felt was prevailing policy. In an earlier situation, in 1806, he had adopted a more passive role. At that time, the outbreaks were in Connacht and the then lord lieutenant, the duke of Bedford, vacillated between alarm (with commensurate activity) and torpor. Bedford went as far as travelling to Connacht, with Littlehales in attendance, but was reluctant to escalate policing too much.[205] As he put it, it was imperative to 'first try every other means' before engaging in strong military action.[206] This was very much in keeping with Bedford's view of what the tenor of his viceroyalty should be – one of conciliation. Bedford was loath to intervene directly with the troubles in Connacht; his correspondence with his colleagues in Dublin castle offered a recurring hope that the local magistracy would manage the situation.[207] There were some important lessons for the under-secretary, however. Bedford was clear in his views that peace could only prosper if the local community interacted positively with the military command, which may well have informed Littlehales' actions in the subsequent situation.[208] Secondly, and equally instructive, was

[205] Littlehales to Bedford, 6 Oct. 1806 (BEA 6D Ireland 2-4).
[206] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 273.
[207] Bedford to Trail, 16 Oct. 1806 (BEA, HMC-96-C), p. 225.
[208] Bedford to Littlehales, 20 Sept. 1806 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/243).

Bedford's insistence that senior military figures confirm the facts themselves, rather than rely on the version of events offered by either the local gentry or indeed their own officers.[209]

As it transpired events would ensure that Bedford's tenure as lord lieutenant was short-lived, and he left Ireland after just one year in the role. Bedford did correspond with his successor the duke of Richmond, in April 1807 when unrest persisted, but Richmond was of a different disposition and had come to Ireland with a mandate to be more zealous in the application of military force in the country.[210] Indeed there was a notable change in tack, with Richmond being instructed to reinstate several key post holders who had been dismissed in previous years.[211] Additionally, the methods of engagement between Dublin and London had settled into a modus vivendi which allowed for a greater degree of cooperation, as shown in the clear lines of communication between Littlehales and Beckett for example. This clear communication at under-secretary level was replicated higher up with the new lord lieutenant quickly established an efficient channel of communication with Hawkesbury, the home secretary and by extension the cabinet in London as needed.[212]

As ever, policing matters were linked to the continued sense of threat from Napoleonic France and the reality was that, for as long as there was a sense of threat from abroad, there was a concern of the impact of this on the population. For Littlehales, this required a consideration of policing and defence as intersecting issues. As such, while much of his focus in 1808 was on matters relating to unrest and banditti, he also was keen to try to discern any possible links between unrest in Munster and influence from France. This is most evident in his correspondence with Jenkinson in London, where connections between internal discord and agitation from abroad were considered, but Littlehales continued to be as

[209] Bedford to Littlehales (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/253).
[210] O' Reilly, 'Completing the Union', p. 287.
[211] 'Memorandum on dismissals', undated (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS 60/263).
[212] Hawkesbury to Richmond, 1 Aug. 1807 (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS 70/1339).

measured as possible. In November 1808 he received notice that a cache of ordnance 'concealed underground but which appears to be French' had been discovered in Carrickfergus by a soldier.[213] Littlehales had no desire to exaggerate such matters, but he was clearly worried. Shortly after the discovery of this ordnance he informed Jenkinson that there was some information that 'a confidential agent is now in Dublin from France.' Again, Littlehales was loath to give too much credence to unsubstantiated reports, but several days later he was clear that new of this 'emissary' was confirmed 'from an authority that I cannot doubt' [214] That said, while the under-secretary was concerned by this development he continued in his assertion that the presence of such an agent was not related to the trouble which had arisen in Munster. The Munster troubles were, he insisted, clearly linked to 'the ineptness and pusillanimity of the generality of magistrates' in that area.[215] In December his focus was back to Dublin where, he informed Jenkinson, a 'Directory' was being assembled in concert with France. This group was believed to be communicating with the disaffected who had been causing so much trouble in places like Limerick. In relating these reports, Littlehales stressed that he had already dispensed with many representations, which he considered to be exaggerated, but that given the state of the country, he believed they merited 'consideration and vigilance.'[216] The emphasis on credible sources was critical, as Jenkinson's replies expressed the usual concern about the tendency towards exaggeration. Littlehales' concern was clearly that French agents would stimulate further disaffection across the country and this apprehension was exacerbated by the suggestion that 'one of those engaged in the Rebellion of 1798 has lately arrived in Ireland from France on a treasonable mission.' Although the identity of this potential insurrectionist was never revealed, to Littlehales' mind his presence signified a more serious commitment to agitation on behalf of

[213] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 24 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/297).
[214] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 27 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/299)
[215] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 23 Nov. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/294).
[216] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 7 Dec. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/314).

France.[217] After a decade in Ireland he had learned to distil fact from exaggerated fiction, and also to be clear in the need to understand what, if any, link arose between internal discord and external threat.

In reviewing the role of Littlehales in the administration of military forces and co-ordinating the response to unrest during the first decade of his tenure it is hard to avoid the conclusion that, as with so much of the post-union structure, personalities played the determining role. Further to this, the concept considered by Jarrat, that decision makers make their decisions based on the information presented to them and their own socialisation and cultural background can be seen to have valuable applicability in terms of policing and defence by the various office holders in Dublin Castle.[218] In his role, Littlehales was the recipient of a near endless array of communications, which required review. Some, such as those which he might receive from a dispatched agent or official were obviously credible, but the majority of reports tended towards the alarmist and required careful consideration as to whether to escalate to his superiors. As has been shown, each lord lieutenant reacted to these problems differently, due in part to the different situations in terms of external threats, but also the direction from London at the time. However, their own personalities also shaped their approach. The different modus operandi of each lord lieutenant clearly influenced their administration and was likely to have been a key determinant on the role of Littlehales in such situations. In effect, Littlehales appears to have assiduously followed the line laid out by his seniors and tempered his activity to match what he believed they wanted. Hardwicke, for example, was typically loath to give too much credence to reports of unrest, whereas Bedford was much more active in addressing them. Furthermore, the vacuum provided by Wellesley's absence for much of the 1808 issue undoubtedly gave him a sense of agency which he might

[217] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 7 Dec. 1808 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/314).
[218] Mark Jeffery Jarrat, 'Castlereagh, Ireland and the French Restoration of 1814–15' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Stanford University 2006) pp 3-6.

not have normally had and stands in marked contrast to his behaviour in the preceding years. Similarly, the degree of communication with the civil under-secretary was important in ensuring that all involved in 'policing' were acting in concert, but it is also notable that Littlehales' greatest period of proactivity occurred when that post was vacant, and he had assumed some of the duties. Irrespective of the role of each actor, it was clear that no systematic solution for the problem of unrest had been found and it would take Robert Peel's arrival and the establishment of a professional police force in the next decade to provide the means to address such matters with the necessary dynamism. As we will see, Littlehales would play a key role in this initiative.

Chapter 4: "The recent change in public affairs" Littlehales, Peel and the transformation of the Irish administration [1]

This chapter will examine Littlehales' relationship with Robert Peel. With a tenure running from 1812 until 1818, Robert Peel was in post for longer than any other chief secretary who served during Littlehales' career in Ireland. He arrived as a 'relatively unknown' politician and when he left Ireland it was to further a career which would ultimately include two terms as prime minister.[2] Of all the chief Secretaries with whom Littlehales served, only Arthur Wellesley, duke of Wellington, could be said to have enjoyed such stellar subsequent success, but Peel's spells in Dublin could not have been more different to Wellesley's. Where Wellesley's tenure lasted only two years and he spent a portion of it abroad on military campaign, Peel's six years saw him devote his time exclusively to the role, bringing an active engagement with his duties, a keen eye for detail and a fearlessness for implementing change which had not been typical since Castlereagh's time, prior to the union. Perhaps due to this activity, the documentary record of Peel's time as chief secretary is considerable, and this enables those who consult it to develop a deep understanding of both his work as chief secretary, but also of his relationship with his military under-secretary. This relationship was, in many ways, as important for Littlehales as had been his earlier ones with Hardwicke, Simcoe and Cornwallis. But Peel was a different character and, having quickly mastered his brief, he made demands of Littlehales, challenging the under-secretary in a way in which his predecessors had not.

Stanley Palmer's view, that Peel's approach to the government of Ireland was 'based on innovation and centralization' and that 'his ideas on the police were a Castle- orientated

[1] Peel to Littlehales, 13 June 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[2] Galen Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force' in *Journal of Modern History, xxxiii*, no 4 (Dec. 1961), p. 363.

version of enlightened despotism', has been challenged by Virginia Crossman who suggests that, if anything, Peel was ineluctably attached to the principle of local autonomy.[3] Far from embracing centralisation, Peel resorted to it reluctantly and resisted it where possible, arguing that central government should only intervene if the efforts of local government had failed.[4] That said, it is possible to view Peel as the first truly 'modern' administrator in Dublin Castle and, in some key areas, his views bear out Vincent Comerford's assertion that the Irish state was becoming 'interventionist and centralising to a precocious degree'.[5]

In some ways, Peel's tenure as chief secretary was a divided one, with the peace which followed Waterloo serving as the line of demarcation. For Littlehales, the removal of the threat from France ushered in the first sustained respite from war he experienced since his arrival in Ireland. But despite the new peace and attendant optimism, military matters did not simply revert to the management of internal unrest; the peacetime reduction in forces was both a complex and, on occasion, a contentious issue for Dublin Castle. Nevertheless, peace did allow for a greater (if not total) focus on internal matters and this, coupled with Peel's refusal to accept the existing *modus operandi*, resulted in innovation, including the creation of the Peace Preservation Force (PPF), which Littlehales had significant involvement with. While the PPF was one of the key achievements of Peel's tenure, and certainly one which impacted on Littlehales' work, the broader sweep of reform and focus which Peel brought resulted in some much-needed improvement in the work of the Military Office in Dublin Castle.

[3] S.H. Palmer, *Police and protest in England and Ireland, 1780–1850* (Cambridge, 1988) p. 531; Crossman 'Growth of the state in the nineteenth century' in Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland,* iii, p. 560.
[4] Crossman, 'Growth of the state in the nineteenth century', p. 561.
[5] R.V. Comerford, *Inventing the nation: Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 37.

"Prepare with all possible dispatch their respective estimates" – the annual estimates

If Littlehales had thought that the new chief secretary was going to be similar to his predecessors, he was swiftly corrected. Arriving in mid-1812, Peel quickly got to grips with his brief and showed an eye for detail which had not been possessed by his immediate predecessors. Nowhere was this more evident than in his response to the first set of military estimates which Littlehales sent to him. This was a routine bureaucratic procedure and part of the annual round of government work, whereby the chief secretary would be provided with estimates, which would be placed before parliament in London for approval. Their preparation and submission, while tedious, was a critical aspect of the post-union military structure and as noted previously, had been one of the challenging points of discussion when Littlehales had been sent to London to clarify the role of the lord lieutenant in 1801.[6] At the time, ensuring collation and approval via the Dublin administration (and from there to the chief secretary in parliament) had been considered as a victory for the civil administration in Dublin, which in relation to this matter retained a degree of agency when other roles such as patronage were being circumscribed.

An undated synopsis of the duties of Littlehales' office outlines the path of transmission for the estimates from Dublin to London, and the impact of this work:

> The annual estimates are transmitted to the Secretary at War with comparative statements and explanations to be laid before Parliament, they are prepared and usually forwarded to London some weeks previously to the Meetings of Parliament and much correspondence from time to time arises there from.[7]

Typically, Littlehales would aggregate the various estimates relating to matters such as ordnance, barracks, militia and similar military matters, then communicate them to both the chief secretary and as required, to the secretary in London. This was generally an onerous

[6] Observations on Lord Hardwicke's instructions to Col. Littlehales' undated (B.L., Shee Papers, Add MS 60338).
[7] 'Synopsis or Memoranda of the Relative Duties of the Irish War Office with various Departments in England and Ireland' undated (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

process, as it relied on the collation of a range of figures from different parts of the military establishment, not all of whom were fully persuaded of the importance of timely delivery to Dublin Castle. Littlehales tended to act as a mediator and his correspondence shows interaction with officials both in Ireland and London, with a recurring pattern of polite requests for detail from colleagues in Ireland, and equally polite apologies for delays to colleagues in London.

In practice the estimates had always been challenging to negotiate, with Dublin and London often at odds over the sums and resources required. Writing to Littlehales in May 1805, Nicholas Vansittart, newly appointed as chief secretary, had sounded a note of concern when he noted 'that a large estimate is very apt to encourage any Department to incur expenses not strictly necessary, notwithstanding all possible attention in the head of the Government.'[8] On a practical level they were also a logistical nightmare to collate. This challenge meant that if the estimate managed to be sent by November, having been approved by the Lord Lieutenant, it was considered sufficiently timely.[9] In November 1808, for instance, Littlehales felt compelled to let Cecil Jenkinson, under-secretary in the Home Office, know that he was aware of the need for haste, but he did not have the full complement of figures. In a short letter which was typical of this sort of communication, Littlehales explained 'I have accordingly transmitted by Express herewith such of them as I have been able already to prepare'.[10] Thus the preparation and submission of the estimates was a challenge, but, having fought to retain it, the Dublin Executive was loath to surrender it.

Within a year of his arrival, Peel was clear that the current way of work was not fit for purpose asserting to Littlehales that he was 'satisfied that radical reform is necessary'[11]. Up

[8] Vansittart to Littlehales, 20 May 1805 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[9] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 16 Nov. 1803 (N.L.I., Hardwicke Papers, microfilm, P986).
[10] Littlehales to Jenkinson, 14 Nov. 1808 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[11] Peel to Littlehales, 8 Apr. 1813 in C.S Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers* (3 vols. London, 1899), i, p. 97.

to this point the fact that there was always a delay seems to have been accepted practice, but Peel was keen to usher in a different, more efficient approach. In November 1812 he began to make enquires as to the status of that year's estimates. Littlehales was in a position to supply some, but not all, of the estimates by late November, and informed Peel 'As soon as the remainder shall have been received from the Departments concerned, they will be sent without delay to the Secretary at War, and copies also to you.'[12] This became a recurring theme for several years, with each November seeing a series of increasingly irritated requests from the chief secretary, and increasingly defensive explanations from the military under-secretary. Requests from Peel in early November 1813 prompted Littlehales to try to explain both the delay as well as his reliance on other parties:

> I hasten in reply to acquaint you that the whole of our Military Estimates except those belonging to the Barrack Department, will be ready for Transmittal by Express on Saturday next… and that I shall immediately send a most urgent letter to General Freeman to forward to me as soon as possible those Estimates for the Preparation of which He is responsible:- the moment he shall transmit them to me they shall be sent to London.[13]

Such a process was cumbersome and protracted, and Peel was often forced to defend both delays and the lack of detail evident in the estimates in parliament. As an example, in March 1813 he was brought to task by Samuel Whitbread, MP for Bedford, who noted that the Irish estimates lacked the precision of the English ones. Peel had to concede this point with the weak defence that 'The hon. gentleman should have moved for such account in an earlier part of the session, and it would have been produced.'[14] Given the breadth of his role, defending something about which he was clearly dissatisfied was not something Peel welcomed and he was quick to lay down very clear rules as regards what he needed in terms of estimates. Writing in March 1813 he informed Littlehales that 'The information sent over with the

[12] Littlehales to Peel, 26 Nov. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[13] Littlehales to Peel, 11 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[14] Hansard 1, cc1156-1191, 8 Mar. 1813.

estimates cannot be too much detailed. Questions are asked which it is impossible to anticipate, or to be provided with an answer to them from memory alone'.[15] Such a rebuke, however valid, stung Littlehales, and his reply consisted of an overabundance of detail and passive aggressive justification. Regarding Peel's specific point about an absence of necessary detail he stated:

> Upon the subject of your second Letter, respecting the discussion in the House on the Barrack Estimates of which, amongst various observations, you mention that you cannot find a single paper in your office in London upon the permanent Barracks now erecting. I can only remark that no preliminary, or at least definitive, step was even adopted here without the most detailed and ample communication having been previously made to your Predecessors; and you are aware that a similar rule has invariably been pursued since your appointment.[16]

Littlehales then moved to the logistics of gathering information as needed, noting that all documentation had been sent over to Peel's predecessor in 1810 and that providing the same again with speed was impossible:

> but as it is quite impracticable to give you, in as clear and comprehensive a manner as you desire it, all the information relating to Barracks in general in Ireland, without reference to the heads of Department. I have written an urgent letter to General Freeman, of which I transmit a copy the instant that his reply shall be delivered to me. I will send it, by Express, to you…[17]

Finally, even Lord Palmerston, then secretary at war, was not spared Littlehales' fit of pique:

> I am sorry that Lord Palmerston should have complained to you that the information sent over with the Estimate from hence is not sufficiently [minute] especially as it must be admitted that there is the most ardent desire to afford every explanation that can be required, and if his Lordship had taken the trouble to have provided out the particular instances in which further detail was requisite there would have been, since the transmittal of the Estimates, full time to have supplied the deficiency; As to your remark respecting the want of adequate information on the Barrack Expenditure I can only say that circumstanced as we are with regards to our Barrack Department, it is, as you know, frequently very difficult- and I was under the necessary of supplying this defect in the comparative statement which accompanied the Estimate.[18]

[15] Peel to Littlehales, 10 Mar. 1813 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers* i, p. 97.
[16] Littlehales to Peel, 13 Mar. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[17] Littlehales to Peel, 13 Mar. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[18] Littlehales to Peel, 13 Mar. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

In Littlehales' defence, there was some validity to his irritation – he himself was consistently let down by General Quin John Freeman the Barrack-Master who was invariably the last person to submit the required documentation. This would be a recurring feature of the latter half of Littlehales' career in Ireland, but where other members of the administration were prepared to accept such behaviour, Peel was not. Littlehales did what he could and optimistically reported to Peel that Freeman had committed 'to use every exertion in promoting zeal and energy' to his and his department's work.[19] Such optimism was not well placed.

By 1813, there was still a clear distinction between the systems in Ireland and Britain, as was evident during a fraught exchange in the House of Commons on 29 June. Outlining a litany of perceived abuses Sir William Freemantle 'urged strongly the necessity of placing the whole of that department [the Irish Barrack Department] under the same control and regulations as the Barrack Department in England, whose estimates were regularly submitted to the view of parliament, the good effect of which system the House had lately witnessed in preventing improvident expenditure'[20] The Irish Executive would consistently argue that every step possible had been undertaken to limit abuse in a system which effectively facilitated it. The scale of the problem can be seen in an exchange between Littlehales and Robert Peel shortly into the latter's tenure as chief secretary, where the under-secretary was clear about the problem:

> Gregory delivered to me the enclosed report from the Deputy Barrack Master General in consequence of your recent communication to him respecting the Barrack system, and deficiencies imputable to the Department, as well as to the further regulation which it may be proper to adopt to render the Office efficient. It does not appear that there is any cordial disposition on the part of Major General Freeman to embrace the views and wishes of Government on the various points which have undergone consideration but it is evident that he admits that the existing warrant comprises adequate powers to enable him and his officers to carry on their respective duties, the

[19] Littlehales to Peel, 12 Feb. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[20] Hansard 1, xxvi, co. 816-873, 22 June 1813,

> natural inference therefore must be, that, all the irregularities and neglects which have been so repeatedly represented to the Lord Lieutenant, especially since Sir John Hope has commanded the Army in this country have originated and are to be ascribed exclusively to remissness and palpable inattention on the part of those who administer the Barrack Affairs.[21]

This issue, like so many others relating to the Barrack system, might well have been addressed by unifying both British and Irish systems – Littlehales himself would note that many of the issues raised by Freeman related to the discrepancy in roles and powers between Ireland and Britain.[22]

Even requests directly from Peel to Freeman had little effect, as Littlehales was quick to remind Peel, later in 1813. Nor did attempts to leverage the seniority of the lord lieutenant meet with success; he was happy to be updated but simply noted his surprise at 'the want of energy on the part of General Freeman.'[23] In reality, further intercession by the civil administration ran the risk of revisiting old tensions around the relationship between civil and military governance, which had caused so many problems for Littlehales and others in the years immediately after the union. Freeman remained in post for the duration of both Peel and Littlehales' tenures and his lassitude brought Peel to write to Littlehales on Christmas Day, 1816, seeking clarification. Littlehales replied to him promptly noting again that he had 'strongly urged' General Freeman to complete his estimates especially as his apathy impacted not just on the Barrack estimates, but on other related areas, such as the Commissariat.[24]

Unsurprisingly, the issue of estimates was a recurring problem. But if many of the challenges Littlehales cited as reasons for delays were undoubtedly valid and systemic, he showed little willingness to work in Dublin to address them. Nor was he beyond making errors, both in detail and of judgement, even after years of working with Peel. In 1816, in a

[21] Littlehales to Peel, 12 Feb. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[22] Littlehales to Peel, 12 Feb. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[23] Littlehales to Peel, 17 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[24] Littlehales to Peel, 26 Dec. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

time of clear economy, Littlehales inexplicably gave Peel military estimates for a larger force than had been present during wartime. This drew a stinging rebuke from the chief secretary, which began 'I must ask your immediate and serious attention to the Irish military estimates from which I foresee great trouble and great embarrassment. It seems you have sent over an estimate for 63,474 men.'[25] Peel noted that in the House of Commons, only the day before, Vansittart (by then Chancellor of the Exchequer) had claimed that the Irish establishment would be only 25,000. While Peel was clear that such a low figure had come as a shock to him and was not, in his view, sufficient, he was brutal in his assessment of Littlehales' estimate, noting 'it was absurd to ever think of 63,000'. In a series of blunt questions, he asked for an explanation of a figure that was 'treble the estimate of 1815'. He was clear with Littlehales, stating 'I am really harassed and annoyed by going through these items, but they are all equally inexplicable. Suppose these estimates had been presented and I had been asked about them, what answer have you enabled me to give'. Peel went on to outline the various areas in which the estimates had failed, noting of the Barrack estimates 'I can barely mention it with patience' and questioning why the Yeomanry needed new clothing when in his view 'they really do so little that it is immaterial how they are clothed'.[26] Early in the letter, Peel made it clear that he considered Edward Connor, an official in Littlehales' Office, to be heavily implicated in the delays. Over a series of pages Peel dissected the estimates, returning time and time again to the importance of accuracy. Referring to the perennial issue of the Barrack estimates, Peel impressed upon Littlehales the need for accountability, noting that lax estimates simply passed on trouble to the Treasury which 'maybe very convenient practice for General Freeman, but it is a most inconvenient one for those who have to defend the estimates in parliament and prove its correctness'.[27]

[25] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers*, i, p. 208.
[26] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/392).
[27] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/392).

While Peel was clearly exasperated with Littlehales, as well as the other figures involved, he was ultimately pragmatic and made it clear to Littlehales that there was no further point in him 'accounting for all this' – the key now, Peel directed, was 'to set about amending this year's estimate'. Again, with a clear view to collective accountability he reinforced the importance of ownership, stating 'this is General Freeman's estimate' but making it clear to Littlehales that 'it is our estimate, and we must be responsible for it.' Where Littlehales' default was to return to the person who had immediate responsibility, Peel, rightly, saw the inefficiency of this, noting 'Do not write to General Freeman for I shall never have an answer'.[28]

Bearing in mind the role Littlehales had for over a decade regarding the estimates, it seems remarkable that it took Peel to address the lax nature of their preparation. He could not have been more explicit in his instruction to the under-secretary, stating

> I must beg of you to examine these items and not to trust to General Freeman – find out not what was estimated but what was expended last year. Explain to me the meaning of each item – for example what is the nature of the grant for Regimental Officers Lodging and bed money – who receives this – and why? Ascertain how many of these items can be reduced to ½ or ⅓ of the amount or struck out altogether.[29]

Peel's letter continued with this precision and detail for pages, and it stands as a forensic assessment of the weakness in both the detail of the military estimates and the process by which they were prepared. His concluding point again stressed the need for him, as chief secretary, to understand and be convinced of the necessity certain types of military spending as 'I must show them to be so'.[30]

[28] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/392).
[29] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/392).
[30] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/392).

Peel's missive had the desired effect and from a letter penned some weeks later it is evident that Littlehales at least had applied himself as directed.[31] Peel was quick to note his agreement with his under-secretary's views but he did not however spare his scorn for the other actors in the estimates process, particularly the Commission of Military Accounts, whose request for additional assistance he considered 'to grow out either of their own incompetency for the discharge of their duties or their gross negligence.'[32] Peel, with some justification, worried that agreeing to such a request would only exacerbate problems and decided instead to use the recent problems to compel the relevant office to provide a weekly account of their work in a way comparable to those undertaken by the Board of Custom and Excise.[33]

At around the same time as he was dealing with military estimates, Peel was addressing the issue of the voluntary forces and, in a letter dated 16 February informed Littlehales that 'It is very well to arm and organise the Protestants of Ireland for their own defence, but they can beat off a carding party as well in red coats as in new ones.'[34] In some ways it can argued that such unguarded language on the part of the chief secretary speaks of a degree of trust in Littlehales and it was undoubtedly the case that Peel recognised that Littlehales was not the sole author of such ill-judged estimates. Indeed, his discontent moderated quickly, and he was quick to thank Littlehales a few days later, noting 'I cannot let the express depart without thanking you for the very valuable information you have sent me and the reductions you have been able to effect. The information is just what I wanted and relieves me from all anxiety.'[35] By April of the same year Peel was able to note, with relief, 'We have done with military estimates, thank god', while again complimenting Littlehales on

[31] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Mar. 1815 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/397).
[32] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Mar. 1815 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/397).
[33] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Mar. 1815 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/397).
[34] Peel to Littlehales, 16 Feb. 1816 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 209.
[35] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Feb. 1816 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers*, i, p. 209.

his efficiency, noting 'If your communication had not been very clear, very quick and very satisfactory I do not know how I should have managed this business.'[36] This represented a considerable improvement in their working relationship compared to several years before.

From early in his tenure as chief secretary Peel, with perhaps some naivety, was quick to try to treat the Irish militia in a way comparable to the English. On the surface, this made perfect sense; there had been an interchange in the forces for some years and by the time of Peel's arrival, there was close to an equal amount of English and Irish militia regiments in the country.[37] Additionally, the idea of acting 'on union principles', which had occupied so much of Littlehales time in the first years after the union, was, by this time, well established. However, there were several problems. Firstly, there had been delays in additional payments made to members of the militia which, Littlehales suggested to Peel, had resulted in reduced transfers from the militia to the regular forces.[38] This was a particularly Irish problem as these transfers had become increasingly important, as the militia had been one of the key conduits of recruitment into the regular forces for some time in Ireland. Compounding this were the issues of recruitment to the military and concerns about pensions which had been given incorrectly from Dublin and which would likely require a Bill of Indemnity to resolve. In a letter to Littlehales, Peel lost no time in seeking information, asking a range of direct questions regarding claims for clothing allowances for more men than were actually in a regiment, while raising the question of reducing the force if recruitment could not be improved.[39] In the same letter he also noted, with some impatience, that he was still waiting on the draft of some legislation which had been promised relating to indemnity offered for the erroneous issuing of pensions to militia men, sparing the usual formalities and beginning his letter with a direct note that 'I have not received the draft of the bill', before moving

[36] Peel to Littlehales, 6 Apr. 1816 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/412).
[37] Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793–1816, a social and military study* (Dublin, 1949), p. 251.
[38] Littlehales to Peel, 8 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[39] Peel to Littlehales, 6 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

through a series of questions about practice in the militia, with a particular focus on apparent deviation of local practice from that of the English model. As ever Peel was economical in his language, frankly asking Littlehales 'Why should we have this in Ireland or has it been done in any cases?' Peel was, however, sensible of Littlehales' role and made sure to assure the under-secretary that 'your own opinion and better judgement … would be desirable'.[40]

This was an assertive move for a neophyte chief secretary and while Littlehales promptly rushed to ensure the draft for a Bill of Indemnity was prepared he also sought legal advice from both Attorney and Solicitor General as to the nuances of such a bill; a move which would become a recurring pattern in their relationship. Replying to Peel, he noted that there were certain allowances available to Irish militia colonels and that consistency with English practice, while admirable, was not at that point possible. Littlehales was quick to position himself as the trusted, experienced hand, offering a potted history of the development of the militia with a particular focus on the challenges that might arise from changing practices to bring the force into harmony with the system present in England. Despite the implication of difficulty, Littlehales was quick to reassure Peel of his understanding of the merits of harmonisation. 'There can', he noted, 'be no doubt of the preference of the British practice both as to Economy and Policy.'[41] To his credit, he managed to quickly transmit the draft legislation which Peel had asked for, sending it with the hope that 'it will be perfectly consonant to your view of the subject'.[42] Unfortunately, his new superior was not impressed and, in a letter which made clear his dissatisfaction, he noted sharply that 'it is now too late for me to do anything'.[43]

As with the estimates, this pattern was repeated on multiple occasions in the first

[40] Peel to Littlehales, 6 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[41] Littlehales to Peel, 8 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[42] Littlehales to Peel, 10 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[43] Peel to Littlehales, 18 Dec. 1812 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

years of their working together, with Littlehales defending existing practices and trying to mediate queries through other channels before a functional if uneasy relationship developed.

"Peace of a long duration": Napoleon's abdication

By April 1814 Napoleon had abdicated raising the prospect of peace. In light of this, in a letter dated 18 April 1814, Peel confidently predicted that the Commander of the Forces could look forward 'to a peace of long duration.'[44] In the same letter, however, he made clear that such a peace had implications for 'the extent of the military establishment'. These implications were rarely far from the minds of Peel and Littlehales, and when peace came in 1814 it was clear that expenditure had to be curtailed.[45] This had immediate consequences, which showcased the different priorities of Peel and Littlehales. Whereas Peel's initial concern was that the current plans for barrack building should be immediately reviewed, Littlehales' initial inclination was to suggest that certain allowances, such as those for baggage and foraging, be discontinued. Following Peel's direction, Littlehales undertook to review the barracks situation across the country. His initial focus was to quantify the number of temporary barracks, which could be disposed of with relative ease. Ascertaining which temporary barracks were occupied and which were not was more complicated than might have been envisaged and required ongoing communication with both General Hewitt and Lieutenant General Freeman. Within a month, however, Littlehales was confident enough to supply a list of temporary barracks that could be surrendered, and he assured Peel that Hewitt, the Commander of the Forces, was in agreement that 'under the improved State of Public affairs' divesting this accommodation would continue to ensure no 'want of accommodation for Troops beyond what the remaining Barracks will supply.'[46]

[44] Peel to Littlehales, 18 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[45] Peel to Littlehales, 18 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[46] Littlehales to Peel, 14 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Accordingly, Hewitt was instructed to proceed.

While the Commander of the Forces seemed to comprehend the need for retrenchment, he faced opposition within his own ranks. Unusually, this was not in the form of General Freeman, but via the regional commander in Dublin, Sir John Hope, who had enthusiastically advocated for the construction of a new recruiting depot near Dublin. Having directed Littlehales to investigate, Peel made clear that such a proposal was illogical unless the Peacetime establishment was likely to be of similar size as that of wartime.[47] Littlehales replied some days later with further information, noting that 'our regular force in Ireland must unavoidably be much greater in time of Peace than of War'.[48] While this may seem counter intuitive, given the arrival of peace, it is clear that at this juncture the strategy for a military presence in post-Napoleonic Ireland was based around retaining the presence of a sizeable force of regular army forces. This strategy did not apply to the militia and yeomanry, however, with both forces set to be reduced or disembodied.[49] Thus, after nearly two decades where the militia and yeomanry had maintained a significant presence, things appeared set to revert to something resembling the military arrangement that had existed in the late eighteenth century.

As early as 25 April 1814, Littlehales was proposing to end recruitment to the militia and noting that the recruitment to the regular army from the militia would likewise come to an end.[50] He also proposed the disbanding of Yeomanry Cavalry and the demobilisation of many of the permanent sergeants in the Infantry Corps of Yeomanry, as well as reductions in the Commissariat, Medical and other Corps in the main force on the assumption 'that the expected general peace will speedily be realised with every prospect of permanency'.

[47] Peel to Littlehales, 29 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[48] Littlehales to Peel, 31 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[49] Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry 1796–1834* (Dublin, 1998), p. 125.
[50] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Despite the widespread optimism, Littlehales did sound a note of caution in the same letter, advising Peel that it was important that the 'laudable zeal' for economy 'will not be carried to such an extreme as may eventually involve us in Ireland in great embarrassment and difficulties and that our Military Force may be fully adequate to every emergency.'[51] Before Peel could reply, however, Littlehales was informed by Hewitt that he had received orders directly from the duke of York (commander-in-chief in London) to cease recruitment for the regular army with a 'suggestion' that a similar policy could be applied to the Militia.[52] Thus, after fourteen years, the challenge of coordinating the military machine in Ireland in the aftermath of the union clearly continued, with Peel untypically marginalised and Littlehales caught in the middle, as he had been earlier in his career.

The reduction or disembodying of military forces was a complicated endeavour and one which caused Littlehales some concern. Foremost in his mind was the potential for men to contribute to further unrest. His main concern here related to the militia, and he was not shy about his reasoning, informing Peel in a letter written in June 1814:

> You will know that, with other circumstances, we look forward to the disembodying of the Militia, when Peace arrived as a very serious question in this County. To let loose a trained and mischievous population of which a large proportion the inferior classes are composed is a cause for great uneasiness, and the difficulty of applying a suitable remedy makes it still more embarrassing.[53]

Peel concurred with this view and represented it to the home secretary Lord Sidmouth, noting that militiamen 'who have been good soldiers may be worst civilians when they get among their friends'.[54]

Littlehales was sufficiently concerned by this issue to offer a dramatic solution, which involved 'holding out encouragement to such Militia men as shall be discharged or

[51] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[52] Littlehales to Peel, 27 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[53] Littlehales to Peel, 15 June 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[54] McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793-1816*, p. 257

disembodying to enlist into Regiments of line in British America upon an assurance of obtaining a grant of Land in Upper Canada, in unlocated Townships, according to the usual applotment of 200 acres each', although with typical diffidence he noted that 'this idea has occurred to others'.[55] In this instance, Littlehales was referring to an idea put forward by the duke of York in 1813, whereby Scottish Militia men could volunteer for service in the regular army in Canada and, upon their discharge, be granted land. At the time this proved controversial with the Home Office in London and was not extended. What Peel thought of this idea is not evident, but ultimately such an option was not offered in Ireland.[56]

June 1814 marked the month where efforts to disembody the militia increased at pace, and Littlehales spent much of the month liaising with Kilmainham and London to ensure a coordinated approach. Given the concern he had expressed about the behaviour of demobilised, 'trained and mischievous' militia men, it was not surprising that he was particularly keen that arms should be surrendered. Somewhat unusually, he was happy to leave the logistics of this to the military themselves. He did, however, warn Peel that this process was likely to raise the ire of senior militia figures who would make their objections felt 'both in and out of parliament'. [57] Such concern was mirrored in cabinet in London and Peel, after a meeting with Lord Sidmouth, asked Littlehales to reduce the Irish militia 'gradually.'[58] However, with the consummate sleight of hand of a career politician he also proposed starting the reduction with the Limerick County and City regiments at the earliest opportunity. This was significant as only days before Littlehales had informed Peel that the senior figures in Limerick were actively suggesting that their regiments could be disbanded, in light of the arrival of some regular army regiments.[59] Thus, Peel managed to adhere to

[55] Littlehales to Peel, 15 June 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[56] Kevin Linch, 'The recruitment of the British Army 1807-1815' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Leeds, 2001), p. 167.
[57] Littlehales to Peel, 3 June 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[58] Peel to Littlehales, 8 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/385).
[59] Littlehales to Peel, 30 June 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Sidmouth's direction, while also placating several senior members of the gentry and beginning the process as he wished. Perhaps bearing in mind Littlehales' preference for utter clarity in the hierarchy of government, he made it explicitly clear in the same letter that there was no need to wait for formal approval from Lord Sidmouth.[60] What Littlehales thought of this is not clear, but in a subsequent communication he referred to 'Lord Sidmouth's official letter for the progressive disembodying of the militia', with the word 'progressive' heavily underlined. However, he followed up with an acknowledgement that Peel's wishes were being implemented as directed.[61]

Unfortunately for Peel, Sidmouth's views were shared by the duke of York and some weeks later he was forced to write to Littlehales to note the commander-in-chief's view that 'we are proceeding too rapidly'. The duke of York's direction was clear and no further reduction was to take place unless Dublin Castle could guarantee that a regular army force of comparable size could replace it.[62] In a further climbdown, Peel instructed Littlehales to forward periodic updates of reductions to Lord Sidmouth who would communicate them to the duke of York.[63] As it happened, a day before Peel issued these instructions, Littlehales had received a letter independently on the same matter. This letter, from Sir George Beckwith, was 'a private letter to request that you would intimate to the Lord Lieutenant the Duke's anxiety on this subject.'[64] Interestingly, this letter made no mention of Peel, possibly as he was in London. Instead, Beckwith asked Littlehales to liaise directly with Whitworth, the lord lieutenant. Whatever Peel and Littlehales may have thought, the message was unambiguous, and they were obliged to heed it. One final obstacle, however, remained: the Commander of the Forces. Curiously, given that he reported to the duke of York, Hewett

[60] Peel to Littlehales, 8 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/385).
[61] Littlehales to Peel, 10 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/386).
[62] Peel to Littlehales, 26 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).
[63] Peel to Littlehales, 26 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).
[64] Beckwith to Littlehales, 25 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).

seemed disinclined to move towards a more gradual reduction. In a letter to William Gregory, the civil under-secretary, he outlined that only 6,535 men had been disbanded, leaving 39,238, which he suggested was still considerably higher than the 'generally supposed peace establishment' of approximately 30,000 men.[65] In addition, he noted that a sizeable number of regiments of the line had arrived in Ireland, further strengthening the country. With some exasperation he concluded that 'this surely is a gradual and cautious proceeding'.[66] While this might reflect the distaste for militia and similar forces which various commanders had shown during their tenure in Ireland, it was a bold statement by Hewett and he went further, noting 'it would not be advisable to postpone doing what has already been ordered' as well as suggesting that having to do a larger disbanding at a later juncture might pose a greater danger to the state.[67]

The question of disembodying the militia required legal consideration, and Littlehales took it upon himself to discuss the matter with both the Solicitor General and Attorney General. As noted, one critical concern for both Peel and Littlehales was that reducing the militia return would result in a significant increase in men who would be without employment and who might prove restless and troublesome.[68] Ultimately, the fears of Littlehales and Peel came to nothing, and by August the lord lieutenant could note that 'the measure of disembodying the Irish Militia has been attended to by no difficulty'[69] By January 1815 the force had been considerably lessened, with only 6,665 men remaining embodied.[70]

[65] Hewett to Gregory, 29 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).
[66] Hewett to Gregory, 29 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).
[67] Hewett to Gregory, 29 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/388).
[68] VJL Fontana, 'The political and religious significance of the British / Irish militias interchange 1811-1816' in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* (2006) vol 84, no 338, p. 144.
[69] McAnally, *The Irish militia*, p. 259.
[70] Fontana, 'The political and religious significance of the British / Irish militias interchange 1811-1816' p. 143.

With regard to the Yeomanry, reductions were not as drastic as those planned for the militia, which probably reflected the government's more favourable view toward them and also the force's original aim – that of internal policing in their locality, a requirement which had not gone away, irrespective of Napoleon's fortunes. In early May, Littlehales outlined his proposal for the reduction of the Yeomanry, which included the complete disbandment of cavalry in the force. The force that remained would see the requirement for 'turning out' reduced from fourteen to twelve days per annum, and with the reduction of permanent sergeants, brigade majors and drummers Littlehales felt confident that expenditure would be 'materially reduced'.[71] By June he was confident enough to suggest that reductions would result in a minimum saving of £50,000. However, on this occasion Littlehales decided to take things further and advised Peel that, while reduction was possible, it might be possible to consider abolishing the force in its entirety in the near future. This could only happen should peace and a 'large standing force' of regulars be guaranteed, and if they could do so 'without giving disgust or offence to the loyal men who compose it'.[72] For a man who had spent the last decade and a half engaged in administering both the suppression of unrest in Ireland, and defence against invasion, this was a dramatic change of heart and suggests that there was genuine optimism in Dublin Castle and the Ascendancy that a long and lasting peace had arrived. Littlehales, a knight of the realm and member of the gentry, might be expected to have had a natural affinity with the Yeomanry as a force, and as noted earlier in this study, he had attempted to protect the force when teasing out the implications of the union in late 1801. Despite this, he had been a soldier and undoubtedly had a predilection for 'regular' forces and the potential of a long peace allowed him to consider a changed military landscape for the first time in his role.

[71] Littlehales to Peel, 4 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[72] Littlehales to Peel, 4 June 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

By early July, Littlehales had written to Peel in London to outline the steps which needed to be taken. Perhaps mindful of how Peel had managed to accede to Sidmouth's wishes while still achieving his own ends with the militia, Littlehales was clear that in his opinion there was no need to consult further with Sidmouth and his ministry, as the matter was 'purely local'.[73] The close relationship between Dublin Castle and the Yeomanry ensured that the proposed process for reducing the force came with a variety of measures that reflected the government's appreciation, including an address of gratitude from the lord lieutenant. Littlehales was quick to highlight how the process tallied with the previous reduction during the Peace of Amiens in 1802 and stressed that those remaining senior figures would be retained on the basis of seniority, with others being entitled to two months' pay.[74]

However, certain Yeomanry issues, which ought to have been more straightforward, continued to cause tension between Littlehales and Peel. The process of 'reducing' the Yeomanry required Dublin Castle to take advantage of upcoming retirements, including that of Brigade Major Harding, whose likely cessation of duties Littlehales noted to Peel early in 1815. Upon investigation Littlehales discovered that, due to his service, Harding stood to obtain a sizeable retirement gratuity 'equal to two thirds of the salary and emoluments of his office' as well as a per diem and an allowance for horses.[75] This, he had checked with lawyers, who confirmed the arrangement. But when Littlehales raised his intention of approving Harding's retirement he received a sharp rebuke from Peel who noted 'you are actually giving him a larger salary during his retirement that he had when in office'. Peel's exasperation was clear. This was a clear error of judgement on Littlehales part – an error of judgement which might have passed muster with previous chief secretaries, but not with Peel.[76] If Littlehales was upset at such censure, he gave no evidence of it, and several weeks

[73] Littlehales to Peel, 11 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/387)
[74] Littlehales to Peel, 11 July 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/387)
[75] Littlehales to Peel, 15 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[76] Peel to Littlehales, Mar. 1815 (no specific date) (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

later he reported that Harding had accepted revised terms which removed the allowances, leaving him with an allowance of £182 a year. [77] However sanguine Littlehales may have felt, the episode reflected poorly on his judgement.

"Urgent demands on the disposable military force of the country": the return of Napoleon

In 1815, Napoleon's return and the dramatic events of the 'Hundred Days' shocked the government and put Littlehales' and Peel's plans to reconfigure the military set-up on hold. As ever, the country saw a degree of internal unrest, but the government's reaction to this, and the perception of what it might mean, was heightened. As had been the case many times before, events in France were linked to events in Ireland, a concern summed up by Peel when he noted 'the events which have passed and I fear have yet to pass in France will contribute little to our internal quiet.'[78] At this juncture, in light of the reduction in other forces, the focus was on retaining what regular army regiments were in the country, with Peel informing Littlehales 'I fear we are not in a situation to contribute much towards the exigencies of foreign service.'[79] By the middle of April both Peel and Whitworth, the lord lieutenant, had petitioned London to remonstrate at any reduction in regular troops in Ireland, but, as Peel outlined to Gregory, the prevailing view was that 'the Government thinks it better to take the chance of danger there (Ireland) for the chance of success which an addition of 5,000 men will give Lord Wellington'.[80] Despite Wellington's success at Waterloo, his request for an increase of military regiments to be sent to Paris was agreed to in London and, in a letter dated 23 June, Peel complained that 'we may expect to have every regular soldier in Ireland sent away to join the duke of Wellington'. This, he suggested, brought several changes, the

[77] Littlehales to Peel, 20 Apil 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[78] Peel to Littlehales, 17 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[79] Peel to Littlehales, 17 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[80] Peel to Gregory, 15 Apr. 1815 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 176.

first being that he had advised the lord lieutenant as to the need for 'immediate embodying of the Irish militia'.[81] Whitworth, the lord lieutenant, agreed and things moved at a rapid pace, with Littlehales telling Peel just three days later that 'His Excellency's Proclamation in Council for calling out the Irish Corps has just been issued'.[82]

The situation regarding the Yeomanry was, however, more complex, and in the same letter Peel asserted that new legislation had to be expedited in recognition of the 'extraordinary situation' which would allow for a better deployment of the Yeomanry. But Peel was quick to give responsibility to Littlehales, noting that if the military under-secretary was happy with the changes which had been proposed some weeks before, legislation was not needed. This related to concerns Littlehales had voiced as regards the ability of Dublin Castle to provide addition allowances to the Yeomanry when out on permanent duty. In his letter to Peel, Littlehales had been quick to note that he had sought legal advice, but that it was not clear that the lord lieutenant had 'sufficient power' to grant such allowances.[83] Such prevarication and conjecture was Littlehales' modus operandi, and while it might have passed muster at a time when the union implications were still being thought out, or with more genteel characters such as Hardwicke, Peel was a different and altogether more decisive character. In his reply, several days later, Peel was notably direct stating 'if it be necessary to grant them – I would grant them if I was the Lord Lieutenant – with or without authority and I have little doubt that it is necessary.' Indeed, he went further, ensuring there was no chance of ambiguity, stating 'I had infinitely rather be blamed for incurring expence without due authority where the peace of the country is concerned.'[84]

[81] Peel to Littlehales, 23 June 1815 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/405).
[82] Littlehales to Peel, 26 June 1815 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/407).
[83] Littlehales to Peel, 14 June 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[84] Peel to Littlehales, 17 June 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Whether or not this was a deliberate tactic to prompt Littlehales, it had the desired effect and on 26 June the military under-secretary sent a letter to London, noting that 'no difficulty appears to the Attorney General or me' in putting the Yeomanry on a permanent setting and advising that the legislation which Peel had proposed would not be necessary. If Littlehales was upset, he gave little indication and concluded the letter with a congratulation to Peel in light of the victory of Waterloo and by expressing the hope that, as a result, 'we may reasonably anticipate the most beneficial results.'[85]

Expense was only one aspect of concern to Peel. He was also focussed on the possibility of having yeomanry corps operate beyond their home district. While the relevant legislation made provision for this it stipulated that this should only occur 'during the Continuance of such Invasion, Insurrection, or Rebellion, or the Apprehension thereof'.[86] Nonetheless, this was an exceptional move, and one typical of Peel's view of the need for government to be able to meet its aims irrespective of precedent. Again, his views were forthright and writing to Gregory, the civil under-secretary he explained that:

> Littlehales tells me of difficulties about pay, deficiency of estimate etc. I shall advise him to cut the Gordian knot. I have no notion of being prevented by the letter of an Act of Parliament from averting any serious evil to the State or depriving it of any great benefit. I am sure Parliament will always be ready to sanction a liberal construction of its enactments, when the motive is clearly a good one, and some great advantage is to result.[87]

Peel faced opposition from Sir George Hewitt, but pointed out to Littlehales that if the force showed that such a move could work 'it will raise the whole body in the estimation and confidence of the loyal and in the apprehension and detestation of the disloyal.'[88] Such a move had the support of the lord lieutenant and, in time, the implication of policing Ireland with fewer regular troops changed Hewitt's mind, although as Littlehales noted to Peel, the

[85] Littlehales to Peel, 26 June 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[86] 42 Geo 3 c.68, 1802.
[87] Peel to Gregory, 17 June 1815, in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 177.
[88] Peel to Littlehales, 4 May 1815, in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 176.

Commander's preference was for Yeomanry to concentrate in cities and towns, rather than work in small parties.[89]

"A licentious disposition to outrage and hostility to law" changing tactics in policing

The challenges relating to law and order, discussed in chapter three did not abate as the second decade of the nineteenth century progressed, and the views of government changed little. Over more than a decade, as military under-secretary, Littlehales had witnessed the various attempts at managing 'banditti' using baronial police, militia, yeomanry and regular troops. And, as has been shown, he had ample evidence of the tendency of local gentry and magistrates to either exaggerate incidences or prove to be 'supine' in their attempts to show leadership in addressing them. The system, which was similar in design to that of England, was not equipped to manage the scale and diversity of unrest, or the reticence of those in each locality tasked with leadership. In terms of the forces at the government's disposal, the baronial police were ineffective, while the militia, who could be brought into a locality to assist, often had natural sympathy for those causing the trouble.[90] The yeomanry force, which had such strong natural links with the gentry and magistracy suffered by being concentrated mainly in the north of the country, with many of the incidences of unrest manifesting in counties such as Limerick, Tipperary, Mayo and Kerry. Using this force where possible was a frequent recourse of Dublin Castle, however, as they were seen to be more trustworthy than the militia.

A typical example was outlined in a letter from Littlehales to Peel in November 1813. Referring to a series of incidents in Old Leighlinn in Carlow, Littlehales provided little detail, but informed the chief secretary that 'outrage and lawless spirit' existed.[91] He did, however,

[89] Littlehales to Peel, 28 June 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[90] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p 364.
[91] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

note that there had been a 'variety of representations from magistrates and others, and particularly the Bishop of Ferns' and that 'extensive' correspondence had been held with the Commander of the Forces. Based on this, and in the absence of Peel, the view of the lord lieutenant was that several corps of Yeomanry already present in the vicinity should be placed on permanent duty.[92] This example is illustrative of several key facts. Firstly, unrest in a locality would always instigate alarmed correspondence to Dublin Castle and, as has been shown in examples from the previous decade discussed in Chapter three, establishing the veracity of these took time. Secondly, there tended to be a reluctance on the part of the regular army to get unnecessarily involved in such matters, particularly at an early juncture. From a military perspective, small detachments of peacekeeping troops ran completely contrary to contemporary army doctrine and had been a recurring concern for Kilmainham for many years. Despite this, the regular forces were typically the preferred option of the local gentry, being efficient and with no obvious sympathy with those perpetuating the unrest. However, it was impossible for Dublin Castle to guarantee the size of this force in Ireland, and, as Littlehales knew better than most, coordinating its movement was a complex endeavour, involving liaison with Kilmainham, the regional command and, on occasion, the commander-in-chief in London. A third point was that in the absence of the chief secretary (then in London) the lord lieutenant was prepared to make a decision, especially in light of petitions from senior Church figures. This was his absolute right, but for Peel, having a more systematic and procedural way of addressing such incidents was critical.

Sidmouth, then home secretary, writing from London was clear when he noted the concerns of cabinet:

> that the measure of dividing the army of a large portion of it into small detachments for the purposes of police will never be resorted to, except under the pressure of an indisputable and urgent necessity as it has the effect not only of injuring most

[92] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

> materially the discipline of the troops, but of teaching the inhabitants to trust entirely to military aid, instead of placing their chief reliance on the vigilance and activity of the magistrates and their own prudence and exertion for protection and security.[93]

This summed up the ideal view, and all accepted the merit of keeping the force in concentrated groups, but for government in Ireland, enforcing law and order without undertaking such work was inordinately difficult. Sidmouth noted that such views had been those of Wellington when he had been chief secretary. Peel was stung by the clear comparison to his now storied predecessor and took advantage of Littlehales' long tenure. Availing of his under-secretary's institutional memory he quickly offered the reply that 'Sir E Littlehales was in office with Lord Wellington, and I have not been able to ascertain that more precautions were adopted to prevent the unnecessary dispersion of the military force at that time than at present'.[94] In reality, while Littlehales and Wellington had a good working relationship, the then chief secretary was not in his post for a long period and spent part of it abroad having agreed with the duke of York that such a post would not prevent his military service.[95] As noted in the previous chapter, such an absence offered Littlehales a degree of latitude and the view of Wellington's biographer that much of the chief secretary's 'burden was borne by capable public servants, in particular the two under-secretaries, James Trail (head of the civil department) and Sir Edward Littlehales (head of the military department)' reflects this.[96] As a former military man, Littlehales undoubtedly concurred with Wellington's views but his correspondence shows no evidence of a tendency to evaluate his superiors, rather to work to enable their stated aims.

Preservation of the peace was, however, only one demand on Dublin Castle. Collection of the Revenue, a perennial thorn in the side of the government, tended also to require support from the military. It brought the exact same challenges for the military,

[93] Sidmouth to Peel, 19 Jan. 1814, in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 132.
[94] Sidmouth to Peel, 19 Jan. 1814, in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 132.
[95] Rory Muir, *Wellington: the path to victory 1769-1814* (New Haven, 2013), p. 191.
[96] Muir, *Wellington*, p. 193.

however, in terms of risking a fragmented force, dispersed across a wide area. Littlehales acknowledged as much in a letter to Peel written in April 1815 in which he noted that a request for military support from Sir George Hill an influential MP for Derry, was problematic and that a larger force should, if possible, be assembled. Littlehales was quick to note that such an idea met with the 'entire concurrence' of Sir George Hewitt, the Commander of the Forces, as well as Alexander Marsden, former civil under-secretary and now chair of the Board of Excise. While going to lengths to acknowledge his 'every deference and respect for his [Hill's] local knowledge and opinions', Littlehales was firmly of the view that a large, concentrated force travelling through a region 'is more likely to answer the ends of the Revenue than by keeping small detachments stationary and frequently inactive.'[97] Replying several days later, Peel concurred, and pragmatically noted that the fact that Hewitt was in favour of that plan and was ready to enact it left them 'doubly bound to comply with his wishes'.[98] This speaks to a critical point and to the realpolitik of law enforcement in the post-union era. Any attempt at peacekeeping in the country would always be reliant on the army, at least in part. As such, the civil administration in Dublin Castle had to be able to work in concert with them. For Dublin Castle, any potential change in how things were managed, such as the creation of a new force, would need to surmount these challenges.

Fortunately, Peel was already disposed to what he referred to as a response which saw the 'union of civil and military', having discussed it with Littlehales in relation to unrest in Westmeath earlier in November 1813. But as he conceded in a letter to Littlehales, such a unified approach could only work 'if the magistrates… are prepared to be active and adopt measures of their own.'[99] However, as an example which Littlehales brought to his attention

[97] Littlehales to Peel, 9 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[98] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[99] Peel to Littlehales, 23 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

made clear, this could not be relied upon. Writing to the chief secretary in May 1814, Littlehales referred to the example of troops being sent to Queen's County to support magistrates and a detachment of Yeomanry, noting:

> You will perceive that these Gentlemen in the name of themselves and the Magistracy of the Queen's County pointedly animadvert upon the Remarks made by Sir George Hewett and General Slade in their supineness in scarcely ever having employed the Troops- for the suppression of the excesses therein, and the apprehending of the Offenders- Notwithstanding this feeling it will be apparent to you that until Mr Wilson was sent by Government to this County little activity was manifested in [requiring] the aid of the Troops to cooperate with the civil power.[100]

In administrative terms, Peel and Littlehales faced a situation where local magistrates were quick to call for support, often with a clear preference for a certain type of military support, which Littlehales could not guarantee and which the military commanders did not wish to undertake. Further to this, as had been shown in Chapter three, such a method of policing typically required Dublin Castle to dispatch someone to investigate to ensure that things were addressed as was intended. Despite his military background, there is no evidence that Littlehales was willing to initiate changes to such practice; he seems to have interpreted his role as that of an enabler and a conduit, who facilitated communication and carried out the decisions of others. This was never more evident than in April 1813 when faced with more local unrest in Westmeath and King's County. This unrest was specifically related to the cost of leasing land and, as Littlehales concluded it was, thankfully 'not of a political nature.' Where several years before Littlehales had shown himself willing to actively engage with what was happening on the ground, he was now completely beholden to the status quo and outlined his actions:

> I have been led to these cursory remarks with a view to mention to you that in all the late applications from Magistrates in that part of the Country for Troops (or Reinforcements where Detachments had been already stationed) the most prompt

[100] Littlehales to Peel, 18 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

> attention has been paid by me to such requisitions, and immediate communications made thereupon to The Commander of the Forces for compliance… [101]

After over a decade's service the under-secretary may have been less inclined to get proactively involved in such matters, but Peel was of a different character. While other senior figures in Dublin Castle and Kilmainham had complained about the systems they had at their disposal, Peel attempted to reform them.

There was a contradiction in trying to reinforce the role of central government in responding to episodes of disorder, while also trying to encourage activity on the part of local magistrates and the Grand Juries. Peel recognised this and so his initial idea for revision was a relatively conservative one, involving the use of English, rather than Irish militia units. There was a logic to this, in that the issue of militia loyalty at times of unrest was a longstanding concern. Bringing in English units would remove this risk. As it transpired, the arrival of peace, and the concomitant reduction in militia forces made such an option redundant. With this option removed, Peel decided to try something more radical in the form of the Peace Preservation Force.[102] Planning and ideas around implementation for this force emerged in 1814 during the first peace and Peel took his proposal to Parliament late in the parliamentary session, with the support of Lord Whitworth, the lord lieutenant. The Bill to create the Peace Preservation Force in Ireland was passed at the end of the Parliamentary session and despite providing for the creation of a whole new force of law and order, received little attention either within Parliament or beyond. The Act was passed[103] and was followed quickly by a new Insurrection Act which was to last for three years, and which gave government further powers to deal with matters of unrest.[104] The Peace Preservation Force which arose from this initiative was a structured, more professional force than previous

[101] Littlehales to Peel, 27 Apr. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[102] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 366.
[103] 54 GEO. III c. 33, Peace Preservation Act, 1814.
[104] 54 GEO. III c. 189, Militia pay Act, 1814.

bodies such as the Baronial Police and this new force could be deployed quickly to trouble spots. It gave considerable power to the lord lieutenant, who could proclaim an area to be in a state of disturbance and appoint a chief magistrate who would superintend the pacifying of the area. All relevant officials were to be salaried, and the cost was to be borne by the area in question. Despite the effort Peel had put into to getting it created, it was not considered that the force needed to be large, and when deployed to a troubled area it typically ranged from thirty to fifty men. Such a force was to be disbanded when not in use, with men paid a percentage of their salary during this time.[105]

Littlehales was quick to congratulate the Chief Secretary on a successful speech which Peel had given in Parliament in defence of the proposal but expressed concern at the composition of a prospective force. In his view 'our Yeomanry Brigade Majors, who would probably be reduced would make very efficient Country Police Magistrates' as well as officers from the Militia.'[106] This view, of course, reflected the context of the prospect of peace abroad, which would see both militia and yeomanry reduced critically. Peel did not have a problem with this idea, signifying his agreement in a reply some weeks later, but stipulating the need for 'good character' and insisting that the 'less local connection the persons appear to have, the better'.[107] While the first point has an obvious rationale, the second reflected a desire to avoid any of the problems which had bedevilled the yeomanry and magistracy up to this point; an impartial force, with no loyalty to local interests was clearly the order of the day.

The state of the country did not improve, and early March 1815 saw a flurry of correspondence with updates regarding outbreaks of unrest and 'excesses' in different parts of

[105] Galen Broeker, *Rural disorder and police reform in Ireland, 1812-36* (London, 1970), pp 66-69.
[106] Littlehales to Peel, 1 July 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[107] Peel to Littlehales, 19 July 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

the country, ranging from Kerry, Limerick and Clare to Cavan.[108] In all cases, Littlehales was being briefed by local gentry as to the urgent need to bring regular troops. Despite his experience, Littlehales took these briefings at face value, noting that he had recommended such areas 'being reinforced with troops' to the lord lieutenant.[109] Hewitt the commander-in-chief was less favourably disposed, however. Damning the 'neglect and suspiciousness of the Magistracy and Gentry' he warned of the risk of fragmenting the already dispersed military force any further in policing actions.[110] This was a familiar refrain from Hewitt, who barely a year previously had written to Peel excoriating the magistrates in Tipperary.[111] For the military, the strategy remained consistent, with a clear preference to aggregate troops in key locations rather than have them scattered in small detachments around the country. Accordingly, Hewitt was loath to even consider responding to such requests with regular forces and he made this clear to Littlehales.[112]

Peel's views were, however, mixed. On the one hand, as noted earlier, he had clear concerns around the impact of events in France impacting on 'our internal quiet' and he was clear that it was important for all involved in Dublin to be 'on their guard at all times'.[113] He emphasized the importance of keeping the forces in Ireland due to the threat and had made the lord lieutenant aware of this view.

At the same time, concerns were growing about the state of the yeomanry, which was leading to increased friction with the regular military. For much of March, there had been tensions in Antrim with provocative handbills being posted which, a newspaper noted, had the impact of disrupting manufacturing and provoking 'every kind of excess'. It was also

[108] See for example Bushe to Littlehales, 23 Mar. 1815), Littlehales to Peel, 3 Mar. 1815, Littlehales to Peel, 4 Mar. 1815 (all Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[109] Littlehales to Peel, 3 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[110] Hewitt to Littlehales, 4 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[111] As noted by Peel to Littlehales, Apr. 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[112] As noted by Littlehales to Peel, 20 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[113] Peel to Littlehales, 17 Apr. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

reported that the High Sheriff was refusing to 'consent to the employment of a military force until it should appear that the civil power was insufficient to preserve the peace.'[114] Such an action only emboldened rioters, as did the Sheriffs' organisation and then cancellation of a meeting of magistrates and landowners aimed at finding ways to restore peace.[115] At the same time, the Yeomanry, which might have been expected to contribute to efforts to pacify matters were manifesting what Littlehales would term 'bad spirit' – undoubtedly linked to the prevarication of the Sheriff.[116] This environment prompted the Major General of the District to order the local Brigade Major to request that any attempt to reduce the force in the locality be suspended, which it was hoped would reduce the risk of the yeomanry exacerbating tensions.[117] Such a move had a degree of logic on paper, but it prompted a swift response from Dublin Castle. Littlehales did not wait for approval from Peel, but wrote to agree to a partial suspension, but only of some of the corps.[118] As Littlehales explained to Peel, he decided on this in light of broader long term proposals 'to decrease the Yeomanry Force in the county of Antrim.'[119] This was unusually proactive from the under-secretary and speaks to the feeling of unease which permeated Dublin Castle at the time in light of the return of Napoleon. Peel's view on the matter, which he gave to Littlehales several days later, was unambiguous: he was in complete agreement. He made clear his abhorrence of the attitude of the Yeomanry involved and the idea, as he put it, of Government being 'dictated to by them'; indeed, he drew an explicit link to the behaviour of the Volunteers some decades before, noting 'we must not forget the history of the volunteers – between whom and the yeomanry of Ireland there are certain resemblances'.[120] Allowing the Yeomanry to decide their own actions in this manner ran the risk of 'compromising the authority of government' and could

[114] *Belfast News-Letter*, 7 Mar. 1815.
[115] *Belfast News-Letter*, 14 Mar. 1815.
[116] Littlehales to Peel, 15 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[117] Littlehales to Peel, 15 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[118] Littlehales to Peel, 15 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[119] Littlehales to Peel, 15 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[120] Peel to Littlehales, 19 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

not be tolerated. In concert with this however, regular forces were brought in later in the month with an express intention to protect gentry from 'the violence of our armed yeomanry.'[121] Littlehales' approach and initiative had been vindicated.

While Peel had endorsed Littlehales' approach, by late March he was prepared to go further, and instructed Littlehales to begin to 'quietly' reduce the Yeomanry numbers, and assuring him that any challenge from the force and its supporters should be addressed with strength.[122] Littlehales was quick to agree and assured the chief secretary that 'a very high and decisive tone' would be used if government was challenged on these matters.[123] Challenges did arise with a clearly exasperated Peel offering a view of the force that 'if this is their loyalty it is not worth having'[124] This was an untypical view from a chief secretary, given how close government had been to the Yeomanry Forces since its inception, and was something of uncharted territory for Littlehales who had always tried to work in concert with the force and who baulked at the chief secretary's idea of using the regiments outside of their designated districts, almost as a surrogate militia. In this instance, Littlehales sided with General Hewitt and urged the chief secretary not to use the force at all.[125]

Publicly, Peel was prepared to show sympathy for the position of the gentry, noting that it was not possible to 'succeed in inducing the gentry of Ireland to reside upon their estates, unless they were secure when there.'[126] Moreover, in private he acknowledged the differing levels of zeal among the magistracy. As such he initially conceived of a force which could meet the different needs of not just localities but the varied enthusiasm in the magistracy. He made this explicit in a letter to Lord Desart, penned in February 1814 where

[121] Hewitt to Peel, 21 Mar. 1815 (B.L., Peel Papers, Add MS 40244 ff 184-9.
[122] Peel to Littlehales, 25 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[123] Littlehales to Peel, 29 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[124] Peel to Littlehales, 30 Mar. 1815 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[125] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Mar. 1815 (T.N.A., H.O., 100/183) quoted in Broeker p. 84.
[126] *Hansard 1*, XXXII Commons 27 Feb. 1816.

he noted that 'in the event of a commotion and a general disposition to acts of outrage, we can scarcely expect from them, at least we can only find in very rare instances, the degree of activity and vigilance which is necessary for their suppression.'[127]

This was a different tack to that which he had outlined to Littlehales and he offered the view that if the magistrates of a region were 'active' less intervention would occur than in a region where 'I should wish to put the magistracy to shame and to make them contribute to the expense of their own disgrace'.[128] He continued to offer this view, privately at least, throughout 1814 in letters to trusted confidantes, such as the Speaker of the House, to whom he noted 'the most effectual way I am confident of keeping the country tranquil is by making the inhabitants pay for the luxury of the disturbance'.[129]

The PPF was effective and brought greater, if not complete, peace to the country. Writing to Abbot, Speaker of the House in 1816, Peel noted that the state of Ireland was sufficiently tranquil 'that I have proposed to the Government in England a reduction, which I think they did not expect to the amount of 3000 men in our military establishment.'[130] While this was due in part to improvement in economic circumstances, it did speak to the benefits of the force.[131] By late 1818, it could be said with confidence that the country was free of agrarian related unrest. Peel's force, controlled by civil government, had shown its value, if not its popularity. By setting up a such a force, the administration reduced the potential for politics to interfere with the legitimate military function. Ultimately the force would not last and was replaced after Peel left Ireland by the more substantial Royal Irish Constabulary in 1822. The fact that the Peace Preservation Force itself did not last does not argue against the merits of the model - it can be seen as a critical step to the formation of a more established

[127] Peel to Desart, 24 Feb 1814 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 142.
[128] Peel to Desart, 24 Feb. 1814 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 142.
[129] Peel to Abbot, 30 Sept 1814 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 155.
[130] Peel to Abbot, 25 Dec. 1816, in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 236.
[131] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 372.

police force. This was a new and innovative approach to managing unrest for all involved, but for Littlehales who was used to engaging with the occasionally cumbersome cooperation of the army, militia and yeomanry, it must have been revelatory. However, the need for it, could only have confirmed his long-held views as regards the magistrates, whose failings had been made all too clear to him in previous cases of unrest.

As a young politician and administrator, Peel took the chance offered to him by coming to Ireland. While he showed an aptitude across his full brief, he showed a particular interest and capacity for matters of law and order. It is tempting to speculate this was in part due to his lack of history with the military forces. He had not, like his predecessor Castlereagh, served in the militia or the regular army (as had Littlehales) and perhaps this afforded him greater objectivity in viewing military matters and perceiving the merits of change. Also, conditions were ripe for such a character. On the one hand, sufficient time had elapsed since the passing of the union, meaning that the necessity of meeting the obligations that had been made, which had hindered others, had receded. Littlehales, having seen how the union promises had constrained the ability of previous administrators to act must have been aware of this. And this view pervaded the entire senior administration with the lord lieutenant, the duke of Richmond, setting a clear tone in early 1813 when he stated 'I must in the first instance say that I do not feel myself bound by any of what is usually called union promises.'[132] Such a view was unambiguous and freed Castle officials from an onerous and limiting set of obligations. Beyond this, in the summer of 1813 the duke of Richmond was replaced as lord lieutenant by Viscount Whitworth who was content to give his chief secretary a relatively free hand. And, in terms of his broader environment Peel worked to cultivate a good relationship with Hewitt, Commander of the Forces as well as with the civil under-secretary, William Gregory. It is evident that he valued Littlehales' length of service

[132] Richmond to Peel, 3 Mar. 1813 (N.L.I., Richmond papers, MS 61/380).

and legacy knowledge, but their relationship in Dublin was punctuated by a recurring series of demands made by Peel that the under-secretary simply was incapable of delivering, either due to his personality or his inability to adapt to the new way of doing things. It is no coincidence that, under Peel, the civil under-secretary, William Gregory, began to assume a more prominent role in matters which might be defined as 'military', with a clear increase in such correspondence either including him or being referred to him.[133] It is notable that the Peace Preservation Force, which had such a strong military aspect and was a clear tool in the management of internal unrest, saw significant involvement by the civil under-secretary, a figure who until Peel's arrival had typically had much less involvement in forces such as the militia and yeomanry. This trend would continue, with Littlehales becoming increasingly marginalised over the remaining years of his tenure. How much of this was due to Peel reshaping the administration around those he deemed most capable is not clear – but certainly Littlehales had not worked with him as effectively as he might have hoped. On a more personal level, there is evidence that, despite a superficial cordiality, Peel was not particularly well disposed towards Littlehales as suggested by a cutting aside in a letter penned in May 1816. Writing to the lord lieutenant from London, Peel noted that he expected Littlehales to arrive in the capital shortly, however 'as large bodies move slowly, we have yet heard nothing of him'.[134] In another letter a few days later, Peel was equally snide:

> Sir Edward is arrived in great force. I really, though knowing him so well and the things which are uppermost in his mind was not prepared for the answer he gave me to the first question I asked him which was "How matters were going in Ireland?" He said that you had given more dinners within the months of February, March, and April than he ever remembered; that people had been asked in their turn and out of their turn; that everything had gone off perfectly well, except on one unfortunate night, on which Lady Manners had a party at the time there was another party at the Castle. I

[133] Before Gregory became under-secretary, very little of this manner of correspondence would involve the civil under-secretary. However, he formed a strong working relationship with Peel and Whitworth and both communicated readily with him on military matters. See as examples: Littlehales to Peel, 17 Nov. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive) and Whitworth to Gregory, 18 Mar. 1815 and 23 Apr. 1815 in William Gregory, *Mr. Gregory's letter-box, 1813-1830* (London, 1898), p. 63.
[134] Peel to Whitworth, 25 May 1816 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 226.

> think Sir Edward is rather surprised that these subjects formed no part of the debate on the state of Ireland.[135]

This was an unusually low remark from a chief secretary who worked hard to cultivate relationships but stands as an exception in his correspondence. By this juncture, Peel had been working with Littlehales for four years and such a quote suggests a degree of frustration at his colleague's superficiality. While it has been noted that the lack of personal correspondence makes it difficult to form a clear picture of Littlehales as a private individual, he was undoubtedly a dedicated administrator, if perhaps lacking the measure of initiative that Peel might have expected.

Such remarks aside, most communication was amiable, if not notably warm. Peel did, however, do Littlehales' one very significant service, which offers a useful insight into the minds of both men. In 1817, in accordance with the will of his cousin Peter William Baker, M.P., of Ranston in Dorsetshire, Littlehales was left a substantial sum with several minor conditions, which were not onerous, the main one being that he change his surname from Littlehales to Baker.[136] He was known henceforth as Sir Edward Baker Baker. Mindful of his newfound wealth, and with his usual desire to do what he considered the right thing, in February 1817 Littlehales was moved to offer to surrender his pension entitlements, explaining that at the point that he had obtained his entitlements he 'was not only not possessed of my late accession of fortune' but had thought that the chance of attaining such an inheritance was 'so exceedingly removed that I scarcely indulged a hope that it would have delivered personally on me'. Accordingly, having now received the unexpected inheritance Littlehales sought to do what he considered right, but also to make clear that he did not expect others to follow suit. As he put it in a letter to Peel, 'I mention this circumstance merely to show that the steps that I have taken rest upon very peculiar grounds

[135] Peel to Whitworth, 27 May 1816 in Parker, *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers,* i, p. 227.
[136] *The Gentleman's magazine and historical chronicle*, May 1825.

and cannot in the slightest degree be drawn into precedent as affecting others in office whose situations may be I conceive totally dissimilar.'[137] Such a way of thinking encapsulated Littlehales – seeking to do what he considered correct, which meant thinking of what he perceived as the public good. At the same time, there was, for him, clear potential that his actions might be misinterpreted or have unintended consequences, which he felt the need to note and perhaps guard against. As a personal trait, this was commendable, but it is suggestive of a degree of equivocation which can also be seen in his professional decision making. Peel, as ever had a clear view and one which was not influenced by sentiment. In his reply he was unequivocal, noting that Littlehales had earned his pension entitlement and that forgoing it would not realise any notable good to the greater public. As such Peel stressed:

> I am strongly inclined to advise you not to relinquish your pension during your continuance in office. I really see no one reason why you should do so. Unless you relinquish your office in a year the sum gained to the public is very trifling and what they do gain they gain on no principle

For Peel, such a proposal had no material benefit, but he also appealed to Littlehales' sense of duty – both in the sense of personal duty, and in the sense of duty to colleagues:

> I think from your length of service you have fairly and honestly earned the pension granted to you.
>
> It matters little to the public whether you are less in need of the pension now than you were when it was granted. The pension was the reward of service performed. Though you can afford to relinquish it others cannot make the same sacrifice and yet it places them in an embarrassing situation if they withhold it.
>
> I enjoin you therefore for the sake of yourself who have the pension and for the sake of the Government which granted it to you - for the sake of Gregory - who has a similar pension for the sake of the public who ought not to accept contributions from their servants - I enjoin you for the sake of all these parties to retain the reward- the honourable and well-earned reward of long and faithful service[138]

[137] Littlehales to Peel, 11 Feb. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/417).
[138] Peel to Littlehales, 16 Feb. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/419).

Peel closed with an acknowledgement of Littlehales' laudable motives but concluded that he could not agree to his proposal on a point of principle. Littlehales hastened to reply and seemed glad to agree with Peel: 'being at all times desirous to defer to your better judgment' he wrote, 'I have no hesitation in abandoning my intention of relinquishing my pension.'[139] Given his response, it is open to conjecture whether Littlehales was sincere in his original proposal, but he was inclined towards deference and obedience. As such, it is credible to conclude he was both genuine and well intentioned.

Peel's tenure in Ireland highlights the limitations of military governance and of Littlehales' own approach and his efficacy. By the time of Peel's arrival he was in his late forties and had limited exposure to such a dynamic administrator, or indeed to one who stayed for as long as Peel did. As we will see in the next chapter, his career would not long outlast Peel's time in Ireland.

[139] Littlehales to Peel, 18 Feb. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/419).

Chapter 5: The demise of the military under-secretary

Littlehales and Peel worked together for six years. This represented the longest working relationship Littlehales had with a chief secretary, and, after a challenging start, he developed a functional mode of engaging with Peel. Reviewing Littlehales' career, this period shows a clear sense of him being held to account to a higher degree than hitherto. Perhaps unsurprisingly, his communications with the chief secretary continued to be suffused with a degree of defensiveness that was not as evident in most of his other interactions and the pattern which had been established of him forming strong associations with his seniors ceased. Where characters such as Cornwallis, Hardwicke and even Castlereagh had a degree of warmth to their professional correspondence with Littlehales, Peel was far more business-like. It is tempting to attribute this to Peel's character and while this may have been true in part, the reality is that the chief secretary was much warmer in his communication to Gregory, his civil under-secretary. That said, whether or not Peel liked his military under-secretary, Littlehales had his uses, with his institutional knowledge and devotion to procedure complementing the chief secretary's vision and innovation. Perhaps understandably given their roles, the final defeat of Napoleon marks a critical inflection point, completely changing the focus of military administration in Ireland. Very quickly, the near existential dread of invasion coupled with the need for constant vigilance in terms of internal policing changed. The external threat was gone, leaving the focus solely on internal matters and, in the years after Waterloo, Ireland became less restive. Even if internal matters had not improved, the view of London was clear – the threat was over and spending on military resources was to be curtailed. Managing this need for economy in a way that did not compromise the internal peace of the country was the key challenge facing Littlehales in the last years of his long tenure. As such, this chapter will examine his last years as under-secretary, which saw him

work not only with Peel, but also with the succeeding chief secretary Charles Grant and with the Earl Talbot, who succeeded Whitworth as lord lieutenant in 1817. To begin, the need for greater economy after Waterloo will be examined, as this is instructive in showing tensions in the administration in a time of peace, but it also illustrates the challenges which arose for Littlehales as the administration recalibrated around him. Following this, attention will turn to the change in personality which occurred, firstly with a new lord lieutenant and subsequently with the departure of Peel. In an administration where personality played a crucial role, such changes brought change for all, but especially for Littlehales.

The new post-war reality was evident to Peel as he attended parliament in the year following Waterloo and he was quick to keep Littlehales appraised. As early as 1816, Peel was told that the Peace Establishment, the number of armed forces considered necessary, was to number no more than 25,000 men, with the militia to be reduced almost completely as quickly as possible.[1] While Peel was confident that he could delay some of the reductions, the issue of incomplete or inaccurate information which had plagued him since the start of his tenure was again evident with information being sent to him in a piecemeal and contradictory fashion. As an example, the commissariat estimates that Peel received from the Commander of the Forces were predicated on a significantly higher number of troops than he and Littlehales had agreed.[2] Much of the last part of Littlehales' and Peel's working relationship was occupied with the need for reduction in the various military forces and this proved to be a time-consuming endeavour for Littlehales in particular.

As noted in the previous chapter, during the initial years of his tenure Peel's eye for detail had prompted an annual interrogation of various Dublin Castle officials over the provision of information relating to the military estimates. This had been an important issue

[1] Norman Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel: the life of Sir Robert Peel to 1830* (London, 1961), p. 197.
[2] Peel to Littlehales, 13 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

during wartime, but post-war reduction accentuated the need for the chief secretary to have accurate information in order to make the best possible argument to London for the retention of resources and manpower.

The reductions made in 1816 had passed muster, and as he faced the customary debate on the matter of army estimates in the 1817 parliamentary session, Peel was keen to table a version of the estimates which he felt was credible and showed progress in efficiency and savings. This he did in March 1817, informing parliament 'that an assimilation had taken place in the services of the two countries, and a considerable saving had been made in the Irish regiments.'[3] The funds for the army in Ireland nonetheless remained considerable, and greatly in excess of those assigned to forces in England.[4] Anticipating further debate about the scale of force needed in a time of peace, Peel sent a detailed and extensive document to Littlehales, asking for comparative figures between the current year and 1792. These were furnished, but Peel was not satisfied and sought to create a narrative stretching back a century, to establish that there had always been a standing army in Ireland. Critically, he asked Littlehales to confer with Sir George Beckwith (then Commander of the Forces) to provide 'any military reason for having a larger force in Ireland now than in 1792', especially as the earlier year had no yeomanry or militia. The question to be answered was 'why in a year of profound peace [1817] with a militia staff and with 30,000 yeomanry why do you propose to retain 23,000 rank and file?' The answer, Peel concluded, could only be 'the increased turbulence of the country'. This, he informed Littlehales, was the only valid defence for the larger figure.[5]

Littlehales' reply asserted that part of the reason for the larger number was the 'extensive military works' and infrastructure that had been implemented to enhance defence

[3] *Hansard 1* cc 917-945, 10 Mar. 1817.
[4] *Hansard 1* cc 917-945, 10 Mar. 1817.
[5] Peel to Littlehales, 20 Apr. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/431).

at sites such as Cork Harbor and the River Shannon since 1792.[6] He also noted that the skeletal militia force no longer had any function beyond guarding depots and that the Yeomanry, which by 1817 was poorly equipped and clothed, 'can scarcely be employed in the execution of any military duties'[7] A week later Littlehales could confirm that, having conferred further with Sir George Beckwith, he and Beckwith considered it ' expedient to retain at least our existing forces'.[8] This was a difficult position for the military under-secretary who had to articulate the need for government-led reductions to a military command who were ambivalent at best about it. At the same time, Littlehales needed to retain sufficient trust from that same leadership in order to ensure that a quick and efficient military response could be managed, should circumstances require it.

Whatever his private opinion, Peel had little choice but to confirm the explanation offered by Littlehales, and as the estimates made their way through Parliament he offered a vigorous defence for the size of the army and the commensurate expense, with various members of parliament questioning the need for such resources at a time of 'profound peace'[9]. In his defence of the estimates, Peel leaned heavily on the information provided to him by Littlehales and offered a variety of examples to show how internal unrest continued to pervade the country, as well as citing the view of the military that, if anything, more troops were needed than were afforded for in the estimates. In addition to the detail provided relating to the overarching need, Littlehales had kept Peel appraised of a variety of 'depredations' that had occurred and that, in his opinion, merited the deployment of even more troops, including a detachment which had been sent out of the country.[10] During the debate Peel was also quick to inform the house that such a force did little to benefit him, for

[6] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Apr. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/433).
[7] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Apr. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/433).
[8] Littlehales to Peel, 30 Apr. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/436).
[9] *Hansard 1* cc 533-559, 13 May 1817.
[10] Littlehales to Peel, 4 Mar. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

the civil government of Ireland had no share of the military patronage; somewhat testily, he stressed that the 'present staff' in Dublin had been much reduced also.[11] Again he had evidence, having asked Littlehales to send him an account of the numbers in his office some months earlier.[12] What prompted these assertions is not clear – there was no evident accusation of self interest in the parliamentary debate on the matter. Moreover, despite his defensiveness, Peel had strong support from senior figures such as Castlereagh and the estimates were passed by a substantial majority. In the past, Parliament might have debated aspects of the estimates, and especially the accuracy and rationale of certain figures, but the impact of peace presented a new test for both Peel and Littlehales in terms of striking the balance between economy and articulating the clear need to maintain a force sufficient for what was required in a still volatile country.

The need for economy affected all the forces in Ireland in different ways. In the case of the militia and yeomanry, the directions were quite clear. In terms of the regular army the situation was perhaps more nuanced and, in direct contrast to his role during wartime, Littlehales had to devote much more of his time to this force than either the militia or Yeomanry. As noted, any reduction in the military force could not be the result simply of a bilateral discussion between Peel and Littlehales; ensuring the cooperation of the Commander of the Forces, who was based in Kilmainham, was essential. This cooperation could not be taken for granted, given that the commander was effectively being asked to reduce his force and, arguably, his influence. During the initial phase of reduction, the Commander of the Forces was Sir George Hewett and the initial steps towards reduction actually came from Kilmainham, rather than from Dublin Castle. As early as February 1816, Littlehales informed Peel that Hewett had proposed that the English regiments currently in Ireland be transferred

[11] *Hansard 1* cc 533-559, 13 May 1817.
[12] Peel to Littlehales, 12 Mar. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

back home. This proposal was practicable, immediately reducing the establishment in a straightforward and uncontentious manner. Littlehales was clear in his agreement, with one key qualification – it was critical that forces in disturbed areas were not demonstrably weakened.[13] Despite the optimism in the year after Waterloo, this was a justified concern: internal unrest was reduced but not completely absent, and Littlehales, writing from Dublin, was undoubtedly more aware of this than Peel in London. Littlehales' concern about the need to continue to afford protection to communities during periods of unrest did not abate in the period after Waterloo and were shared by the new Commander of the Forces Sir George Beckwith. Beckwith having been appointed in late 1816, was quick to bring Littlehales' attention to such matters, especially in light of the reduction in his force and Littlehales duly kept Peel appraised of the commander's military concerns.[14] Beckwith's concerns did not dissipate with time, but Littlehales had a strong working relationship with Beckwith and despite the commander of the force's misgivings, Littlehales was able to inform Peel that he had secured Beckwith's 'general acquiescence' to proceed as Dublin Castle wished, despite the diminution of the force available to him.[15]

This, Littlehales may have felt, represented a triumph, but praise was sparing from his superior, who continued to write from London to urge the need for reduction. In addition to economic savings, Peel noted a desire for consistency with the English system in so far as was possible across all forces. In one letter, he stressed the need for allowances to be 'precisely on the same footing' between both countries and directed Littlehales to draft a bill 'cutting down our staff- to the extent of the present English staff'. This, he suggested, would save £25,000. By this point in their relationship, Peel was less didactic in his language and was quick to seek Littlehales' view, rather than simply instructing him to act. In this vein he

[13] Littlehales to Peel, 12 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[14] Littlehales to Peel, 20th Nov. 1816, Peel to Littlehales, 25 Dec. 1816, Littlehales to Peel, 27 Dec. 1816, Littlehales to Peel, 18th Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[15] Littlehales to Peel, 18 Feb. 1818 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

left the door open for feedback from the under-secretary, noting 'If there are difficulties of which I am not aware of course you will suggest them to me.'[16] As it transpired, Littlehales was in complete agreement with the reduction, but also with some proposed changes which would see non-commissioned officers who were leaving the Militia being used as part of the Peace Preservation Force.[17] This was an astute proposal, which again saved money, while providing the force with experienced members, and was included as part of a number of amendments to the force in 1817 that greatly enhanced its acceptance by the local communities.[18]

Reductions continued at pace and in early 1817 Littlehales estimated that a further decrease in officers in the infantry would yield an additional £15,000 in savings.[19] However, on the same day he wrote to inform the chief secretary that the continued unrest in areas such as Donegal required additional military resources and Littlehales was pessimistic about the financial implications, noting 'our Barrack Estimates will, I fear, be unavoidably, much augmented by these measures.'[20]

These reductions brought clear military and policing implications and Littlehales and Peel were fortunate that Sir George Beckwith, a more amenable character than some of his predecessors, occupied the role of Commander of the Forces and proved willing to work in concert with the civil administration. Littlehales, who had been in the middle of more than one altercation between Kilmainham and Dublin Castle, clearly appreciated the efforts made by Beckwith, informing Peel in February 1817 that 'I am sure that you feel that no Commander of the Forces has more cordially co-operated with us, in promptly affording, to

[16] Peel to Littlehales, 30 Jan. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[17] Littlehales to Peel, 3 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[18] Galen Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force' in *Journal of Modern History, xxxiii*, no 4 (Dec. 1961), p. 372.
[19] Littlehales to Peel, 6 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[20] Littlehales to Peel, 6 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

the extent of his means, the Military assistance which we have required.'[21] By this point Littlehales had worked with eight commanders and was clearly appreciative of Beckwith's approach. For his part, he was keen to collaborate and was prepared to support the requests from senior military figures where he considered them to be valid.

On occasion, however, Littlehale's willingness to support the military led to problems, and his backing in early 1817 for a proposed staff estimate that suggested a need for three permanent Assistant Quarter Masters when there were only two currently serving proved problematic.[22] Peel was, as ever, quick to see the detail and questioned Littlehales on the rationale for increasing staff at a time of economy. Littlehales' answer was short, noting the concern of the General who managed the unit he stated that he had 'personal knowledge' of the officers who had been omitted and reinforced General Airey's 'earnest expectation' that their situations would not be affected.[23] In many ways this epitomised the challenge which Littlehales had faced over many years: he was close to the military, but beholden to his civil masters. Ostensibly, this represented a clear error of judgment from Littlehales, but Peel proceeded more tactfully than he might have done a few years previously and his dealing with the situation, while terse, left an opening for explanation and defence, with the question 'is the omission … a mistake?'[24] As it transpired, the full complement of officers had not been accounted for in the originally submitted estimates. This was a clerical error which Littlehales defended, stating: 'I am sure that you will feel that readily imputable to the extreme haste in which the Military Estimates were unavoidably prepared, but more particularly from the frequent alterations which were made in them.'[25] While this may have been a valid argument, it illustrates a clear evolution in the under-secretary's tone. Here, we

[21] Littlehales to Peel, 18 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[22] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[23] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[24] Peel to Littlehales, 22 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[25] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

see little of the apologetic tenor that characterized Littlehales' early correspondence with Peel. It is notable and somewhat typical of Littlehales that his sense of duty led him to support the request from General Airey *before* he investigated it, rather than refraining from commenting until he had ascertained what had happened. Peel's reply was unusually conciliatory: he noted that it was 'unfortunate' that this omission had happened but did not assign any blame. Again, in an uncharacteristic moment of doubt Peel asked Littlehales to explain his role in the episode to Airey, noting 'I hope you have told General Airey that it was through no fault of mine that these officers were omitted- and you may now tell him that I will do all I can to have them included.'[26]

Beckwith's 'acquiescence', noted earlier, only went so far. While he was prepared to make do with a diminished force, he noted the limitations that such reductions entailed. A key area for him, and ultimately for both Littlehales and Peel, was the role of the army in matters of revenue. Indeed, Littlehales, on more than one occasion, described the role of the army post-Waterloo as being to 'support… the civil and revenue services of the country.'[27] Historically, the Board of Excise was the body tasked with the suppression of lucrative illicit distillation. Such distillation typically occurred in remote areas and was guarded by large, armed groups.[28] Consequently, attempts by the Board to investigate such activity tended to require the assistance of a strongly armed guard. In practice, this was a duty which the regular army had undertaken, and it made significant demands on the force. However, the reduction in the force left both Beckwith and Littlehales concerned about the ability of the army to continue to undertake this role. This had been flagged to Peel by Littlehales during the initial tranche of reductions in early 1816, when he had given Peel the specific details of how many troops typically were involved in this work, going as far back as 1806.[29] There were, he

[26] Peel to Littlehales, 28 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[27] Littlehales to Peel, 18 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[28] Jim Herlihy, *The Irish revenue police* (Dublin, 2018), p. 6.
[29] Littlehales to Peel, 22 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

explained, a lack of credible alternatives, with the militia being both greatly reduced and focussed in their localities and the Yeomanry being 'interdicted by Regulation from being employed upon Revenue Services.'[30] At the time, Peel's chief concern, as he explained to Littlehales, was not whether the army should be supported in prosecuting its revenue duties, but whether Littlehales could furnish him with 'strong facts of instance' which would allow him build a case and show the potential cost of not having the force empowered to do this work.[31] The ability of the army to prosecute such duties was undermined by a change in orders proposed by Beckwith's predecessor, Sir George Hewett, in 1816. These revised orders adopted in 1817 were, as Littlehales explained, intended to prevent the separation of Military Detachments. What this meant in practice was that troops were not to conduct such work, 'unless attended by a Commissioned Officer.' [32] The thinking behind this was to avoid any unnecessary confrontation between troops and the populace – either those involved in the illegal distillation activity, or those who were mistakenly considered to be. There was a clear military logic in this approach, but it made the processes of conducting revenue work considerably more difficult for the force and it had an immediate and negative impact.

One potential solution emerged in 1817 in the form a proposal to establish a revenue police, managed by the Board of Excise which could support its work. This proposal caught both Peel and Littlehales off guard and elicited a quick response from the former, who was in London. In a letter dated 16 May, Peel was unambiguous, directing Littlehales to inform the Board 'that they will immediately suspend all proceedings for establishing what is termed a Revenue Police'.[33] Peel's view was very clear: he wanted Littlehales to inform the Board that such a proposal was in its infancy and should not proceed without the endorsement of Government. The Peace Preservation Force, he contended, was subject to a rigorous process

[30] Littlehales to Peel, 21 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[31] Peel to Littlehales, 14 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[32] Littlehales to Peel, 4 Mar. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[33] Peel to Littlehales, 16 May 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/504).

of Governmental oversight which occurred before the force was deployed in a disturbed district. Sending out another prospective police force without this oversight could create a situation where 'a very serious responsibility may be imposed upon the government' with the potential for the excise led force contradicting the intention of the government mandated force.[34] Littlehales was only partially successful and what ultimately emerged was a fudge at best – the force itself was not constituted, but the establishment of several Revenue Police Stations in Mayo and Sligo were. This move was approved by the lord lieutenant in April 1818 and was sufficiently vague to allow a local inspector general of Revenue to hire a small number of men from ex-military background 'to be employed in aiding in the suppression of illicit distillation.'[35] Ultimately, a fully functional Revenue Police would only be constituted many years later, in 1834. Nevertheless, the establishment of such infrastructure represented an untypical setback for Peel. As for Littlehales, it is unclear how strongly he felt about the creation of the new force, but while he had played a role in the genesis of the Peace Preservation Force, he was quickly becoming marginalised in relation to the armed forces.

"Every possible retrenchment" – economy in the War Office

As work continued to reduce military forces in light of peace, Littlehales was forced to grapple with the issue of reduction closer to home, in the military department in Dublin itself. Peel insisted that reductions should apply to the military department in Dublin Castle as well as to the military forces and Littlehales obliged. By early 1817, the staff of the Yeomanry Office had been significantly reduced from fourteen to eight, which represented the pre-war figure.[36] It should be noted that Peel's point about reductions in the staff in Dublin was not bluster; the drive towards economy permeated every aspect of the administration. In the main, Littlehales was in agreement with the necessity for such moves, even down to some

[34] Peel to Littlehales, 16 May 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/504).
[35] Jim Herlihy, *The Irish revenue police*, p. 9.
[36] Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel*, p. 232.

very minor details. In late March, having been told of 'the absolute necessity of every possible retrenchment' Littlehales reported back on the reduction planned in 'English and Irish Newspapers, Gazettes which have been heretofore furnished for my Department'.[37] This sense of frugality and reduction applied also to everyday items – in the same letter Littlehales noted that he agreed with the revised allowance for coals and candles, and observed that he had 'repeatedly mentioned my opinion to different chief secretaries on this matter over the years'.[38] He changed his view, however, after a discussion with Gregory, his civil counterpart, who noted that he was not reducing the newspapers for his clerks. On this basis, Littlehales noted that his clerks are 'precisely in the same predicament' and therefore should receive 'a continuance of this indulgence'.[39] There was a strong degree of equivocation in this argument, as at the same time Littlehales was clear that 'the diminution of Force in this Country must necessarily lead to a decrease of expense' in other areas and stressed that he would be zealous in continuing to reduce expenses.[40]

Despite such statements, Littlehales' views were not as clearly defined as he might have suggested and there was one further area where his sense of economy did not apply: his own allowances. In March 1817 he faced a query about his allowances, and tellingly it came, not directly from Peel, but via Gregory. His reply was clear in his view as to their legitimacy

> Upon your question as to the period when the Allowances refer to which you commenced, I think it necessary, with regard to myself to remark that my predecessor enjoyed what I have done since I have held my present situation- and having occasion some years since to look into this description of expenditure I found that these emoluments existed for at least twenty years antecedent to the Union- if not from the formation of the office.[41]

[37] Littlehales to Peel, 28 Mar. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[38] Littlehales to Peel, 28 Mar. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[39] Littlehales to Peel, 17 Apr. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[40] Littlehales to Peel, 26 Apr. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[41] Littlehales to Peel, 28 Mar. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Littlehales was nothing if not dutiful, and it is tempting to view this attitude as a simple 'black and white' view of what his role (rather than his person) was afforded. In most cases the amounts were not particularly significant, but one allowance of £200, relating to accommodation, represented approximately 20% of his salary.[42] Littlehales defended this and his other allowances for sundries such as candles and newspapers from the perspective of precedent as they had been long established, stretching back in some cases to 1777, with a report in parliament some years later simply referring to 'other allowances for a country house etc.'[43] Furthermore, Littlehales was almost certainly aware that, for much of his career, the civil under-secretary role had carried with it a slightly higher salary.[44] Less personally, allowances in addition to salary were prevalent across the administration and the military at the time. As such, Littlehales clearly felt entitled to his allowances due to the post he held and the environment in which he operated. The idea that this was not a question of personal greed is buttressed by his previously stated desire to forgo his pension, but it was a clear deviation from the financially prudent approach which he had otherwise endorsed and may suggest that, as late as 1817, Littlehales anticipated his post being retained after he retired. In effect, Littlehales had operated in a wartime environment for almost two decades and while that had brought with it many challenges, the necessity to defend and police the island had been incontrovertible and this mission had been ably resourced. Having experienced the old world of privilege, discretionary emoluments and military expenditure, as an administrator he struggled with the new world of greater fiscal responsibility at a granular level.

By now, Gregory was heavily involved in military matters, which set a new precedent that came at Littlehales' expense. Their relationship was cordial, but Gregory was not shy in

[42] Hardwicke to Pelham, 26 Aug. 1801 (B.L., Hardwicke Papers, Add MS. 35771, f 7).
[43] House of Commons Report from select committee on civil government charges 14 Oct. 1831 p. 67.
[44] House of Commons Report from select committee on civil government charges 14 Oct. 1831 p. 67.

insinuating himself into areas where previous civil under-secretaries had previously feared to tread. Within two years of his appointment, he was fielding queries on the internal security of the country and offering his views to Littlehales. Even his tone and phrasing began to mirror that of Peel, as shown in a letter he wrote to Littlehales in June 1814, which began 'I have nothing to add to your letter which is in every particular correct.'[45] Such language was suggestive of a senior writing to a subordinate, and while it might have been expected of a character such as Cooke, who had been such an institution as under-secretary, it was an unusual tone for a colleague to take.

By this juncture, Littlehales' most valued attribute was his legacy knowledge, based on nearly two decades service in Dublin. The benefit of such knowledge was not lost on Peel, who was quick to take advantage of it when possible. When facing a decision about enforcement of the Insurrection Act, Peel directed Gregory to ask Littlehales for a brief precis of the use of the legislation in the past. This was quickly forthcoming, with Littlehales writing:

> Gregory having given me the perusal of your letter requiring all the information that could promptly be collected, relative to the disturbances in Louth and the circumstances which rendered it expedient to enforce the provisions of the Insurrection Act therein, I have given him all the documents in my possession to forward to you altho' I am not aware that they will materially assist your object I do not know whether any value may attach to the late Lord Cornwallis's opinion respecting the necessity of the Government of Ireland being fortified with the powers which this Law gives but he desired me to mention to Mr. Pitt, when speaking on other important matters, that he considered, notwithstanding the War was then closing, that the Insurrection Act should not be suffered to expire, but on the contrary that the Lord Lt. should continue to be invested with this authority until some favorable change should be wrought in the minds of the people__ Lord Cornwallis however desired me to add that this power ought to be exercised with great discretion and in cases of emergency only.[46]

[45] Gregory to Littlehales, 16 June 1814 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/553).
[46] Littlehales to Peel, 6 May 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Such a reply is notable for several reasons, not least highlighting that the aging under-secretary was still of use to the administration. Beyond this however, the legacy of Littlehales' predisposition to form strong attachments with senior figures was evident in his reference of Cornwallis' opinion from years before. Littlehales was sufficiently courteous to note that such an opinion might no longer have value, but it is clear that he still valued the view of his former mentor and those bonds.

It is tempting to view such a response as infused with nostalgia, as, even allowing for the changed circumstances brought on by Napoleon's defeat, Littlehales was facing a significant recalibration in his role for the first time. What he thought of these reductions and the implication for his role is not evident, but it is likely that his recent inheritance, which made him wealthy and gave him a country seat in England, left him more sanguine about his situation. And change was evident, with Gregory, the civil under-secretary corresponding directly with Peel on some military matters by early 1817, including discussions with local magistrates and military figures, which certainly constituted an evolution in the role of civil under-secretary. This development led Norman Gash to suggest that 'the civil under-secretary was one of the half-dozen men who constituted the real government of Ireland.'[47] Such a view would not have been accurate before Peel, but with Gregory's role developing, it was rapidly becoming a reality. Littlehales seemed remarkably comfortable with this, referring to it in letters without comment. Writing to Peel on a disturbance in the north in early 1817, he appeared neutral about the civil under-secretary's involvement, even when that involvement arguably strayed into the arena of agrarian unrest and disturbances, which typically were the bailiwick of the military under-secretary. As such, even when he had military information to furnish to the chief secretary, he was at pains to be respectful. Writing to Peel with 'further information' he had received from a Colonel in a disturbed district,

[47] Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel*, p. 113

Littlehales took care to preface his intelligences with a disclaimer noting 'I entertain[ed] no doubt that Gregory has conveyed to you, from time to time, the information which has been communicated from Major General Dalzell, and the Magistrates and Gentlemen in the disturbed parts of the County of Donegal.'[48]

Littlehales' zeal for appropriate behaviour did, however, lead him into potential conflict with his civil equivalent. As was customary, the absence of one under-secretary led to the other managing both departments, something Littlehales acknowledged in letter to Peel in May 1817, in which he noted that he would 'keep a good look out' during the civil under-secretary's absence for family reasons.[49] In most instances this practice raised few major issues, but in 1818, during Gregory's absence, Littlehales received a request from an official in the civil under-secretary's office for £1000. This he reported to Peel, admitting that such requests had been made to him in the past when he had managed the civil department in the absence of Gregory's predecessors. On every occasion, he made clear, he had been happy to let the civil under-secretary know that 'this trite manner of applying for an advance of the public money was quite contrary to the practice in my own department, in which, as you know, it is an invariable rule not to give an order upon the treasury with regular estimates or other ostensible documents'. Littlehales was quick to reassure Peel that this was simply a matter of appropriate behaviour. He made no comment on Gregory offering only a defence of his actions and explaining that 'I should not hesitate for a moment, in signing any order to which Gregory would affix his name, far less to one which would be authenticated by you.'[50] Despite the assertions of conciliation and cooperation, the tone here was more dogmatic than previously and it is hard not to view Littlehales' comments as an episode of administrative pedantry. Littlehales was fussy at the best of times, but the tone of passive aggression was

[48] Littlehales to Peel, 10 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[49] Littlehales to Peel, 16 May 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/444).
[50] Littlehales to Peel, 9 May 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/491).

notable and suggests an increasingly marginalised official, keen to offer a belated show of force, albeit in his usual proper manner.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, as the plans for disembodying the militia came closer to fruition, resistance arose. At the direction of Peel, Littlehales informed the Colonels of the plan, only to encounter what he called 'considerable opposition'. One militia Colonel, he reported, told him that it was 'an infringement of the Magna Charta [sic] of the Irish Militia' and that such a move would never get through Parliament.[51] In a rare moment of dry wit, Littlehales informed Peel that he had suggested to Colonel Bagwell that it was likely that the savings of some £30,000 would probably make the proposal acceptable to Parliament, but at the same time, he was concerned and told Peel to expect further 'remonstrance' from other senior figures.[52] Ultimately, the imperative for reduction carried the day and an act to reduce the force passed in July 1817.[53]

The situation with the Yeomanry was similar but, in many ways, represented a greater neutering of Littlehales' role given that he had directly managed the Yeomanry Office for sixteen years. Despite his staunch Protestant outlook, Peel was not overly fond of the Yeomanry as a force. From early in his tenure, he had reservations regarding both the impartiality, as well as the reliability of the force. Ever the pragmatist, Peel had endorsed the use of the Yeomanry when necessary but his concerns about it contributed to the development of the Peace Preservation Force. In the post-Waterloo era, Peel took a similarly pragmatic view on the need for greater economic prudence for the Yeomanry. This was due in part to his own jaundiced view of the force, but also because he was being forced in Parliament to defend the yeomanry estimates at the same time as those for the regular army.

[51] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[52] Littlehales to Peel, 25 Feb. 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[53] (57 Geo. 3) C A P. CIV.

Littlehales did not necessarily disagree with this view, but was clear in the need for a strong force irrespective of its composition having concluded that the advent of peace had brought with it an understanding that 'our regular force in Ireland must unavoidably be much greater in time of Peace than of War.'[54] While it had taken some time for the implications of this to be teased out, the view a regular professional force had to be sustained had been established and by 1816 Peel was far happier to defend the army in parliament, telling Littlehales that he considered the Yeomanry force to be 'almost useless in a military point of view.' The Dublin administration was in a bind however, as there was clear feedback from London that the army estimates, however meritorious, was inducing the government to 'apprehension.'[55] In such light, the need for economy accentuated the merits of the Yeomanry, in theory a more economical force. Littlehales by now had 15 years' experience of managing the Yeomanry and kept his counsel on the matter. Peel, however, who was the member of the Dublin Executive forced to defend the Yeomanry in London was more forthright. The army estimates having been at risk, he was clear that he considered the estimate submitted at the same time on behalf of the Yeomanry force, to be spurious and unhelpful. Compounding his ire, was the fact that the majority of the estimate request, some £105,000, related to a request for new uniforms. While he fell short of castigating Littlehales for allowing such a request to pass he made his feelings clear on the merit of it.[56]

During his time in office, Peel had been cordial but rarely personal in his dealings with Littlehales. While he felt comfortable writing to Gregory to suggest that 'an honest despotic government would be by far the fittest government for Ireland', such candour and openness was never manifest in his correspondence with Littlehales.[57] In fact, while

[54] Littlehales to Peel, 31 May 1814 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[55] Peel to Littlehales, 16 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[56] Peel to Littlehales, 16 Feb. 1816 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[57] Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel*, p. 197.

managing the 1818 general election, he had written to Littlehales to warn him about his behaviour. In a brief note he preached the need for 'extreme caution with which you must conduct yourself to all matters connected with the approaching general election. You know the consequences of any undue interference on the part of Government being detected and you must therefore act with all your circumspection.'[58] It is not clear precisely what prompted this, but Peel may well have been concerned at Littlehales' family connection to the duke of Leinster, a strong Protestant voice for Catholic Emancipation.[59] While there was little chance of the under-secretary bending the rules in such a way, it serves as a reminder that he was not just an official in Dublin Castle, but a member of the ascendancy world with the social and familial connections that entailed.

Talbot as lord lieutenant

Whitworth's tenure as lord lieutenant was long, running from June 1813 until Autumn 1817 and his easy-going manner had enabled Peel to increase his power as chief secretary and attempt to reform the administration. Whitworth's replacement, the Earl Talbot has been viewed as 'ineffectual' and certainly he was inexperienced.[60] This meant that he relied heavily on the competence of both Peel and, increasingly, on Gregory, the civil under-secretary.[61] Where Littlehales' length of service had ensured that he had experienced a variety of relationships with his seniors, his relationship with the new lord lieutenant, while cordial, was not that professionally significant.

At the time, much of Peel's attention was given to rebutting calls for Catholic Emancipation in the House of Commons, though he was also preoccupied with securing

[58] Peel to Littlehales, 22 May 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/514).
[59] Bridget Hourican, 'Fitzgerald, Augustus Frederick (1791–1874)' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/fitzgerald-augustus-frederick-a3133
[60] Brian Jenkins, 'The Chief Secretary', in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds) *Defenders of the Union: a study of British and Irish unionism since 1801* (London, 2001), p. 45.
[61] Patrick Geoghegan, 'Gregory, Wiliam' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/gregory-william-a3625

election as Member of Parliament for Oxford. The former confirmed his status as a rising figure in the political sphere; the latter was a direct recognition of it.[62] Despite his rising status, and his wish to depart Dublin in concert with Whitworth, the outgoing lord lieutenant, Peel elected to stay in post during 1818 to be help manage the general election. Civil and political matters demanded most of his focus, but the policy of retrenchment in the military remained a live issue and his energy remained undimmed. For Littlehales this meant work continued, despite the increasing role for Gregory, and he was required to form a working relationship with a seventh lord lieutenant.

The scale of change which came with each new lord lieutenant was considerable, with each new incumbent bringing diverse levels of experience and ambition, varied ways of working and, importantly a different suite of directions from London. For those in the administration, it was necessary to get to grips with such nuances and, understandably, Littlehales was always keen to focus on military matters. As Talbot settled into his role, his relationship with the military under-secretary focussed less on military matters, and much more on the challenges of setting up house and home in the Phoenix Park. In his letters to Littlehales, Talbot tended to ask questions far beyond Littlehales' bailiwick, such as querying the appropriate fee for a doctor to visit the vice regal lodge and the cost of crops.[63] Much of this can be considered in the context of a new and very inexperienced official trying to ensure that their actions were in keeping with practice, but it is not clear whether it was a compliment to Littlehales that such queries came to him in particular. Regardless, the relationship prospered and, with the exception of Hardwicke, Littlehales seemed to develop as cordial a relationship with Talbot as he had with any lord lieutenant, albeit based around social rather than professional matters. There were several particularly personal dimensions

[62] Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel,* p. 229.
[63] Talbot to Littlehales, 20 Dec. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/568), Talbot to Littlehales, Mar. 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/570).

to this relationship. Firstly, Talbot's wife and son were frequently unwell during their time in Ireland and the Littlehales family seemed to be active in offering support to their new neighbour in the Phoenix Park, which was greatly appreciated.[64] Secondly, and importantly, Talbot was related to Littlehales' in-laws, the Fitzgeralds, and his wife Frances Thomasine Lambert was a daughter of Charles Lambert of Beau Parc in Meath, meaning that the families had a degree of prior familiarity.[65] Moreover, the relationship was a reciprocal one. Talbot was, for example, quick to assist Littlehales in getting a fair valuation on lands he had inherited in England in June of 1818. While it is possible to conclude that such a rapport was a credit to Littlehales, who had much more experience of the peculiarities of the Dublin administration than either Peel or Gregory, it also suggests that much of the substance of his role had been marginalised or ceded to Gregory. This represented a new situation for Littlehales who had formed strong personal relationships with characters such as Hardwicke, but always on the foundation of his acumen as military under-secretary. With Talbot it was a close relationship, but not with the same professional bedrock.

Regardless of his intimacy with Talbot, it is clear that, on a more professional level, Littlehales' role had been reduced. Such a diminution, unthinkable only a few years before, was taking place in a very changed country. As was customary for a new lord lieutenant, Talbot undertook a tour of the region in the Autumn of 1818. Unlike Bedford, some years earlier, the new lord lieutenant was able to enjoy the tour, which he described as 'completely satisfactory', in a country that was, broadly speaking, at peace.[66] The ongoing peace ensured that retrenchment continued in full force. Such economy continued to be all pervasive and by this juncture had begun to materially affect one of the last discretionary favours available to Dublin Castle, in the form of patronage. Where the initial post-union period had seen heated

[64] Talbot to Littlehales 11 July 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/577).
[65] Martin McElroy, 'Talbot, Charles Chetwynd' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (Cambridge, 2009) available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/talbot-charles-chetwynd-a8446
[66] Talbot to Littlehales, 7 Sept. 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/581).

discussions on who should be able to employ patronage and where, the post-war period rendered such discussions nearly, if not entirely, redundant. Even a request from an old colleague of Littlehales, Sir John Craddock, could not be entertained. Craddock had ties to both Cornwallis and Wellington, had served as quartermaster general in Ireland during 1798 and was a Peer by this juncture.[67] Writing in 1818 he sought to obtain a barrack master position for a relative. Given his history and status, such a request was of consequence but, irrespective of his own wishes, Littlehales could only refuse. He was, however, shrewd enough to link the refusal explicitly to the reduction in military forces and offered a memorandum to buttress his argument.[68] The reduction in opportunities for patronage was not limited to Ireland - Littlehales' friend, William Beresford, who had been an MP for Waterford as well as Commander of the Portuguese Army, had to regretfully refuse a request made via Littlehales by a Reverend Stewart, who sought to find a place for his brother in the Portuguese Army. Writing in early 1819, Beresford noted that the army in Portugal 'is like all others in Europe which had augmented their military establishments during the wasteful conflict brought on by the French revolution. Reduction of the military is here, as everywhere the cry.'[69]

As Peel's tenure as chief secretary moved to its conclusion, there is, in this period a clear sense of the decline of Littlehales' career. Save some desultory notes on military matters and some personal correspondence expressing concern for his health, Littlehales' correspondence with Peel dried up. There was, however, time for Littlehales to find himself in the middle of a contretemps between the lord lieutenant and the outgoing chief secretary in the form of the election to the seat for Trinity College Dublin. Of the two candidates, the

[67] James Quinn, 'Caradoc (Cradock), John Francis (1759–1839)' in *Dictionary of Irish biography* available at https://www.dib.ie/biography/caradoc-cradock-john-francis-a1459
[68] Craddock to Littlehales, 14 Aug. 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/782).
[69] Beresford to Littlehales, 31 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

government initially favoured Wiliam Plunkett and had advised the lord lieutenant of this. However, the cabinet in London subsequently decided to support John Croker, who had been a loyal friend to the Dublin administration and was a personal friend of Peel. Peel informed Littlehales of this change in stance and asked him to inform the lord lieutenant. Despite their good relationship, Talbot refused to consider this subsequent communication, via Littlehales, as completely verified and replied to Littlehales stating 'Upon the whole, I shall deem it best not to take any step whatsoever in the Election at ye College pro, or con, either Plunkett or Croker.' [70] While it is possible to see Littlehales refusal to push this matter further as a cynical exercise designed to cause problems for Peel, it is far more likely that, ever dutiful, he simply did not view it as part of his role. Despite what Peel had done in terms of ensuring the primacy of the role of chief secretary, the lord lieutenant was still officially the more senior figure and for Littlehales this was a paramount consideration.

Writing with considerable tact from London, Peel informed the lord lieutenant that all communications from him to both under-secretaries could be considered as canonical. This was the first time such an incident had happened in Littlehale's tenure as military under-secretary. As it transpired, Croker lost the vote by a narrow margin, due in no small part to the communications breakdown in government.[71] Several months later, Peel would finish his tenure, having managed the broader general election successfully, to be replaced by Charles Grant, who took up his position in August 1818.

Grant's tenure offered a clear indication of how things had changed. He was fortunate in that he came into a role and administration that had been greatly improved by Peel. Grant lacked many of the qualities of his predecessor, particularly Peel's keen eye for detail. Writing to Littlehales, Nicholas Vansittart, former chief secretary, was clear on the difference

[70] Talbot to Littlehales, 5 May 1818 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[71] Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel*, p. 233.

between the two, stating 'I can readily conceive your regret on the loss of Peel, everyone has cause to lament it'. Of Peel's successor he noted, 'I fear some particulars which we could wish were otherwise' and emphasised how much the new incumbent would rely on Littlehales and Gregory.[72] What concerned Vansittart was almost certainly the fact that Grant favoured emancipation – views which would impede relations with many of the main characters in Dublin Castle.[73] Littlehales and Grant enjoyed warm, amiable correspondence, but it was quickly evident that the military under-secretary was not the man he had been some years before. By this juncture Littlehales' eyes had failed to an alarming degree, which limited his time at work, rendered his handwriting incomprehensible and required the frequent application of leeches.[74] Grant, perhaps mindful of not just Littlehales' length of service, but also of the capability of Gregory, was indulgent of these issues and his correspondence to Littlehales shows warm regard and genuine concern.

As noted previously, Littlehales' was advised about his inheritance in August 1815 upon the death of his cousin Peter William Baker, MP. The legalities took some time, but in 1817, in accordance with the will of his cousin, Littlehales changed his surname from Littlehales to Baker. He was known henceforth as Sir Edward Baker Baker. At his request a new coat of arms was created, which was to incorporate the Baker and Littlehales arms, but also reference the arms of the House of Leinster, presumably in deference to Littlehales' wife. Confirmation of his good fortune prompted speculation about whether Littlehales intended to continue in his role. For some, this represented an opportunity and Littlehales received letters from prospective successors. One such correspondent, Mr J Ready, wrote to note that he would be 'most happy at undertaking to perform the duties of your office', should Littlehales decide to retire.[75] While Ready noted that in a prior conversation Littlehales had intimated

[72] Vansittart to Littlehales, 26 July 1818 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/229).
[73] Galen Broeker *Rural disorder and police reform in Ireland 1812-36* (London, 1970), p. 106.
[74] Littlehales to Grant, 2 Apr. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[75] Ready to Littlehales, 14 July 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

that he did intend to retire, the reply he received was unambiguous. 'It is certainly not my intention to resign my office,' Littlehales wrote, 'but whenever It may suit my convenience to do so I shall feel it incumbent on me to communicate my resolution to the Ld [Lieut.] and Chief Secretary in the first Instance'.[76]

When Littlehales subsequently did convey his intentions in late 1818, his retirement brought a significant structural change in the administration. This was acknowledged in December 1818 when the home secretary, Sidmouth, informed Talbot that he had communicated with Lord Liverpool the prime minister, and that they had agreed with Talbot's suggestion 'for the discontinuance of the office of under-secretary of state for the military department'. [77] Talbot had proposed an allowance for Littlehales, and it was agreed that this should be based on the length and merit of the public service undertaken by Littlehales. At the same time, Littlehales himself had used his network of friends and acquaintances to get advice on what allowances might be afforded to him. The most useful advice came to him from one-time civil under-secretary, Alexander Marsden, who considered his case in light of legislation relating to Public Salaries and allowances, concluding:

> it seems to me to be clearly for your advantage to bring your retirement within that act, if it can be done unobjectionably. A man does not like to have it certified that he is <u>incapable</u> of anything; but he is not for this to wait until he is blind; and I should think that the ailments in your eyes, as I have latterly been told of them, would fully warrant your Medical Attendant in describing your case as within the provisions of the act.[78]

However, despite these various assurance that he could retire with an allowance, as late as April 1819 Littlehales continued to present himself as having a role to play, noting that he was 'not impatient to retire from Public Life' and that he still believed there to be 'some matters in which my further service may be usefully available'.[79] He had, though, accepted

[76] Littlehales to Ready, 24 July 1817 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[77] Sidmouth to Talbot, 20 Dec. 1818 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[78] Marsden to Littlehales, 16 Feb. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[79] Littlehales to Grant, 2 Apr. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

two key realities: first, that his role was greatly 'diminished' due to the peace abroad and the comparative tranquillity in the country; and secondly, that the difficulties he faced with his eyes could not be resolved. While he assured Grant, 'I can sign my name without much inconvenience and am enabled to go thro' official papers here with the assistance of a confidential clerk' this was clearly not a sustainable situation.[80]

Grant was suitably respectful and addressed his concerns:

> Let me beg you not to put your health in any hazard, nor yourself to any inconvenience, in order to stay at the oar longer than you ought. Much as I shall miss you, your health should with us all be first consideration. A little business may perhaps amuse you, but pray do not stay a moment longer than your physicians advise. I will write soon to the Lord Lieutenant on the subject of the retirement and bring it to a conclusion. [81]

Notwithstanding this, Littlehales continued to work with his typical assiduousness, sending daily updates regarding both the usual mundane matters, but also significant ones such as the setting up of a Commission of Enquiry into abuses in the Barrack Department.[82] Notwithstanding his ailing health, he still had energy enough to urge Grant to make several critical decisions regarding Barrack matters in early May. Several days later, however, he conceded defeat and wrote to Grant to confirm matters:

> I assure you that, it is not from any impatient desire, that I renew the subject of my retirement having the fullest confidence in your kind intentions, but as the general state of my health is not improving and other considerations render it desirable that the arrangement for my retired allowance should be completed as soon as practicable (in order that I may be enabled to resign my situation on the 24th of June next, and take my departure from Ireland.)[83]

Rural unrest, which had been broadly in abeyance for several years returned with a vengeance in the winter of 1819, with a concomitant need for internal policing.[84] By this

[80] Littlehales to Grant, 5 Apr. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[81] Grant to Littlehales, 13 Apr. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[82] Littlehales to Grant, 5 Apr. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[83] Littlehales to Grant, 11 May 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[84] Broeker, 'Robert Peel and the Peace Preservation Force', p. 372.

stage all such work fell on Gregory's shoulders, as Littlehales had finally retired.

Littlehales' good fortune in receiving his inheritance in prompted a number of significant figures to contact him to offer him their best wishes. These included Castlereagh, Whitworth and Charles Abbot, with the latter noting his 'satisfaction' at events, but also observing that the inheritance 'is likely by your own account to occasion your removal from Ireland.'[85] This would suggest that some manner of retirement was in Littlehales mind several years before he actually left, and that the ailment relating to his eyes was perhaps the prompt, but not the whole reason, for his departure.

When his plans to retire finally became known praise arrived from various quarters. Unsurprisingly, Littlehales had strong connections with military figures, such as William Beresford, who had been an MP for Waterford as well as commander of the Portuguese Army, and who was effusive in his praise of Littlehales and his tenure in Ireland. With regard to his ill health and departure, Beresford offered the heartfelt view that Littlehales could 'have the consolation of carrying with you with your retirement the esteem and approbation' of those who knew him.[86] The warmth of these wishes was not surprising – Beresford was not only of the Irish gentry but had spent his formative years in the army in Canada. While it is not clear if his time there saw him encounter Littlehales, there was a clear warmth to their relationship. Similar praise came from a religious quarter. The Bishop of Down and Conor informed Littlehales:

> You have the satisfaction of leaving a country where every man must be obliged to you by the many acts of kindness, and attention you have paid to them to them, and then in the long continuance of office you have given less uneasiness and more satisfaction than falls to the lot of them in public life. I firmly believe the regret will be universal as well to your private friends as to those who have had official communication with you.[87]

[85] Abbot to Littlehales, 4 Jan. 1817 (N.A.I., Littlehales Papers, 2004/66/200).
[86] Beresford to Littlehales, 31 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[87] Bishop of Down and Conor to Littlehales, 24 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Even allowing for the longevity of Littlehales' tenure and the manners of the day, the breadth of correspondence and the evidently genuine feelings expressed are indicative of a character who was well regarded. The former prime minister, Henry Addington, Lord Sidmouth, who Littlehales had worked with during the negotiations around the union in 1801, wrote to offer his best wishes. There was clearly more than mere manners at play here: as home secretary, Sidmouth had to agree with Talbot's proposal regarding Littlehales getting an allowance upon his retirement. In his response, Littlehales 'embrace[d] the candid opportunity of conveying to you my best acknowledges for the kind manner in which you and also Lord Liverpool have recognised my Public Services.' [88] This gratitude, Sidmouth observed, was unnecessary and he considered that the under-secretary had 'executed your official duties most honourably, gracefully and I trust that you have now before you many years of Health & happiness.'[89] Others, closer to Littlehales, offered their condolences at his retirement, with his old colleague Marsden effusively opining that he had 'heard it said that the office you hold is to be abolished. This is going farther in economics than I understand, I presume it must be from despair of finding a successor to you who would not appear to disadvantage.'[90]

It was not only political and administrative figures who paid tribute to him upon retirement, however. In early 1819 a letter was sent from the office of the Prince Regent, then ensconced in his seaside retreat at Brighton. Written by the Prince's private secretary, Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, it noted that the prince had been informed of Littlehales' 'intentions' and assured him of the prince's 'sense of your attention and of your long and laborious services during a period of no ordinary difficulty'[91]

[88] Littlehales to Sidmouth, 8 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[89] Sidmouth to Littlehales, 18 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[90] Marsden to Littlehales, 19 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).
[91] Bloomfield to Littlehales, 31 Jan. 1819 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Peel also revealed a warmer side to his character and his last letter but one, written when he was back in England and Littlehales was on the verge of retirement, suggests a warm regard that was rare in their official correspondence. Writing with great enthusiasm about the food he had encountered on a recent visit to Paris, his gentle teasing indicates an affection which was not always evident in their professional relationship:

> I wish you had been with me in Paris and in good health, without a curb on your appetite. More than once, as we sat down at Beauvilliers' or Very's, we breathed a sigh for you. Though you are not allowed to eat, I suppose you may *hear* of good things without danger and refresh yourself occasionally with the recollection of a *foie gras* or a truffle.

He concluded with a warm reference to Littlehales' own time in Paris in 1803 during the treaty negotiations:

> I well know, Sir Edward, that you have been at Paris and have feasted on these delicacies in days of yore – but possibly the revolutionary mania had invaded the sacred precincts of the kitchen when you were at Paris, and had attempted to level those valuable distinctions which should be maintained in every department of the state – at any rate, to so great an amateur and such an acknowledged judge, a little sketch of the existing state of the art may not be unsatisfactory.[92]

The tone in this letter was as important as the content and if Littlehales had indulged in a moment of introspection, he might well have considered that a convivial letter from perhaps the most dynamic statesman he had worked with served as an appropriate, if unusual, coda to his career as military under-secretary. His career, which had seen him work in three different regions of the empire had concluded and he and his family prepared to depart Ireland, where he had lived for over two decades, to take up residence in the inherited family seat in Ranston, Dorset.

[92] Peel to Littlehales, undated (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

Conclusion

The primary aim of this thesis has been to examine Edward Baker Littlehales' career as military under-secretary, with a view to considering how the civil administration's management of military matters evolved during his tenure, if at all. The secondary question was to evaluate whether the role of military under-secretary truly became redundant. By examining the breadth and function of this role over the duration of Littlehales' time in it, this thesis has shown that Dublin Castle's administration of the military was evolutionary, but most of this evolution was driven by a need to respond to events and personalities, rather than any grand design. Irrespective of the reason for this evolution, by the time of Littlehales' retirement, a more advanced bureaucracy, and the elimination of the threat of war removed the need for an under-secretary specifically dedicated to military matters. Examining the situation in Ireland through the various lens used in this research bears this out.

The view offered by K. Theodore Hoppen that 'politically the two decades following the union are often dismissed as something of an incomprehensible hiatus during which "things" in some mysterious way ''took time to adjust"' has been cited earlier in this thesis.[1] The main body of this study would conclude that Hoppen's concern over such a dismissive attitude is well founded. However there remains a sense of organic, rather than planned evolution, which contributes to the sense of post-union Ireland almost stumbling into a new status quo. Any purposeful attempt toward systemic development was frequently impacted by the power of personalities in administration of the time. This was most obvious in the immediate aftermath of the union, where the personality of Hardwicke, Pelham and many more determined the administrative course, but it never went away during Littlehales' time in office. While this thesis offers a broad view of this Irish administration, it is focussed on one

[1] K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800: conflict and conformity* (London, 1989), p. 14.

official's experience, and that experience shows the interplay of the civil and the military, with Littlehales' role as under-secretary and his long tenure situating him as an organisational locus. In this regard his role was unusual, requiring him to understand both the competing demands of his superiors in Dublin Castle, and also the imperatives faced by the senior commanders of the various military forces. This was a complex network, which, from 1801, was made all the more complicated by the fact that both parties ultimately reported to different masters in London. A classic example of this was the perennial tension in terms of the deployment of forces – with the military command arguing quite convincingly against the deployment of small forces across the country, something which the civil administration often deemed necessary if not optimal. For Littlehales, success in his role often depended on managing these competing views and ensuring that the decisions taken by the civil administration were enacted by the military. He had a more direct role with the military too, via his different levels of responsibility for yeomanry and militia forces. While his role with the regular army continued after Waterloo, his function with regard to the militia and yeomanry changed dramatically as a result of peace. There remained a clear need for the army in Ireland, albeit at a reduced level. The peacetime establishment tended to amount to 25,000 troops. Periods of unrest necessitated an increase in troops. As an example, during the rising of 1798 the establishment rose to some 52,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry.[2] The end of the Napoleonic wars on the other hand led to a significant reduction. Although it is difficult to be precise about the number of recruits in Ireland, the overall figure for the British Army diminished at pace with the figure for 1819 being approximately one third of that from 1816.[3] As such, there remained a clear need for someone from the civil administration to engage with the army via military command at Kilmainham.

[2] Tony Gaynor, *Commanders of the British Forces in Ireland 1796–1922* (Dublin, 2022), p. 40.
[3] Return of Number of Recruits raised for Regular Army; Number of Deaths, Discharges and Desertions, 1816-21 13 Mar. 1822 H.C. (78) xix 321.

The situation with the militia and yeomanry was, however, considerably different. For Littlehales the Yeomanry were a direct responsibility in a way that the regular troops were not. His understanding of the Irish milieu was critical in mediating between this force and those who had a less than salutary opinion of it. Chief among these tended to be the Commander of the Forces, who, as a professional military figure, would, inevitably sooner see regular forces drilled and organised in a manner in accordance with contemporary military orthodoxy. The Yeomanry, the 'Ascendancy Army' so beloved of the Protestant minority, had an ambiguous relationship with Dublin Castle from their inception and became increasingly synonymous with Orangeism. Such concerns had been raised directly with Littlehales as far back as 1803 – and he was not reticent about acting to curtail any activity on behalf of the Yeomanry which could be interpreted as provocative or 'triumphalist'. By the end of Littlehales' career in Ireland, the need for such a force was being questioned and the Yeomanry swiftly declined, being formally disbanded in 1834.[4] In theory, the Yeomanry were a peacekeeping force, which should have necessitated their retention at scale; however, in cold hard numbers, the diminution of the force was pronounced post-Waterloo. Even in Ulster, the heartland of the force, figures dropped by nearly a quarter in the two years after Waterloo.[5] Figures from the other provinces show an even more pronounced reduction.

For the militia, there were very strong historical links to the regular army, but also a clear role in terms of defence against invasion which vanished after Waterloo. This was a marked change for Littlehales who had found the management of various aspects of the force such as ballots and bounties to be highly time consuming. Peel in particular had seen the force as having a role in 'the preservation of tranquillity'.[6] Despite this fluid interpretation of its role, its reduction once peace was certain was inevitable and disbandment began in earnest

[4] Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry 1796–1834* (Dublin, 1998), p. 294.
[5] Blackstock, *An ascendancy army,* p. 117.
[6] Peel to Littlehales, 4 Dec. 1813 (Maynooth University, Littlehales Archive).

in 1816. Across all areas of Littlehales' role, the cessation of war with France, which had lasted decades, had completely changed the focus of administration and the concomitant resourcing. While the colonial mission continued to require military resourcing, Britain would not involve itself in another major war until the Crimean War. In such an environment, the demands which had originally mandated a need for a military under-secretary in the decades before the union were removed. What remained could be managed by an active civil under-secretary like Gregory.

The reduction in these forces and the development of alternative policing bodies such as the Police Preservation Force, changed Littlehales' role dramatically. In this regard his role was clearly influenced by external events such as peace, but also by the views of his seniors. Peel for example had a different view of the Yeomanry and Militia than many of his predecessors and this had a clear impact on how Littlehales engaged with both forces. Such examples reinforce the assertion that the role of military under-secretary and the evolution of military administration more generally were at the intersection of broad security considerations but also the influence of personality. It is this latter point which represents the chief finding of this study. While the idea of the 'great man' has rightly lost currency, this thesis has demonstrated the primacy of personality in administration in post-union Ireland. The impact of personality is a theme which has run through this study, from the tensions which arose between Hardwicke and Pelham due to their divergent views on the union, through to the power of Robert Peel's personality which elevated the position of chief secretary.

The ability for one strong personality to shape an administration is worth reflecting on and suggests that, despite an increasingly professional and complex bureaucracy, individual personalities continued to be the key determinant. This was a consequence of two things. Firstly, despite the importance of the Act of Union, the assertion made by Hoppen that 'the

actual mode of governing was almost casually overlooked' is true and set the tone for the administration in the decades after the Act.[7] Any transition in the mode of governance was likely to be complicated and contentious, but the legislation which was passed created further ambiguity while also removing some of the old administrative certainties around roles. Undoubtedly, this ensured that personality was allowed to set the direction of administration to a disproportionate degree. Thus, Hardwicke could feel entitled to send Littlehales to London to protest at any diminution in the role of lord lieutenant while Peel, over a decade later, could feel entirely justified in promoting the role of chief secretary. The overarching imperative for Dublin Castle, bequeathed to them by London, was simply to make the union work and any actions which could be interpreted as contributing to this could be legitimised. For Littlehales, this partly explains why attempts to put military governance on a comparable footing with that of London was piecemeal, as such moves only happened when the most powerful members of the administration felt them necessary. Equally, the reality of managing both internal policing and defence from external threats, which was pressing for most of his career, arguably left little room for the development of an overarching vision which would resonate with Dublin and London.

All of the above highlights the importance of prominent personalities such as Hardwicke and Peel. This does not remove the centrality of Littlehales, a less dynamic character in the evolution of the Dublin Executive. Indeed, his longevity validates the centrality of personality. Had he been an administrator of greater vision, such as Edward Cooke, he undoubtedly could have instigated more change. However, given the complexity of the situation after the union, the attractions of a competent, biddable, if uninspired administrator were demonstrably evident to a variety of lord lieutenants, chief secretaries as

[7] K. Theodore Hoppen, 'A question none could answer: "What was the viceroyalty for?" 1800-1921', in Gray and Purdue (eds.), *The Irish lord lieutenancy* (Dublin, 2012), p. 132.

well as officials in London.

This thesis suggests that for historians considering the role of the civil power in Ireland in terms of its relationship with the military function there are difficulties. The sources required remain exceptionally heterogenous and fragmentary. Even a study focussed on one individual such as Littlehales is confronted by many gaps in prospective sources and his historiographical footprint to date pales into comparison with contemporaries such as Edward Cooke, Wickham, Abbot and others. Establishing a clear understanding of the interface between civil and military administration is also challenged by the scale of official records, such as the Kilmainham Papers and those in Kew, which need to be balanced with an interrogation of the private papers of the significant actors of the era. Critically for this study, the archive of Littlehales himself is broken into two sizeable collections, neither of which are catalogued in detail.

This thesis has raised questions and suggested areas of further study to historians of the period. Littlehales may have been a nexus between the civil and military, but he was only one person in a broader landscape of connections between Dublin Castle, Kilmainham and their equivalents in London. Undertaking studies which concentrate on the synergy between the military and civil would allow for more holistic interrogation of sources and an appreciation of the diverse drivers which contributed to the formulation of military administration in Ireland. As an example, studies tend to focus on one military force – such as the militia or the yeomanry. In reality, both forces and the army were interconnected and saw their roles interpreted fluidly in terms of internal policing and external defence. In many ways this is exemplified through the department which Littlehales' managed, which engaged with all forces, on both internal and external issues. Building on this idea, the need to comprehend the push and pull between external defence and internal policing is clearly evident. The threat of invasion impacted on military protocol for internal policing and the

state of the country influenced thinking about how to defend the country. This theme has been recurrent in this thesis, but only as it affected, and was affected by Littlehales.

This thesis is neither 'history from below' – taking its subjects as ordinary people and concentrating on their experiences and perspectives – nor can it be considered as traditional political history, with a focus on the actions of 'great men'. That said, while the idea of the 'great man' has rightly lost currency, this thesis has demonstrated the primacy of personality in administration in post-union Ireland. While Littlehales is the key subject of this study, the key finding relates to the impact of personality. Personality, therefore, is a theme which has run through this study, from the tensions between Hardwicke and Pelham through to the power of Peel's personality. The power of personality to shape administration, in a time of supposed evolution is worth reflecting on. This is not simply a case of biographical study, however. There are plenty of biographies of many of the senior characters in Littlehales' world, but many are dated and, in their attempts to encompass the totality of a life, they do not always offer enough detail on the period under review here. What is needed are further studies similar to the work undertaken by Gash on Robert Peel that place these personalities in the milieu of Irish administration.[8] Such work will help build up a stronger understanding of the evolution of the administration in Dublin Castle.

This thesis has examined the Irish career of one man, Edward Baker Littlehales. His breadth of experience, across various regions, his length of tenure and his connections to powerful figures in Dublin and London make him a figure of some significance, a fact which is reinforced by the wealth of good wishes sent to him when he prepared to leave Ireland. Littlehales' time in Ireland highlights the strength and weakness of administration in Dublin at the time. Through his career, it is possible to see the genuine attempts made by many to

[8] Norman Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel: the life of Sir Robert Peel to 1830* (London, 1961).

improve the governance of a country and the safety of its people, and also to appreciate the impact of the capriciousness of his seniors.

Any assessment of Littlehales' career as military under-secretary is affected by the fragmentary nature of his recovered archive, as well as his relative absence from the historiography noted previously. As such he remains something of a cypher, assiduous in his professional life, but gnomic in his personal life. He can be considered a success in both, carving a successful career in Dublin and marrying well.

In terms of his career, it is fair to say that Littlehales' transition into the role of military under-secretary represented an inflection point, seeing him move from a military existence (although, as noted, one primarily focussed on administration) into a civil role. His military career was notably more exciting, but after serving in contested arenas in North America, the Caribbean and Ireland there is no evidence that he wished to continue at the coal face of the army. The role of military under-secretary suited him, allowing him to harness his military knowledge and his inherent administrative strength, but in a role which rarely appears to have required him to be the final arbiter of decisions.

His record in this post was not without achievement, however, most notably in the first decade of his tenure, when he played such a key role in the union negotiations, supported Cornwallis in Amiens, and was a leading character in addressing unrest in a proportionate manner. His subsequent successes, such as his role with the Peace Preservation Force and reconfiguration of the military forces in a time of peace are qualified by the sheer energy of Peel's tenure and Littlehales' sense of his agency and his disposition towards independent action, never his key attributes, were further diminished in favour of ever more dutiful implementation of policy. That said, his dedication never wavered, and he continued to contribute dutifully, if not dramatically, to his role and to the Executive. This perhaps represents his key weakness. It is contended in this study that inconclusive way in which the

union was passed left an organisational vacuum which was filled by personalities. In such a capricious environment, a character such as Littlehales, with some ability and merit, but lacking a sense of dynamism and an obviously vigorous nature, could attain a prominent administrative position and secure employment, but nothing more. The testimony upon his retirement speaks of a dutiful character but not a galvanic one.

Littlehales' private life remains sadly under-examined and access to a broader range of primary sources would undoubtedly allow a study of a character who served as a bridge between England and Ireland. Where many of the senior executive came to Ireland, bringing family with them for the duration of their time, after which they departed Ireland and Dublin Society, Littlehales arrived in Ireland in 1798 quite unencumbered by personal connections and the family he gained during his time in Ireland can be considered as resolutely Anglo Irish. His connections to families such as the Pakenhams and the Edgeworths speak to the close-knit network ascendancy society, but we can say little beyond that. Similarly, any attempt to gain an understanding of Littlehales' personal beliefs is equally challenging. This is a key limiter in any attempt to view him solely through the framework advocated by Mark Jeffery Jarrat, who suggested that belief system and socialisation can be interpreted as part of an 'agent-structure' problem.[9] It is possible to examine Littlehales' career and interpret motive in many cases, but it is much harder to quantify the extent to which his formative experiences and exposure to ideas shaped his later actions.

The uncertainty left by an imperfect union coupled with the threat of invasion proved a difficult platform for him to carry out his duties. Nearly a century after Littlehales' departure, another under-secretary, Antony MacDonnell, offered a scathing assessment of Dublin Castle, considering it to have 'little or no control over the administration of the

[9] Mark Jeffery Jarrat, 'Castlereagh, Ireland and the French Restoration of 1814–15' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Stanford University 2006), p. 3; Alexander Wendt, *Social theory of international politics* (Cambridge, 1999), pp 26-27.

country'.[10] Such a reality would assuredly have horrified Littlehales, who clearly believed in the importance of the Dublin administration. With the advent of peace after Waterloo, he was destined for obsolescence which would have stung such a dutiful character. As such, it was his good fortune that his inheritance allowed him to depart with dignity as well as the warm regard of those who had known and worked with him.

[10] Kieran Flanagan, 'The Chief Secretary's Office, 1853-1914: A bureaucratic enigma' in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 94 (Nov. 1984), p. 201.

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