

## **Landlord-Tenant Relations on the Clonbrock Estate in Galway, 1849-93**

by

John O'Sullivan

This study examines Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants in the post-famine period until his death in 1893. A cursory glance at the measures taken by him to alleviate distress on his estate during the famine shows that, when fact and legend are separated, his efforts saved his people from a worse fate.

The convenient view once held that landlords charged excessively high rents and did not invest money in their estates does not apply to Lord Clonbrock. In the period 1849-80 his rents increased by just eighteen per cent while almost eleven per cent of rental income was spent on improvements to his estate. When tenants whose rental was low were in difficulties in times of temporary economic crises he responded positively to their problems.

Special attention is devoted to Lord Clonbrock's extensive tenants who paid rental in excess of £100 a year. Though these tenants constituted less than five per cent of the total tenant population of the estate they accounted for over forty per cent of the total rental income. These tenants rarely experienced difficulty in paying their rents.

Lord Clonbrock responded to the land agitation which began in the late 1870s, in a non-confrontational manner. He allowed generous rental abatements in years of particular difficulty. While some of his tenants joined in the plan of campaign in December 1886 a settlement was soon reached in May 1887 when a rental reduction of fifteen per cent was allowed. Overall in the ten turbulent years, 1880-9 only £4,209 of a projected rental figure of £107,794 remained uncollected and this stable situation still existed up to his death in 1893.

Lord Clonbrock's efficient estate management, investment in estate improvements, and awareness of the problems facing his tenants served him well in both the relatively prosperous post-famine years and the troubled years of land agitation.

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND**

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**LANDLORD - TENANT RELATIONS ON  
THE CLONBROCK ESTATE IN GALWAY,  
1849-'93**

**by**

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## MAPS

**Map 1:** The baronies of County Galway

**Map 2:** The civil parishes of County Galway (with parishes containing land which formed part of the Clonbrock estate shaded).



## ABBREVIATIONS

NLI National Library of Ireland

NA National Archives

GO Genealogical Office

RD Registry of Deeds

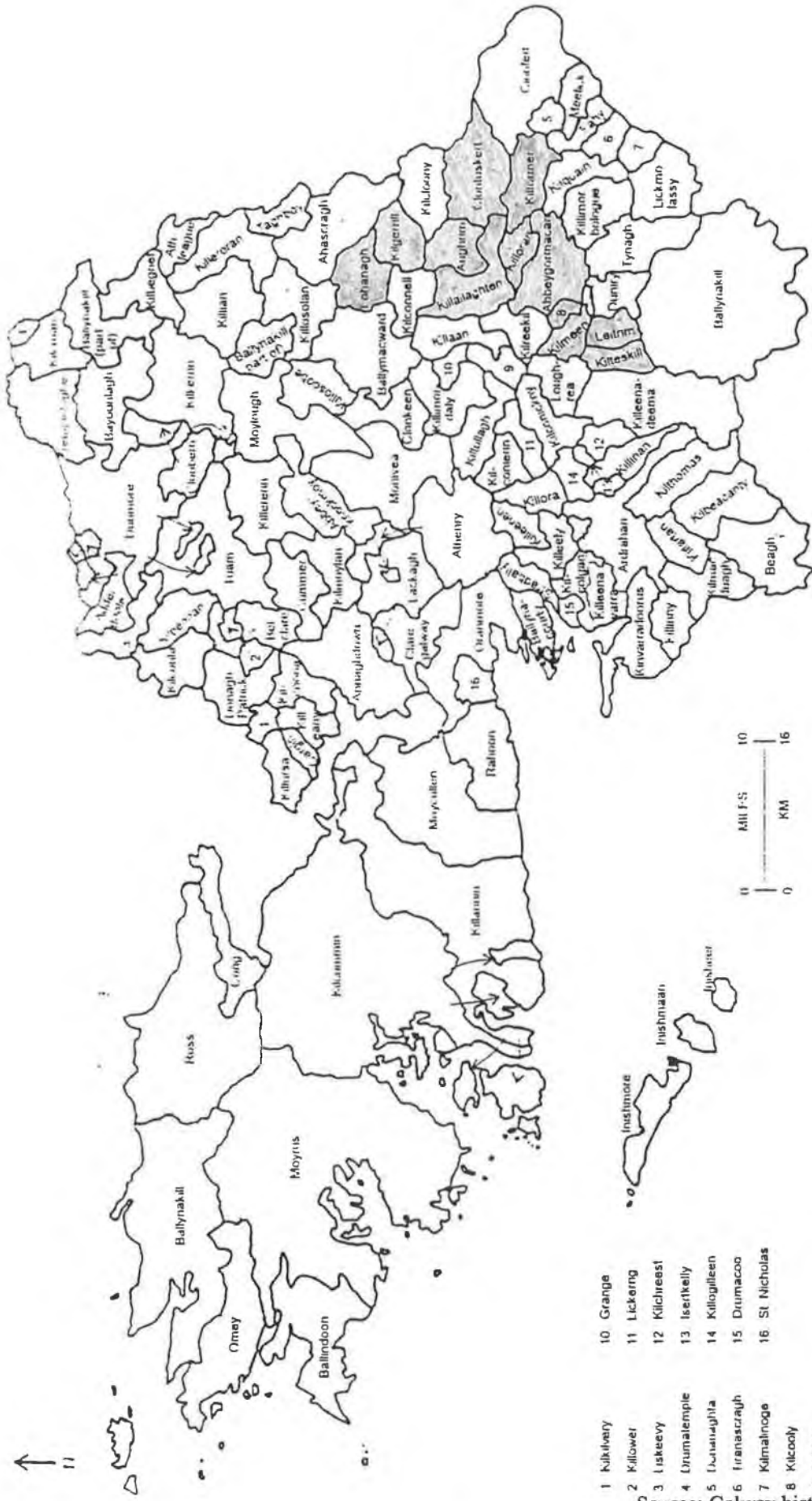
# THE BARONIES OF COUNTY GALWAY



Source: Galway history and society,  
Gerard Moran and Raymond Gillespie  
(eds.).

# THE BARONIES OF COUNTY GALWAY

(parishes containing land which formed part of the Clonbrock estate are shaded)



- 1 Kiliverry
- 2 Killovet
- 3 Liskeevy
- 4 Drumalempie
- 5 Uanauaghla
- 6 Franscraigh
- 7 Kilmalnoge
- 8 Kilcooly
- 9 Bullaun
- 10 Grange
- 11 Lickering
- 12 Kilchreest
- 13 Iserikelly
- 14 Killogileen
- 15 Drumacoo
- 16 St Nicholas

Source: Galway history and society, Gerard Moran and Raymond Gillespie (eds.).

## Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine landlord-tenant relations on the Clonbrock estate in east Galway, 1849-93. The fortunes of landlords changed considerably in this period. Landlords who were not financially ruined by the famine emerged from it strengthened rather than weakened. The famine had played the role of a Darwinian selector of the fittest. <sup>1</sup> In the 1860s landlords looked to be in an unassailable position. Yet land legislation first regulated their relationship with their tenants, then drastically reduced their rental income <sup>2</sup> and by about 1890 the main (if largely unarticulated) question about the problem was: under what terms would the landlords interests' be bought out by the occupiers ? <sup>3</sup>

Until the early 1970s few people questioned the view expressed by J.W. Pomfret that this revolutionary change in the fortunes of Irish landlords was due to the fact that landlords acted as predators who capitalised on the desire of the peasants to obtain land at any price and as a result rent was extorted that was out of proportion to the yield.<sup>4</sup> However in more recent times writers such as Barbara Solow <sup>5</sup>, J.S. Donnelly Jr. <sup>6</sup> and W.E. Vaughan <sup>7</sup> have challenged this convenient generalisation. They have shown that in some cases rent increases were lower, evictions less frequent, and insecurity of tenure less pervasive than earlier writers supposed. For instance Vaughan drew attention to the Murray-Stewart estate in Donegal where twenty-seven per cent of yearly rental income was spent on improvements to the estate in the period 1851-80.<sup>8</sup>

However the crucial question of how many Irish landlords fitted into the general pattern still remains. Only detailed examination of individual estates will answer that question. The purpose of this study is to make such a detailed examination of the Clonbrock estate by exploring the relationship between Robert Dillon the fourth Baron Clonbrock and his tenants in the critical years 1849 until his death in 1893.

Chapter one gives the geographical location and extent of the Clonbrock estate. Though the study is concerned with landlord-tenant relations in the post-famine period a cursory glance is taken at Lord Clonbrock's estate in the famine years and the years immediately prior to it. It was felt that the measures taken by Lord Clonbrock as a resident landlord to alleviate distress in the famine years would have a bearing on how his tenants perceived him in the post-famine years. Though there is evidence for the existence of distress on the estate during the famine the impact of the measures taken by Lord Clonbrock during the famine and the years immediately prior to it saved the people from a worse fate.

Chapter two deals with the rapid recovery in the affairs of Lord Clonbrock in the post-famine period. It shows that those of Lord Clonbrock's tenants who farmed extensively, paying rental in excess of £100 a year experienced practically no difficulty in paying their rental. A considerable number of them or their families remained in continuous occupation of their farms throughout the post-famine period up to 1880. The tenants of the smaller holdings experienced difficulties in times of economic depression and they sometimes fell into arrears with their rental. The eviction process was one of the methods used to deal with such situations but overall these difficulties were addressed by the use of constructive and humane measures by Lord Clonbrock.

Increases in rental were moderate over the period 1849-80 while landlord investment on estate improvements was considerable.

Chapter three deals with the impact of the land war on landlord-tenant relations on the estate. The extensive tenants experienced little difficulty in paying their rental in the period 1880-93. Those who got into difficulties surrendered their farms and the eviction process was not necessary. Rental projections for those farms were, with few exceptions, met in the years 1880-93 and only very insignificant amounts of money were lost in irrecoverable arrears. The land war had a greater impact on relations between Lord Clonbrock and the tenants of his smaller holdings. The years 1886 and 1887 were particularly troubled years. Relations between landlord and tenant though sometimes strained never broke down completely. Lord Clonbrock seemed determined to avoid confrontation with his tenants in times of difficulty. He offered generous rental abatements in the most difficult years of the 1880s and these appear to have been motivated as much by his awareness of the problems besetting his tenants as by demands from pressure groups.

This study attempts to explore the mind set of Lord Clonbrock and what shaped his attitude to his tenants, and the policies he adopted when dealing with them 1849-'93. A variety of sources have been used such as private papers, contemporary publications, articles in contemporary newspapers, and parliamentary papers. The sources most heavily relied on however are Lord Clonbrock's estate rental and accounts ledgers. While the complete set of these ledgers do not now exist those for the important years, 1849-54, 1858-69, and 1880-93 do. They contain meticulous detail on estate rental and expenditure and are rich in observations by the agents for the consideration of

Lord Clonbrock. The observations contain what the agent saw as the reasons for a tenant's non payment of rent but even more importantly Lord Clonbrock's response to the tenant's situation was sometimes added later.

It could be argued that information given by landlords and their agents on their relations with their tenants is not totally reliable and that this could even apply to information given by them in evidence to royal commissions. While it is not being suggested that they attempted to be deceptive the possibility still remains that they were conscious of their image and that the information they were willing to give may have been governed by this to a certain degree. It is this which makes Lord Clonbrock's rental and accounts ledgers such valuable sources as access to them was exclusive to Lord Clonbrock and his agent. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of their content, as distorting the information in an effort to give a favourable view of Lord Clonbrock's treatment of his tenants would have served no sensible purpose.

## Chapter One. Lord Clonbrock's estate in the aftermath of the famine, 1849.

In 1849 Robert Dillon, the third Baron Clonbrock, was in possession of a considerable landed estate in east Galway. In the course of the period under study, 1849-93, the estate changed somewhat in expanse. The changes however, were minor ones, the most significant being the purchase in 1864, of 616.5 acres, in the townland of Pallas, which adjoined Lord Clonbrock's original estate. Lord Clonbrock borrowed £9,000 from Lord Ashtown to finance this transaction <sup>9</sup> and the property had an annual valuation of £173. <sup>10</sup> By 1876 Lord Clonbrock's estate consisted of 28,246.75 acres and was valued at £11,442.25 and he was one of only five landlords who held estates of 20,000 acres and upwards in Galway (see table 1).

**TABLE 1**

### The five landed estates of 20,000 acres and upwards in County Galway, 1876

Name of Landlord	Area	Percentage of the total acreage of the five estates	Valuation of estates as per Griffith's printed valuation 1855
	Acres		
The marquis of Clanricarde	49025.75	30.49	£19,634.50
Lord Dunsandle	33543.25	20.97	£11,861.50
Lord Clonbrock	28246.75	17.66	£11,442.25
Sir Thomas J. Burke, Bart	25258.75	15.79	£7,564.25
The earl of Clancarthy	23896.50	14.94	£11,724.50
Total	159971.0	100.00	£62,227.00

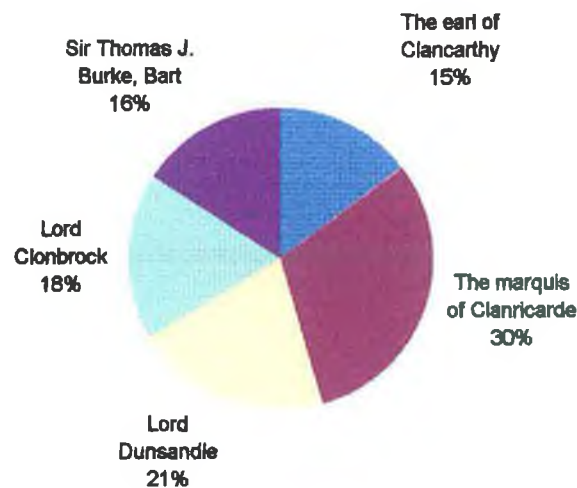
Source: Table compiled from the Return of owners of land of one acre and upwards in the several counties, counties of cities and counties of towns in Ireland [C1492], HC 1876, lxxx, 61.



Lord Clonbrock's estate was the third largest in Galway with only the marquis of Clanricarde's estate of 49,025.75 acres and Lord Dunsandle's estate of 33,543.25 acres being larger (see table 1). Lord Clonbrock's estate contained 581 holdings in 1849 and to facilitate the efficient management of these the estate was divided into administrative units. There were six such units Clonbrock, Ballydonelan, Duansbury, Castlegar, D0oon, and Dalystown. <sup>11</sup>

**Figure 1**

**Percentage of the total of the five estates of 20,000 acres and upwards in Galway held by each of the five landlords in 1876**



Source: Data taken from table 1

It was almost inevitable that on an estate of such vast proportions there would be a wide variation in the quality of the land and an estate survey, commissioned by Lord Clonbrock and completed between the years 1832 and 1837 by the Dublin surveyor, James Edward Vaughan, confirms this. <sup>12</sup> In the interests of efficiency Vaughan surveyed the estate in sections. The northern section consisted of twenty-nine

townlands and the quality of the land varied considerably from townland to townland and in some cases even within a townland itself .<sup>13</sup> To illustrate this the following townlands were chosen as a random sample.

The land in the townland of Iskerballycahill was of superior quality. Of a total of 220 acres, 177 were listed as arable upland pasture while the remaining 43 acres were listed as inferior boggy pasture.<sup>14</sup> The townland of Derrymore did not compare favourably with this. Here, out of a total of 442 acres, only 20 were classed as arable upland pasture while, 242 were classed as inferior boggy pasture, 7 as improved cut-bog, 4 as improvable cut-bog, and 170 as waste.<sup>15</sup>

Even the land of Lord Clonbrock's own demesne showed a considerable variation in its quality. The demesne consisted of a total of 1,095 acres and of these 682 were classed as arable upland pasture, 318 as inferior boggy pasture, 78 as improved cut-bog, and 16 as cut-bog improvable.<sup>16</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's house was close to the village of Ahascragh, Co. Galway. Ahascragh was located seven miles from the town of Ballinasloe, on the Ballinasloe to Castlebar road.<sup>17</sup> The house itself was described by Mark Bence-Jones as consisting

of three storeys over a basement built between 1780 and 1788 by Lord Dillon, afterwards first Lord Clonbrock, to the design of William Leeson; replacing the old castle, of that branch of the Dillons, which remained intact until 1807 when it was burned owing to a bonfire lit to celebrate the birth of the second baron's son and heir.<sup>18</sup>

A feature of the house was its long early Victorian drawing room incorporated in the single storey wing, which was added to the right of the entrance front of the main house in 1855. As a young diplomat in Vienna, Luke Gerald Dillon, afterwards the

fourth Lord Clonbrock, had written home giving instructions on how the floor of this room was to be laid, 'so that it might be suitable for dancing the latest waltzes'.<sup>19</sup>

The Dillons, from which the Clonbrock branch of the family sprang, had long connections with Ireland. They were of the same ancestry as Viscount Dillon and the earl of Roscommon., and they can be traced to Robert le Dillon, called in Ireland 'Sasanagh' or the Englishman, who came to Ireland with John, the earl of Moreton, afterwards king of England, at the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

The Dillons, aided to no small degree by a series of judiciously arranged marriages, soon established themselves as one of the most powerful families in Ireland. For instance Robert le Dillon married the daughter of Gerald Windesore, and their son Thomas le Dillon settled in the barony of Kilkenny West in the County Westmeath and married Mary, daughter of Edmund le Botiller, justice of Ireland. Their son, William, married Olivia, daughter of Maurice Fitzgerald ancestor to the earls of Leinster.<sup>21</sup>

In 1424 Sir Richard Dillon of Proudstown, brought six hundred Irish to the battle of Verneoil to fight on the side of Henry VI and received the crest, 'Falcon Volant', from the duke of Bedford, for his bravery in that battle. It was his younger brother Gerald who was the ancestor of the Dillons of Clonbrock.<sup>22</sup> Gerald married Elizabeth, daughter of John, Lord Barry. They had seven children and one of them, Richard, settled near Dublin and married Mary, daughter of Lord Delvin. Their son Thomas Esquire was an eminent lawyer and second justice of the Queen's bench in Ireland. It was he who purchased the estate in Clonbrock in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.<sup>23</sup>

Robert Dillon, whose relationship with his tenants in the post-famine period 1849-93 is the subject of this study, inherited the Clonbrock estate on the death of his father, Luke Dillon, the second Baron Clonbrock, in 1826<sup>24</sup>. He also inherited the title, Baron Clonbrock, which had been created in 1790 and bestowed upon his grandfather Robert Dillon, who had served as member of parliament for Lanesborough, 1776-90.<sup>25</sup> Robert was born on 29 March 1807 and was the sole heir to the estate and title. He was educated at Eton and matriculated from Oxford, 21 May 1825. He received a B.A. degree in 1827 and an M.A. degree in 1830. He held membership of the Travellers, Arthurs and the Sackville Street clubs. He married Caroline Elizabeth Spencer, whose father was the first Baron Churchill, 15 June 1830. He was lord lieutenant of Galway from 1874 to 1892 and was a representative peer from the time of his appointment in 1838 until his death in 1893<sup>26</sup>.

Lord Clonbrock was thirty-eight years of age and had been in possession of his east Galway estate for nineteen years when the famine struck in 1845. Whereas in recent years the famine's place as a watershed in the economic and social development of the country has begun to be questioned, few historians question the view expressed by F.S.L. Lyons that 'the famine was in many ways a profoundly significant event in modern Irish history'<sup>27</sup>. Thus 1849, when certainly the worst of the famine was over, is an appropriate time to begin a study of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants on his estate in east Galway until his death in 1893.

It is important to emphasise that the primary aim of this study is not an in-depth analysis of the measures taken by Lord Clonbrock to alleviate his tenants problems in the pre-famine and famine years. Such an important subject deserves more attention

that can be afforded in the scope of this study. However since in general the measures taken by landlords to alleviate the worst problems facing their tenants, in the years immediately prior to and during the famine, had a significant bearing on landlord-tenant relations in the post-famine period it is hoped that a cursory glance at the issue may be allowed as it may serve to provide a clearer picture of relations between Lord Clonbrock and his tenants in the post-famine period up to 1893.

The rental and accounts ledgers for Lord Clonbrock's estate for the years immediately prior to the famine indicate that Lord Clonbrock was keeping a keen eye on the affairs of his estate and taking measures which would leave neither his income from rental or his tenants themselves in a seriously vulnerable position when the catastrophe struck. Although the use of the eviction process or indeed the threat of it did little to smooth relations between landlord and tenants such measures were used by Lord Clonbrock. For instance in February 1843 Joseph H. Cowan was paid \*£11.8 for 'ejectment decrees obtained at the last Ballinasloe session' against such people as Pat and John Nowlan of Clooncannon, Michael Kenney of Kilglass, and Hugh Ward of Lurgan.<sup>28</sup> However the evidence shows that Lord Clonbrock favoured other more positive and humane measures to the eviction process.

\* In this study pre-decimalisation units of currency are retained. The currency units of shillings (s) and pence (d) are expressed as percentages of old pound units

As early as 1841 Lord Clonbrock was expending large sums of money in an attempt to reduce the numbers of small holdings, on his estate. In 1841 he paid a total of £250.80 for the purchase of certain tenants interests in the estate. For instance Pat Geraghty received five pounds 'on going away from' Bonevane and Anne Hardy received a similar amount 'on going away from' Ballinlawless.<sup>29</sup> Again in 1843 he paid £373.25 for 'the purchase of tenants interests on leaving the estate'<sup>30</sup> Such expenditure assumes added significance when it is taken into account that there was a heavy debt on the estate at that time. The rental and accounts ledger for 1836 shows that Lord Clonbrock had loans totalling £73,350 for which he paid £1,425 in interest, that year.<sup>31</sup> These loans included one of £10,500 from the Archbishop of Tuam<sup>32</sup>. The situation was largely unchanged in 1841 when he paid out £1,475 in interest on these loans<sup>33</sup>

Emigration was also looked favourably upon by Lord Clonbrock in pre-famine times. In 1842 Thomas Galvin had an old arrear 'allowed him' on sending a brother and sister to America' and Thomas Staunton also had an old arrear, due by his father John Staunton, 'allowed him' and was given five pounds 'to bring his family out to Australia'.<sup>34</sup>

The beneficial effect of a resident landlord was also evident, in other ways, in the years immediately prior to the famine. The surviving rental and accounts ledgers for those years show that sums of money were allocated for charity each year. For instance in the year December 1840 to December 1841, a sum of ninety pounds was allocated for 'sundry charities' and certain tenants, on the Clonbrock section of his estate received between one and two pounds each. A sum of thirty-one pounds was similarly

expended on the Ballydonelan section of his estate.<sup>35</sup> A sum of £55.75 was also expended on 'occasional charities'. Such items as seven hundred-weight of meal for the 'sick poor' of Clonbrock, ten hundred-weight of meal for 'people in fever' on the Clonbrock estate, fifty pairs of blankets for the poor, and a coffin for a poor woman in Ballyluogue were among those purchased.<sup>36</sup> A new mill, built on the instructions of Lord Clonbrock, at a cost of £373.25, in 1842, had a beneficial effect on the community.<sup>37</sup> By 1850 yearly wages totally £211.38 were being paid to workers there<sup>38</sup>. The mill's long term effects can be gauged from the fact that it remained in operation under Lord Clonbrock's control, until it was let by him for a yearly rental of ten pounds in 1887<sup>39</sup>, and did not close down until 1889.<sup>40</sup>

Again in 1842, when a significant rental allowance of £384.32 was granted to tenants,<sup>41</sup> this interesting comment was written in the rental and accounts ledger:

If the improvements made by the different tenants on their farms were included over and above what has been allowed to them it would more than cover the unavailable arrears.<sup>42</sup>

This shows that Lord Clonbrock not only looked approvingly on improvements made by his tenants to their holdings but gave rental allowances to the tenants, who made them thus making their prospects of survival more likely on their improved farms in times of future difficulty.

The rental and accounts ledgers for Lord Clonbrock's estate for the vital years 1845-9 do not exist, so, without access to such an enlightening source, it is difficult to analyse, with a satisfactory degree of accuracy, either the measures taken by Lord Clonbrock to alleviate the problems faced by his tenants or the level of distress on the estate. However the demographic trend in an area in the years 1841-51 is, in general, a good

indicator of the severity of the famine in that area. Thus a comparison of the demographic trends in a section of Lord Clonbrock's estate in this period with trends in other areas of Galway may help to shed some light on the extent to which the estate was affected by the famine.

**Table 2**

**Townlands in Lord Clonbrock's estate which formed part of the baronies of Kilconnell, Tiaquin, Killian and Clonmacnowen in County Galway**

Townland	Barony	Pop 1841	Pop 1851	Change	Percentage Change
Ticooly (Carr)	Kilconnell	57	29	-18	-31.57
Eskerballycahill	Kilconnell	23	8	-15	-65.21
Loughanbee	Kilconnell	15	12	-3	-20
Killeen	Kilconnell	129	80	-49	-39.79
Currafarry	Kilconnell	120	53	-67	-55.83
Lurgan	Kilconnell	240	175	-65	-27.08
Bunavan	Kilconnell	82	61	-21	-25.60
Ballybaun	Kilconnell	140	102	-38	-27.14
Clonbrock	Kilconnell	22	9	-13	-59.09
Latoon	Kilconnell	173	133	-40	-23.17
Keelagues	Kilconnell	25	12	-13	-52
Shruhaunfusta	Kilconnell	82	71	-12	-14.63
Clonbrock Dremesne	Kilconnell	95	80	-15	-15.78
<b>Total</b>		<b>1204</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>-379</b>	<b>-31.74</b>
Killosolan	Tiaquin	630	437	-193	-30.63
Ticooly (O'Kelly)	Tiaquin	40	17	-23	-57.5
Caltra	Tiaquin	165	58	-107	-64.84
Lehanagh	Tiaquin	185	107	-78	-42.16
Derrymore	Tiaquin	75	33	-42	-56
<b>Total</b>		<b>1095</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>-443</b>	<b>-40.45</b>
Clonshee	Killian	19	8	-11	-57.89
Clooncannon	Killian	86	75	-11	-12.79
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>-20.95</b>
Kilglass	Clonmacnowen	366	232	-134	-36.61
Killuppaun	Clonmacnowen	18	16	-2	-11.11
<b>Total</b>		<b>384</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>-136</b>	<b>-35.41</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2788</b>	<b>1808</b>	<b>-980</b>	<b>-35.15</b>

Source: Compiled from, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, part i, Ulster and Connaught, area, population and number of houses by townlands and electoral divisions [1557], HC 1852-3, xcii, 339. This census also contains census data from the earlier 1841 census.



The Clonbrock section of the estate has been chosen for the purposes of this comparison. This section of Lord Clonbrock's estate contained twenty-two townlands and these formed part of the four baronies of Kilconnell, Tiaquin, Killian and Clonmacnowen. Thirteen of these townlands were in the barony of Kilconnell, five were in Tiaquin and two each in the baronies of Killian and Clonmacnowen (see table 2). The population in this section of the estate declined by 35.15 per cent between 1841 and 1851 (see table two). This does not compare favourably with trends in general in Galway. The total population of the entire eighteen baronies of Galway declined from 422,923 in 1841 to 298,564 in 1851.<sup>43</sup> This represented an average decline of just 29.4 per cent. The comparison with the four baronies, that this section of the estate formed part of, is even less favourable. The average decline for those baronies was 27.48 per cent (see table 3).

**Table 3**

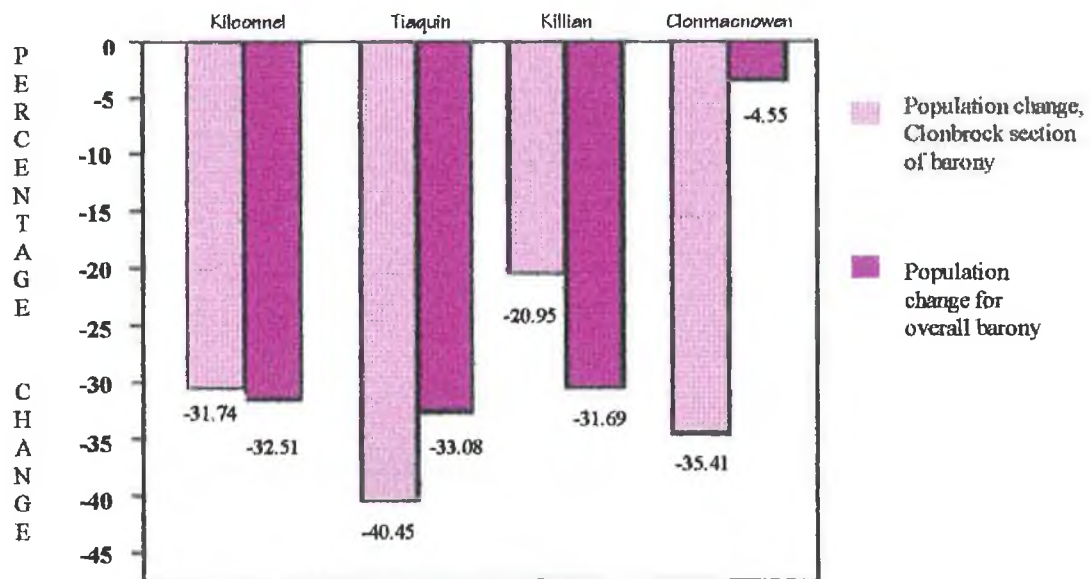
**Change in population in four baronies in Galway 1841-51**

Barony	County	Pop. 1841	Pop. 1851	% Change
Kilconnell	Galway	17,162	11,582	-32.51
Tiaquin	Galway	31,922	21,361	-33.08
Killian	Galway	17,122	11,695	-31.69
Clonmacnowen	Galway	14,715	14,045	-4.55
<b>Total</b>		80,921	58,683	-27.48
Total excluding the barony of Clonmacnowen		66,206	44,638	-32.57

Source: Compiled from, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, part i, Ulster and Connaught, area, population and number of houses by townlands and electoral divisions [1557], HC 1852-3, xcii, 339. This census also contains census data from the earlier 1841 census.

These results indicate that a considerable area of Lord Clonbrock's estate was affected quite adversely by the famine. Lord Clonbrock must have been aware of the situation on the ground during the famine as this section of his estate incorporated his own house at Ahascragh, County Galway. This suggests an inability or perhaps an unwillingness on his part to care for the people of his estate during the famine.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Population change for four County Galway baronies, 1841-51. Changes in Lord Clonbrock's sections of the baronies Vs the changes for the baronies overall.**



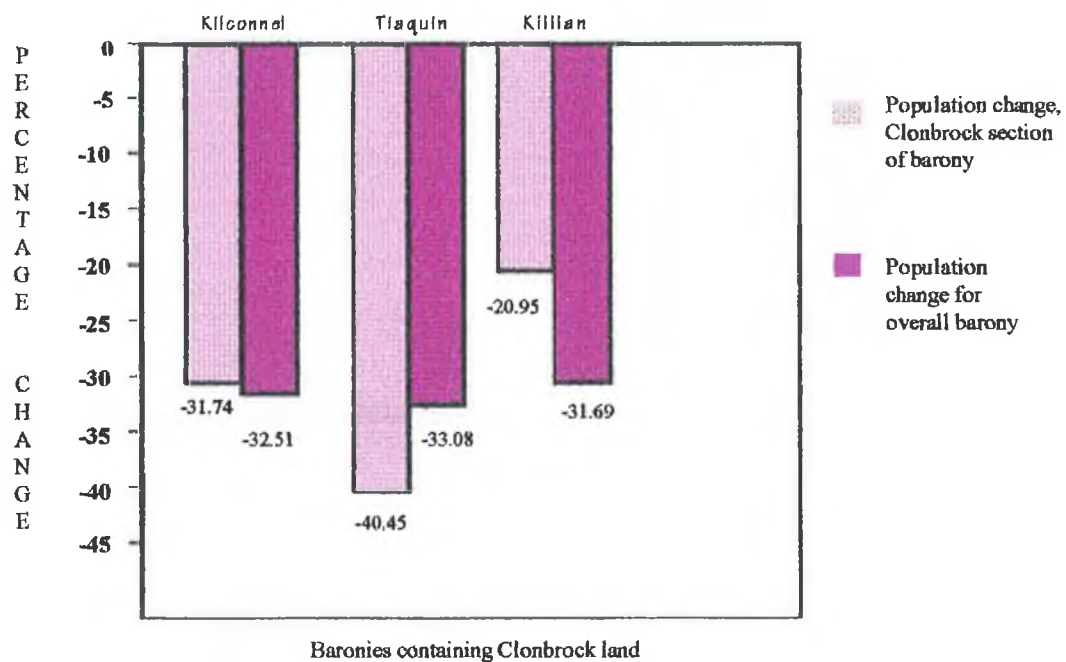
Baronies containing Clonbrock land

Source: Data taken from table 2 and table 3

However the barony of Clonmacnowen has to be looked at carefully in this situation. Its population decline of only 4.55 per cent over the period (see table 3) was even less than the decline of 5.33 per cent in the island barony of Aran.<sup>44</sup> It was unusual for baronies such as Aran, which were constituted from islands, to experience drastic population decline in this period. However Clonmacnowen does not fit into such a category and thus proves a phenomenon, the explanation for which remains outside the

scope of this study. Since only two of the townlands under study, Kilglass and Killuppaun, were in that barony it may be reasonable, in the interests of accuracy in the overall picture, not to include them in this aspect of the study (see table 2). In that case Lord Clonbrock's estate fits much more into the overall picture for the baronies. The population for the three baronies of Kilconnel, Killian and Tiaquin shows a decline of 32.57 per cent (see table 3) while the decline for the townlands which formed part of Lord Clonbrock's estate was only slightly higher at 35.15 per cent (see table 2).

**FIGURE 3**  
**Population change for three County Galway baronies, 1841-51. Changes in Lord Clonbrock's sections of the baronies Vs the changes for the baronies overall.**



Source: Data taken form table 2 and table 3

However even when provision is made for the exclusion of the barony of Clonmacnowen from this analysis, the fact remains that a population decline of 35.15 per cent over a ten year period, which accounted for 980 people, on a section of Lord Clonbrock's estate is indeed considerable (see table 2). Even when allowing for the fact that Lord Clonbrock had been taking humane measures to encourage small holders

to leave his estate immediately prior to the famine a population decline of such proportions must have been associated with considerable distress on the estate.

Further indications of this situation are evident from the rental and accounts ledger for Lord Clonbrock's estate for the year 1849. This ledger is of particular interest as it gives the arrears figure for the year 1848. They stood at £2,339.75 while the projected rental for 1849 was £8,823.41 (see table 5). Arrears in 1848, which were 26.51 per cent of the projected rental figure for 1849, must surely be a strong indication of problems for Lord Clonbrock and his tenants in the testing famine times. Its significance is emphasised by the fact that arrears declined steadily over the next four years when they stood at £629.47 at the end of 1854 on a projected rental of £9,233.82, a mere 6.8 per cent (see table 5). Furthermore, arrears remained well below that figure of 26.51 per cent for more than thirty years. Even in the worst years of the economic slump of the 1860s the arrears figures remained very much lower and peaked at 5.52 per cent in 1863 when there was an arrears figure of £547.12 on a projected figure of £9,906.97 (see table 9). It was not until 1887, when arrears reached £3,178.78 on a projected rental of £10,846.38, or 29.3 per cent that the figure of 26.51 per cent was surpassed (see table 16).

Before leaving this cursory glance at the impact of the famine on Lord Clonbrock's tenants and the measures he adopted to alleviate their problems it would be well to give the issue a wider focus. A population decline of 35.15 per cent which accounted for 980 people in a large section of his estate between the years 1841 and 1851 (see table 2), arrears at the end of 1848, which were 26.51 per cent of his projected rental for 1849 (see table 5) may indeed suggest eviction by Lord Clonbrock of hard pressed

tenants. It must however be remembered that landlords in general were themselves hard pressed during those years and that ‘the famine bankrupted over ten per cent of landlords and about one seventh of the country changed hands within a decade’.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore closer investigation shows that Lord Clonbrock, as a resident landlord during the famine years, had a positive impact on the community. His farm receipt and payment book for the year 1846-7, shows the amount of money paid by him in salaries and for labour in the various areas of his estate for that year (see table 4).

**Table 4**  
**Salaries and labour costs on Lord Clonbrock’s estate, 1846-7**

	<b>Salaries</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Farm</b>	£ 53.50	£296.80	£350.30
<b>Stable Yard</b>	£ 75.31	£ 78.81	£154.12
<b>Garden</b>	£ 73.50	£135.20	£208.70
<b>Woods</b>	£ 45.71	-	£45.71
<b>Place</b>	£112.00	£214.76	£326.78
<b>House</b>	£317.90	£ 50.61	£368.51
<b>Keepers</b>	£ 40.00	£ 14.50	£54.50
<b>Total</b>	£717.92	£790.68	£1,508.60

**Source: Table compiled from the farm receipt and payment book, 1846-7, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MS19531 ).**

Such large amounts of money , as the £1,508.6 paid by Lord Clonbrock for labour and in salaries in the year 1846-7 (see table 4), must have played a significant part in saving people, in the area of his estate, from some of the distress of the famine years. A report in the Western News newspaper on the funeral of Lord Clonbrock in 1893

strongly suggests that he was perceived in the community as somebody who had been instrumental in alleviating some of the distress faced by his tenants during the famine.

The report made reference to what it termed the 'legend' of his

having caused a valuable pack of fox hounds to be killed, to save the cost of their keep and of his distributing the flesh of the herd of deer in his park among the starving people during the famine of 1847.<sup>46</sup>

This reflects very favourably on Lord Clonbrock's treatment of his distressed tenants during the famine but one would do well to question the complete accuracy of a report on an event which, allegedly, took place forty-six years previously and besides there were other more sensible options for helping his distressed tenants open to Lord Clonbrock other than having a valuable pack of fox hounds slaughtered. Indeed his farm receipt and payment book shows that in January 1847 he received £100 for five tons of meal sold at his mill and that in March of the same year he not only received such payments as £29 for two heifers and £23.6 for seven fat sheep but received £7.50 for one old kerry cow sold to the 'soup shop'.<sup>47</sup> Distribution of those resources among his tenants or the voluntary contribution of the old kerry cow would surely have been a more sensible option to have been chosen by Lord Clonbrock.

However the fact that the writer of the article refers to the incident as 'a legend' indicates an admirable degree of balance in his journalism and makes his following account, in the same newspaper article, of an incident at Lord Clonbrock's funeral quite credible:

Some idea of the popularity of Lord Clonbrock may be learned from the fact that the tenantry unyoked the horses from the hearse and drew the remains to the graveyard, a distance of two miles by relays of willing hands, notwithstanding that sleet and snow was falling all the time.<sup>48</sup>

Even allowing for a certain degree of exaggeration such a show of respect by the tenants at the funeral of Lord Clonbrock, coming as it did after more than a decade of serious land agitation on many estates, is remarkable. It is all the more impressive when this respect appears to have had its origin, in the measures taken by Lord Clonbrock to alleviate his tenants distress during the famine.

Lord Clonbrock succeeded in keeping his estate intact during the famine. His rental arrears in 1848 may indicate problems but as already seen they were down to just 6.8 per cent by 1854 (see table 5). This was an impressive achievement and must indicate a satisfactory working relationship between landlord and tenant in the years immediately after the famine.

As stated earlier in this chapter the aim of this study is not an in-depth analysis, of Lord Clonbrock's measures to alleviate his tenants' distress during the years of the famine. However this cursory glance is sufficient to indicate that, while there was, in general, distress and serious problems for Lord Clonbrock's tenants during the famine they were saved from an even worse fate. Lord Clonbrock took positive measures in the years immediately prior to the famine to encourage his lesser tenant, in a humane manner, to leave the estate. This, coupled with the benefit of the employment available on his estate during the famine years, doubtlessly, alleviated some of the distress. There is also a strong suggestion that these measures were appreciated by his tenants in general and that this had a bearing on his relations with them in the post-famine years. An in-depth analysis of this relationship, which begins in the next chapter, comprises the core of this study.

## **Chapter Two. Landlord-tenant relations on the Clonbrock estate,**

**1849-80**

This chapter deals with Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants in the period 1849-80. This period began as the country emerged from the crisis years of the famine of 1845-9 and ended as the country faced the crisis years of land agitation, which began in the late 1870s. As this period was, thus, wedged between two major crises periods there is a danger of it being overshadowed. This would be most unfortunate because it was a period of considerable significance during which, as Hoppen points out, 'the countryside underwent a series of transformations which eventually helped to establish what amounted to a new social order',<sup>49</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's rental arrears stood at £2,339.72 at the beginning of 1849 while his projected rental for that year was £8,823.41 (see table 5). Such a substantial arrear of 26.51 per cent is unremarkable in light of the fact that economic recovery after the famine had scarcely begun. What is remarkable, though, is the rapidity with which arrears declined in the following five years up to and including 1854.



**Table 5**

**Projected rental, 1849-54, rental received, 1849-1854, and rental arrears, 1848-54 on Lord Clonbrock's estate**

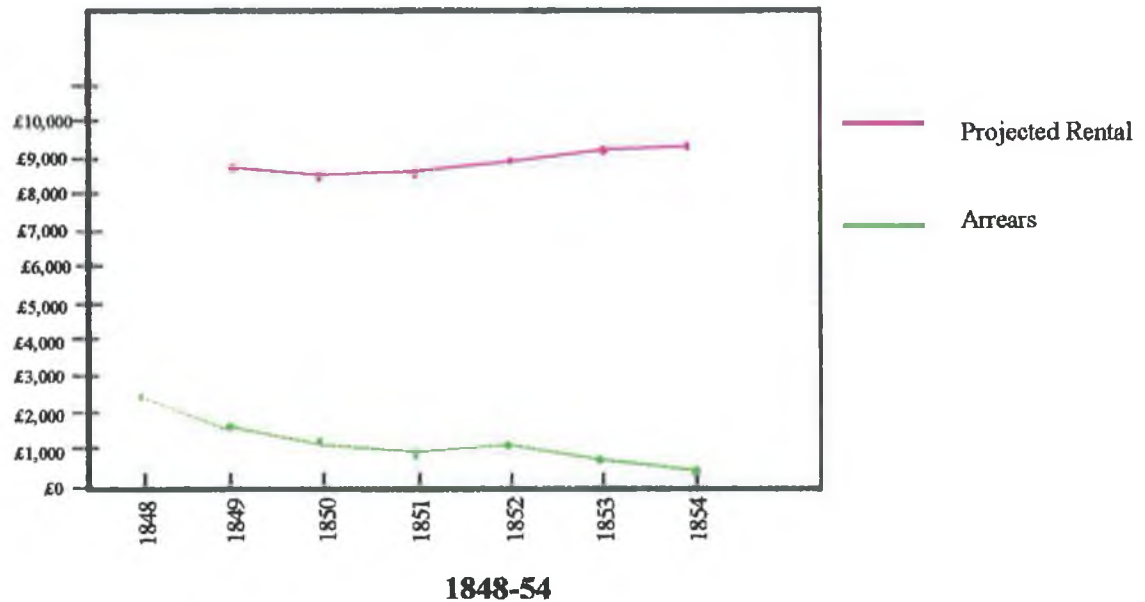
<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Rental</b>	<b>Rental Received</b>	<b>Arrears</b>	<b>Arrears as a percentage of Projected Rental</b>
<b>1848</b>	Figure not available	Figure not available	£2339.72	
<b>1849</b>	£8823.41	£9269.68	£1893.46	21.38
<b>1850</b>	£8648.87	£9067.65	£1473.82	17.04
<b>1851</b>	£8857.68	£9250.32	£1081.18	12.20
<b>1852</b>	£8989.52	£8845.77	£1224.92	13.62
<b>1853</b>	£9142.81	£9527.75	£839.98	9.18
<b>1854</b>	£9233.82	£9444.63	£629.47	6.81
<b>TOTAL</b>	£53,696.11	£55,408.80	£629.47	1.17
<b>AVERAGE</b>	£8,949.35	£9,234.80	£1,190.47	13.3

**Source: Table compiled from the, rental and accounts ledgers, 1849-1854, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19617-19622)**

In the period 1848-54, with the single exception of the year 1852, when the arrears figure rose by £143.74 on the previous years figure, arrears declined regularly to stand at £629.47 in 1854 which was a mere 6.8 per cent of the projected rental figure of £9,233.82 for that year (see table 5). This significant reduction in an arrears figure, which built up during the testing years of the famine, assumes added significance due to the fact that it occurred during a period when projected rental rose by 4.65 per cent from a figure of £8,823.41 in 1849 to £9,233.82 in 1854, and that as early as 1849 the figure of £9,269.62 for rental received exceeded the projected rental figure of £8,823.41 (see table5).

**Figure 4**

**Projected rental 1849-54 and rental arrears, 1848-54 on Lord Clonbrock's estate**



Source Data taken from table 5

There is considerable substance in Cormac O'Grada's assertion that 'the famine's part in improving the lot of most people who survived it is undisputable'. This certainly appears to apply in the case of Lord Clonbrock's estate.<sup>50</sup> However one must look for more dynamic reasons for the very rapid regularisation of the affairs of Lord Clonbrock's estate in the aftermath of the famine and this area of the study will focus on the significance of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants in this process of regularisation and the subsequent retention of stability on the estate up to 1880.

Irish landlords, in general, had a desire to be perceived as having a good working relationship with their tenants. Not all of them went to such extremes as the third earl of Leitrim, who, when he wanted a grand illumination for his visit to Milford in May

1861 ordered his agent Captain Baker to send 'Allic Russell round to each tenant with an order that a candle was to be in each pane of glass in the front of each house'.<sup>51</sup> But few of them, Lord Clonbrock included, lost an opportunity to draw attention to their good relations with their tenants. In 1872 Lord Clonbrock told the examiner, Mr Murphy, in the trial of the Galway county election petition that 'in this country we have always prided ourselves, and I think very justly prided ourselves, upon the cordial union between landlord and tenant'.<sup>52</sup> Later in the same trial Lord Clonbrock alleged that during the election campaign, which was under investigation, a certain Pat Barrett 'gave me considerable abuse; indeed he called me a "blind old liar"<sup>53</sup> but conceded that Pat Barrett had been his tenant 'more than twelve years ago'<sup>54</sup> and went on 'I may say in confirmation of the union between landlord and tenant that for forty five years he was the only tenant that I ever had occasion to bring into court'.<sup>55</sup>

The available rental and accounts ledgers for Lord Clonbrock's estate in the period 1849-80 reveal that, relations between him and his tenants were not quite as harmonious as outlined by him to the examiner at the trial and that evictions took place on a somewhat wider scale, especially in the early post-famine years. The aforementioned Pat Barrett had one small holding in each of the three townlands of Killeen, Keelogue, and Latoon, and an entry beside his name on the rental and accounts ledger for the year 1860 reads; 'Ejected from all three holdings, 28-12-1860'.<sup>56</sup> There are other examples beginning with the year 1849 where entries such as these are found: 'Paid attorney, Davies, twenty-two pounds for twenty-one ejectments., Paid sheriff £5.65., Paid Lloyd and Roper thirty-two pounds for Killuremore ejectment'.<sup>57</sup> Those evicted included such people as John Monaghan of Clonkeen, whose rental was four pounds a year and whose arrears were eight pounds

and Edward Byrne of Ballyluogue whose rent was £3.77 a year and who was £17.68 in arrears.<sup>58</sup> It is, however, important to point out that once stability returned to Lord Clonbrock's estate after the famine crisis there is a distinct lack of evidence of evictions taking place in the post-famine period up to 1880.

Landlords evicted tenants for a variety of reasons other than for non payment of rent. For instance a tenant on the Fitzwilliam estate had an eviction notice served on him because he was 'not thought to be steady'.<sup>59</sup> Eviction for such reasons frequently left tenants feeling aggrieved and landlord-tenant relations were damaged as a result. There is no evidence to suggest that Lord Clonbrock evicted tenants for such reason. There is indeed no evidence to suggest that in the period 1849-80 he evicted for any reason other than for non payment of rent and a resultant accumulation of arrears. If the case of the aforementioned Pat Barrett is returned to for a moment it can be seen that his eviction fitted into this category also. He had ceased to pay rent and had run up sizeable arrears in each of the three holdings from which he was ultimately evicted (see table 6).

**Table 6**

**Holdings of Pat Barrett, his yearly rental and arrears, 1860**

<b>Tenant</b>	<b>Townland</b>	<b>Yearly Rent</b>	<b>Rent Paid 1859</b>	<b>Arrear</b>
<b>Pat Barret</b>	Killeen	£8.63	nil	£12.47
<b>Pat Barrett</b>	Kellogues	£4.00	nil	£ 6.00
<b>Pat Barrett</b>	Latoon	£8.00	nil	£12.00

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledger, 1860, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MS 19624).**

As seen at an earlier stage of this study Lord Clonbrock encouraged his lesser tenants, in particular, to leave his estate in pre-famine years. This strategy was continued by him quite vigorously in the early years of the post-famine period up to and including 1850. Tenants who left the estate under such circumstances had the comment ‘Gone away’ written beside their names on the rental ledger. Such was the case of J. Mannion of Currafarry in 1849 whose yearly rental was £3.21 and who left an arrear of £6.73.<sup>60</sup> It can be fairly assumed that Lord Clonbrock preferred this system of putting affairs on his estate in order to the eviction process and that he was prepared to finance such schemes. This is evident in the year 1849 when he paid a sum of sixty-six pounds to ‘sundry tenants on throwing their houses and leaving the estate’ and a sum of seventy-five pounds to tenants who emigrated.<sup>61</sup> He paid a further £44.12 to tenants on vacating their houses and leaving the estate in 1850 but such payments did not continue after that year.<sup>62</sup> However payments to tenants who emigrated, continued on quite a regular basis, in the years for which records are available up to 1868 and in all a sum of £240 was paid in the years 1864-8 (see table 7).

**Table 7**  
**Money paid to sundry tenants on emigrating,**  
**by Lord Clonbrock, 1865-69**

Year	Amount Paid to Emigrants
1865	£100.00
1866	£ 65.00
1867	£ 30.50
1868	£ 44.50
<b>Total</b>	£240.00

Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1865-1868, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19629-32).

William Gacquin's observation that 'some landlords like Lord Clonbrock...may have seen it as part of their role as landlord to look after the interests of their tenants and ensure they could pay their rent'<sup>63</sup>, though made in reference to the pre-famine period holds also for Lord Clonbrock in the post-famine period. Lord Clonbrock's repayments on loans from the board of works, which were used to finance some of the improvements on his estate, were in excess of £480 for each of the years 1859-68.<sup>64</sup> This was slightly in excess of 4.5 per cent of his average annual rental income of £10,441.53 for those ten years (see table 9). J.W.H.Carter puts the average expenditure by landlords on improvements on their estates for the years 1850-75 at between three and four per cent of their gross rental<sup>65</sup> while W. E. Vaughan puts the figure for 1851-80 just slightly higher at four to five per cent.<sup>66</sup> Based on these figures, Lord Clonbrock's expenditure on improvements on his estate, financed by board of works loans alone, brought his expenditure safely up to the national average. Furthermore the improvements were carried out at practically no cost to the tenants, who benefited from the improvements which these loans financed, as we learn from the evidence given by his agent, at the time, John Ross Mahon, to the Bessborough commission regarding improvements on Lord Clonbrock's estate and the financing of same.

Q.21190        What kind of improvements?

A. Drains, almost entirely drains is what I prefer very much to lay out money on.

Q.21191        And road making?

A.     Yes

Q.21192        All for the general advantage of the estate?

A.     Yes, no interest is charged for money expended on roads. This is considered landlords repairs.

Q211.94        Do you mean to say you would drain a tenants field for him?

A.     Yes

Q.21195 Do you add anything to the rent for that?

A. Yes, under the present loans we charge about two and a half per cent before that we charged five per cent and Lord Clonbrock pays the difference. He only charges interest on the money. He pays the principle himself.<sup>67</sup>

It is also very important to point out that expenditure on improvements on his estate by Lord Clonbrock was not limited to money borrowed from the board of works and that substantial sums of money from his rental income were also spent on improvements in the post-famine period. For instance in the five year period 1864-8 a total of £3,270.46 of his total rental income for those five years was expended on improvements to his estate (see table 8).

**Table 8**  
**Money received from rental and money expended on improvements**  
**on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1864-8**

Year	Rental Received	Expenditure on Improvements	Percentage of rental expended on improvements
1864	£10,332.99	674.36	6.52
1865	£10,141.67	570.24	5.62
1866	£10,408.58	691.28	6.16
1867	£10,164.73	604.67	5.94
1868	£10,338.02	729.91	7.06
TOTAL	£51,296.31	£3,270.46	6.36

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1849-1854, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19628-19632).**

When these figures are pitted against overall rental income figures from all sections of the estate for the same five years it is seen that expenditure on estate improvements never fell below 5.62% of actual rental received and the average for the five years was 6.36 per cent (see table 8). This expenditure on estate improvements, when coupled

with the expenditure on improvements, which were financed by loans from the board of works, brings the percentage of rental income spent on estate improvements, for the five years, to 10.86 per cent. This figure is very much in line with the figure of eleven per cent arrived at by Vaughan for expenditure on improvements on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1851-80.<sup>68</sup>

Expenditure of such a magnitude on estate improvements must surely justify putting Lord Clonbrock in the category of 'improving' landlord. This is underpinned by the fact that Vaughan refers to Lord Erne, whom he estimated to have spent in the region of eight per cent of his rental income, in the post-famine period, on improvements to his estate, as 'one of the best known improvers of his day'.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore Lord Clonbrock's improvements were designed to benefit the tenants directly. If the year 1865 on the Duansbury section of his estate is taken as an example it is seen that the money was expended on such things as, drains £203.50, tenants houses £15.45, gates £8.92, seeds £2.35.<sup>70</sup> Expenditure of such a magnitude for such constructive purposes, by Lord Clonbrock, must further discredit Pomfret's claim that 'landlords as a class were alien and absentee and had little interest either in the welfare of the peasants or in the improvement of their property'.<sup>71</sup> On the contrary it indicates a willingness by Lord Clonbrock to maintain a harmonious working relationship with his tenants.

A valuable insight into relations between Lord Clonbrock and his tenants can be gained from the rental figures for his estate in the period 1859-68. However before any further reference is made to those rental figures it is necessary to offer an explanation



for the unusually high figure of £14,416.82 for projected rental and £14,019.37 for rental received in 1861 (see table 9).

**Table 9**  
**Projected rental, rental received and arrears for**  
**Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1859-68**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Rental</b>	<b>Rental Received</b>	<b>Arrears</b>	<b>Arrears as a percentage of Projected Rental</b>
1859	£9,594.73	£9,553.23	£57.55	0.59
1860	£ 9,745.56	£ 9,791.34	£11.77	0.12
1861	£14,416.82	£14,019.37	£409.22	2.83
1862	£9,896.43	£ 9,825.90	£479.74	4.84
1863	£ 9,906.97	£ 9,839.55	£547.12	5.52
1864	£10,074.54	£10,332.99	£288.73	2.86
1865	£10,234.40	£10,141.67	£371.47	3.62
1866	£10,303.26	£10,408.57	£266.17	2.58
1867	£10,244.01	£10,164.73	£345.43	3.37
1868	£10,248.35	£10,338.02	£255.57	2.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>£104,665.07</b>	<b>£104,415.37</b>	<b>£255.57</b>	<b>0.002</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>£10,466.50</b>	<b>£10,441.53</b>	<b>£303.27</b>	<b>2.89</b>

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1859-1868,**  
**(NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19623-19632).**

Prior to 1861 each rental year, on Lord Clonbrock's estate, coincided with that calendar year. The gale days of each rental year were in May and November of that calendar year. When Lord Clonbrock did not collect the May 1861 gale the gale day of May 1862 was included in the rental year 1861 and the hanging gale of May 1861 was also collected on the gale day of May 1862 which in effect meant that three gales were included in the rental year 1861.<sup>72</sup> Subsequently the rental of each rental year was collected on the November gale day of that calendar year and on the May gale day of the following calendar year.

The projected rental figures for the years 1859-68 are illuminating. The projected rental of £10,248.35 for 1868 shows an increase of 6.81 per cent on the projected figure of £9,594.73 for 1859 (see table 9). This is not a significant increase since, as already seen, Lord Clonbrock was expending close to eleven per cent of his total rental income, which was an average expenditure, in excess of £1,100 a year on estate improvements in the years 1864-8. It should also be taken into account that the 1868 projection figure included, the projected rental figure of £308.34 for the farm in the townland of Pallas, which Lord Clonbrock did not purchase until 1864,<sup>73</sup> and which could not therefore have been included in the 1859 projection figures. If this is excluded it brings the increase in the overall projected rental for the ten year period considerably further down to 3.6 per cent. Such a moderate increase in rental over a ten year period contradicts Pomfret's claim that outside of Ulster in the period 1850-76 there was a 'ceaseless demand for higher rents by landlords'.<sup>74</sup>

Despite the fact that there was a temporary depression in agriculture in the early 1860s the arrears on Lord Clonbrock's estate over the period in question never rose above 5.52 per cent of projected rental when in 1864 there was an arrears figure of £547.17 on a projected rental figure of £9,906.97 and that in 1868, the last year for which figures were available before the troubled years of the land war arrears were £255.57 on a projected rental figure of £10,248.35, a mere 2.49 per cent (see table 9). This strongly suggests that Lord Clonbrock's tenants were responding positively to the improvements he was making on his estate, which benefited them directly, and which were accompanied by only very moderate increases in rental.

David Seth-Jones, in his work on post-famine Ireland, rightly points out that contrary to the popular image of rural Ireland as predominantly inhabited by small farmers:

There existed another significant group of land occupiers in Ireland, quite distinct and set apart from the ordinary peasantry: extensive farmers involved in dry cattle and sheep grazing, commonly called graziers or ranchers.<sup>75</sup>

A similar situation existed on Lord Clonbrock's estates in the post-famine years examined in this study. In the year 1854, when recovery from the testing years of the famine were at an advanced stage on Lord Clonbrock's estate, with rental arrears standing at only 6.8 per cent of the projected rental for that year (see table 5), there were 533 holdings on Lord Clonbrock's estate.<sup>76</sup> Many of these holdings were indeed small or of poor quality soil. For instance in Lord Clonbrock's section of the townland of Kylebrack West the largest holding consisted of 29.75 acres and was valued at just £7.50 in Griffiths printed valuation 1855.<sup>77</sup> Overall there were seventeen occupiers of holdings in the townland sharing 241.75 acres with a valuation of £61.35<sup>78</sup> Thus the average value of holdings in the townland was a mere £3.6.

Dispersed throughout the estate however were holdings for which substantial rental was being paid. In 1854 there were twenty-one such holdings with rental in excess of £100 a year being paid for each while the average rental for such holdings was £248.33 (see table 10). Considerably more was being paid in some cases. For instance the 1854 rental and accounts ledger shows that Charles Filgate paid a yearly rental of £278.57 for a holding in Doon and £40.61 for another holding in Killupaun while William H Masters paid £300 rental for a holding in Creggane and a further £80 for one in Cappataggel.<sup>79</sup> Thus the total projected rental for the twenty-one farms for which rental in excess of £100 a year was being paid, was £3,724.97 in 1854 (see table 10), while the total projected rental figure for the entire estate was £9,233.82 for

that year (see table 5). This meant that the fifteen tenants of those 'extensive farms' accounted for 40.34 per cent of the total projected rental figure and were thus of considerable importance to Lord Clonbrock. Lord Clonbrock derived much of his rental from farmers such as these and his relationship with them in the post-famine period up to 1880, before the land war began to make its impact on landlord-tenant relations, is worth examining.

It is difficult to say with certainty how many of these extensive farmers held leases. Lord Clonbrock may have kept a record of leases granted to his tenants but if so it did not survive. However those rental and accounts ledgers which still survive for the years 1849-68 provide evidence for the existence of some leases held by some of his extensive tenants in that period. In all there is evidence of leases being held by ten tenants, who paid yearly rental of £100 or more, and the period for which these leases were granted varied. There is no commencement dates for the leases of Pat Kelly of Carra, John Burke of Glanmeene, or Pat Trumple of Clonmane who held 'life' leases. Neither is there a commencement date for the lease of Denis Deely of Killaghbeg, which was for ever. All of these tenants are listed as lease holders in the 1854 rental and accounts ledger.<sup>80</sup> Thomas O'Connor held a 'life' lease on the farm at Pallas from 1864.<sup>81</sup> A 'twenty-one year' lease was granted to William H Masters of Creggane from 1853<sup>82</sup> while Mat Ryan of Mullamore and Thomas Jackson of Clonmane were also given 'twenty-one year' leases from 1868.<sup>83</sup>

In his evidence to the Bessborough commission Lord Clonbrock's agent, John Ross Mahon, stated: 'I will take Lord Clonbrock's estate ... The grass tenants pay twenty per cent over the ordnance value.'<sup>84</sup> In so far as it is possible to make direct

comparisons, accurately, between farm units in Lord Clonbrock's rental ledgers and farm units in Griffiths printed valuation, the evidence suggests that in general, John Ross Mahon's evidence was considerably accurate. For instance Michael and John Carr's farm in Latoon consisted of 488.25 acres and was valued at £296.75 in Griffith's valuation <sup>85</sup> while they paid a yearly rental of £356.21 for it <sup>86</sup> and Robert Darcy's farm in Clonkeen consisted of 155.5 acres land and 27.5 acres bog and was valued at £150.<sup>87</sup> The yearly rental on this farm was £148.33<sup>88</sup> and was thus below the Griffith valuation. However the rental had increased to £173.32 in 1860 <sup>89</sup> and stood at £200 in 1880.<sup>90</sup>

The fact that the rental being paid by many of Lord Clonbrock's extensive tenants was, in some cases, well in excess of the value placed on it in Griffiths valuation does not mean that this rental was excessive. A letter written by the daughter of Sir Richard Griffith to The Times newspapers in 1880 helps to explain this. In it she stated that her father had said on a number of occasions that the purpose of his survey was to arrive at 'a relative valuation of property to regulate the taxation of Ireland and not for the purpose of fixing a letting value and he always said that he had valued the land from twenty-four to thirty per cent under its letting value.'<sup>91</sup> It is also important to put increases on the rental of these extensive farmers between the years 1854-80 into perspective.

**Table 10**

**Projected rental on twenty-two of Lord Clonbrock's holdings for which rental in excess of £100 a year was paid, 1854 and 80**

Farm No.	Townland	Rent in 1854	Rent in 1880	Percentage change
1	Ticooly	£130.00	£160.00	+23.07
2	Ticooly	£262.63	£262.63	nil
3	Iskerballycahill	£170.30	£300.00	+76.15
4	Bolebane	£142.00	£130.00	-8.45
5	Latoon	£203.20	£233.20	+14.76
6	Latoon	£153.71	£167.22	+8.78
7	Doon	£278.57	£380.00	+36.41
8	Creggane	£300.00	£440.00	+46.66
9	Colughagalla	£300.00	£380.00	+26.66
10	Killaghbeg	£143.38	£138.46	-3.43
11	Ballyeighter	£146.42	£146.42	nil
12	Tooreemore	£100.63	£110.62	+10.00
13	Coultly	£130.11	£160.00	+23.07
14	Clonkeen	£173.32	£200.00	+13.66
15	Tooreenard	£168.00	£200.00	+19.04
16	Mullamore	£124.70	£144.70	+16.03
17	Corballymore	£140.00	£200.00	+42.85
18	Carra	£186.00	£270.00	+45.16
19	Clonmane	£170.00	£245.70	+44.52
20	Glanmeene	£122.00	£184.00	+50.80
21	Lurgan	£180.00	£200.00	+11.11
*22	Pallas		£308.83	
Total		£3,724.97	£4,961.78	+33.20
Average		£177.37	£225.53	

\* Note The farm in the townland of Pallas was not purchased by Lord Clonbrock until November 1864.

Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledger, 1854 and 1880, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19617 and 19633).

The rental of the farms of Lord Clonbrock's extensive tenants showed a gross increase of 33.20 per cent between the years 1854 and 1880 (see table 10). However if the farm in Pallas is excluded from the calculations as it was not bought until 1864 and was not thus included in the 1854 rental figure<sup>92</sup> a more accurate figure of 24.91 per cent is arrived at. But in general these were years when, despite the economic depression of the early 1860s, extensive farmers could show profits from cattle and sheep as the figures taken from Lord Clonbrock's account books for his farm for the ten years 1860-9 show. Gross profits made by Lord Clonbrock for cattle and sheep never fell below 96 per cent in the ten year period 1860-9 and average profits were 248.52 per cent (see table 11). Whereas these figures are for cattle and sheep only and should not be taken for net farm profits, they still indicate that the era was one of considerable prosperity for extensive farmers and rent increases along the lines of Lord Clonbrock's and outlined in Table 10 were not unreasonable.

**Table 11**  
**Money expended on the purchase of and earned from the sale of cattle and sheep on the Clonbrock farm, 1860-69**

Year	Cattle Purchased	Cattle Sold	Sheep Purchased	Sheep Sold	Percentage profit on cattle and sheep
1860	£204.68	£683.99	£259.47	£873.61	235.56
1861	£ 93.24	£707.77	£378.52	£880.98	236.76
1862	£292.12	£503.42	£271.23	£606.17	96.95
1863	£ 91.76	£399.84	£289.07	£843.88	226.57
1864	£117.87	£524.83	£280.22	£867.32	237.16
1865	£224.12	£678.42	£ 40.78	£871.85	485.22
1866	£160.22	£578.30	£ 69.28	£436.28	341.9
1867	£ 4.30	£535.19	£306.97	£335.54	179.7
1868	£105.20	£553.36	£ 88.27	£522.32	455.99
1869	£175.01	£556.44	£183.40	£712.09	253.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,468.52</b>	<b>£5,721.56</b>	<b>£2,167.21</b>	<b>£6,950.04</b>	<b>248.52</b>

Source: Table compiled from the farm account books, 1860-69, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19510-19511).

It is also significant that a high proportion of these extensive farms remained in the hands of the same people or their families in the post-famine period up to 1880. In 1854 twenty-one of these farms were held by fifteen families. Some families held more than one farm, for instance, the Carr family held five farms and the Masters family held two farms.<sup>93</sup> It is most significant to note that by 1880 eight of the families were still occupying the farms they had occupied in 1854 (see table 12).



Table 12

**Surnames of families who occupied the farms for which Lord Clonbrock was receiving rental of £100 and upwards in 1880, distinguishing those who were not occupiers in 1854**

Occupiers 1854-80	Occupiers in 1880 but not in 1854
Bowman	Bourns
Carr	Burke
Darcy	Connor
Lyons	Deely
Masters	Fahy
Ryan (James)	Hardy
Ryan (Mat)	Jackson
Staunton	Kerrans
	O'Connor

Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1854 and 1880, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19617 and 19633).

The enduring nature of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his extensive tenants is even more impressive than is initially suggested by the data in table 12 for the following reasons, (a) The Connor family who became occupiers of the farm in Pallas which Lord Clonbrock purchased in 1864<sup>94</sup> were still in occupation in 1880 (see table 18) (b) The Bourns family were in fact occupiers in 1854 but since the rental on the farm was just £85.30 at that time it did not qualify as an extensive farm<sup>95</sup> (c) The Jackson family, who replaced the Trumple family, were already occupiers of land in the townland of Clonmane in 1854.<sup>96</sup> This surely indicates that these tenants regarded themselves as being treated fairly by Lord Clonbrock and that articles such as the following one which appeared in the Tuam Herald newspapers in 1867, approving of Lord Clonbrock's treatment of his tenants, had at least some substance:

Some months ago the Honourable Luke Gerald Dillon married... Immediately afterwards the tenantry of the Clonbrock estate resolved to give a practical profession of their devotion to the noble family. A subscription list was opened... and only the tenantry of Lord Clonbrock were permitted to join in the movement. The tenantry determined that the movement should be confined to themselves... The large sum subscribed was an evidence of the prosperity of the people... and a demonstration that the Irish people only require to be well treated... If we had more such scenes in Ireland and as good cause for their occurrence it would be well for the country... It may fairly be hoped other proprietors, who hardly know their dependants, seeing the popularity of Lord Clonbrock may resolve upon imitating the bright example he has set them.<sup>97</sup>

The article finished by giving a list of the seven tenants who made the actual presentation on behalf of their fellow tenants and significantly four were from the group of tenants under study, who paid in excess of £100 a year in rental. They were James Ryan, Charles Filgate, Francis Darcy, and William H Masters.<sup>98</sup> This not only gives the newspaper article itself a fair degree of credibility but further emphasises the apparent good working relationship which existed between Lord Clonbrock and that section of his tenantry who held farms for which they paid in excess £100 a year in rental.

A good working relationship between Lord Clonbrock and his 'extensive' tenants was, very much in Lord Clonbrock's own best interests because as already seen the rental from such tenants constituted a considerable portion of his total rental income. In the early post-famine years, prior to 1854, Lord Clonbrock evidently saw the necessity of lending support to them in their efforts to pay their rental. The rental and accounts ledger for the years 1849 had the following entry: 'Allowed sundry tenants ten per cent on paying rent of grazing farms'.<sup>99</sup> A similar entry appeared for the following year, 1850, and this time the amount of the 'allowance' given was £293.61.<sup>100</sup> The available rental and accounts ledgers for the remaining post-famine years up to 1880 show no

evidence of such 'allowances' being made to tenants. This is significant as the evidence from the rental and accounts ledgers shows that from 1854 to 1880 these 'extensive' tenants did not require assistance with rental payment. Unfortunately an element of assumption is required here as the rental and accounts ledgers for the years 1869-79 have not survived. However the ledgers for the years 1859-68 show that not one of these extensive tenants fell even temporarily into arrears in those years and furthermore in 1880, when rental and accounts ledgers are again available, none of the tenants paying in excess of £100 a year in rental was in arrears.<sup>101</sup>

The stability in relations between these tenants and their landlord is further highlighted by the fact, already dealt with in this chapter, that eight of the fifteen families who held these farms in 1854 were still in possession of them in 1880 (see table 12). There is also evidence that at least one of the families, no longer in possession by 1880, ended its relations with Lord Clonbrock on the most cordial of manners. This was the Trumple family of Clonmane and the following extract from a newspaper article gives some of the details:

The farm in Clonmane in the county of Galway was let thirty years ago by Lord Clonbrock to Mr. Patrick Trumple at a rent of £110 a year for the tenants own life... The tenant prospered and at his death, which has just happened, he had accumulated £1,000. Having no children he bequeathed half of this sum to his widow and disposed of the other half in the manner set forth in the following extract from his will, with which a correspondent in no way connected with either landlord or tenant has kindly favoured us: "And I will and bequeath to Lord Clonbrock the sum of £500 sterling as a mark of my esteem and regard for him and as a token of my gratitude for all his kindness to me since I became connected with him as his tenant". The response made to this was the grant of a new lease to the testator's widow at the same rent for her life and a gift of the interest of the £500 to lessen her rent.<sup>102</sup>

Evidence of the authenticity of the contents of this letter can be found in the rental and accounts ledgers of Lord Clonbrock. In the ledger for 1860 the name Patrick Trumple is replaced by the name Mrs. E. Trumple and an entry reads: 'Lease for the life of the leesee',<sup>103</sup> but more importantly the accounts section of the ledger for 1859 has the entry: 'Paid fifty pounds legacy duty, at ten per cent, on £500 bequest of the late Patrick Trumple'<sup>104</sup> This is concrete proof that the claim in the newspaper, that Patrick Trumple had left a sum of £500 in his will, to Lord Clonbrock, and is testimony to a long and satisfactory relationship between them as landlord and tenant. It would be naive to suggest that Lord Clonbrock's relationship with the Trumple family was in every way typical of his relationship with all of his 'extensive' tenants but it does help to reinforce the view that he did enjoy a satisfactory working relationship with them in the period under study.

A study of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants, in the post-famine years up to 1880, cannot, however, neglect an examination of his relationship with his numerous lesser tenants who occupied his holdings. There were 581 such holdings in 1849.<sup>105</sup> The rental paid by many of these lesser tenants was very low. For instance the fifty-one tenants of the Dalystown section of his estate accounted for just £66.48 in projected rental in 1849. This was an average rental of a mere £1.30.<sup>106</sup> Some tenants, whose yearly rental was low held leases. For instance Patrick Miskell of Cloncannon, whose yearly rental was £11.40 and Michael Clarke of Doonaree, whose yearly rental was £10.06 held leases<sup>107</sup> but in general, as Lord Clonbrock's agent, at the time, John Ross Mahon told the Bessborough commission: 'The small farmers won't take leases... I have offered them... They are under the impression that the landlord would be more liberal to a yearly tenant.'<sup>108</sup>

Much can be learned about Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his lesser tenants from the observations beside their names in the rental and accounts ledgers. These observations were most numerous in years of economic depression such as those of the early 1860s. For instance in 1864 an entry beside the name of Thomas Leonard of Killosolan whose yearly rental was £11.67 reads: 'Lost one cow, two horses and lent five pounds'.<sup>109</sup> In the same year an entry beside the name of Bryan McKelly, of the same townland, whose yearly rental was six pounds and who was eighteen pounds in arrears reads: 'Lost pigs'<sup>110</sup> and again in the same year an entry beside the name of Michael Mannion of Killeen whose yearly rental was £2.38 and who was £8.88 in arrears reads: 'Poor unable to pay'.<sup>111</sup> It can be fairly suggested that entries such as these were made in the hope that Lord Clonbrock may look sympathetically on the difficulties besetting the tenants in question.

A closer look at the situation on the Dalystown section of Lord Clonbrock's estate in the post famine period up to 1880 can shed some valuable light on Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants whose yearly rental was low. Dalystown consisted of three townlands, Kylebrack, Ballinlawless, and Dalystown Mountain, which came to be known as Kyleglanna after 1859.<sup>112</sup> In 1849 there were fifty-one holdings in all on this section of the estate. The projected rental was £66.48 so the average yearly rental was just £1.30.<sup>113</sup> The tenants of Dalystown were experiencing considerable difficulty in paying their rental in the years 1849-54 as the following table shows.

**Table 13**

**Projected rental, rental received and rental arrears  
on the Dalystown section of Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1849-54**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Rental</b>	<b>Rental Received</b>	<b>Arrears</b>	<b>Arrears as a percentage of Projected Rental</b>
<b>1849</b>	£66.48	£58.22	£46.25	69.56
<b>1850</b>	£66.48	£21.66	£91.07	136.98
<b>1851</b>	£67.87	£119.33	£39.61	58.36
<b>1852</b>	£66.33	£54.43	£51.51	77.65
<b>1853</b>	£62.28	£17.11	£96.67	155.21
<b>1854</b>	£63.17	£105.99	£55.85	88.41
<b>TOTAL</b>	£392.61	£376.74	£55.58	14.15

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1849-54, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19617-19622).**

When rental arrears increased from what was already a very high figure of 69.56 per cent of projected rental for the year 1849 to 136.98 per cent for the year 1850 (see table 13) Lord Clonbrock responded, not by resorting to the eviction process but by writing off £57.45 as an 'irrecoverable arrear'.<sup>114</sup> It is also significant that by 1851 only two tenants are recorded as having left the Dalystown estate and they are listed as 'gone away'<sup>115</sup> which suggests that they were not evicted and in all probability availed of the financial aid made available to tenants who left the estate or emigrated in those early post-famine years. In that year alone a sum of £97.78 was set aside to assist tenants of Lord Clonbrock's estate to emigrate.<sup>116</sup> The above remedial action taken by Lord Clonbrock which reduced arrears to £39.61 or 58.36 per cent of projected rental for the following year 1851 (see table 13) while relatively successful, proved not to be enduring as arrears continued to spiral and by 1853 they stood at £96.67 which was a

staggering 155.21 per cent of the projected rental for that year (see table 13). Again Lord Clonbrock responded by allowing the sum of £27.63 as irrecoverable arrears in 1854<sup>117</sup> with the result that arrears fell back to £55.85 or 88.41 per cent of projected rental for that year (see table 13).

The fortunes of the tenants of the Dalystown section of Lord Clonbrock's estates cannot be followed between the years 1854 and 1858 as the rental and accounts ledgers for those years did not survive. However Lord Clonbrock's efforts in assisting them, by writing off some of their arrears in times of difficulty, appeared to have met with success as in 1859, when rental records again became available, arrears stood at only £2.40 on a projected rental figure of £67.72.<sup>118</sup> This arrear of just 3.54 per cent was quite inconsiderable and reflected quite favourably on Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants on that section of his estates. Arrears showed a further decline on the Dalystown section of the estate in the next year, 1860, when they stood at just £1.60 or just 2.34 per cent of the projected rental figure of £68.22 for that year.<sup>119</sup>

The next year 1861 is of considerable interest with regards to Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants whose yearly rental was low. The gale days on Lord Clonbrock's estates were on the first of May and on the first of November. Collection of the May gale of 1861 was delayed and thus it became a hanging gale and subsequently Lord Clonbrock based his estate expenditure for the financial year January 1862 to December 1862 on the rental from the gales of May 1861, November 1861, and May 1862.<sup>120</sup> Lord Clonbrock anticipated that payment of this hanging gale of May 1861 would cause difficulty to his tenants whose yearly rental was low. He

thus made a concession to them which is recorded in the rental and accounts ledger for that year, thus: 'On the May gale 1861 tenants paying under four pounds yearly are allowed half of that gale, tenants paying four pounds and under twelve pounds have been allowed one third of that gale, on paying up the hanging gale'.<sup>121</sup>

The apparent awareness of Lord Clonbrock that his lesser tenants were vulnerable in times of even minor change and his sensitivity to their difficulties is further underpinned by the fact that the tenants of the Dalystown section of his estate, who certainly came within the category of lesser tenants, were allowed the entire 1861 gale and were asked to pay just the November 1861 and May 1862 gales. The following entry was made in the rental and accounts ledger for that year: 'The May 1861 gale was allowed to the tenants of the Dalystown section of the estate'.<sup>122</sup>

Tenants, like those of the Dalystown section of Lord Clonbrock's estate, whose holdings were small and the soil of which was of poor quality, were frequently faced with periods of economic difficulty and were vulnerable in times of change or, of even temporary, economic decline. They needed a landlord who was prepared to be made aware of their difficulties and to take some remedial action when they were particularly hard pressed. Lord Clonbrock proved himself to be such a landlord in the post-famine years up to 1880 and it is significant that on the gale day of May 1880 when the land war was already beginning to have its impact, arrears on the Dalystown estate fell from a figure of £16.50 for the previous year, 1879 to £10.65 which was a relatively moderate, 16.67 per cent of the projected rental for that year.<sup>123</sup>



There was a rapid recovery from the effects of the famine in the affairs of Lord Clonbrock's estate. Arrears of rental which stood at 26.51 per cent in 1848 were down to 6.8 per cent in 1854 (see table 5). Overall the gross projected rental figure of £10,756.02 for 1880 (see table 16) showed an increase of 21.9 per cent on the figure of £8823.41 for 1849 (see table 5). However if the projected rental figure of £308.83 for the farm in Pallas is excluded as it was not included in the rental until 1864 <sup>124</sup>, the net increase in projected rental for 1880 over that of 1849 is 18.4 per cent.

Notwithstanding the fact that a net increase of over eighteen per cent in projected rental is substantial Lord Clonbrock's awareness of his tenants problems, in times of difficulty, was evident throughout the period. As already seen the tenants of his 'grass' farms were allowed a ten per cent abatement in 1849 and 1850, while in 1862 his lesser tenants were allowed reductions on, the hanging gale of May 1861 and his Dalystown tenants were allowed the full gale. It was Lord Clonbrock's willingness to respond to his tenants difficulties in general and in some cases to individual tenants difficulties coupled with his expenditure of around 11 per cent of his rental income on estate improvements which ensured a satisfactory working relationship with his tenants. Lord Clonbrock's ability to maintain that satisfactory relationship with his tenants, in the testing years of land agitation until his death in 1893, will be examined in the next chapter of this study.

### **Chapter Three. The impact of land agitation on landlord-tenant relations on the Clonbrock estate, 1880-93**

R. V. Comerford points out that Gladstone's visit to Ireland in the late autumn of 1877 coincided with the Indian summer of post-famine prosperity and that the great houses in which he stayed 'would soon have their ease disturbed and their prosperity threatened by agricultural recession and agrarian and political unrest'.<sup>125</sup>

As the rental and accounts ledgers for Lord Clonbrock's estate for the years 1869-79 have not survived the level of post-famine prosperity experienced by Lord Clonbrock cannot be measured with complete accuracy and neither can the year he began to feel the impact of the hostile forces, mentioned by Comerford, be pinpointed. However the records for 1868 show that affairs on his estate, with regards to rental income, were in quite a satisfactory state as he faced the financial year January to December 1869. His rental received for that year exceeded his projected figures by £89.87 and his arrears of £255.57 were a mere 2.49 per cent of his projected rental of £10,248.35 (see table 9).

When the rental and accounts ledgers become available again for the year 1880 they show that the projected rental figure for that year stood at £10,756.02 (see table 16) This shows a 4.95 per cent increase on the figure of £10,248.35 for 1868 (see table 9) which suggests a further degree of prosperity on the estate in general during the 1870s. That this prosperity had already begun to decline, however, is evident from the fact that the arrears figure for that year, 1880, stood at £989.71 which was 9.20 per cent of the projected rental figure of £10,756.02 (see table 16), and almost four times the arrears figure of 2.49 per cent for 1868 (see table 9). The era when landlords had their ease disturbed and their prosperity threatened had arrived on the estate of Lord

Clonbrock. The severity of the impact of this process would be indicated, in no small way, by Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants up to the time of his death in 1893.

His rental receipts in excess of £10,000 a year in the early years of the 1880s (see Table 16) may suggest that there was little cause for concern but this has to be measured against his financial overheads which were considerable and some of which are listed in the following table for the year 1880.

**Table 14**

**Some items of expenditure on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1880**

<b>Item of Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Percentage of Projected Rental 1880</b>
Agency	£423.47	3.93
Income Tax	£305.52	2.84
Insurance	£321.62	2.99
Interest on Loans	£395.77	3.67
Poor Rate	£395.22	3.67
County Cess	£165.97	1.54

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledger, 1880, (NLI, Clonbrock papers Ms 19633).**

In 1880 provision was also made for expenditure on such things as tenants houses and drains which came to £802.97, and a rental abatement of £270.14 was also allowed.<sup>126</sup>

Such expenditure had an important impact on his relationship with his tenants. Lord Clonbrock, like other landlords had an obligation which was legally binding, to make certain financial provisions for family charges and jointures. An indenture, dating from

the year 1830, when Lord Clonbrock married the Honourable Caroline Elizabeth Spencer, stipulated that

if there should be one or more children of the same marriage, other than an eldest son,... that the said Lord Clonbrock should lay and raise the sum of £20,000 for the portion of such children whether sons or daughters.<sup>127</sup>

It was therefore very much in the interests of Lord Clonbrock to maintain a satisfactory working relationship with his tenants as even a modest decline in rental over a number of years could have a negative impact on the financing of his affairs. It is significant that in 1880 only £23.96 of Lord Clonbrock's rental income of £10,163.54, for that year, remained after all estate expenses had been met.<sup>128</sup>

Starting in the late 1870s, circumstances appeared to conspire against the maintenance of good relations between landlords and tenants. A series of cold and wet springs and summers had devastating effects on returns from crops as the following article in the Tuam Herald newspaper in September 1879 concerning the crops in Galway shows:

As this is being written a fierce westerly wind is blowing bringing with it much destruction to the cereal crops. Rain falls continuously... Turf which was but partially saved can only add to the manure heap. The yield from oats is very fair and owing to absence of sun the stalk is not ripening and the late winds are now ruining them. Wheat, barley and rye are in the same unsatisfactory condition... The farmer class feel the pinch of the bad times in perhaps its most intensified form...<sup>129</sup>

This bleak picture is verified in the observations of the sub-inspectors of the R.I.C., who acted as superintendents of the agricultural statistics, in their reply to a circular in December 1879. Reporting from the Dunmore district of County Galway, they observed that 'the probable cause of the bad yield of the various crops in this district may be attributed to a late spring, a cold wet summer, and a late wet harvest'.<sup>130</sup> The adverse effect of the cold and wet seasons can be seen from the following table which

is an extract from the agricultural statistics for the year 1879 and gives the yield per statute acre of the various crops in Galway for the years 1870, 1875, and 1879. Not only was the favourable return from crops for 1875 reversed but in general the yield for 1879 was well below that for 1870.

**Table 15**

**Showing the yield per statute acre of the various crops  
in Galway in 1870, 1875, and 1879**

County	Yrs	YIELD PER STATUTE ACRE OF THE VARIOUS CROPS												
		Wheat cwt	Oats cwt	Barley cwt	Bere cwt	Rye cwt	Beans cwt	Pease cwt	Potatoe cwt	Turnip cwt	Mangle Wuzel & Beetroot tons	Cabbage tons	Flax tons	Hay tons
Galway	1870	9.8	12.2	13.4	12.4	10.9	13.6	9.1	3.9	12.0	13.3	12.1	26.3	1.8
	1875	12.8	14.7	16.1	13.7	11.7	17.3	11.8	3.9	15.2	15.3	15.1	31.0	2.3
	1879	9.2	10.7	8.6	7.4	6.9	17.2	8.0	1.4	7.8	7.8	8.3	16.5	1.9

**Source:** Agricultural statistics of Ireland for the year 1879 [C2534], HC 1880, Ixxvi, 815.

Economic decline, which posed a threat to the livelihood of tenant farmers, inevitably put a strain on their relations with their landlord. The economic decline of the late 1870s was accompanied by land agitation. This agitation quickly gained momentum and escalated into what has become known as the land war. On 20 April 1879 Michael Davitt organised a demonstration attended by perhaps 10,000 persons at Irishtown, County Mayo. This was to protest against what were considered to be the excessive rents being charged, by the Mayo landlord, Canon Burke.<sup>131</sup> Pleased with the success of this meeting, Davitt established the national land league of County Mayo in August 1879, pledged to 'the abolition of the present land laws of Ireland'.<sup>132</sup> In the autumn of 1879 this land league spilled over the borders of Connaught into Munster and parts of Leinster and the Irish national land league was formed in October 1879.<sup>133</sup> Its

primary objectives were ‘the reduction of rack rents, the defence of those who may be threatened with eviction for refusing to pay unjust rents, and to facilitate the obtaining of the ownership of the soil by the occupiers’<sup>134</sup>. When Parnell became leader he ‘welded the forces of advanced constitutional nationalism to the rapidly growing land movement’<sup>135</sup> and the movement ‘achieved the largest, active mass participation of any movement in Irish history, mobilising sectors of the population and areas of the country just beginning to become politicised.’<sup>136</sup> When, in the autumn of 1880 the land league cry went up that no more than the government valuation of any farm should be paid as rent landlords were facing major crises. Their difficulties were further compounded because in the difficult economic conditions of the time, as R.V. Comerford writes: ‘Farmers and shopkeepers responded readily to the idea that agricultural rents lacked the moral legitimacy of other debts and might be delayed, reduced, or withheld to facilitate the meeting of other commitments.’<sup>137</sup>

In these circumstances, relations between some landlords and their tenants totally broke down. J.S. Donnelly Jr. cites the County Cork landlord Charles William Talbot Ponsonby who ‘by the winter of 1888-9 had lost almost £25,000 in rent and owed some £4,000 or £5,000 to his solicitors’,<sup>138</sup> and of whom Balfour informed Lord Salisbury in January 1889: ‘Ponsonby is completely broke... He has no money to pay his charges and none to provide himself with bread and butter’.<sup>139</sup> On the estates of one of Lord Clonbrock’s fellow county landlords, the first marquis of Clanricarde, relations between landlord and tenant also broke down. As Desmond Roche wrote:

Clanricarde insisted that his “low” rents were payable under the law, and must be paid. And he compounded the offence by maintaining, from his lair in London, an unshakeable refusal to reinstate any evicted tenant, who had taken part in the plan of campaign.<sup>140</sup>

The evidence for this apparent inability on the part of Clanricarde to form any sort of satisfactory relationship with his tenants is reinforced by the claim made in 1886, to the Right Honourable George Shaw-Lefevre M.P., by Mr Joyce, who was Clanricarde's former agent, that

he would have settled the dispute with the tenants on a most satisfactory basis at an abatement of twenty per cent and that the grave mistake that Clanricarde had made was in attempting to manage his estate from London without any personal knowledge of the country.<sup>141</sup>

Lord Clonbrock was a resident landlord who according to an article in the Western News newspaper at the time of his death in 1893 was 'utterly unknown to the society throng in London and seldom ventured outside the confines of his native County Galway... his figure familiar to the peasantry'.<sup>142</sup> The article also mentioned that he was 'a most beneficent landlord and he suffered less from the times than most of his brethren'.<sup>143</sup> Before going on to analyse how his relationship with his tenants impacted on his rental income, this study will now focus on his rental and arrears figures for his estate in the ten testing years of land agitation, 1880-9.

Before beginning this analysis it is well to put the projected rental figure for 1880 in perspective as much of the analysis will be based on it (see table 16). A comparison with the year 1868, which is the closest year, prior to 1880, for which such a figure is available, can serve this purpose and 1868 was a year of relative normality coming as it did after the economic depression of the early 1860s had ended. The projected rental figure for 1868 was £10,248.35 (see table 9). Projection figures had increased by 4.95 per cent to £10,756.02 in 1880 (see table 16). Since the early and mid 1870s were years of considerable prosperity an increase of this proportion indicates that the projected rental figure for 1880 was a realistic one which was based on the figures for

relatively normal years before the land agitation gained full momentum causing an impact on the rental of estates in general.

**Table 16**

**Projected rental, rental received, rental abatements, 1880-9 and rental arrears, 1879-89 on Lord Clonbrock's estate**

Year	Projected rental	Rental received	Abatements	Arrears	Abatements as a % of projected rental	Arrears as a % of projected rental
1879	Figure not available	Figure not available	Figure not available	£989.71		
1880	£10,756.02	£10,163.54	£270.14	£1,582.15	2.51	14.70
1881	£10,756.02	£10,116.37	3570.93	£2,120.50	5.30	19.72
1882	£10,701.33	£10,780.26	£497.22	£1,310.82	4.64	12.24
1883	£10,644.71	£10,469.53	£294.92	£1,433.29	2.77	13.46
1884	£10,798.28	£10,596.44	£219.78	£1,401.47	2.03	12.97
1885	£10,794.43	£10,460.13	£1,356.66	£1,729.78	12.52	16.02
1886	£10,867.52	£9,990.84	£1,699.78	£2,606.45	15.64	23.98
1887	£10,846.38	£9,889.27	£1,403.70	£3,178.78	12.94	29.30
1888	£10,839.15	£10,761.64	£490.63	£3,241.82	4.52	29.90
1889	£10,790.64	£10,357.35	£239.21	£3,649.57	2.21	33.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>£107,794.48</b>	<b>£103,585.37</b>	<b>£7,037.97</b>	<b>£3,649.57</b>	<b>6.52</b>	<b>3.38</b>

**Source; Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1880-9, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19633-19641)**

The fact that the arrears figure of £989.71 at the beginning of 1880 was a reasonably moderate 9.20 per cent of the projected rental for that year (see table 16) is a further indication that the rental figures for 1880 were realistic and not dictated by seriously abnormal circumstances. This is reinforced when a comparison is made with the figure for rental received in the ten year period, 1859-68. In the ten year period 1859-68 a total of £104,415.37 was received in rental (see table 9). However in the interests of accuracy, in the overall picture, some adjustment needs to be made to this figure. As explained in chapter two this figure is for twenty-one gales and as this distorts the true picture the figure of £99,443.20 which is the average for twenty gales is preferred. Furthermore, since the farm at Pallas, for which a yearly rental of £308.83 was



charged, was not included in the rental until 1864 it is being excluded from the reckoning and this gives an overall figure of £97,899.05 for rental received which is more accurate for purposes of comparisons.<sup>144</sup> The average yearly income for the ten year period 1859-68 is thus £9,789.90. Since the rental income for 1859 was £9,594.76 (see table 9) the average yearly rental income for the period shows an increase of 2.03 per cent. It is indeed remarkable that in the ten turbulent years of land agitation 1880-9, Lord Clonbrock's average yearly rental income which showed an increase of 1.9 per cent was a mere 0.13 per cent less than the average increase in the much more settled years 1859-68.

The figures for Lord Clonbrock's loss in rental income over the period 1880-9 are also of considerable interest. The figure for total projected rental for the ten years was £107,794.48 while the figure for rental received was £103,585.37 (see table 16). This shows a loss in rental income of £4,209.11 which was 3.9 per cent of projected rental. Using the same criteria, as already used above, for calculation of the figures for the period 1859-68 they show that his total projected rental of £98,136.86 exceeded his total rental received of £97,899.05 by £237.81 which is 0.24 per cent of projected rental. It can be fairly concluded that a loss of only 3.91 per cent of total rental income in the period 1880-9 which is only 3.66 per cent greater than the loss in the decade 1859-68 indicates considerable stability on Lord Clonbrock's estate in such turbulent years.

However if the rental trends are looked at for individual years they show that the disruptive events of the more turbulent years of the decade 1880-9 also impacted on Lord Clonbrock's estate. Rental fell slightly by 0.46 per cent from £10,163.54 in 1880

to £10,116.37 in 1881 (see table 16). This was a very insignificant fall as 1881 was a particularly disturbed year in landlord-tenant relations in general. Furthermore this fall in rental income was more than offset by an increase of 6.06 per cent on the 1880 figure in 1882 (see table 16). This substantial increase in rental income can be accounted for, almost in total by the payment of £581.43 to Lord Clonbrock by the land commission under the arrears of rental Ireland act 1882 as the following table shows.

**Table 17**  
**Schedule of payments made to landlords by the land commission,**  
**under the arrears of rental act, 1882**

Name of landlord	Amount of arrears(duc to the last gale day of 1880) extinguished by order of the land commission	Amount paid to, or for the benefit of, the landlord by the land commission
Lord Clonbrock	£1,275.52	£581.43
The marquis of Clanricarde	£2,623.79	£1,253.63
Lord Clanmorris	£1,005.92	£368.80

**Source: Return of payments made to landlords by the Irish land commission pursuant to the 1<sup>st</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> sections of the [arrears of rent] acts; and also a return of rent charges cancelled pursuant to the 15<sup>th</sup> section of the act [C4059], HC. 1884, Ixiv, 97,**

The years 1883, 1884 and 1885 show a 3.39 per cent increase in their average rental income of £10,508.70 over the figure for 1880 with the biggest increase of 4.25 per cent being in 1884. These increases coincide with an improvement in landlord-tenant relations in general in those years of the troubled decade. The following extract from a letter, written by Lord Clonbrock's agent at the time, John Ross Mahon, from the rent office in Ahascragh, County Galway to his brother, George in America, in November 1883, emphasises this:

There is a considerable mend in Irish affairs. The combination against payment of rent has abated and I hope will soon cease. The tenants stood out bravely but have been fairly beaten. Curious to say they are making no profession of attachment but are quite civil.<sup>145</sup>

This is in stark contrast to the gloomy letter which he wrote to the same person in May 1882. The following extract from that letter highlights the unhappy position in which many landlords found themselves at the time:

Mr. Battersby makes a better case for compensation to landlords that I thought he could. But in my opinion nothing could compensate them for their being swept away by British rule because they have been loyal and true. Fortunately I have not invested money in land. I am thoroughly sick of the country and its inhabitants. They seem to be getting worse daily and the country itself cannot get right in my lifetime.<sup>146</sup>

Rental income dropped substantially, on Lord Clonbrock's estate, in the years 1886 and 1887. In 1886 there was a drop of 4.48 per cent to £9,990.84 from the 1885 figure of £10,460.13 and the drop to £9,889.27 in 1887 was greater at 5.45 per cent (see table 16). This coincides with the adoption of the plan of campaign on the estate. Tenants involved in the plan refused to pay any rental to their landlords unless the reductions they demanded in rental were granted. It was put in place in parts of the Ballydonelan and Duansbury sections of Lord Clonbrock's estate. The Freeman's Journal newspaper reported that the plan of campaign commenced on those sections of Lord Clonbrock's estate in December 1886 when

The tenants met their agent at Cappataggel... Mr. Harris M.P. attended. After he arrived the tenants consulted among themselves and finally decided to ask for a reduction of twenty-five per cent. An estate committee was formed and had a meeting with Lord Clonbrock's agent, John Ross Mahon, who offered twelve and a half per cent, but this was refused.<sup>147</sup>

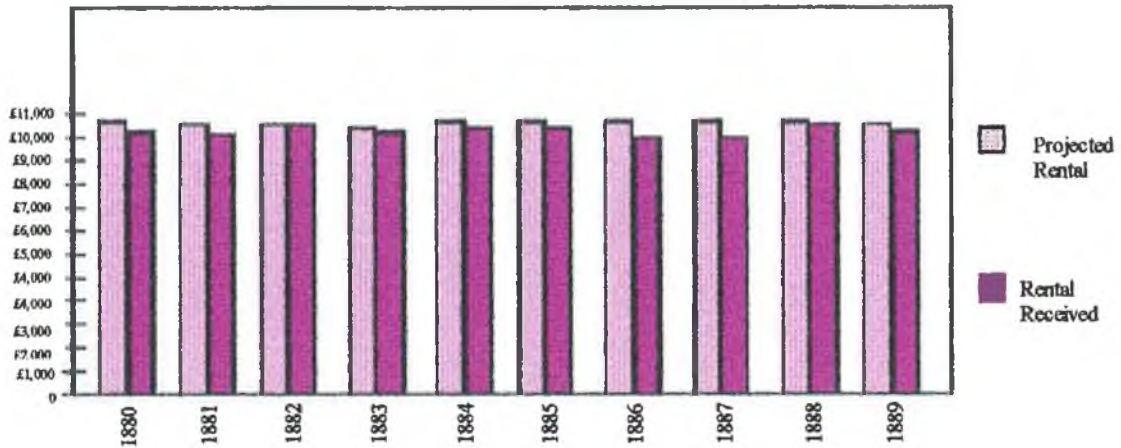
The existence of the plan is verified by a report made by the R.I.C. on 'meetings of Lord Clonbrock's tenants, involved in the plan of campaign, at Ahascragh and Cappatagel 17 December 1886'.<sup>148</sup>

Geary gives May 1887 as the month when the plan of campaign ended on Lord Clonbrock's estate when a fifteen per cent rental abatement was granted.<sup>149</sup> It appears that this agreement was not reached until after the May gale day, which was on the first day of the month, as a further letter written by the same John Ross Mahon to the same George finishes as follows: 'Lord Clonbrock's tenants have not yet given up the plan of campaign'.<sup>150</sup>

The very considerable 8.82 per cent increase in rental income from the figure of £9,889.27 for 1887 to £10,761.64 for 1888 (see table 16) is an indication that the economic depression of the mid 1880s had eased. But it is a clear indication also that the plan of campaign was no longer in place on Lord Clonbrock's estate. This is further testified to by the fact that the rental income figure of £10,357.35 for 1889 was again above the 1887 figure by 4.73 per cent and was only an insignificant 0.11 per cent below the average figure for rental received over the ten year period, 1880-9 (see table 16).

**FIGURE 5**

**Annual projected rental and annual rental received  
on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1880-9**

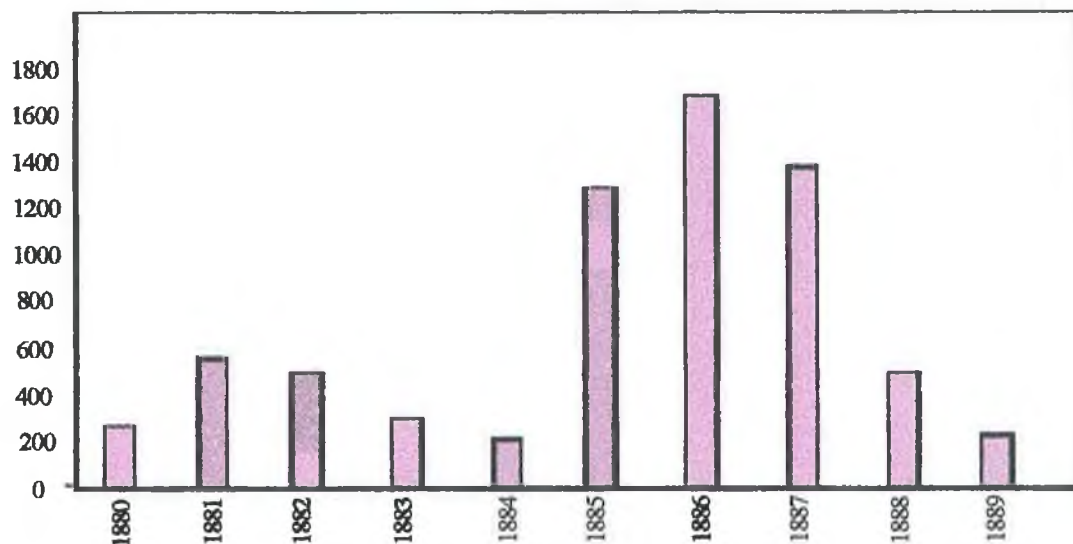


Source: Data taken from table 16

The rental abatements which were granted in the ten year period 1880-9 are worthy of analysis in the context of Lord Clonbrock's relations with his tenants. In 1880 an abatement of £270.14 was allowed. This was 2.51 per cent of the projected rental figure of £10,756.02 for that year(see table 16). In the troubled year of 1881 the percentage allowed increased to 5.3 per cent of the projected rental figure of £10,756.02 for that year. (see table 16) This is an indication that Lord Clonbrock was responding to difficulties which his tenants faced, in a time when such difficulties could disrupt the smooth running of an estate. In 1882 an abatement of 4.64 per cent was allowed on the projected rental figure of £10,701.33(see table 16). These abatements, coupled with the net reduction of £703.86 under the workings of the arrears of rental Ireland act, in the arrears figure of £2,120.50 which some tenants owed, took some of the pressure off those tenants.<sup>151</sup> This was reflected in rental income in the two following years, 1883 and 1884 when rental received was only 1.64 per cent and 1.86

per cent respectively less than the projected rental for the respective years. (see table 16)

**Figure 6**  
**Rental abatements on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1880-9**



Source: Data based on table 16

The abatement figure of £1,351.66 for 1885 which was a substantial 12.52 per cent of the projected rental figure of £10,794.43 for that year (see table 16) is of particular interest as it was allowed when rental received was 0.13 per cent above the average for the ten year period. There is a distinct possibility that this was a tactical decision by Lord Clonbrock to maintain a satisfactory working relationship with his tenants at a time when relations between landlord and tenant in general were beginning to deteriorate. These worsening relations were given full expression in the plan of campaign which began in the following year.

As already seen the plan of campaign on Lord Clonbrock's estate did not become an enduring struggle with the potential to seriously damage landlord-tenant relations, and

rental income, which increased substantially in 1888 remained high in 1889 (see table 16). This stability is further emphasised by the fact that these increases in rental income were achieved with only mild abatements being allowed. Abatements of just 4.52 per cent in 1888 and 2.21 per cent in 1889 were allowed on the respective projected rental figures of £10,839.15 and £10,790.64 (see table 16). Lord Clonbrock had come through the worst years of the land agitation. His estate was intact and his finances were not seriously damaged through loss of rental income. This study will now return to an analysis of the degree to which this was made possible by his personal relationship with his tenants.

A certain note of pride and affinity with his native place can be detected on the part of Lord Clonbrock when he told the trial of the Galway county election petition in 1872: 'I resided almost entirely amongst my own tenantry for the last forty-five years'.<sup>152</sup> There is certainly very little evidence to suggest that he shared the apparent insensitivity and lack of awareness attributed to his neighbour, the first marquis of Clanricarde by Dr Duggan, the catholic Archbishop of Clonfert, when he told the royal commission on agriculture in 1881:

I live upon the property of an absentee owner who takes a rental of £30,000 a year from the country. I have a sum of £2,000 lying idle for the past six years to build a church in a town containing a population of three thousand people. But he lives away in London and he wont permit me to build a church for my people on the estate.<sup>153</sup>

On the contrary, Lord Clonbrock's rental and accounts ledgers show that he made a contribution of twenty pounds in the financial year 1866 to the cost of renovating the catholic chapel at Caltra<sup>154</sup> and that in 1884 he contributed five pounds to the same project, together with ten pounds towards the renovation of the priests' house at Fohenagh in County Galway.<sup>155</sup> A report carried in the Western News newspaper in

October 1886 on the meeting which Lord Clonbrock chaired and which took the decision to suspend the Galway hunt due to the disturbed state of the county also indicates his approval of an integrated community. It quoted him as saying that he greatly regretted that 'necessary' decision as he felt hunting 'afforded an opportunity for social meetings and brought all classes together and tended to peace and goodwill in the country'.<sup>156</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's sensitivity and awareness was combined with an astuteness which was evident in his tactical granting of abatements in the ten troubled years 1880-9, as outlined earlier in this chapter. A man of such a mentality would be keenly aware of the dangers of confrontation in those years of highly charged emotions, and of incurring the wrath of the land league. He would no doubt wish to avoid the unhappy plight of his fellow county man Michael Clasby who wrote as follows to the chief secretary, William E. Forster in October 1881:

To let you know what the land league has brought me to having completely boycotted me since I gave the representatives of your attorney Mr Henderson's sessional solicitors a car from here to Loughrea to prosecute three suspects early in June last. Since then no person dares enter my place of business... I am made bankrupt and my prospects ruined forever.<sup>157</sup>

To verify his unhappy plight Clasby included, with the letter, a bill of sale by the auctioneer and valuer, John B. Kennedy for 'the stock in trade, household furniture and out door effects etc. of the bankrupt'.<sup>158</sup>

In the years of the great land agitation it was important for Lord Clonbrock in the interests of keeping his rental income at a satisfactory level to maintain a good working relationship with his tenants whose yearly rental was in excess of £100 and who can be categorised as extensive farmers. These tenants held a total of twenty-three farms and



in only two years, in the ten year period 1880-9 did the total rental projection for them fall below £5,000. That was in 1887 and 1888 when the projected rental figures were £4,825.03 and £4,975.03 respectively (see table 18).

**Table 18**

**Yearly rental on each of twenty three holdings on Lord Clonbrock's estate.  
Only holdings for which a minimum of £100 a year rental was paid are included**

Tenants Name	Townland	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
John M Carr	Ticooly	160.00	160.00	160.00	160.00	165.90	165.90	165.90	165.90	165.90	165.90
William Bourms Reps.	Ticooly	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	125.00
E Bowman Reps.	Ticooly	261.67	261.67	261.67	261.67	270.00	270.00	270.00	270.00	270.00	270.00
John Lyons	Iskerhallycahill	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
Pat Staunton	Bolebane	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	130.00
Thomas O'Connor	Latoon	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20	233.20
John M. Carr	Latoon	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22	167.22
Thomas O'Connor	Doon	380.00	380.00	380.00	380.00	340.00	340.00	340.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
Thomas O'Connor	Pallas	308.34	308.34	308.34	308.34	369.15	369.15	369.15	369.15	369.15	369.15
W.H. Masters	Creggane	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00	440.00
John M. Carr	Cloughagalla	380.00	380.00	380.00	380.00	339.21	339.21	346.39	346.39	346.39	346.39
Denis Deely	Killaghbeg	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46	138.46
Dan Burke	Ballyeigher	146.42	146.42	146.42	146.42	155.63	155.63	155.63	155.63	155.63	144.79
James Ryan	Lurgan	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	201.10	201.10	215.60	215.60	215.60	215.60
Dan Burke	Tooreenore	110.67	110.67	110.67	110.67	115.09	115.09	116.13	116.13	116.13	116.13
John Connor	Coultymuraghty	160.00	160.00	158.00	158.00	167.93	167.93	186.88	186.88	186.88	186.88
Francis Darcy	Clonkean	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	206.38	206.38	215.70	215.70	215.70	215.70
Francis Darcy	Tooreenard	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	221.30	221.30	221.30	221.30	221.30	221.30
Matt Ryan	Mullamore	144.70	144.70	139.70	139.70	139.70	139.70	148.79	148.79	148.79	148.79
George Kerrans	Corballymore	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00
Joseph Hardy	Carra	270.00	270.00	270.00	270.00	298.00	298.00	298.00	Nil	150.00	300.00
Thomas Jackson	Clonmane	245.70	245.70	245.70	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00
John Fahy	Glanmeene	184.00	184.00	184.00	184.00	187.62	187.62	195.57	195.57	195.57	195.57
<b>Total</b>		5070.38	5070.38	5063.38	5017.68	5095.89	5095.89	5163.03	4825.03	4975.03	5129.19

Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1880-89,  
(NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19633-19642).

The total rental projection for the ten years 1880-9, for his twenty-three such farms was £50,505 88 (see table 19). This was a very substantial 48.72 per cent of his projected rental figure of £107,794.46 for his entire estate (see table 16). The extent to which these projections were met is of interest. In the year 1880 the full projected rental figure of £5,070.38 was met (see table 19). Only one tenant, Pat Staunton of

Bolebane, failed to pay his rental of £130 in 1881 but Lord Clonbrock's good working relationship with his tenants is evidenced by the fact that this arrear was cleared by Pat Staunton when an abatement of sixty pounds was granted to him in 1882.<sup>159</sup> This harmony is further emphasised by the fact that no rent was lost or no arrear left when George Kerran's farm in Corballymore was surrendered and relet to Mat Ryan in 1882.<sup>160</sup> Only £45.70 of a projected rental figure of £5,063.38 was lost that year (see table 19). This arrear of £45.70 on Tom Jackson's rental of £245.70 on his farm at Clonmane, did not lead to any lasting tension between landlord and tenant as can be seen from the following note on the rental ledger beside the name of Tom Jackson: 'Rent reduced from £245.70 to £200 by special arrangement and arrears of £45.70 to be left out next time.'<sup>161</sup>

Full rental projections of £5017.68 for 1883 and £5095.89 for each of the two years 1884 and 1885 were met (see table 19). In 1886 Joseph Hardy appeared to have got into difficulties with his farm in Carra. He surrendered the farm leaving an arrear of £22.75 on his rental of £298.<sup>162</sup> This arrear was not recovered and was written off in 1887.<sup>163</sup> Otherwise the remainder of the projected rental figure of £5,163.03 for 1886 was met (see table 19). The full projected rental figures of £4,825.03, £4,975.03 and £5,129.19 respectively for the remaining three years 1887, 1888 and 1889 of the ten years 1880-9 were fully met. The fact that in the ten year period looked at only £22.75, out of a total projected rental of £50,505.88, a mere 0.04 per cent, was lost(see table 19) must surely be testimony to Lord Clonbrock's satisfactory working relationship with his extensive tenants.

Table 19

**Total yearly projected rental, rental received, rental arrears, and rental allowed for the twenty-three farms for which Lord Clonbrock charged yearly rental of £100 and upwards, 1880-9**

Year	Projected rental	Rental received	Arrears	Arrears allowed	Arrears as a percentage of projected rental
1880	£5,070.38	£5,070.38	nil	nil	nil
1881	£5,070.38	£4,940.38	£130.00	nil	2.56
1882	£5,063.38	£5,087.68	£45.70	£60	0.9
1883	£5,017.68	£5,017.68	nil	£45.70	nil
1884	£5,095.89	£5,095.89	nil	nil	nil
1885	£5,095.89	£5,095.89	nil	nil	nil
1886	£5,163.03	£5,140.28	£22.75	nil	0.44
1887	£4,825.03	£4,825.03	£22.75	nil	0.47
1888	£4,975.03	£4,975.03	£22.75	nil	0.45
1889	£5,129.19	£5,129.19	£22.75	nil	0.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>£50,505.88</b>	<b>£50,377.43</b>	<b>£22.75</b>	<b>nil</b>	<b>0.04</b>

Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1880-9, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19633-19642)

It may be wise to point out here in the interests of accuracy in the overall picture, that the farm in Carra remained unlet from May 1886<sup>164</sup> until November 1887 and was farmed by Lord Clonbrock.<sup>165</sup> Between the time when it was relet at £300 a year, to an unnamed tenant in November 1887, until it was again let jointly to Pat Harvey and Pat Sweeney at £240 in November 1892, arrears of £450 were lost on it.<sup>166</sup> Furthermore when the farm of Thomas O'Connor and John M. Carr of Latoon was surrendered and relet to Andrew Hession for £258 in 1890 an arrear of £49.77 on their old rental of £233.20 was lost.<sup>167</sup> These losses of £499.77 for the four years 1890-3, though certainly more substantial than the losses of £22.75 for the ten years 1880-9, are still very modest and must indicate sustained stability and harmony between Lord Clonbrock and his extensive tenants through the worst years of land agitation to his death in 1893.

All of the evidence suggests that Lord Clonbrock was sensitive to the economic problems which his extensive tenants were faced with in the troubled years of land agitation. We have already seen evidence of this in the cases of Thomas Jackson of Clonmane and Pat Staunton of Bolebane. And the Staunton story does not end here, as Pat Staunton's son received a loan of fifty pounds from Lord Clonbrock to stock the farm when he succeeded his father in 1889.<sup>168</sup>

The rental and accounts ledgers do not contain a break down of the abatement figures granted by Lord Clonbrock. However those for the three years 1880, 1881 and 1883 are exceptions as they give such a breakdown.

**Table 20**

**Total abatements allowed to Lord Clonbrock's tenants, distinguishing those allowed to his extensive tenants, in the years, 1880, 1882, and 1883.**

Year	Total Abatement Figure	Amount of Abatement given to Extensive Tenants	Percentage of total abatement given to extensive farmers
1880	£270.14	£180.00	66.63
1881	£570.93	£509.57	89.25
1883	£294.92	£160.00	54.25

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1881, 1882 and 1883, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19633, 19634 and 19636).**

These figures of 66.63 per cent, 89.25 per cent and 54.25 per cent respectively (see table 20) may suggest that Lord Clonbrock was giving assistance to his extensive tenants which was disproportionate to that given to his lesser tenants. However it is well to remember that when £730.86 was taken off the figure of £2,120.50, which Lord Clonbrock's tenants owed him in arrears, through the workings of the arrears of rental (Ireland) act, it was the lesser tenants exclusively who benefited from it<sup>169</sup> and

that, Lord Clonbrock's agent at the time, John Ross Mahon, told the Bessborough commissioners, 'I will take Lord Clonbrock's estate. The small tenants pay twelve and a half per cent less than the ordnance value. The grass tenants pay twenty per cent over the ordnance value.'<sup>170</sup>

Lord Clonbrock himself farmed extensively as the figures for the turn over on his farm, taken from his carefully kept farm accounts books, reveal. In the fourteen year period 1880-93 total income from the farm was £23,205.35 which reflected a loss of 5.94 per cent on his expenditure of £24,672.19 (see table 21)

**Table 21**  
**Monies taken in and monies expended**  
**on Lord Clonbrock's farm 1880-93**

Year	Money Taken In	Money Expended	Profit Margin	Percentage profit margin
1880	£1280.78	£2130.67	- £849.89	-39.88
1881	£1898.77	£1951.10	-£52.33	-2.68
1882	£2445.12	£2575.95	-£130.83	-5.07
1883	£2303.62	£2424.30	-£126.68	-5.20
1884	£1500.75	£1857.77	- £357.02	-19.21
1885	£1540.15	£1793.64	-£253.49	-14.13
1886	£1468.52	£1388.10	+£80.42	+5.79
1887	£1629.80	£1499.12	+£130.68	+8.71
1888	£1679.41	£1304.40	+£375.01	+28.74
1889	£1649.82	£1674.48	-£24.58	-1.46
1890	£1705.83	£1652.86	+£52.97	+3.20
1891	£1364.13	£1347.20	+£16.93	+1.25
1892	£1263.75	£1251.15	+ £12.60	+1.00
1893	£1474.90	£1821.45	- £346.55	-18.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>£23205.35</b>	<b>£24672.19</b>	<b>-£1466.84</b>	<b>-5.94</b>

Source: Table compiled from the farm accounts book, 1880-93, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MS 19511)

Notwithstanding the fact that potential for net profit on Lord Clonbrock's farm was somewhat reduced by the fact that produce from the farm was used to supply his big house, the largely unfavourable figures for net profits over the fourteen years would have sharpened his awareness of the economic difficulties facing those of his tenants who were in the category of extensive farmers and prompted him to take the measures he took to keep his relations with them in a satisfactory state.

The satisfactory nature of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his extensive tenants was reflected in its endurance. At the beginning of 1880 the twenty-three farms in question were held by seventeen families. Fourteen years later, at the end of 1893 eight of those families were still in possession of them. In the case of three other families the farms they rented were passed on to the widow of the occupier on his death and were held by the widows until 1891, in the case of two of them, and 1885 in the case of the third, when it can be fairly assumed they died. Finally the Galbraith family who became the tenants of the farm in Clonkeen in 1881 stayed in possession until 1892 when the farm passed to Ernest Hardy (see table 22).

**Table 22**

**Tenants of and the duration of their occupancy of, farms of yearly rental of £100 and upwards, on Lord Clonbrock's estate 1880-93**

<b>Townland</b>	<b>No of Farm</b>	<b>Name of Occupier</b>	<b>Duration of Occupancy</b>
<b>Ticooly</b>	1	John M Carr Bina Carr Andrew Hession	1880-1889 1890-1891 1892-1893
<b>Ticooly</b>	2	Reps. of William Bourns	1880-1893
<b>Ticooly</b>	3	Reps. of R. Bowman Martin Connolly	1880-1881 1882-1893
<b>Iskerballycahill</b>	4	John Lyons	1880-1893
<b>Bolebane</b>	5	Pat Staunton John P Staunton	1880-1888 1889-1893
<b>Pallas</b>	6	Thomas O'Connor Eleanor O'Connor	1880-1890 1891-1893
<b>Creggane</b>	7	W. H. Masters Martha Masters T.J. Greene	1880-1888 1886-1890 1891-1893
<b>Killaghbeg</b>	8	Denis Deely	1880-1893
<b>Ballyeigher</b>	9	Dan Burke Widow Burke J. M. Colohan	1880-1881 1882-1884 1885-1893
<b>Lurgan</b>	10	James Ryan	1880-1893
<b>Couly</b>	11	John Connor Margaret Joseph Bernard Joseph	1880-1885 1886-1887 1888-1893
<b>Clonkeen</b>	12	Francis Darcy James Galbraith Ernest Hardy	1880-1881 1882-1893 1893
<b>Mullamore</b>	13	Mat Ryan	1880-1893
<b>Corballymore</b>	14	George Kerrans Mat Ryan Alfred le Persse	1880-1882 1883-1891 1892-1893
<b>Carra</b>	15	Joe Hardy Lord Clonbrock Unknown Tenant Pat Harney & Pat Swency	1880-1886 1887-1888 1889-1892 1893
<b>Clonmane</b>	16	Tom Jackson Reps. of Tom Jackson Michael F. Hogan	1880-1885 1886-1888 1889-1893
<b>Glanmeene</b>	17	John Fahy M. J. Fahy	1880-1881 1882-1893

**Source:** Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1880-93, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MSS 19633-19645).

Note: Of the remaining six farms under question, the Carr family held two, one in Latoon and one in Cloughagalla. The O'Connor family held one in Doon and also

held another farm, in Latoon, jointly with the Carr family. The Burke and Darcy families held the farms at Tooremore and Tooreenard respectively.<sup>171</sup>

In a ten year period 1880-9 Lord Clonbrock had received a total of £50,377.43 in rental from that section of his tenantry which paid £100 and upwards in rental each year while the figure for rental left unpaid by those same tenants in that ten year period was a mere £22.75 (see table 19). In the case of his overall estate in the same ten year period he received £103,585.37 in rental but there was a total of £3,649.57 left outstanding in unpaid rental (see table 16). This arrear of 3.52 per cent, which was quite insignificant in the circumstances of the times, does not, however, compare very favourably with the .04 per cent arrears left by his extensive tenants. It must be remembered however that the lesser tenants were much more vulnerable in times of economic depression consequently making their relations with their landlord potentially more volatile.

A situation on the Clonbrock estate where arrears rose by 63.55 per cent from a figure of £989.71 in May 1879 to £1,582.15 in May of 1880 and rose again by a further 94.61 per cent from the 1880 figure to £2,120.50 in May 1882 must have prompted Lord Clonbrock to look carefully at the options open to him in attempting to rectify the situation (see table 16). One option available to him was the eviction of those tenants who were not paying their rental and the evidence shows that eviction and the threat of eviction were used by him, albeit in a sparing fashion. For instance his rental and accounts ledger for the year 1881 has the following entry beside the name of Pat Hession of Cloonigney whose yearly rental was £53.33 and who was £106.66 in arrears: 'Ejected, arrears lost, place relet', while beside the name of John Croffy of the



townland of Killure Castle, whose yearly rental was £9.30 and who was £32.55 in arrears, was the entry: 'Ejectment decree obtained. Sheriff is daily expected to execute it'.<sup>172</sup> Detailed study, however, of the observations in Lord Clonbrock's rental and accounts ledgers have revealed that he saw his tenants as more than mere sources of rental for him and who became dispensable when they no longer fulfilled that function. It also has added further substance to K.T. Hoppen's conclusion that 'neither tenants or landlords could be treated as homogeneous groups locked in a species of eternal conflict in which the rules of engagement were simply the product of what contemporary law might or might not allow'.<sup>173</sup>

The rental and accounts ledger for Lord Clonbrock's estates for the year 1880 does not contain many observations. However ledgers for the following years which cover each of the remaining years under study are rich in observations on those tenants whose full rentals were not being paid. Since these observations were made by his agents for Lord Clonbrock's consideration it can be fairly safely assumed that his tenants considered him as a sort of final court of appeal where their difficulties may be given at least sympathetic consideration. For instance an observation beside the name of John Cooney of Loughanbee whose yearly rental was £4.12 and who was £16.51 in arrears, in 1881 reads: 'A very bad case, no means whatsoever'.<sup>174</sup> In the same year an observation beside the name of John Donnellan of Park whose yearly rental was £3.35 and who was £6.70 in arrears reads: 'A cripple and an object for charity'.<sup>175</sup> In 1882 an entry beside the name of John Gaffy of Killuremore, whose yearly rental was £4.12 and who was £22.37 in arrears, reads: 'In U.S.A., wife and young family at home with no means.'<sup>176</sup>

These ledgers also show that some of Lord Clonbrock's lesser tenants, who were in his employment in the area and who were falling into arrears with their rental, also expected him to give consideration to their difficulties. For instance, in 1881, Pat Noone, whose yearly rental was £1.44 and who was £3.76 in arrears had the following observation beside his name: 'Works in the garden at Clonbrock' and in the same year two other tenants in the same townland, Nicholas Gill and Simon Smith who were experiencing similar difficulties with their rentals, had the observations: 'Cuts turf in Clonbrock' and 'Works in the garden at Clonbrock' beside their respective names.<sup>177</sup>

At this point it is worth returning to the case of Pat Hession of Cloonigney, who as already seen was evicted by Lord Clonbrock in 1882 leaving an irrecoverable arrear of £106.67, as the rental and accounts ledger for 1883 have the following observation beside his name: 'Ejected but left the house and small portion of land'.<sup>178</sup> Such an arrangement indicates that Lord Clonbrock was not a landlord with cold and callous disregard for the welfare of his tenants and this is further borne out in his future dealings with the tenant in question. In 1887 an observation beside the same Pat Hession's name reads: 'In America' and the figures show that he had again fallen seriously into arrears of £32.02 on his new yearly rental of £10.67.<sup>179</sup> In 1893, the year of Lord Clonbrock's death, the rental and accounts ledger show that Pat Hession had paid no rental in the intervening years and was £75.70 in arrears and an observation reads: 'A tram driver in New York, his wife has no means and cannot pay'.<sup>180</sup>

The observations in the rental and accounts ledgers also suggest that Lord Clonbrock showed considerable tolerance towards tenants who were in difficulty but who were making an effort to meet their rental commitments. For instance an observation beside

the name of Pat Moran of Lecarrow in 1888, who was £43.95 in arrears in his yearly rental of £15.65, reads: 'A respectable man, horse and cow died, given time to pay'.<sup>181</sup> The observation in the same year beside the name of Laurence McKelly of Shruhaunfusta, who was in arrears to the considerable amount of £21.75 on a yearly rental of £5.75 also showed a tendency by Lord Clonbrock to be tolerant towards tenants who made an effort to, or even showed good will towards, paying their rental. It reads: 'Promises to pay a years rental in October'.<sup>182</sup> Finally in 1889 there is concrete evidence of Lord Clonbrock's desire to be tolerant and to be non-confrontational when an observation beside the name of John Galvin of Loughanbee, who had already been evicted for having an arrear of £12.00 on his yearly rental of £4.12 reads: 'Evicted, subsequently paid a years rental and costs and was allowed in as future tenant'.<sup>183</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's astute granting of abatements in the ten turbulent years 1880-9 has already been dealt with in this study. The positive result of such a strategy on his income returns from rental must surely have shown Lord Clonbrock that a working relationship with his tenants was superior to a confrontational one. The tolerance which Lord Clonbrock showed to Pat Hession of Cloonigney, by allowing him to remain in his house and in part of his holding, appears on the surface as being unwise as Hession continued to be an unworthy tenant as already seen. However, Lord Clonbrock's good will towards him was rewarded somewhat by the fact that the section of Hession's holding which was taken up was immediately relet to his neighbours James Hession and Michael Duffy thus earning Lord Clonbrock a yearly rental of £42.66.<sup>184</sup>

On the other hand the failure of any sort of satisfactory arrangement being reached between Mary Silk of Doonaree and Lord Clonbrock must have shown, such an astute man, that confrontation with tenants in such times was to be avoided where possible. In 1884 Mary Silk, whose yearly rental was £3.82 and who was £19.12 in arrears was evicted but admitted to the house as caretaker.<sup>185</sup> When she continued to default in her rental she was evicted in 1886. A note in the ledger beside her name reads: 'Ejected, unlet, emergency men\* in charge of holding. House has been levelled'.<sup>187</sup> This eviction proved to be a costly process as the following entry in the accounts section of the ledger for 1886 shows: 'Cost of emergency caretakers for Silks holding at Doonaree, including wages, fuel, repairs, travelling expenses, £51.63'.<sup>188</sup> The arrears were eventually written off and the holding remained unlet and was still so in 1893.<sup>189</sup> The reason it remained unlet is unclear but whatever the reason the outcome of this eviction was not very satisfactory for Lord Clonbrock.

It can be fairly concluded that the eviction process when used by Lord Clonbrock during the period of land agitation 1880-93 was governed by a considerable degree of tolerance and good sense on the part of Lord Clonbrock and his desire to maintain a reasonable working relationship with his tenants was clear. Indeed there is evidence to

\* These were men sent by the orange emergency committee and the property defence association to serve writs and other legal processes where local officers were intimidated from doing so.<sup>186</sup>

show that not all eviction notices served by Lord Clonbrock were designed to extract rental from or punish a hard pressed tenantry. Such was the situation in the case of

Ellen Laffe of Derrymore, who in 1887 was £9.00 in arrears on her rental of £1.00 a year, and beside whose name the following observation appeared: 'Seldom pays but is regularly noticed to prevent her claiming a free house'.<sup>190</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's strategy of offering his lesser tenants reasonable rental played its part in maintaining a good working relationship between landlord and tenant. As already seen his agent, John Ross Mahon told the Bessborough commission that Lord Clonbrock's small tenants paid twelve and a half per cent less than the ordnance. Other evidence suggests that this was indeed considerably accurate. A letter written by the same John Ross Mahon in 1887 contains the following extract, which draws attention to, what he saw as Lord Clonbrock's very fair treatment of his lesser tenants in particular:

Lord Clonbrock's tenants on his estate near Ballydonelan have joined in the plan of campaign and are not paying any rent... You know Lord Clonbrock's are reputed to be the most comfortable and lowest rented tenants in the west of Ireland and have always paid their rent well and satisfactorily. Their land is good - rented below the ordnance - and they were offered three shillings in the pound on the past rent but won't pay.<sup>191</sup>

Since this letter was written by him to his brother George in the United States, it can be reasonably assumed that it was a true statement of the facts, as he saw them, as any attempt to distort the true picture would be pointless in the circumstances.

It could be argued that the excellence of Lord Clonbrock's relationship with his tenants, may have been exaggerated in a letter, by an anonymous tenant, published in The Times newspaper in 1887 and from which the following extract is taken:

I beg leave to dwell on the Right Honourable Lord Clonbrock as being a model of supremacy in the ranks of landlordism... He has at all times loved his

tenantry... If death rendered a holding vacant he would select, in preference to any other, the next male of kin, clearly proving his filial affection... He has expended on his estate to the sum of £30,000, giving employment to hundreds...

Now I would ask the public, is Lord Clonbrock to be put on a level with the tyrant the rackrenter, the exterminator ? If other landlords copied from his example there would be no necessity for a no rent manifesto or a plan of campaign.<sup>192</sup>

However one can expect the comments made by the catholic priest, Father Costello, who was secretary to the Ballinasloe branch of the land league, to George Pellew in 1887 not to be biased in Lord Clonbrock's favour and indeed he had some harsh words to say about at least one other landlord as the following extract shows:

From here to Banagher you pass through Pollock's estate where he evicted 400 families and four miles to the north in County Roscommon he evicted 1,400 more... Lord Clancarthy and Lord Clonbrock are the best landlords in County Galway.<sup>193</sup>

The fact that the plan of campaign as already seen,, which began in a section of the Clonbrock estate in December 1886, when the tenants there demanded a rental reduction of twenty-five per cent was ended in May 1887 when fifteen per cent was granted and accepted is a clear indication that relations between Lord Clonbrock and his tenants were quickly retrievable in times of difficulty.<sup>194</sup> Rents must also have been considered reasonable when a settlement was achieved based on just a fifteen per cent reduction. This compared favourably with the situation on the estates of Sir H. Burke of Marble Hill, County Galway where a thirty per cent reduction was demanded and granted and even more favourably with the situation on the Clanricarde estate where a forty-five per cent reduction was demanded and where a settlement was not reached until the estate was sold in 1913.<sup>195</sup>

A resident and improving landlord had a positive impact on the economic lives of his tenants and that helped to keep relations between them on a relatively smooth footing, especially in difficult years like those of 1880-93. Absentee landlords, who did not reinvest money in their areas were more likely to have an unsatisfactory relationship with their tenants as the following extract from an article in the Tuam Herald newspaper shows:

Lord Clanricarde finds himself so hit by the reduction in his rents as to render it impossible for that ungenerous soul to continue his subscription to the hunt and has reduced his subscription by ten pounds. He is a blessed absentee. A man who never visited Ireland except when he came on the pleasing mission of burying his own father.<sup>196</sup>

Indeed the following extract, from an article in the same newspaper in 1886, which set out to show just how harmonious relations between a resident and generous landlord and his tenantry could be, helps to bolster this conclusion:

In acknowledgement of the many favours which Colonel Hanley of Cooga Lodge, Easky had conferred on his tenantry, the local brass band,... after last mass on Sunday, proceeded to his residence and played a selection of strong national airs in front of the house... They were accompanied by all the tenants and there were nearly 2,000 persons present on the lawn. The Colonel was completely and agreeably surprised by the unexpected visit... He was told it was on account of the kind treatment he had accorded to his tenants and the good example he had shown other landlords in not alone giving them a twenty per cent reduction in their present rentals but forgiving a large amount of arrears.<sup>197</sup>

The impact of Lord Clonbrock's positive actions as a resident, improving landlord can be seen at an early stage of the period under study in this chapter. In 1880 an entry in his rental and accounts ledger shows that £106.27 was spent to 'supply meal for the poor in the spring and summer of 1880' and that a further £138 was spent on 'charity'.<sup>198</sup> Welcome as they may have been, Lord Clonbrock was not content with such short term measures for the relief of distress. In the course of 1880 he received sanction, for loans totalling £10,580 under the provisions of the relief of distress

(Ireland) acts and by the end of that year he had already received £4,120 of that amount which was allocated for drainage and farm roads as the following table shows:

**Table 23**  
**Loans applied for, purpose of loans, and amounts received up to the**  
**31 December 1880, by Lord Clonbrock, under the provision**  
**of the relief of distress (Ireland) acts 1880**

County	Barony	Name of Applicant	Amount of Loans	Description of Work	Gross Amount received to 31.12.1880
Galway	Clonmacnowen	Lord Clonbrock	£7,545.00	Drainage	£2,000.00
Galway	Leitrim	Lord Clonbrock	£1,515.00	Drainage	£ 600.00
Galway	Tiaquin	Lord Clonbrock	£1,520.00	Farm Roads & Drainage	£1,520.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>£10,580.00</b>		<b>£4,120.00</b>

**Source:** Table compiled from the return of the names of landowners and sanitary authorities who have obtained loans under the provision of the relief of distress (Ireland) acts, 1880, distinguishing those obtained at the reduced rate of interest, showing the dates of application and of sanction, the amount of the loans, the description of works, together with the dates of first advances and gross amounts of money issued on account of such loans, to the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December 1880 inclusive, arranged by counties and baronies, HC. 1881(99), Ivii. 653.

Expenditure on Lord Clonbrock's estate on such things as drainage and improvements to tenants house continued right up to 1893 and substantial amounts of money, over and above what was spent on board of works projects, were spent in each year. This can be seen from the following table for the ten years 1884-93 when a total of £8,080.64 was spent.



**Table 24**  
**Money spent on improvements on Lord Clonbrock's estate, 1884-93**

Year	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893	Total
Money	£1051.19	£803.00	£898.42	£406.65	£693.05	£750.83	£713.92	£900.09	£1079.98	£783.51	£8080.64
Rental received	£10,596.44	£10,460.13	£9,990.84	£9,889.27	£10,761.64	£10,357.35	£10,269.85	£10,247.30	£10,464.43	£10,626.36	£103,661.34
Percentage of rental	9.91	7.67	8.99	4.11	6.44	7.24	6.95	8.78	10.32	7.37	<b>7.79</b>

**Source: Table compiled from the rental and accounts ledgers, 1884-1893, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, Mss 19636-19646).**

Expenditures such as these not only benefited the tenants by improving the land they farmed but it also meant that employment was created in the area. An indication of the amounts of money spent on labour by Lord Clonbrock in those ten years can be had from the figures for the amount of money paid by him for labour and in salaries on his farm in the years 1884-93 as outlined in table 25.

**Table 25**  
**Expenditure on labour and salaries on the Clonbrock farm, 1884-93**

Year	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893
Labour	406.28	388.32	394.54	376.57	369.92	352.25	426.50	376.32	418.22	423.37
Salaries	142.00	142.00	142.00	143.50	143.50	143.50	142.00	142.00	142.00	142.00
Total	548.28	530.32	536.54	520.07	513.42	495.75	568.50	516.32	560.22	565.37

**Source: Table compiled from the farm accounts book, 1880-93, (NLI, Clonbrock papers, MS 19511).**

In the testing years 1880-93 relations between Lord Clonbrock and his lesser tenants were not always as satisfactory as were those with his extensive tenants. It has already been established in this study that the series of bad harvests beginning in the late 1870s, which put many tenants in financial difficulties, combined with the expansion of land

In the testing years 1880-93 relations between Lord Clonbrock and his lesser tenants were not always as satisfactory as were those with his extensive tenants. It has already been established in this study that the series of bad harvests beginning in the late 1870s, which put many tenants in financial difficulties, combined with the expansion of land agitation at local level, put a strain on relations between Lord Clonbrock and his lesser tenants in particular. In an ideal situation all of Lord Clonbrock's tenants who were experiencing difficulties with paying their rental would have been treated like the widow, Maria Donnellan of Killuremore. In 1888 she was £12.78 in arrears on her yearly rental of £2.32 and beside her name was the entry: 'Poor has but one cow'.<sup>199</sup> By 1890 she was £17.42 in arrears and this time the observation beside her name reads: 'Left off proceedings.'<sup>200</sup> However the following list of eight payments chosen at random, which Lord Clonbrock had to meet in that same year, 1890 should suffice to show that his rental income was vital for his survival as a substantial landlord. The payments included, agency £443.55, taxation £258.13, insurance £325.88, interest £394.87, poor rate £353.50, county cess £236.00.<sup>201</sup> It should also be remembered that landlords as L.P. Curtis Jr. correctly points out, were vulnerable financially and 'when depressions reduced the regularity of rent payments and obliged proprietors to grant temporary reductions the impact upon net income could often prove disproportionately severe'.<sup>202</sup>

A measure of this financial strain on landlords in Galway in the testing years of land agitation and which indicates that they were financially hard pressed can be clearly seen as early as 1881, from the following motion agreed by the sub-committee of the County Galway land committee and property defence association in November of that year:

In the matter of the employment of senior counsel as well as junior counsel, the sub-committee agree that the matter must go before a general meeting of landlords as even if it did appear to them expedient they would not be justified in incurring the expense without authorisation.<sup>203</sup>

In the following year, 1882 the committee itself passed a motion which deemed the eighty-eight pounds a day paid to retain a senior counsel and fixed by the central committee to be

excessive and that unless the central committee can come to some other arrangement they must give up retaining any counsel and that they are of opinion that fifty-eight pounds a day should be deemed sufficient.<sup>204</sup>

When these landlords, who were well aware of the importance of having senior counsel represent their interests in the land courts, which had been set up under the 1881 land act, were prepared to consider dispensing with them on financial grounds, it must surely indicate financial strain and it is very significant, in the case of this study to bear in mind that Lord Clonbrock's situation must have been little different and that indeed it was he who was chairman of the above meeting when the motion was passed.<sup>205</sup>

Lord Clonbrock's difficult task of maintaining a satisfactory relationship with his tenants in the period 1880-93 was not made any easier by the unhappy relationship in general between landlord and tenant throughout County Galway at that time. The number of evictions in County Galway, which came to the notice of the Royal Irish Constabulary in the quarter ended the thirty first day of December 1882 alone, and which are outlined in the following table are evidence of this unhappy relationship.

**Table 26**

**The number of people and families evicted, the number later reinstated as tenants and the number later reinstated as caretakers in the quarter ended 31 December 1882 in County Galway**

Year	County	Evicted		Readmitted as Tenants		Readmitted as Caretakers	
		Families	Persons	Families	Persons	Families	Persons
1882	Galway E. Riding	35	212	-	-	26	164
1882	Galway W. Riding	98	647	-	-	31	205

**Source:** Table compiled from the, Return '(Compiled from returns made to the inspector general of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of cases of eviction which have come to the knowledge of the constabulary in each quarter of the year ending 31 December 1882, showing the number of families evicted in each county in Ireland during each quarter, number readmitted as tenants and the number readmitted as caretakers' [C3465], HC. 1883, lvi.99.

The following proposal by Mr Christopher Blake the resident magistrate at a meeting of magistrates of County Galway, which was chaired by Lord Clonbrock, in Dublin in January 1881 gives a clear insight into the unhappy relations between landlord and tenants in general in Galway. Mr Blake proposed to

concentrate as large a force as possible in east Galway... to be able to check and finally to suppress the illegal associations and put a stop to the terrorism which was now manifesting itself in the “no rent” organisation. He took the district around Loughrea as being the worst in the county if not in Ireland.<sup>206</sup>

A proposal by Colonel Daly at the same meeting that all landlords should ‘act unanimously in enforcing their legal rights against the recalcitrant tenants on their estates’<sup>207</sup> is further evidence of the unhappy relationship between landlords and tenants in general in Galway where both sides appeared to be becoming entrenched in their respective positions.

It is indeed a tribute to Lord Clonbrock that, in such an atmosphere and in such difficult circumstances, he succeeded in maintaining a satisfactory working relationship with his tenants up to his death in 1893.

## Conclusion

When Lord Clonbrock died in December 1893 the Clonbrock estate passed to his son and heir Luke Gerald Dillon, the fourth Baron Clonbrock. The estate was intact having come through the famine crisis and the critical years of land agitation which began in the late 1870s. The famine impacted on the estate as is evidenced from the considerable decline in population even in areas of the estate which were in the immediate vicinity of Lord Clonbrock's own house. Considerable amounts of rental arrears accumulated in the famine years and in May 1849 they stood at 21.51 per cent of projected rental for that year (see table 5). Arrears were not to reach such a high percentage of projected rental for another thirty-eight years.

However many people on Lord Clonbrock's estate were spared from the worst ravages of the famine by the efficiency with which the estate had been run in the years prior to the famine. This involved the encouragement, through humane methods, of people who occupied small unviable holdings to leave the estate. Lord Clonbrock's presence in the community as a resident landlord was also an essential factor as it resulted in much vital employment and as the Western News newspaper reported almost half a century later at the time of his death: 'His efforts to help the starving people during the famine of 1847 always made a great impression'.<sup>208</sup>

The rapidity with which Lord Clonbrock's estate recovered after the famine is very impressive. As early as 1849 not only was full rental projection being met but arrears, which were accumulated during the famine, were beginning to be cleared. By 1854

arrears stood at only 6.81 per cent of projected rental for that year (see table 5). This was made possible by a continuation of the pre-famine efficient management of the estate which was tinged with firmness and a good degree of paternalism.

Once the famine was over there was great stability in the affairs of Lord Clonbrock's estate until the beginning of the land agitation in the late 1870s. The tenants of his extensive farms paid their rental regularly even during periods of temporary economic depression such as that of the early 1860s. When Lord Clonbrock's lesser tenants, who were much more vulnerable in times of economic depression, were in difficulty they were helped. The tenants of the tiny holdings in the Dalystown section of the estate had some of their arrears struck off at such times and were allowed the full hanging gale of May 1861.<sup>200</sup>

In the testing years of the land agitation which began in the late 1870s Lord Clonbrock's relations with his tenants were sometimes strained. This was especially so in the case of his lesser tenants who were vulnerable in the periods of economic fluctuation in the late 1870s and throughout the 1880s. However in the ten year period 1880-9 all but £4,209.11 of a total projected rental figure of £107,794.64 was collected (see table 16). This indicates considerable stability in testing times and verifies the observation of the writer who reported on the funeral of Lord Clonbrock, that he 'suffered less from the times than most of his brethren'<sup>201</sup>

Lord Clonbrock and his tenants enjoyed a satisfactory working relationship in the post-famine years until his death in 1893. This was made possible to a large degree by the fact that Lord Clonbrock had a keen interest in his estate and ran it efficiently. This

relationship was based on mutual respect. Lord Clonbrock was a representative peer and a staunch unionist. The Tuam Herald newspaper reported that at the fete to celebrate his son, Luke Gerald's coming of age, in 1855, which was attended by several thousands of his tenants, he declared that they were all 'loyal and true men' and he proposed a toast to Queen Victoria, and another to the 'army and navy'.<sup>202</sup> Nevertheless Lord Clonbrock respected the political opinions of his tenants. He told the trial of the Galway county election petition in 1872 that at election times:

I make no threat or hold out no inducement ... My tenants are as perfectly competent to form an opinion as to who should be a member of parliament as I am, and I should never dream of asking them to alter their opinion.<sup>203</sup>

In December 1886 when Lord Clonbrock was approaching his eightieth birthday, having been in charge of his estate for more than sixty years, a meeting of some of his tenants was held for the purpose of putting the plan of campaign in place in areas of the estate. Matt Harris M.P. who was an influential activist in the campaign for land reform addressed the meeting and finished his speech as follows: 'If Lord Clonbrock was ten years younger he would gladly accept your offer. In the past he was not a bad landlord and he was not an exterminator'.<sup>204</sup> These were relatively mild words spoken by someone whose views on the vexed land question were in almost all things opposed to those of Lord Clonbrock. Such words, spoken in such circumstances could only apply to a landlord who had enjoyed a satisfactory relationship with his tenants over a long number of years.



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