



Public Record Office
of Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

CLOGHER DIOCESAN RECORDS

December 2007

Clogher Diocesan Records DIO RC/1 and DIO2

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DIO RC/1: Summary

This extensive archive, 1789-1938, contains c.1,150 documents and volumes, mainly correspondence, but also including pastoral letters, philosophical treatises, sermons, funerary inscriptions, political papers, accounts, wills, letters of probate, maps, diaries, notebooks, etc. Some documents are in Irish or Latin. Where they are in Latin, rough translations are provided in the list. The archive has been fully calendared.

In many respects, the layout of this archive has similarities to that of an estate archive. The content is of course concerned largely with theology, liturgy, clerical politics and pastoral care. However there is considerable cross-over with an estate archive in the sense that both are also concerned with politics, property and of course human nature. The classification scheme lays out in detail the subjects covered, which are multifarious and consequently of interest to the general and local historian as well as to the ecclesiastical historian.

The archive begins with the Roman Catholic Church, still under the influence of pre-Revolutionary European Catholicism, as exemplified in the papers of the émigré Abbé Delahogue. It moves through the period of virtual re-establishment of the diocese, under Bishop James Murphy, who had to face challenges from parochial clergy resentful of the dilution of the independence they had enjoyed during the Penal Era.



Challenges to episcopal authority

A major critic of the imposition of episcopal suzerainty was a suspended priest, Michael Maginn, who in 1813 chose to mount a challenge to the bishop over his total proscription of alcohol under pain of mortal sin. Maginn appealed to Rome over the bishop's head. The grounds were that 'this law has been ignored by the laity with the result that many were staying away from confession' (DIO RC/1/4B/5-6). On April 13 of the same year the clergy of Clogher signed a statement in favour of Maginn. Eventually, in 1817, a modus vivendi was brokered by the Bishop of Kilmore between Dr Murphy and the dissidents, largely on Murphy's terms.

That the job of a bishop was not easy is also illustrated in an earlier suspension, in 1809, of a priest named Campbell for gross immorality. The extent of the scandal is illustrated graphically in the following:

DIO RC/1/5a/7a-c N.D. 1809 Signed statement, contemporary copy, and modern typewritten copy, by the Roman Catholics of Errigal Truagh of objections against Thomas Campbell, alleging gross immorality, later proven and dealt with accordingly.

'We the Roman Catholics of the parish of Errigal Truagh, entertain the following objections to Mr Campbell which we conceive render him absolutely unfit for discharging the duties of pastor amongst us,

- (1) It has been publicly notorious that he carried on a criminal intercourse with his cousins germane who were sisters, in consequence of which, one of them proved with child and the other died.
- (2) That he kept up a similar intercourse with another female servant, Mary Campbell, both before and after marriage, whom he made use of as an instrument to destroy the character of his curate, Mr McGirr, whom she charged with an attempt of a rape on herself which was proved to be false on trial before his bishop and some of the clergy.
- (3) That a Mary Ann Devin, with many females who frequented his house were considered the objects of his lewdness and profligacy.
- (4) That a Nancy McCusker who lived in his service for a length of time, and who was generally believed to be his concubine, was brought forward by him to prove before the Rt. Rev. Dr. O'Reilly, the present Bishop of Kilmore, Visitor Apostolic, that another curate of his was guilty of adultery with a protestant's wife, and that in this failed, and being seized with remorse for what she had done, went to the congregation on Sunday, and there declared on

the holy evangelists that all she had advanced was unfounded; that the protestant, whose wife had been thus calumniated, founded an action for defamation against the said Mr Campbell on a letter which was proved to be his insinuating the adultery and this action being tried in the public court of justice before a judge of assize. and a respectable jury Mr Campbell was convicted and £200 damages with £100 costs awarded to the plaintiff.

- (5) That the impression made by this public controversy and the scandalous reports of his immorality ... alienated their minds from him, that the generosity of the people previous to his departure for Rome had abandoned him, and great numbers of them now again declare that they will never acknowledge him as the parish priest nor suffer the female part of their families to go to confession to him.'

Signed by 44 men, 13 of them by mark.

Despite the veracity of the charges, Campbell appealed to Rome and this caused endless trouble for Bishop Murphy and his successor Edward Kernan. Nevertheless, Bishop Murphy weathered these storms and left behind a much better organised diocese on his death in 1824.



The priest in politics

The priests in the diocese of Clogher (which covers all of Co. Monaghan, most of Fermanagh and part of Tyrone and the parliamentary constituencies concerned) became increasingly involved in the major political questions of the day, such as Catholic Emancipation, tithes, the Land Question and Home Rule, usually on the opposite side to the landed and political establishment. Thus we find that the correspondence of politically engaged clergy like Rev. Charles McDermott and Bishop James Donnelly, dovetails nicely with that of landlords such as the Maddens of Hilton Park, Clones, and the Lords Rossmore of Rossmore Park, Monaghan, whose archives are also held by PRONI. The rise of Roman Catholic electoral power in a county like Monaghan, turned the clergy into patronage brokers on a par with the landocracy who indeed now had to reckon with this.

For example (DIO RC/1/11/A/20), a letter of 18 July 1871 from John Madden, Hilton Park, to Dr Donnelly, Monaghan, requests that the Bishop should not oppose him.

'It is my intention to contest this county on Home Rule principles at the coming election if I find I can do so with a fair prospect of success. I take this step, because I believe that nothing else will so greatly conduce, to promote that unity of sentiment among all classes of Irishmen, so necessary to the prosperity and welfare of this county, provided it can be carried out in a Liberal spirit and without any attempt to disturb the security of property or to interfere with the free exercise of religious opinion.

I therefore venture to hope that in a question like this, which can never be carried into effect except by united action, amongst all classes of Irishmen - where a man, who has some influence with people of all parties, and no small stake in the well being of the country - comes forward as I do, honestly designed to promote the prosperity and happiness of Ireland - that if you are not prepared to give me an active support, at least you and the clergy of your church, will not be found numbered among those who oppose me. I may add that I have already received very encouraging promises of support, from people of all creeds and classes - and it is generally believed that I shall certainly defeat Mr Leslie, if Mr Lewis has withdrawn. (as it is reported he has done) and if no one else comes forward on the same principles in his place.'



The residual role of the landlord

The growth of diocesan institutions still required the help and approval of the landlords. A letter of 18 December 1838, from Lord Cremorne, Naples, to the Most Rev. Dr Edward Kernan (DIO RC/1/7/3), promises help in finding land for the erection of a seminary in Monaghan.

'I take the first opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of a signed letter by your Lordship and the Catholic clergy of the diocese of Clogher asking me to grant a lease forever of some land on which to erect a seminary for the purpose of educating Catholics for the college of Maynooth or for any professional or commercial pursuit.

An institution of such utility must of course meet with my approbation and I trust I shall have it in my power to accede to your wishes as to leasing the lands in question. I regret that my absence from Ireland should occasion any delay in bringing it into effect but shall take the first opportunity on my return borne in [the] spring of attending to this matter.'



A Catholic building boom

Finally, the period covered is one of great growth in the diocese, with the construction of a seminary, a cathedral (partly designed by that major architect of Catholic buildings in the diocese, William Hague), many new churches and a number of houses of religious orders. These are the outward signs of the increasing spiritual and temporal influence of the revived Roman Catholic Church contemporaneous with the rise of nationalist political hegemony. This is reflected in these records.



Delahogue papers

The first section of the archive relates to the fugitive French professor, Abbé Louis Delahogue. The papers deriving from him comprise: 57 letters, accounts and official papers, 1789-1830, mostly relating to his work in teaching dogmatic theology in St Patrick's College, Maynooth. They are mainly in French but there are a few in English from Archbishop John Thomas Troy of Dublin. Then follows 129 notebooks and notes about educational matters, c.1800. These notes form a course in science, philosophy, and theology, probably given by the Abbé Delahogue at Maynooth. On his death they passed into the hands of the Rev. Dr Charles McNally, a future Bishop of Clogher, who was his executor. They are hand-written and are mostly in Latin and French, although there are a few in English. Finally there are 13 sermons and funerary inscriptions written by Delahogue, 1807-1816. One of the inscriptions was composed by Louis XVIII of France. They are mostly in Latin, although there are a few in French.



Bishop James Murphy (1801-1824)

This section of the archive comprises 80 letters, 1783-1822, relating to Dr James Murphy, including his administration as Bishop of Clogher. The first 25 letters, 1783-1822, also relate to his predecessor, Dr Hugh O'Reilly. The main correspondents are the Revs Patrick Bellew, Charles McNally, and Roman officials. The last 55 letters and drafts, 1810-1822, are all about an ecclesiastical quarrel between Dr James Murphy and some of his clergy. The letters are mostly appeals to Rome and rescripts from Cardinal Litta on behalf of Propaganda. These letters are mostly in Latin, and a rough translation is provided.



Bishop Edward Kernan (1824-1844)

There are 65 letters, 1772-1847, relating to Edward Kernan, including his administration as Bishop of Clogher. This section of the archive begins with 37 letters, 1772-1840, which include some about Clogher clerics at continental seminaries and the case of one of them, Thomas Campbell, who was dismissed from the diocese on a charge of immorality (see above). Also included is correspondence about his successor, the Rev. Charles McDermott, P.P. of Errigal Truagh, Co. Monaghan, who was accused of extortion in his parish and threatened with assassination. Some 35 letters relate mostly to the re-establishment of the Clogher diocesan chapter. The main correspondents are Edward Kernan, Bishop of Clogher, and the Revs Patrick Bellew, Charles McNally, James Duffy, James McArdle, Arnold McMahon and other parish priests of Clogher. Thirteen letters, 1813 and 1828-40, relate to Edward Kernan as Bishop.



The Rev. Charles McDermott

There are c.70 political and semi-political papers, 1817-1849, of the Rev. Charles McDermott, P.P. of Errigal Truagh. He was politically associated with the 2nd Lord Rossmore, so these papers fit in well with those of the latter in PRONI's T2929.



Architecture and building

Some 40 letters, architects plans, an account book and receipts, 1833-1900, pertain to building projects in the diocese of Clogher. The principal projects documented are: a national school at Killybrone, the diocesan seminary at Monaghan, a bell tower at Errigal Truagh for the Rev. Charles McDermott, and a convent and a new church at Monaghan.



Bishop Charles McNally (1844-1864)

There are 233 letters, notes, sermons and newspaper clippings, 1815-1864, about Charles McNally as professor at Maynooth and subsequently as Bishop of Clogher.

These comprise: 36 letters, 1815-1843, mostly to Dr Charles McNally while a professor at Maynooth, from former students and from prominent Clogher clergy, supporting his appointment to the co-adjutorship of the diocese; 77 letters, 1843-1871, mostly to Charles McNally, Bishop of Clogher, from John McHale, Archbishop of Tuam, John O'Hanlon, professor at Maynooth, Cardinal Paul Cullen and various parish priests of Clogher, mainly about a dispute among the archbishops and bishops over the educational system in Ireland; 43 pastoral letters and circulars, sermons, poems, pamphlets, petitions and newspaper clippings, 1851-65, forming a literary section; and several copy out-letter books, 1843-1846, of the Rev. James Duffy, Archdeacon of Clogher, during the administration of Dr McNally. The correspondence is mostly to his family and to the Bishop about Clogher clerics.



Bishop James Donnelly (1864-1893)

There are 38 letters, diaries and account books, 1852-1893, deriving from Dr James Donnelly, including his administration as Bishop of Clogher. For the period 1871-1880, there are 38 letters, telegrams and notes, including a cartoon about the 1880 Monaghan election. The letters are from Home Rule supporters and Cardinal Cullen, Lord O'Hagan and others, and mostly about the respective merits of the different candidates at the Co. Monaghan election of 1871.

Diaries kept by Dr Donnelly run from 1848-1893, some being written during a fund-raising tour of America, organised to collect money for the Catholic University of Ireland, 1850-53. These contain many anecdotal and often amusing accounts of his journeys. Finally there is a 'Book of accounts connected with Dr James Donnelly, Bishop of Clogher', 1881. This is an alphabetically indexed ledger containing details of Dr Donnelly's correspondents and business transactions. His greatest achievement was the building of St Macartan's Cathedral, and his letters and diaries to some extent reflect fund-raising for this cause.



Bishop Patrick McKenna (1909-1942)

There are 180 letters from Patrick McKenna, Bishop of Clogher, to Dean Keown, 1909-1938, mostly concerning the administration of the diocese of Clogher. These include a letter appointing Keown archdeacon, 16 October 1916, and one appointing him dean, 11 May 1920. [**Closed to the public until 2014.**]



Records relating to individual parishes

These comprise: two parish registers for Errigal Truagh, 1837-1879, containing details of births, deaths, marriages, parish accounts and details of various collections: 'Accounts of Receipts received in the parish of Monaghan' – an account book of fees paid for liturgical functions, eg., marriages, baptisms, funerals and Christmas dues, 1865-1886; and a paginated book entitled 'Contents of the strong room, St McCartan's seminary, Monaghan', listing the parishes of Clogher, but containing details only about leases and title deeds, 1892.



Miscellaneous

These comprise several groups of papers, as follows: 27 letters, receipts, and notes of a miscellaneous nature, 1710-1957, including a map of Italy, a statement of the rules of Monaghan infirmary, copy history notes (in Irish) about 1690 which were used as wrappers, a typewritten synopsis of papers kept in the St Macartan's strong-room, and various typewritten drafts and transcripts pertaining to the whole archive; 66 letters, leases, accounts, wills and probates concerning Clogher clergy and laity, 1791-1894; 12 letters about Clogher diocesan chapter business, 1861-1929, mostly to Rome about special dress for the canons and particular diocesan solutions in relation to liturgy, temperance and devotional practices; and 19 notes and letters between Aubrey Gwynn, SJ, and the Rev Patrick Culligan, 1944-1945 and 1962, mostly about early monasticism in Ireland.



Clogher Church of Ireland diocesan records (DIO2)

The Clogher Diocesan archive of the Church of Ireland is as extensive as, but very different to, the Roman Catholic. It contains c.1,500 documents, made up mostly of correspondence, but also including visitation books, ledgers, minute-books, registers, sermons, legal papers, etc.

In comparison to the Roman Catholic archive, it is mundane and in content somewhat disappointing. There is no hint of the turmoil of the Tithe War and Disestablishment, or the erosion in other ways of the position of both the Church and the prominent members of its laity who exercised patronage in its parishes. Nor is there documentation of the Church's reaction to the *Ne Temere* Decree or the threat that Home Rule would bring Rome Rule.

Instead this is the administrative archive, the official face, of the diocese; the bare record of marriages and burials; who got what position; who was present at what visitation; who was nominated to what; what was discussed by the Glebe Committee, or select Vestry. Accounts are meticulously maintained, marriage licences issued, etc. The essence of this archive is the record of the day-to-day running of the diocese, with little of a controversial nature entering in.

For example, the archive is silent about the most extraordinary event in the 19th century history of the diocese, the deposition of Percy Jocelyn, Bishop of Clogher, 1820-1822. The relevant papers, in the Armagh Diocesan Registry Archive have recently been released from closure, from the initial interdict of Primate Beresford in 1822 (see DIO4/25/ 1/1-107). This case was a sensation at the time, as it would be even now. Bishop Percy Jocelyn, third son of the 1st Earl of Roden, was caught in a compromising position with a guardsman at the White Hart public house in Westminster on 19 July 1822. The Home Office archive contains pertinent correspondence (of which PRONI's copy bears reference MIC224/112), involving the Lord Lieutenant (the Marquess Wellesley), the Archbishop of Armagh (the recently appointed Lord John George Beresford), the 3rd Earl of Roden and others on the Jocelyn affair. Jocelyn had been raised to the episcopacy through political influence: paradoxically, so had Primate Beresford. But the latter was a man of very different stamp, and the Jocelyn affair strengthened his hand in enforcing higher standards and instituting reforms of abuses brought about by lax and worldly clerics.

The diocesan archive, though it lacks such drama, provides a useful source for church and local historians. Typical of the records are the Visitation Books (DIO2/2), documenting, for example, 'The Annual and Ordinary Visitation of the Rt Honorable and Most Reverend Father in God, Marcus Gervais by Divine Providence Lord Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland and Metropolitan and Bishop of Clogher [between 1850 and 1886 Clogher was united with Armagh] held in the parish Church of Clones for the Diocese of Clogher on Thursday the 17th Day of October 1872'.

There is also a series of legal and testamentary papers (DIO2/9/1). They include such things as the following recommendation for the upkeep of a local parish church, obviously for the attention of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners:

'In a matter concerning the repairs of the Parish Church of Aghabog the Rev. Wm. Annesley Rector and Vicar of the Parish of Ematris and Rural Dean of the District of Ematris deposeth and saith that he has been for some years past acquainted with the state of the Parish Church of Aghabog in the County of Monaghan and Diocese of Clogher and saith that the Pews of Said Church require repairs and saith there is no linen for communion service, nor is there a Cup, Chalice or Patten and saith that if the Pews are not repaired and put into sufficient order and condition for the decent celebration of Divine service therein the Pews of said Church will become dilapidated and ruinous, saith that some part of said dilapidations or want of repair has occurred within two years last past.

Wm. Annesley. Taken, examined and repeated before me this 24th day of August
1825
Signature.'



Layout of the archive

The layout of the Clogher Church of Ireland diocesan archive is as follows:

- DIO2/1 Visitation Returns, 1861-1946.
- DIO2/2 Visitation Books, 1871-1889.
- DIO2/3 Nominations, 1871-1932.
- DIO2/4 Personal Returns, 1903.
- DIO2/5 Glebe Committee Minutes, 1893,1902,1928, and April 1943.
- DIO2/6 Marriage Notices, 1845-1902.
- DIO2/7 Correspondence, 1880-1910.
- DIO2/8 Registers of Parish Clerks, March 1661-September 1705.
- DIO2/9 Legal and testamentary papers, early 1700s to 1920s.
- DIO2/10 Papers about individual parishes, alphabetically arranged, mainly running from the early 19th century to 1920, but some as early as 1672.
- DIO2/11 Miscellaneous papers: Clogher Diocesan Widows' Fund Society, 1799-1856, Glebes and Parochial Statistics, 1883, Diocesan Board of Education Inspector's Report Book, 1884-1901, and Preachers' Book for the Parish of Aghabog, 1909-1927.
- DIO2/12 Account books.

At the end of the calendar is a list of Clogher diocesan papers deposited in the Representative Church Body Library in Dublin, of which there are no copies in PRONI.



The Armagh Diocesan Registry Papers: Clogher (DIO4/25)

The Diocese of Clogher was subsumed in the Archdiocese of Armagh in 1850, but separated again in 1886. However, Clogher was always part of the Metropolitan Province of Armagh, and as such was 'Visited' triennially by the Archbishop, who was also frequently appealed to to resolve disputes, etc. For administrative and archival purposes, the main, practical difference was that the Archbishop of Armagh *and* Bishop of Clogher carried out annual Visitations of Clogher between 1850 and 1886 and that the Armagh Diocesan Registry papers are much fuller of details about Clogher affairs during that period than at any other.

Although the Clogher section of the Armagh Diocesan Registry papers is DIO4/25, which contains material dated 1638, 1661-1705, and 1737-1974, there are references to Clogher, some of them very important, all through DIO4. These comprise:

DIO4/4/1, 4 and 5
DIO4/5/3 and 6,
DIO4/8/1/9/5 and 7
DIO4/15/1,
DIO4/22/4/42,
DIO4/22/5/21 and 49-50,
DIO4/22/6/29 and 13-39,
DIO4/22/7/38,
DIO4/23,
DIO4/24/2/ 1, and
DIO4/29/3/8.1

In other words, DIO4 has to be used with care and rewards careful use.

DIO4/25 (the Clogher section) is arranged as follows:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1/1-107 | Papers about the election, enthronement and, in one instance, deposition of Bishops of Clogher, 1820-1886, 1903 and 1907-1973. |
| 2/1-7 | Papers about visitations and visitation fees, 1638, 1820, 1866, 1868, 1869, and 1900. |
| 3/1-5 | Papers about improvements to and dilapidations on the Palace and demesne at Clogher, particularly in Bishop Porter's time, 1732, 1812, 1816, and 1819. |
| 4/1-2 | Papers about the Consistorial Court of Clogher [See also /25/8], 1781 and 1808 |
| 5/ | Blank in the sequence. |



Papers about individual parishes, 1790-1974

- 6/1/1-2 Papers about improvements on the glebe land of Kilmore, 1790 and [post 1863].
- 6/2/1-44 Papers about Fermanagh parishes, [1795-1809] and 1839-1852.
- 6/3/1-12 Formal documents, letters and memorials to Primate Beresford and Precentor Irwin and other papers relating to the parishes of Clones, Newbliss and Aghalurcher, 1812, 1852, 1867-8 and 1870. [These parishes have been grouped together for the same reason. [See 22/6]
- 6/4/1-2 Letter and memorial to Primate Lord John George Beresford and Primate Marcus Gervais Beresford respectively, the first concerning Clogher parish, the second Monaghan, 1852, 1862.
- 6/5/1-6 Letter to Primate Lord John George Beresford and formal documents about Dromore parish, 1852, 1958.
- 6/6/1-15 Letters to Precentor Irwin about the following parishes; Drumsnatt and Errigal Trough, 1852; Augher and Pomeroy, 1867; Magheracross, 1868; Rockcorry, Magheraclone, Errigal-Shanco, Sallaghy and Killany, 1869; Errigal Shanco, Clontibret and Tempo, 1870; and Lack, 1871.
- 6/7/1-4 Letter to Primate Lord John George Beresford and papers about Lisnaskea, 1852, 1868-70.
- 6/8/1-39 Memorial to Primate Lord John George Beresford and papers about Aghavea, 1853, 1855, 1867, and 1869.
- 6/9/1-9 Correspondence of Primate Lord John George Beresford about a row between Rev. John C. Wolfe, Rector of Ematris, and the local magnate, Lord Cremorne, who accused Wolfe of introducing political topics into a sermon, 1857.
- 6/10/1-3 Memorial to Primate Lord John George Beresford and letter to Precentor Irwin about Donagh, 1859 and 1870.
- 6/11/1-9 Memorial to Primate Lord John George Beresford and correspondence of Robert Riddall, Metropolitan and Diocesan Registrar of Armagh, about Kils Kerry, [1850s?], 1868, and 1870. [See also /5/3]
- 6/12/1-32 Correspondence of Primate Lord John George Beresford and Precentor Irwin about Galloon - a dispute over the remuneration of the two curates, 1860.

- 7/1-2 Papers about the Clogher Diocesan Registrarship and Registry, 1831 and 1888.
- 8/1-52 Correspondence of Primate Lord John George Beresford and legal case papers about the case of Rev. Alexander Nicholls of Errigal Trough parish who had his license withdrawn by the Bishop because of irregularities which he had committed, and who appealed (unsuccessfully) to the Primate, 1837-9.
- 9/1-20 Returns, letters and formal documents concerning the preparations for and implementation and effects of Disestablishment in the diocese of Clogher as a whole, 1867-1871.
- 10/1-10 Correspondence of Canon H.W. Love, Metropolitan and Diocesan Registrar of Armagh, about the affairs of the diocese of Clogher, 1943, 1958, 1969-70, and 1974.
- 11/1-5 Printed orders of service for ceremonies in connection with the diocese of Clogher, 1903, 1933, 1958, and 1972.
- 12/1-56 Documents about the appointment of individual Clogher clergy, as follows, slim volume recording admissions to benefices, etc, 1661-1705, and similar volume recording 'Collations, institutions, inductions and certificates of assent and consent, etc.', 166-94; and formal documents, petitions for faculties, nominations, letters, testimonial, recommendatory and dimissory, certificates of oaths and declarations having been taken, si quis, bene decessits, presentations, institutions, etc, 1870-1970 [N.B., some of these documents may relate to clergy moving from Clogher to livings in the Archdiocese of Armagh], 1661-1705, 1853, 1857, and 1868.

The merger with Armagh had taken place under the terms of the Church Temporalities Act of 1833 which, accompanied by tithe reform, aimed at reducing the extent of the state's endowment of the Church of Ireland and re-deploying the money saved to other purposes. The most obvious way of effecting economy was by reducing the number of archbishoprics and bishoprics as and when existing incumbents died. The then Bishop of Clogher did not die until 1850. Between that date and 1886 a strong body of local opinion within the former diocese of Clogher began to agitate on favour of a re-separation of Clogher from Armagh. A number of prominent and wealthy individuals left or promised sums of money to help finance a separate diocese.

In company with John Grey Vesey Porter of Belleisle, Lisbellaw, who owned and wrote most of his own newspaper, *The Lisbellaw Gazette*, W.C. Trimble of Enniskillen, owner and proprietor of *The Impartial Reporter* (with whom he was usually at variance), threw himself energetically into the campaign for the revival of the bishopric of Clogher as a separate see, shorn, however, of its episcopal Palace,

which Porter's own father had bought in 1850, and which eventually was replaced by Knockballymore, Mageraveely, a distinguished house of c.1740 on part of the Fermanagh estate of Lord Erne.

In his campaign for a separate see of Clogher, Porter was following family tradition. In c.1870, his father had given £5,000 to the Representative Church Body for the endowment of the see, and all his life had generously endowed Kilsheery and the parishes on his own estates. The Rev. J.B. Leslie sententiously declared: '...What a contrast there is between the generosity of the Porter family and the niggardliness of some others that were enriched by the Church'. Marcus Gervais Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Bishop of Clogher, 1862-1885, would not have concurred. He thought Porter's endowment was insufficient to do more than create trouble, and in 1877 expressed his wish that the separatists would 'give up at once their bishopric scheme, which they cannot carry out'. This was partly because he thought that Porter's father had bought the Palace for a song, and partly because the arithmetic, and the ecclesiastical politics, of the whole enterprise had been greatly complicated by the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869. He became greatly agitated that a re-separation would leave both dioceses impoverished and perhaps non-viable. He therefore discouraged benefactions for the purpose of re-establishing a separate see of Clogher, as is shown in a series of letters he wrote to one of the benefactors, the 3rd Earl of Erne, who had promised to give £1,000 towards the endowment. (PRONI, D1939/21/9/11/13 and 14.)

In a letter of 1884 to Lord Erne, the harassed, 83-year-old Primate explained his views of the 'bishopric scheme': ' ... I was and am anxious, if possible, to get the question of a successor settled before I die or become incapable of discharging the duties. Grey Porter's gift has thrown this diocese in to the utmost confusion. Had we been left as all the other united diocese have been to provide a salary for a bishop, everything would have gone on smoothly and we should have had no trouble. But the mitre Grey Porter set rolling to be scrambled for by the Clogher clergy has raised contentions that will, however the matter be settled, strongly affect the Church. I am of opinion that the Armagh Synod when it next meets will put an end to the question of the division of the diocese, if it were only for this reason; that in case of division one-third of my composition money which now stands at £12,542 and one-third of £5,000 granted to each diocese in 1874 together with interest making in all £6,474, will go to Clogher, which would leave Armagh so impoverished as to forfeit the £25,000 granted the Synod to endow the Primacy and not leave us sufficient to endow the bishopric. However, I am least interested in this matter, for so long as I live the Primacy will endure; but I do not like to contemplate the wreck of the diocese or the giving up the chair of St Patrick to the undisputed possession of the Church of Rome ...'

Archbishop Beresford died in December 1885, and somehow or other money was found for the separation of Clogher from Armagh. Porter's newspaper campaign, also aided by a loan from Porter, ended with the election of Archdeacon Maurice Stack as Bishop of Clogher on 4 June 1886. So a Clogher clergyman had scramble successfully for the rolling mitre!

While this frank and entertaining expression of views is to be found in the Erne Papers in PRONI, and not in the two official Church of Ireland diocesan archives, the latter are not to be dismissed lightly. If they lack fun and Primate M.G. Beresford's humour and directness, they are still packed with information for the local and church historian.

