



Public Record Office  
of Northern Ireland

# **INTRODUCTION**

  

# **TIGHE PAPERS**

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# Tighe Papers (D2685)

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## **Summary**

The Tighe Papers in PRONI comprise c.450 documents and volumes, 1721-1903 and are part of the surviving archive (the rest is the National Library of Ireland) of the Tighe family of Woodstock, Inistiogue, Co. Kilkenny, and of Rossana, Ashford, Co. Wicklow.



## The Papers

They include c.80 letters, 1788-1811, from Mrs Sarah Tighe, née Fownes (daughter and heiress of the late Sir William Fownes of Woodstock), to her son, William (1788-1816), mostly while William was making the Grand Tour; the topics referred to include the Irish general election of 1790 and Irish parliamentary affairs during that decade, William Tighe's travels, general family news, the involved state of Mrs Tighe's finances, the Union and the 1798 Rebellion. As an enthusiastic convert to Methodism, Mrs Tighe seems to have been happy only in 'the blessed little village of Haverfordwest' in Pembrokeshire. When William is in Paris in February 1788, she writes, '... I am sorry to hear that you are still in Paris, but trust that God will protect you and take you as a brand out of the fire...'; and when he moves to Italy in June she expresses fears '... that Italy is peculiarly dangerous to young men. ... Those who are truly devoted to God ... fear to expose young persons of either sex to the snares of the world ...'.

The next section of the papers, consisting of c.100 letters to Mrs Tighe from members of the Tighe, Blachford, Ponsonby, Bligh and other related families, 1780-1821, reflects to the full her preoccupation with the state of her soul, but also includes comment on the problems of the Methodist Church in Holland during the French Revolutionary Wars, the position of Wicklow town during the 1798 Rebellion, etc. The Rebellion, this time in Co. Kilkenny, is also the subject of three informative letters to William Tighe, and there are c.20 letters to his eldest son and heir, William Frederick Tighe, about local outrages in the Inistiogue area, 1824-1833.

The corporation books and other records of the parliamentary borough of Inistiogue for the period 1717-1840 survive in these papers. Inistiogue was one of the two parliamentary boroughs which the Tighes controlled in the last third of the 18th century, the other being Wicklow, Co. Wicklow. There is little mention of the affairs of Wicklow borough, but there is a run of c.15 letters, 1818-1821, about election politics in Co. Wicklow, with particular reference to the Tighes' quarrel with the great Wicklow magnate, the 4th Earl Fitzwilliam.

A bundle of c.35 documents, 1793-c.1860, comprises estimates and architectural drawings by Thomas Costello, Henry Watters, William Robertson and others, for additions to Woodstock. The later material consists of: miscellaneous letters to William Frederick Tighe, 1813 and 1827-1866, about estate and financial affairs, the Devon Commission, Griffith's Valuation, etc; personal letters from relations and friends to Lady Kathleen Ponsonby, who married in 1858 Frederick Edward Tighe, 1846-c.1863; and letters of a similar nature to Lady Louisa Tighe, née Lennox, widow of William Frederick Tighe, 1887-1903. There is also a copy of *The Tighe Story*, a privately produced book written by the late Rear-Admiral W.G.S. Tighe in 1951-1959.

