

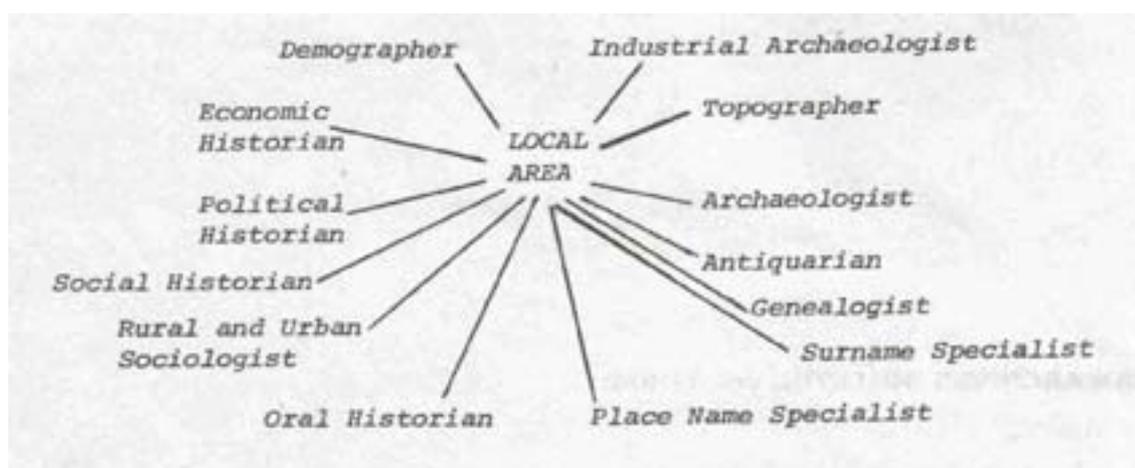
# Local Historical Studies of Rural Areas: Methods and Sources

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## INTRODUCTION

Many histories of rural areas take as their theme the church and the history of its parish. This article is an attempt to outline a framework of questions for the study of a rural area which will not rely on the church and the parish for the central theme. It will suggest that the proper theme is the people - how they lived, worked, played and died - and the land they inhabited. Rural societies appear stable, retaining for long periods the traditions handed down by fathers and grandfathers; yet they are changing in response to events and to pressures from both inside and outside the community which are beyond their control. Indeed the church plays its role in this process but it is more important to consider the demographic, industrial, agricultural and social history of the community. Finberg [1] defined the task of the local historian as the study of 'the origin, growth, decline and fall of a local community', though, of course, any particular community will not necessarily have passed through all of these stages. Stephens [2] has argued that because local history is concerned with change in the locality 'it is particularly interested in the structure of the local society - the whole community, not merely the ruling class - the occupational structure, the demographic structure, the social structure, and in the economic basis - in particular local industry trade and farming. To these are related the topography of the locality, its communication system and those aspects of local government and politics that did not merely reflect the national story.'

The angle of approach to the historical study of any local area can be varied, and the diagram below illustrates a number of possibilities.



In the past local history tended to be the preserve of the antiquarian, often interested in the history of the local gentry or the church or some person or event of national significance. Over the last few decades, social and economic historians, demographers and industrial archaeologists have shown an increasing interest in

the study of broad problems using local evidence that reflects regional variations in social and economic matters. This article is designed to give anyone interested in the history of any rural area in the country an idea of the questions that might be asked and some indication of the sources that should be examined in a search for the answers. It follows on from Kenneth Darwin's article[3] on sources for townland history and the authors article[4] on the study of the history of a townland.

The ideas, questions and sources presented here result from work and discussion over many years with a great number of people[5] and indeed this paper should still be regarded as a discussion document since many sections are far from complete and require further elaboration. Furthermore not every aspect of life has been covered; the emphasis on the social and economic as opposed to political aspects has been deliberate. Many of the political issues at the local level might be better understood if the social and economic background was carefully studied.

The decision not to deal with towns was based on two considerations. Firstly, until fairly recent times Irish society was predominantly rural, and since many of the very small towns were rural rather than urban in character they can be included as part of the study of rural society. The study of Belfast and the larger provincial towns would require different techniques, with the enquirer asking different questions. Obviously a full understanding of society in any region will require study of both towns and countryside but for the purposes of this article attention will be directed to the rural area. In looking at society and economy in the rural area since the nineteenth century we find a mixture of change and continuity. The change is more evident in the material world. The decline of industry can often be seen; anyone comparing the technology of the farmer of the late 1970s with that of his counterpart of a hundred years ago will be forcibly struck by the differences; the thatched whitewashed cottage with the poky out-buildings has given way to an impressive farmhouse with silo, hayshed and an array of purpose-built housing for stock. On the other hand values, attitudes and beliefs change more slowly and in this field a greater continuity can be found. The church is still important. Institutions like the Orange Order and the G.A.A. are perhaps even more powerful than they were. Another aspect of life that has changed is the greater role of government in social and economic affairs such as unemployment and health. This began back in Famine times; in fact, because of poorer conditions in Ireland direct government involvement in such things as health, poverty and education was often evident earlier than in England.

This article will look at each of these aspects of life, indicating the questions that might be investigated and the sources available for study. It should be made clear that the questions here asked and the sources suggested are the basic ones, and that further investigation into any aspect will lead to more questions and the discovery of more sources.

Perhaps the greatest change has been in the number of people living in the countryside and it is with population and families that we begin.

## **POPULATION**

The general pattern of population history in nineteenth century Ireland has been outlined by K. H. Connell.[6] There is little dispute over the pattern after the Famine i.e. a declining population brought about by a combination of emigration and a falling birth rate, the latter caused by later marriages and a higher incidence of celibacy.

There was of course regional variation in this pattern; some areas, particularly the West of Ireland, retained pre-Famine demographic trends - i.e. large families, early marriages and limited emigration - until the latter years of the nineteenth century. Population was rising in Ireland for many decades prior to the famine as a result, according to Connell, of early marriages producing a higher birth rate. Many historians have questioned Connell's explanation. **[7]** Were early marriages and high birth rates a feature of all classes and all areas in Ireland? There is evidence to suggest that there were social and regional variations in demographic patterns. It is essential, therefore, to be aware of the social and economic structure of a local community since it can be an indicator of its demographic pattern. There is a considerable literature on the whole question of population growth in the early nineteenth century which the local historian can study with profit. **[8]**

Studies of population can be undertaken at various regional levels. It will be useful to examine the statistics of the population census which are readily available from 1841 on a decennial basis. These can be studied for any group of townlands up to parish or indeed barony level. The figures available allow the growth, decline and density of population to be calculated, and from 1851, emigration at county level can be examined.\* There are figures for 1821 and 1831 at parish level, and though these are regarded as being inaccurate they do give some indication of trends in the pre-Famine period. A number of questions can be pursued:-

*Just how dense was the population in pre-Famine times? Is there any evidence that it was declining before the Famine?*

*How significant was the Famine in producing population decline? Was there a significant decline or rise at any other period? How far does the decline relate to emigration figures?*

*How dense is the population now compared to various times in the past?* **[9]**

Armed with a general idea of population patterns in the larger area over a fairly long period, the study can become more detailed, by concentrating on a townland or contiguous groups of townlands and by examining families rather than numbers. This detailed work will help to explain the patterns revealed by the bare population statistics. Work can begin with the study of 'Griffith's Valuation Lists' **[10]**, compiled in the decade between 1855 and 1865, which list the occupiers of land in each townland. The lists can be used in conjunction with the contemporary 6" to 1 mile valuation maps which locate each individual household and farm. The valuation lists and maps were revised annually so that families can be traced up to the point where the memory of even the younger members of the community can supply the details. **[11]**

The enumerators' returns of the 1901 and 1911 census are another fundamental source. These list the individual members of each family in a townland and give details of age, sex, relationship to head of household, religion, education, occupation, marital status, and place of birth. They are available in the P.R.O.I., and the P.R.O.N.I. has microfilms of entries pertinent to N. Ireland.

*\*The emigration figures first appear in the 1871 census but refer back until 1851 when enumeration commenced.*

Studies of the documents mentioned above will begin to show the degree of continuity and change in the area in the post-Famine period. The following questions can now be answered:-

*Which, if any, families survive from the earlier period?*

*Which families have disappeared, and when?*

*Which new families moved into the townland during the period? When and from where did they come, and what are or were their occupations?*

Rural society was not stable, static and unchanging as many people assume it was. As the Rev. T. H. Mullin found in his study of families in Ballyrashane, a farming parish in north Derry:-

*'The great majority of these farming families [mentioned in a parish document dated about 1750] have now disappeared, or no longer own land in the district... Many farms indeed have changed hands far more than once in this period. Throughout the whole parish area, the farms that have remained in the same families during this time could be counted on one's fingers.*

*What happened to them? Some families died out, others took up business in Coleraine or elsewhere, others emigrated. Occasionally there was a family of girls, and the farm passed out of the original name, or was sold. Some families mortgaged their land and lost it, others with drive and enterprise began as labourers or farmers in a small way and rose to prosperity. There has been a continual flow of new people into the district, from Limavady, from Donegal, from the Ballywillan district and from the wide lands of North Antrim that lie between Ballyrashane and Ballycastle. [12]*

Thus internal movements, emigration, late marriages and celibacy have all taken their toll since the Famine and a detailed study of the families in an area could reveal the interplay of these factors and establish their relative importance at various times throughout the period.

It is important to examine firstly the history of the families that have survived to find if any general deductions can be made to explain their continuity. Were there always sons to inherit the land? Were the farms large by nineteenth century standards? In the case of the families which have disappeared some attempt might be made to establish the roles that late marriage, celibacy and movement out of the area played. A careful analysis of the civil registers of marriages, births and deaths may provide some of the evidence required. [13]

On the question of emigration few documents exist other than emigrants' letters and reference in rentals which say 'gone to America'. [14] It is important therefore to gather information from local people. The questions which might be asked include:-

*Just how important was emigration?*

*Is it possible to identify periods when it seems to have been significant?*

*Did entire families emigrate or just young men and women?*

*Did more men than women emigrate?*

*Was emigration more prevalent among Roman Catholics than Protestants?*

*Are there any of the relations of the present residents living elsewhere in Ireland?  
What jobs did they do when they left the area?*

*Are any returned emigrants living in the area?*

Some of these questions can be answered at the county level with relatively little difficulty. Periods of significant emigration can be seen in the figures in the census reports. The problem lies in establishing whether emigration was uniform throughout the county. Sometimes it is possible to deduce the character of emigration from the nature of the population change over a period e.g. a more rapid reduction of women than men in the 20-40 age group over a 20 year period, would suggest heavy emigration of unmarried women, though the influence of migration of, for example, girls entering domestic service, should be borne in mind.

Not all the families which have disappeared from a townland in the period will have moved to the major cities or emigrated to the New World. Indeed there seems to have been considerable movements of population within rural areas. This is an interesting and easily overlooked phenomenon and one which local historians could profitably study. These movements can be documented by reference to the Griffith and subsequent valuations and the 1901 and 1911 census records, supplemented by local information. It is important to find out the circumstances of the migrant families since this can help to explain what was happening.

*Who were these people? Were they large or small farmers, sons of farmers, labourers, or others?*

*How far did they move?*

*In moving did they go up, down or remain stationary in the social hierarchy?*

*Do any particular families stand out in relation to these movements?*

Perhaps the most interesting questions on population relate to the pre-Famine period but the paucity of detailed records makes it a difficult area in which to work. Although there was a census in 1821 and again in 1831 only fragments of the detailed enumerator's returns remain extant. Some parish registers for the period have survived and some attempt can be made to work out family size and age of marriage, but sadly few parish registers give a long enough sequence for any meaningful conclusions to be drawn\*.

\*See V. Morgan, 'The Church of Ireland registers of St. Patrick's Church, Coleraine,' Ulster Folklife (Vol. 19, 1973)

Where enumerators' returns do exist some attempt should be made to compare them with the tithe applotment books, [15] or any sources, such as rentals, which detail land-holders, in an attempt to establish the socioeconomic structure of the pre-Famine community, and in particular the population of cottiers and labourers.

In using the sources outlined above it is important to extract not only demographic information on sex/age structure, births, marriages, deaths and migration - but also to note details on the socio-economic structure of the community - the strength of the various religious groups, the employment structure, the numbers in various classes

e.g. labourers, cottiers, small farmers, large farmers, etc. Thus armed with an overall picture of the community, the local historian can undertake a more detailed study of topics such as agriculture or industry.

### **THE LANDED ESTATE**

Since agriculture was the major source of employment in rural areas it is sensible to examine it as the next step. Normally land was, until the late nineteenth century, in the hands of landlords many of whom appointed agents to manage their estates. In order, therefore, to understand many aspects of farming and indeed the general social and economic life of the community one must look at the landed estate. Most land in Ireland, at some time or another and often more than once, had been granted in fee simple to landed proprietors, or head landlords. Many landlords, particularly during the eighteenth century, had leased parts of their estates either on long leases or by perpetuity leases to intermediate landlords or '*middlemen*' as they were generally known. These middlemen then leased land to tenants who often sublet to other tenants, so there could be a considerable number of middlemen between the tiller of the soil and the head landlord. Many head landlords then had little immediate control over their estates, particularly towards the end of the eighteenth century when population was growing fast. When finally in the early nineteenth century, some did regain control over their properties they found them overcrowded through sub-division. The slump following the Napoleonic Wars impoverished many landlords, some to and beyond the point of bankruptcy, and the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 was designed to facilitate the sale of such estates. Many of those who bought land at this stage had made their fortunes in commerce and were new to estate management, and some brought a determined commercial philosophy with them. Much of the best of nineteenth century estate management was aimed at eradicating the middlemen and improving the estates. Central to improvement was consolidation of holdings but this was pointless unless subletting and subdivision were halted. In a situation where people were plentiful and the demand for land was high, prohibition of subletting and subdivision was not welcomed by all tenants. The Famine of course removed many from the land, but these were often the cottiers or very small farmers and consolidation was still necessary after the Famine. The complex land question finally came to a head in the 1870s and 1880s after, incidentally, a period of relative prosperity for farmers in the 1860s. J. S. Donnelly's study of County Cork [16] gives a good insight into the land troubles of the latter years of the nineteenth century. These troubles led to a series of Land Purchase Acts under which Irish farmers became owners of the soil. Ireland, unlike England, has few tenant farmers today.

A study of the landlords in an area might best begin with an examination of the published Griffith's Valuation. There will be found listed, townland by townland, the

'immediate lessors'. The estates of these immediate lessors can be plotted on the townland index map published by the Ordnance Survey at the scale of 1 inch to the mile. **[17]** Having thus established the major estates in an area, including the churchlands and glebe lands, the next step is to check on the availability of estate records. These records, if they survive, will include title deeds which will show how the landlord acquired his estate; indeed they will give the history of ownership and allow the study of ownership to proceed before or after 1860. A perusal of the printed sales particulars of the Encumbered Estates Court and later of the Landed Estates Court will indicate if an estate changed hands after 1849 **[18]**. The Land Purchase Commission records will give particulars of the final sale of an estate to the tenants.

An estate archive may also contain maps, leases and rentals. Individual leases for each farm may be conveniently summarised in a lease book. A study of the leases will show the leasing policy of the landlord over a period, and in particular will reveal when and if the granting of leases ceased during the nineteenth century. Closely related to leases are the rentals which give details on the one hand of what tenants paid and on the other the amount of revenue raised by the estate. The agents' accounts will give details of both income and expenditure and the correspondence exchanged by the landlord and agent will refer to the problems of running an estate and will often give insight into the attitudes of both towards the tenants. The quality of such correspondence is well revealed in a number of recent publications. **[19]** Estate records may also contain detailed maps of each townland showing the location and layout of each farm.

No study of landlord and tenant would be complete without reference to the parliamentary papers. A number of commissions were appointed during the nineteenth century to enquire into the relations between the two groups. Two stand out as being of particular importance. The first sat in the period immediately before the Famine, and produced the '*Minutes of Evidence and Report from her Majesty's Commissioners of Enquiry into the State of the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland*', more popularly known as the Devon Commission Report, in 1845. The second considered the effects of the land acts and its '*Report of her Majesty's Commissioners of Enquiry into the working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act of 1870 and the acts amending the same*', known generally as the Bessborough Commission Report, was published in 1881.

In the study of a landed estate the following questions might be put:-

*Did the estate change hands in the nineteenth century? What was the social background of the buyer?*

*Did it grow or decrease in size?*

*What was the attitude of the landlord and his agent towards the estate, and in particular towards the tenants who occupied it? Was the landlord responsible for many agricultural improvements in the area?*

*How did the tenants regard the landlord? What stories survive about landlords and their actions, particularly those relating to dealings with tenants?*

*How far do the stories match up to the evidence from other sources?*

A study of the tenantry can often be best undertaken by examining groups of townlands together. The following are some of the questions which can be asked:-

*Who were the landholders in the townland at various times throughout the nineteenth century?*

*How much consolidation and change of ownership took place throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?*

*What size were the holdings? Does there seem to have been any significant differences in the size of these at different periods?*

*Was there much sub-division of holdings in pre-Famine times, or indeed after the Famine?*

*How did the tenant hold land? Were leases common and if so what was the normal term and were there any unusual covenants? When were they most prevalent? Who held them?*

*Was tenant right permitted and if so how much was it worth?*

*How much was the rent? How did it change over time?*

*What was the landlord's policy towards non-payment of rent?*

*When was the estate sold to the tenants?*

An examination of estate records may reveal many contrasts between the state of affairs which prevailed in the eighteenth century, and particularly in the earlier part of the century, and those which characterised the nineteenth century. In the early decades of the 18th century good tenants were scarce and landlords were prepared to offer good terms. Longer leases were granted, protecting the tenant against rising rent but likewise ensuring the landlord's income even in times of lower prices. The presence or absence of middlemen in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries may have had a significant effect on the history of the estate in the nineteenth century; thus, for example, an estate without middlemen may have suffered less from sub-division.

## **FARMING**

A drive through the farming countryside of today will reveal relatively prosperous farms with good solid dwelling houses and outbuildings. Many of these have been built or rebuilt since the 1950s. By nineteenth century standards present-day farms are large, but they employ less labour, relying instead on an array of machinery to do the work. Yields are higher too, because of the use of artificial manures. Markets and fairs have become less important, having been replaced by the various government marketing schemes.

Some of the past still remains; old attitudes die hard, and some individuals having neither the capital nor the inclination to join in twentieth century farming nevertheless retain their land, often letting it in conacre.

Pre-war farming had the horse as its basic mode of power. It had its machinery too:- the plough, although some still used the spade; the seeddrill, but many still distributed seed by fiddle or hand; the mower and binder, but the scythe was not uncommon. Livestock was important but farms were more mixed - poultry could be seen in the yard, flax was still grown and potatoes and oats were important crops on each farm. Farmyards were perhaps less prosperous looking but there was the stable, the cowshed, the pigsty and the henhouse; the silo was yet to come.

To reach even that stage farming had had to come a long way since Famine times. Many of the machines mentioned, such as the reaper and binder, had been developed for the wheatfields of the American West and had only come into use towards the end of the nineteenth century. The earlier part of the century, the 1840s, had seen the introduction of the scythe, and not all farmers, even by that time, had accepted the value of crop rotation. The spade was as important as the plough. and the lazy beds, remnants of which can still be seen today, were commonly used to grow potatoes.

Farming, therefore, has seen many changes since the early nineteenth century and the study of agriculture in any area should try to identify, describe and explain the nature of the change. The following questions might serve to begin an examination:-

*What changes have taken place in the size, layout and physical appearance of farms and farmsteads in the area since the nineteenth century? A careful look at the landscape of today in a number of contiguous townlands will help to establish the present-day scene and identify those aspects of the landscape and architecture which have survived as remnants from the past. Early photographs of farming and farms in the area would be well worth collecting. Changes in size and layout of farms can most easily be seen in the successive Valuation lists and accompanying 6" maps which are available from about 1860.*

*How much land has been reclaimed since the 1830s? Who was responsible for this? Was reclamation significant at any particular period and if so why? Comparison of the various editions of the Ordnance Survey 6" maps from 1830/5 onwards will reveal the reclamation of land. Estate records may indicate who was responsible for it, and why it was done.*

*What changes have taken place in crops and livestock since the nineteenth century? Were the changes consistent throughout the area or did some regions change faster than others or at different periods from others? Can any delays be explained?*

The government published annual agricultural statistics from 1847 onwards. The figures for 1847 on crops are given on a poor law union and electoral division basis for each county: this practice continued until 1850 when the boundaries of unions and electoral districts were revised. The livestock figures are given at union and barony level only. After 1850 the figures for both crops and livestock are provided on both a union and barony basis; figures for electoral districts were no longer provided.

*Which were the more important crops in the area? How important was stock-raising? Where were the main markets and fairs in the area since the nineteenth century? At*

*which markets did the farmers of the area sell their produce? Where did they buy and sell livestock? How did they sell eggs, flax and grain? How and when did these practices alter? Which markets and fairs expanded at the expense of others and why?*

Local farmers and auctioneers may have useful information and recollections. Lewis' Topographical Dictionary (1837) and The Parliamentary Gazetteer (1846-9) list the markets and fairs in each parish for the early nineteenth century. There are three particularly useful parliamentary papers on fairs and markets in Ireland during the nineteenth century: 'Evidence before committee on the tolls and customs at markets and fairs in Ireland', H.C. 1834 [603], xvii, 229; 'Reports of commissioners on the state of the fairs and markets in Ireland', H.C. 1852-53 [1674], xli, 79; 1854-55 [1910], xix, 1; and 'Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls: Vols V and VI, H.C. 1889 [c.5888 and 5888-1], xxxviii, 1 and 429. There was a further 'Commission on market rights and tolls' in 1889; volume five of its report gives a transcript of the evidence taken in Ulster. Of more recent vintage are two N.I. papers on markets - the 'Mark Committee' report on 'Transit, prices and marketing and agricultural produce in N. Ireland' (1927) [Cmd. 75] and the 'Harkness Committee' report on 'The Marketing of N. Ireland agricultural produce' (1932). The 'Babington Committee's' 'Reports of the agricultural enquiry committee' (1947) [Cmd. 222 and 249] give a general description of agriculture just after the war. **[20]**

*How mechanised are the farms today? When were the various technical and other agricultural innovations (starting in the late nineteenth century) introduced into the area e.g. the first tractor, thresher, etc? Who introduced them? Are some farmers and some areas more innovatory than others? Why is this so?*

It is difficult to get documentary evidence on such developments and the main source of information may be local memory. Where they are available, the records of the motor taxation office can supply some facts on the arrival of tractors in an area, e.g. in 1940 there were only 282 tractors in Co. Antrim compared with 1690 in 1945 and 4755 in 1954. Co. Fermanagh, a pastoral county, had only 32 in 1940, 265 in 1945 and 1058 in 1954.

*Are there any old ways of farming still practised in the area, e.g. souming and morrowing? Describe their characteristics. If they have ceased to be a feature of agri-cultural life in the districts can their disappearance be dated and explained? Which areas still cling to the old ways and how do they relate to the areas of innovation?*

Whilst records such as travellers' accounts, **[21]** estate papers and Ordnance Survey memoirs will often make reference to these activities in the first half of the nineteenth century, much of the information sought here survives only in oral tradition.

*What was the pattern of agricultural employment in the area throughout the nineteenth century and into more recent times? Was a sufficient labour supply available from the local area? Did hired hands work on the farm? Were they taken on at hiring fairs? Was there a tradition of cottiers working for farmers? or did migrant labourers come into the region at harvest times, and from where? Did many people*

*from the area migrate seasonally to the harvests elsewhere in Ireland or Britain? When did this tradition die out? Was seasonal migration limited to certain areas and socio-economic groups? If so why?*

The major sources of documentary evidence in this area are the census enumerators' returns for 1901 and 1911. These indicate the number of labourers and servants in any area and show whether they lived in with farmers or had their own houses. Local knowledge will help to fill in the picture between 1911 and the present. It would be a useful exercise to record older people's memories of the hiring fair and the reminiscences of anyone who was hired out in that period. For the pre-1900 period the general pattern of agricultural employment can be seen at the barony level in the employment statistics in the census reports for 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891. Careful scrutiny of Griffith's valuation lists will show the number of (almost) landless labourers living in their own houses in each townland in the middle of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly there were more landless labourers before the Famine but it is difficult to establish exact numbers in the period except from some surviving estate records. Some of the Ordnance Survey memoirs give lists of seasonal migrants from some parishes in Counties Antrim and Londonderry in the 1830s.

## **INDUSTRY**

Unfortunately the story of nineteenth century rural industry is, basically one of decline. In Ulster the eighteenth century had seen the growth of a range of industries, the most important of which was linen. Linen, apart from the processes of bleaching and finishing, was a domestic industry. The bleachworks were found along rivers, for water was required not only for bleaching but also for driving the beetling mills which were used to finish the cloth. Other industries such as corn milling, flour milling, glass works, breweries and distilleries also relied on water either as a source of power or a basic constituent in the manufacture of the product. [22]

The nineteenth century saw the introduction of steam-power driven machinery for spinning and weaving in the linen industry, and this led to the contraction of domestic industry. Factory spinning was introduced in the late 1820s and the power loom in the 1850s. The decline in domestic industry in the years before the Famine robbed many families of an industrial income which had given them a reasonable standard of living. Perhaps the most important factor leading to the contraction of many industries both in town and country was that they served only a local market. This market was invaded by cheaper mass-produced goods from the factories of Britain, and the advent of steam ships and railways enabled the easy and cheap distribution of such manufactured goods. The changes became more evident in the years after the Famine and, of course, are still going on. The industries which have managed to survive have either been in, or have moved to, the larger towns. The coming of steam and later of electrical power removed the necessity to locate industries on fast flowing streams and so today we think of industry as an urban rather than a rural activity.

In studying industry in a rural setting it is best to examine an extended area. Since in the early nineteenth century most industry in rural areas relied on water power the river valley or basin is the natural area for study. It also seems logical not to exclude the major industries, such as corn mills and flour mills which may be found in towns along the rivers.

The first task is to establish the location of old and existing mills. Fieldwork is necessary at this stage and the later editions of the 6" and 25" Ordnance Survey maps will be invaluable. There may be maps for the 1950s and there will certainly be maps for the 1930s or the 1920s. During the fieldwork stage oral information on the mills should also be collected, and questions which might be asked include:-

*When were the mills closed, who owned them, what activities were carried on in them, etc.?*

The Valuation revision books indicate when businesses expanded, contracted, changed hands or failed. These can be supplemented with records of many of these businesses. As the next stage, industry at the turn of the century should be examined. Two basic sources can be used in conjunction, the 6" and 25" O.S. maps prepared c.1900 and the 1901 and 1911 census enumerators returns. The latter will give details of industrial employment in any area and the former will locate and name the major industrial sites.

For the mid-nineteenth century the '*Griffith's Valuation*' books and accompanying 6" maps are the fundamental source. It is advisable to use the manuscript '*field book*' compiled by the valuers rather than the printed copies, since the manuscripts will often contain marginal notes, comments and statistics, on industrial and other sites, which are made by the valuer as an aide memoire, enabling him to consider all the factors bearing on the value of a site.

The sources for the pre-famine period are less specific and less universally informative. Travellers in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Ireland frequently left accounts which comment on particular industries in particular localities; statistical surveys of counties or parishes were published in some instances and the Ordnance Survey memoirs of parishes in the north are particularly useful. The '*field*' books and maps of the first general valuation of Ireland are uneven in the quality of the information recorded, but cannot be ignored. **[23]**

A number of parliamentary papers on industry in Ireland during the nineteenth century are worth consulting, and in particular the '*Reports from the Assistant Commissioners on Hand-Loom Weavers*' (1840) and '*Report of the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland)*' (1884-5),<sup>24</sup> as well as the reports of the factory inspectors.

The following questions will act as a framework for any study:

*How important was industry as an employer of local labour? What kinds of factory industries were established in the area? When did they originate? Where were they located? What were their sources of power? Did they recruit labour locally? What were the limits of their catchment areas? Where were the markets? Where did they obtain their raw materials?*

*Has any particular industry declined? When? Was it sudden or gradual? What were the reasons for this decline? What was the immediate effect of this decline?*

*Which families were involved in industrial activity? What other roles did they play in the community?*

*Have any industrial villages grown up in the area?*

*What physical remains can be still seen of earlier industry? Can they tell us anything of what was going on in the building when it was in operation? If so would it be useful to preserve them?*

*Was domestic industry such as spinning, weaving, knitting, sewing, sprigging or lace-making ever important in the area? When did it die out?*

## **TRANSPORT**

The development of agriculture and industry requires a well developed transport system. The improvement of existing, and the building of many new roads from the eighteenth century onwards, the development of canals from the 1740s and the coming of the railways in the nineteenth century did much to open up the countryside and allow farmers and industrialists to export their products. At the same time it exposed these areas to an inflow of goods from the outside world many of which were often cheaper than those produced locally. **[25]**

A study of the development of communications in the local area is, therefore, important. The physical development of the road, rail and canal pattern can be studied in the field and with the help of the successive editions of the 6" Ordnance Survey maps from the 1830s onwards.

Many county maps were produced for the Grand Juries in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and these can be used as a base line in a study of the roads. **[26]** The Grand Jury in each county was responsible for the building and upkeep of roads and bridges and when their resentment records survive the development of roads can be traced in minute detail. The famine period saw the building of many roads through public works schemes, and as drainage and other road building techniques improved new roads were made across hitherto impassable ground, 'opening up' many parts of the country.

Though railway development can be traced in the O.S. maps, the major sources of information are the records of the various railway companies. A typical archive will include minute books, files, letter books and pads, account books, maps and plans and probably much else besides. Records of tramways or light railways have also survived and many have been deposited in public repositories.

Many of the records of the companies responsible for the construction and management of canals have passed into public hands. In Ulster, for example, the Lagan Navigation, The Ulster Canal, Tyrone Navigation, Upper Bann Navigation and the Newry Navigation Company records can all be found in the Public Record Office.

## **LANDSCAPE**

The human activities discussed above have produced a landscape which tells of the efforts of man to clear it, to build on it, to make it suitable for cultivation or the grazing of livestock, to make roads on it and so on. The visible evidence, when looked at in conjunction with other sources will help us to understand better man's activities in relation to the land. **[27]** To the trained eye the physical evidence of man's activities acts as an indicator of the kind of community which existed in an area.

Perhaps the dominant features of the man-made rural landscape are the houses, fields, routeways and plantations. It is important to note how they have changed over time. The various 6" Ordnance Survey maps will be invaluable in tracing changes through the nineteenth century to the present day. In some cases it is possible to identify the houses in a particular townland which were occupied in the nineteenth century and earlier; some are still in use as dwellings or as out buildings, others are now derelict but they can still tell us much about house types and fittings of a century or more ago. The field books of the '*Townland Valuation*' of the 1830s should also be consulted. In some townlands the valuers have noted, in code form, the dimensions and quality of some of the houses, and an indication of age, general condition, and type of roofing is given. **[28]**

## **SOCIAL WELFARE**

So far the emphasis has been on the economic and demographic history of rural areas but what of the other aspects of life? The lack of economic development and cyclical depressions had significant consequences for employment, poverty and health. Associated with the hard times were problems of begging, drunkenness and petty crime.

There was no welfare state in the nineteenth century but the beginnings of government intervention in various social fields can be traced and it is possible to see in various sources, the efforts of the local community, often assisted or directed by central government, to deal with its problems. Attitudes can also be discerned. A short extract from the minutes of the Strabane Board of Guardians dated 31 January 1854 will illustrate a hard, unsympathetic attitude towards poverty and misfortune in the nineteenth century:

*It having been reported that certain irregularities were permitted in allowing children to sleep with their mothers out of their proper places contrary to the classification of the workhouse, and the Board having investigated the report find it substantially correct and express their regret and surprise that such a system should be permitted, and consider the officers of the work house very remiss and reprehensible in the discharge of their duty, and caution them that should it occur again the most serious notice of it will be taken. **[29]***

Earlier attempts to handle the problems were often made by either private individuals or the church. The Ordnance Survey memoirs of the 1830s often give details of various charitable schemes in a parish. The Church of Ireland vestry records make reference to collections for and distribution of charity to the poor, infirm and unfortunate. Apart from the county infirmaries which were set up after 1765 and district dispensaries established in some areas after 1808 there was little government sponsored effort to help the poor or indeed the infirm until the late 1830s.

The growing population and harsh economic conditions of the early nineteenth century led in spite of any local charitable efforts to major poverty, health and unemployment problems. These were investigated in the mid -1830s by the commissioners set up to enquire into the conditions of the poorer classes in Ireland. Their reports contain evidence on the state of vagrancy, poverty and the conditions of labourers in pre-famine Ireland. **[30]**

In 1839 the boards of guardians were set up to administer the Poor Law Act of 1838. Their main function was to build, maintain and administer the workhouses which were to be used to house the poor. The minutes of the boards of guardians are available for most unions from 1839 and give details of treatment of the poor over a period stretching well into the present century though they are of particular interest during the famine period. Careful study should be made of admission registers which detail the names, addresses, previous employment, physical condition, etc., of those admitted.

Dispensaries, established to provide the poor with medical advice and medicines and funded in part by charitable donations, were important from the early nineteenth century. Many dispensary districts published annual reports. Few survive but some of the Ordnance Survey parish memoirs contain transcript of these reports, including the statistics on the incidence of various diseases amongst patients. A list of dispensaries in each county will be found in the Parliamentary Gazeteer 1846-91. This also lists the fever hospitals in the county.

We tend to think of the Famine period, because of its catastrophic effects, as the major period of poverty and suffering in Ireland. It is useful to try to gauge its severity in particular localities. Compare population for 1841 and 1851 using the census statistics. Compare landholders in 1840s with 1830s, using Griffith's Valuations and tithe applotment books. It may be that there is little change among landholders and that reductions in population are due to removal of cottiers. In other words the effect of the Famine on different socio-economic groups and on different areas should be measured; significant regional or class variations may be found. Poverty did not end with the famine. The depression years of the inter-war period 1919-39 were, for many families, far from pleasant. Unemployment was often high and some idea of the amount and nature of this can be seen in official returns.

## **EDUCATION**

Government officials, particularly in the pre-Famine period, believed that ignorance was a real impediment to social and economic progress in Ireland and as a result, during the nineteenth century, the state became more involved in the promotion of education.

At the close of the eighteenth century many children were attending '*hedge-schools*'. These were schools of variable standards, often held in a local barn and the name '*hedge*' arises from the habit of holding classes in the open air during the summer months. In addition to these, there were schools founded and maintained by individuals, including some landlords, or by the churches, e.g. the Erasmus Smith foundations of the established church. These church schools were, in general, avoided by the catholic population since they were seen as proselytising institutions. One foundation, the Kildare Place Society formed in 1811, tried to promote a system of undenominational elementary education. The State was prepared to subsidise its efforts and by 1831 it was receiving an annual grant of £30,000. The efforts of the Kildare Place Society came to be viewed with suspicion by much of the catholic population and in 1831 the government established a National Board of Education to administer a centralised system of undenominational elementary education.

The various church bodies in Ireland were not consistently in favour of the schools and more often than not, in practice, the schools ended up as single denomination

institutions. The state was ultimately obliged to concede to the insistent demand for sponsored denominational education.**[31]**

In examining the history of educational provision in a local area a number of questions can be pursued.

*How many schools were there in the area in the first half of the nineteenth century? When were they founded and how were they funded? Where were they located and why? Were some areas better served than others? There will most certainly have been a decline in the number of schools since the nineteenth century and though this is easily explained, what is the explanation of the survival of one at the expense of another? How far did the schools draw their pupils from both sides of the community? Were some socio-economic groups better represented than others? What was the local attitude towards education; for example, did some parents keep their children at school longer than others? Were some families more prone to longer periods of non-attendance than others?*

The Ordnance Survey maps of the 1830s will identify and locate the schools in any area at that period, and the Ordnance Survey memoirs, where they are available, devote considerable attention, verbal and statistical, to the schools. Where the memoirs are not available, Lewis' 'Topographical Dictionary' (1837) and the 'Parliamentary Gazetteer' (1846) fill some of the gaps by listing the schools in each parish.

Each of the National schools in an area will be well documented. The applications submitted by a local committee or individual for grant aid, to help found or maintain the school, have survived, and give details of the date of foundation, premises used, average attendance, names, qualifications, and salary of the teachers and much else besides. The correspondence exchanged between the Board of National Education and the school can also be studied.**[32]** A number of parliamentary papers, which both demonstrate the governments' concern for education and at the same time provide considerable information on the provision of schools at local level, should also be examined.**[33]**

The records surviving in the archives of each school should not be overlooked.**[34]** Registers, which record the names and backgrounds of each pupil, are invaluable, but roll books, which show the incidence of absenteeism at particular seasons of the year, punishment books, etc., will also repay close examination.

## **LAW AND ORDER**

It has been said that the third major social problem of pre-Famine Ireland, after poverty and ignorance, was violence. Violence was often associated with political agitation over such things as tithes, rents, leases, catholic emancipation and, in the later years of the nineteenth century, the land law and home rule questions. In addition to these more spectacular outbreaks there were the problems associated with drunkenness and disorder, faction fighting, debt and minor squabbles which ended in civil cases. It would appear, at least from the evidence of the Ordnance Survey memoirs, that nineteenth century countrymen were litigious.

The memoirs often give a useful picture of the state of law and order in the pre-Famine period, some analysing the cases coming before the local and the assize

courts for the previous 5 or 6 years. For local crime the records of the petty sessions courts, which in most cases survive from the mid-nineteenth century, are useful. Where they are available, the manor court records will give details of cases of debt up to the value of forty shillings. More serious crime was dealt with at the assize courts, and though many of the 19th century records were destroyed in 1922 some isolated material has survived.

The government took a particular interest in the various disturbances throughout the nineteenth century and a number of commissions or committees of enquiry reported on the state of the country. During the land war period from 1879 there are annual returns, province by province, of agrarian outrages reported to the R.I.C. [35]

Obviously, the main task in studying law and order in an area is to see whether crime and general agitation is rife and whether its high or low incidence can be related to other factors such as the degree of poverty, the number of evictions, or any other cause. It may be that certain townlands have a particular reputation for disorder and violence. If so, can this be explained? Is there any tradition of antagonism between the tenants of one estate and those on another?

### **ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, VALUES, TRADITIONS, SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONS**

Perhaps the most difficult task is to try to unravel the ideas and 'assumptions in the minds of people both present and past, but these are important since they guide action in social, economic and political activities. In Ulster it might be sensible to begin with the present by examining the social relationships within and between the two communities, looking at values, attitudes and beliefs, and the role tradition plays in thinking. The work of Rosemary Harris supplemented by Arensberg and Kimball might provide the best framework for examining this very complex aspect of life. [36]

According to Harris, the social network of the individuals in the community which she studied in the west of Ulster (and it must be remembered her conclusions related to that community, to which she gave the fictitious name of Ballybeg) was restricted overwhelmingly in most fields to their co-religionists because of endogamy (the custom of marrying within the same culture group) and the fact that most formal social organisations have a religious basis and most individuals in the community have strong ties with such organisations. This, as we know, leads to a lack of knowledge by each group of the other and the creation of stereotypes and prejudice.

At the same time Harris is able to show that the two religious groups do in fact share a common culture. Despite their differences *'there is, by and large, a vast amount in common between households at the same economic level whatever their religious affiliation. This similarity extends not merely to their standards of living, to family relationships, ideas about the roles of the sexes and attitudes to them in general, but to ideas about the duties neighbours owe each other, more general values regarding good and bad conduct, what commands and what looses respect, and even, somewhat surprisingly, to very similar attitudes to the external world of officialdom.* [37]

Since religion plays such an important part in the life of the community the first task might be to establish the relative strength of the various religious communities in any

area from the 1800s onward, and in particular how this has changed over the period. This can be done by reference to not only church records but also to the census enumerators' returns for 1831 (where these are available) and 1911. The past can then be compared with the present.

The degree of segregation in an area is of course an interesting question but a study of the origin of this would necessitate taking the study back into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The author has shown how the sequence of settlement and the growth of segregated areas can be established using the hearth money rolls of the 1660s, the religious returns of 1740 and 1766 and the enumerators' returns of 1831. **[38]** It is not easy to establish the sequence accurately but it might be worth glancing at the hearth money rolls to see if any pattern had been established by that time.

It is also worth investigating if, with declining population, segregation has become more marked. Here one can compare the valuation lists and maps of c.1860, and the 1901 and 1911 enumerators' returns with the present day. Very often a turnover in population can be detected but the area will still remain either predominately catholic or predominately protestant.

Another question concerns the socio-economic make-up of church congregations. Did they draw their support from the entire spectrum of society or were some elements more represented than others? It is useful to locate the churches in each district and examine the families which made up the congregations. Which families tended to be dominant in them? Many churches suffered from internal disputes. A study of the background to these disputes and of their effect on the community would be worth-while. It is important to set such disputes in the wider context of society and ask to what extent they were a power struggle between certain groups in the area. Sources worth consulting would include church records and perhaps local newspapers. Oral tradition may also reveal much that is hidden obscurely in formal church records.

*Finally the church played a very important part in the everyday life of the community. How much did it dominate social occasions? Which were the traditional occasions and places of meetings? Have they changed over the years? Does the church appear to have been the dominant factor in shaping the values, attitudes and beliefs of the community?*

It is often the case that other institutions, albeit with a religious connection, were important in shaping ideas. On the protestant side the Orange Order and the Masonic were important with the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the G.A.A. equally important on the catholic side. It would be instructive to look at the membership of these organisations and their degree of support. Harris suggested, for instance, that the poorer protestants in 'Ballybeg' were more supportive of the Orange Order, not only because they felt more threatened, living as they did in a part of the area where they were in a minority, but also because it gave them a chance to talk bluntly to their more prosperous co-religionists in the richer townlands. This of course is an area difficult to investigate and shades into sociology and anthropology and manuscript sources are difficult to come by, unless there are minutes of lodge meetings. Perhaps oral tradition must play the major part here.

It should not be assumed that the present pattern of voting, dominated in most cases by the traditional parties, is an unchanged inheritance from an immemorial past. Is there any evidence of change over the period; for example, were liberal candidates supported during the earlier struggles over land and home rule? If there has been a change, how can it be explained?

*Local traditions and national events, such as the Famine, landlord and tenant during the land war, home rule, the world wars, are worth collecting. How far do these stand up to the known documented facts which are available? Who stands out as remarkable characters from past, and why have they been remembered? Is there any social and political significance in this? Can we read anything into the tales and the traditions about national events? What do they tell us about the community?*

*Finally were there, or are there still, any social institutions without a religious affiliation which draw support from both sides of the community? Perhaps the local history society?*

## **CONCLUSION**

The collection of material to answer all of these questions will provide data which can be used to describe and explain changes that have taken place in the social and economic life of the community. It is possible to answer the questions about a fairly large area but as has been suggested at various points in the text it may be better to begin by examining one or a few adjacent townlands. However not all the questions are meaningful in relation to a small areas and in any case the ability to interpret data about a local area will often depend to a great extent on knowledge of the larger region of which it is a part and on a general knowledge of Irish history. [39]

## **NOTES**

[1] H. P. R. Finberg, *The local historian and his theme*, reprinted in H. P. R. Finberg and V. H. T. Skipp, *Local history: objective and pursuit* (David and Charles, 1967).

[2] W. B. Stephens, *Teaching local history* (Manchester University Press, 1977).

[3] K. Darwin, 'Sources for townland history', *Ulster Folklife*, Vol 3 (1957). See also, T. P. O'Neill, *Sources of Irish local history* (Library Association of Ireland, 1958), C. Dallat, 'The sources of local history', *Ulster Local Studies*, Vol 1, No 1 (1975) and PRONI, *Sources for the study of local history in Northern Ireland* (H.M.S.O., 1968).

[4] W. Macafee, 'The study of the history of a townland - a worksheet', *Ulster Local Studies*, Vol 2, No 1 (1976); *The teaching of local history in Ireland: a bibliography for teachers* (Queen's University of Belfast Teachers' Centre, 1979).

[5] It is impossible to list all those who have helped me over the years, but I must publicly acknowledge the contribution of W. H. Crawford to many of the questions and ideas in this article, and I must acknowledge the editorial assistance of S. C. McMenemy.

[6] K. H. Connell, *The population of Ireland, 1750-1845* (Clarendon Press, 1950).

**[7]** See in particular M. Drake, 'Marriage and population growth in Ireland, 1750-1845' *Economic History Review*, Ser 2, Vol XVI, No 2 (1963) and L. M. Cullen, 'Irish history without the potato', *Past and Present*, No 4 (1968) .

**[8]** For a useful bibliography see pages 193-195 of the 1976 reprint of L. M. Cullen, *Economic history of Ireland since 1660* (Batsford) .

**[9]** See R. Smith, 'Demography in the nineteenth century: an introduction for the local historian', *The Local Historian*, Vol 9, No 1 (1970), which shows, very clearly, the various calculations necessary to make best use of census data.

**[10]** The lists survive in manuscript and printed form. The manuscripts are in PRONI (Ref VAL 2) and in the Valuation Office in Dublin, and contain some comments, figures, etc., which were not reproduced in the printed lists. The printed versions of the lists, prepared to permit appeals against the valuation, were widely distributed and can still be found in many local libraries.

**[11]** The Northern lists and maps for the period c.1860-c.1935 are in PRONI (Ref VAL 12); those for the post-1935 period are retained in the Valuation Office, Belfast. 12. T. H. Mullin, *The families of Ballyrashane* (privately published, 1969).

**[13]** Civil registration of all marriages, births and deaths was not made compulsory in Ireland until 1864 though the civil authorities had registered all protestant marriages since 1845. Getting access to the registers can be difficult as the law governing custody and control of the records is complex.

**[14]** Lists of emigrants where they do survive are particularly useful but they are sadly incomplete both in terms of time and of areas covered. Some of the Ordnance Survey memoirs of parishes in Cos. Antrim and Londonderry contain lists of emigrants who left in the 1830's; 5 volumes listing the passengers on William McCorkell's ships leaving Londonderry between 1841 and 1862 have survived but the addresses ascribed to passengers refer only to the town in which they booked passage. Comprehensive lists of immigrants arriving at the Atlantic seaboard ports were compiled by the U.S. authorities from 1820 onwards; microfilm copies of the Philadelphia and Baltimore lists are in P.R.O.N.I. and N.L.I. have copies of those relating to New York and Boston. Since the lists record only the country of origin of each immigrant their value to the local historian is severely limited.

**[15]** Tithe applotment books, compiled in the 1820s and 1830s, and now deposited in PROI and PRONI, list the occupiers of all lands subject to tithe.

**[16]** J. S. Donnelly, Jr, *The land and the people of nineteenth century Cork* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975). Since tenants subletting to cot tiers will also appear as 'immediate lessors' it is essential to exercise discretion in eliminating names. The names of local landlords or 'gentry' may also be found in 18th and 19th century travellers guides, in Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland and in local directories.

**[18]** Incomplete sets of sales particulars will be found in many repositories including PRONI and NLI.

**[19]** See in particular w. A. Maguire (editor), *Letters of a great Irish landlord, a selection of the estate correspondence of the third Marquess of Down shire, 1809-43* (H.M.S.O., Belfast, 1974) and W. H. Crawford, *Letters of an Ulster land agent 1774-85* (PRONI., 1976)

**[20]** For a comprehensive list of Northern Ireland parliamentary and departmental papers see A. Malt by, *The government of Northern Ireland 1922-1972, A catalogue and breviat of parliamentary papers* (Irish University Press 1974)

**[21]** For a comprehensive bibliography of visitors accounts see H. Heaney, *Tourists in Ireland 1800-1850, an annotated bibliography* (Library Association Fellowship Thesis, 1968).

**[22]** For useful background reading see E. R. R. Green, *The industrial archaeology of County Down* (H.M.S.O., 1963), and *The Lagan Valley 1800- 50* (Faber, 1969), H. D. Gribbon, *The history of Water power in Ulster* (David & Charles, 1969) and W. H. Crawford, *Domestic industry in Ireland, the experience of the linen industry* (Gill & Macmillan, 1972).

**[23]** W. A. McCutcheon's article 'The use of documentary source material in the Northern Ireland survey of industrial archaeology', *Economic History Review*, Vol 19 (1966) shows very fully how useful the O.S. memoirs and the valuation records can be in the study of industrial sites in this period.

County statistical surveys were commissioned and published by the Royal Dublin Society in the early years of the nineteenth century and W. S. Mason's 3 volume study *A statistical and parochial survey of Ireland* (1814) is a mine of information on the parishes surveyed.

**[24]** The local historian must become familiar with a variety of guides and indices to the nineteenth century parliamentary papers. After 1830 in particular parliament showed a passion for collecting and then publishing local facts and figures.

**[25]** R. B. Nolan's *Travel and transport in Ireland* (Gill & MacMillan, 1973) provides an excellent general introduction to the study of transport and carries a full bibliography.

**[26]** See also G. Taylor and A. Skinner, *Maps of the roads of Ireland 1778, revised 1783*, republished by Irish universities Press in 1869 with an introduction by J. H. Andrews; and J. H. Andrews, 'Road planning in Ireland before the railway age' *Irish Geography*, Vol 5, No. 1 (1964).

**[27]**A seeing eye is required to get maximum benefit from a study of the landscape. W. G. Hoskins' work shows how much can be gleaned; see in particular his *Fieldwork in local history* (Faber, 1967), *Making of the English landscape* (Pelican 1970) and *English landscapes -how to read, the man-make scenery* (BBC Publications, 1973) .A. R. Orme's *Ireland* (Longmans, 1!170) is perhaps the most useful Irish study.

**[28]** The valuation rolls were amended frequently between 1828 and 1838, during the course of the valuers' survey, so that not all the records which were compiled on the same basis. Prior to 1836 (and most of Ulster were valued by this date) buildings of an annual value of more than £3 were measured and recorded; those of a lower value were ignored. In 1836 the threshold was raised to £5. One result of this is that some houses listed in the rough 'field books' compiled prior to 1836 were excluded from the fair copies that were prepared later.

**[29]** PRONI, BG26/A/4 p. 107. *First Report of Inquiry into the Condition of the Poor in Ireland, with appendices* (HC 1835, [369] xxx and 1836, [35-42], xxx-xxiv).

**[31]** See D. H. Akenson, *Irish education experiment* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970) for the history of the Board.

**[32]** These records are now available for consultation in the PROI and PRONI, having been divided, but only roughly, on a geographical basis. The Grant Aid Applications commence in 1831 and run through the nineteenth century. The National School Registers, which contain abstracts of the important correspondence exchanged by the Board and the school, the Correspondence Files and the Salary Books begin later but continue in use until the 1920's.

**[33]** *Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the nature extent of the instruction afforded by the several institutions in Ireland for the purpose of elementary or primary education; also into the practical working of the system of national education in Ireland* (H.C. 1870 [c.6-1-viii], XXVIII; Parts I-V); *Report of the Vice-Regal Committee into primary education (Ireland)* (H.C. 1913 [Cd. 6829]).

**[34]** Some school records will now be found in public repositories but others are still retained by individual schools. It is rare to find any school records of a date earlier than 1858 but registers of post-1860 vintage are reasonably commonplace.

**[35]** G. Broeker, *Rural disorder and police reform in Ireland 1812-36* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970); E. Rumpf and A. C. Hepburn, *Nationalism and socialism in twentieth century Ireland* (Liverpool University Press, 1977). For annual returns of agrarian outrages see the indexes to the parliamentary papers.

**[36]** R. Harris, *Prejudice and tolerance in Ulster: a study of neighbours and 'strangers' in a border community* (Manchester University Press, 1972); C. M. Arensberg, *The Irish countryman* (Peter Smith, Mass., 1959); C. M. Arensberg and S. T. Kimball, *Family and community in Ireland* (Harvard university Press, 1968).

**[37]** Harris, *Prejudice and tolerance*.

**[38]** See W. Macafee, 'The colonisation of the Maghera region of South Derry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *Ulster Folklife*, Vol. 23, (1977).

**[39]** This is not the appropriate place to attempt a full bibliography of general studies likely to be of interest to the local historian, but the following general works will be found useful and will themselves suggest further reading: L. M. Cullen, *An economic history of Ireland since 1660* (Batsford, 1972, reprinted 1976), *Six generations: everyday work and life in Ireland from 1790* (Mercier Press, 1976), and *The*

formation of the Irish economy (Mercier Press, 1969); T. W. Moody and J. C. Beckett (editors), *Ulster since 1800: a political and economic survey* (BBC, 1955), and *Ulster since 1800, a social survey*, (BBC, 1957); R. D. Crotty, *Agricultural production: its volume structure* (Cork university Press, 1966),-and see a critical review of this by J. J. Lee in *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 17 (1969); E. E. Evans, *Irish heritage* (Dundalgan Press, 1942) and *Irish folkways* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957); R. D. Edwards and T. D. Williams (editors), *The great famine: studies in Irish history 1845-52* (Irish Committee of Historical Sciences, 1956).

**Macafee, William.** 'Local historical studies of rural areas' [Methods and sources]. *Irish Archives Bulletin*, 6 (1976), 4-31.

### **Note by the author 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008.**

'The article was published in 1976 in the *Irish Archives Bulletin* [vol. 6] so it is a bit dated. In 1998 I contributed a chapter on my home townland 'Forttown' which is near Ballymoney in Co. Antrim in a book edited by Bill Crawford and R. H. Foy **Townlands in Ulster. Local History Studies**, published by the Ulster Historical Foundation in association with the Federation for Local Studies, pp 27-65. In many ways this chapter put into practice many of the suggestions that I made in the 1976 publication. A transcript of the chapter is available on the Ulster Historical Foundation website

<http://www.ancestryireland.com/index.php>. However it can only be accessed through the Members Area, which means you have to be a member of the UHF.'

### **Family and Local History - Bill Macafee's Web Site**

<http://www.billmacafee.com>

### **The Irish Society for Archives**

The Irish Society for Archives was founded in December 1970 in response to the lack of a forum for the discussion of archival matters in Ireland. Its first meeting was held in the Physics Theatre, UCD, Earlsfort Terrace and those present elected Professor Robert Dudley Edwards as its first chair. It published the *Irish Archives Bulletin* which later grew into *Irish Archives*, which remains Ireland's only dedicated archives journal.

The Irish Society for Archives exists to promote the place of archives in Irish society. It publishes *Irish Archives* annually, a twice-annual newsletter and organizes lectures on topics of interest and concern to archivists, the users of archives and the wider public.

### **Irish Society for Archives**

<http://www.ucd.ie/archives/isa/isa-index.html>

We are grateful to the editor of the ***Irish Archives Bulletin* Elizabeth McEvoy**, and to the author **William Macafee**, for kind permission to host this work on

**[aughty.org](http://aughty.org)**