WILLIAM
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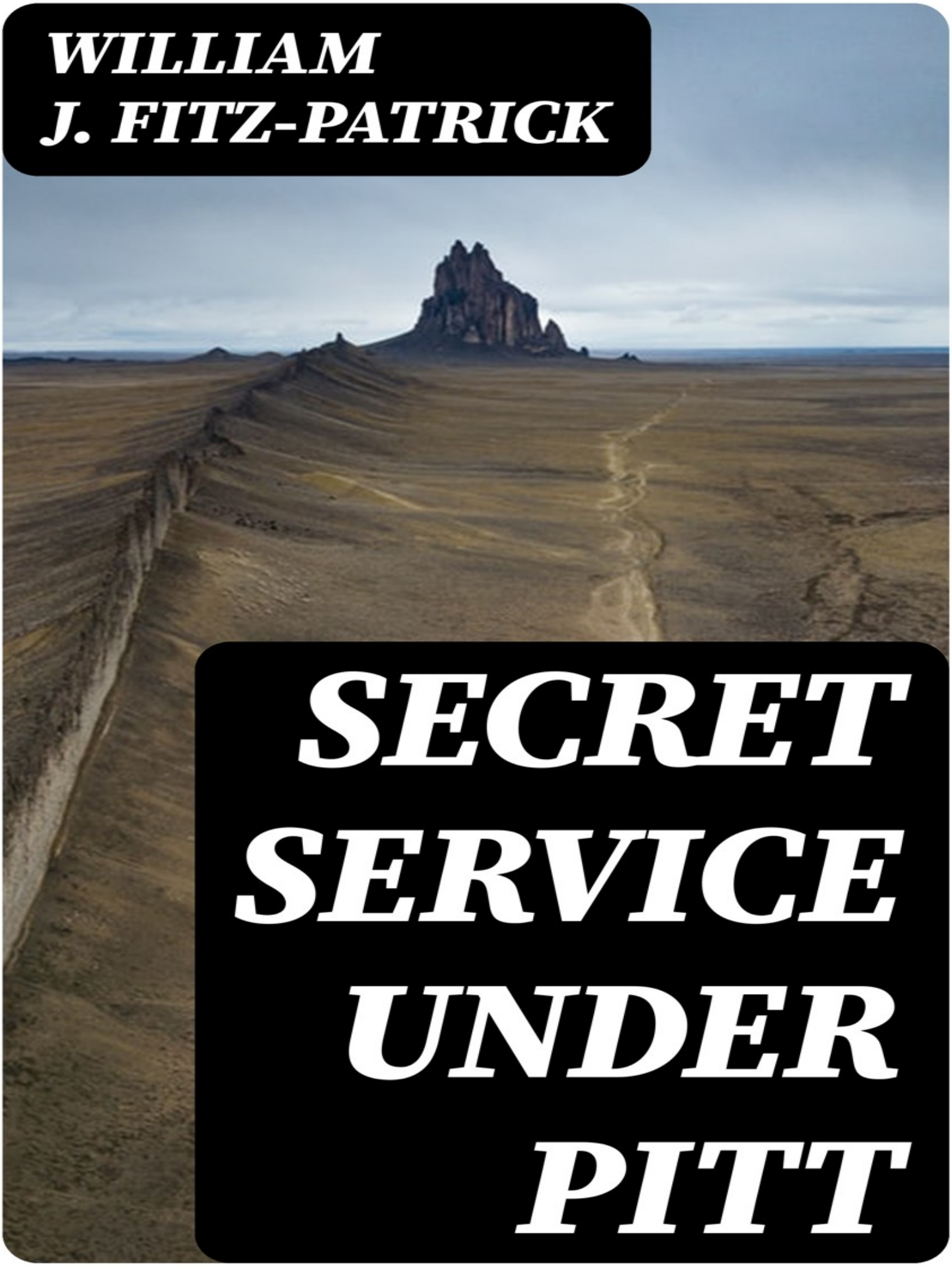

SECRET SERVICE UNDER PITT

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Table of Contents

PREFACE

Table of Contents

These rough notes—begun long ago and continued at slow intervals—were put aside during the onerous task of editing for Mr. Murray the O'Connell Correspondence. The recent publication of Mr. Lecky's final volumes, awakening by their grasp a fixed interest in pre-Union times, and confirming much that by circumstantial evidence I had sought to establish, affords a reason, perhaps, that my later researches in the same field ought not to be wholly lost. Mr. Lecky's kindness in frequently quoting me[1] merits grateful acknowledgment, not less than his recognition of some things that I brought to light as explanatory of points to which the State Papers afford no clue. This and other circumstances encourage me in offering more.

My sole purpose at the outset was to expose a well-cloaked case of long-continued betrayal by one of whom Mr. Froude confesses that all efforts to identify had failed;[2] but afterwards it seemed desirable to disclose to the reader a wider knowledge of an exciting time.[3] In various instances a veil will be found lifted, or a visor unlocked, revealing features which may prove a surprise. Nor is the story without a moral. The organisers of illegal societies will see that, in spite of the apparent secrecy and ingenuity of their system, informers sit with them at the same council-board and dinner-table, ready at any moment to sell their blood; and that the wider the ramifications of conspiracy, the greater becomes the certainty of detection.

It may be that some of these researches are more likely to interest and assist students of the history of the time than to prove pleasant reading for those who take up a book merely for enjoyment. Yet if there is truth in the axiom that men who write with ease are read with difficulty, and *vice versâ*, these chapters ought to find readers. Every page had its hard work. Tantalising delays attended at times the search for some missing—but finally discovered—link. Indeed, volumes of popular reading, written *currente calamo*, might have been thrown off for a tithe of the trouble.

'If the power to do hard work is not talent,' writes Garfield, 'it is the best possible substitute for it. Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up.' Readers who, thanks to Froude and Lecky, have been interested by glimpses of men in startling attitudes, would naturally like to learn the curious sequel of their subsequent history. This I have done my best to furnish. The present volume is humbly offered as a companion to the two great works just alluded to. But it will also prove useful to readers of the Wellington, Castlereagh, Cornwallis, and Colchester Correspondence. These books abound in passages which, without explanation, are unintelligible. The matter now presented forms but a small part of the notes I have made with the same end.

A word as regards some of the later sources of my information. The Pelham MSS. were not accessible when Mr. Froude wrote. Thomas Pelham, second Earl of Chichester, was Irish Secretary from 1795 to 1798, but his correspondence until 1826 deals largely with Ireland, and I

have read as much of it as would load a float. Another mine was found in the papers, ranging from 1795 to 1805, which filled two iron-clamped chests in Dublin Castle, guarded with the Government seal and bearing the words 'Secret and Confidential: Not to be Opened.' These chests were for a long time familiar objects exteriorly, and when it was at last permitted to disturb the rust of lock and hinge, peculiar interest attended the exploration. Among the contents were 136 letters from Francis Higgins, substantially supporting all that I had ventured to say twenty years before in the book which claimed to portray his career. But neither the Pelham Papers in London nor the archives at Dublin Castle reveal the great secret to which Mr. Froude points.

That so many documents have been preserved is fortunate. Mr. Ross, in his preface to the Cornwallis Correspondence, laments that 'the Duke of Portland, Lord Chancellor Clare, Mr. Wickham, Mr. King, Sir H. Taylor, Sir E. Littlehales, Mr. Marsden, and indeed almost all the persons officially concerned, appear to have destroyed the whole of their papers.' He adds: 'The destruction of so many valuable documents respecting important transactions cannot but be regarded as a serious loss to the political history of these times.'

I have freely used the Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin—a department peculiar to Ireland. Originating in penal times, its object was to trace any property acquired by Papists—such being liable to 'discovery and forfeiture.' This office served as a valuable curb in the hands of the oppressor, and ought to prove a not less useful aid to historic inquirers; but, hitherto, it has been unconsulted for such purposes. Few

unless legal men can pursue the complicated references and searches, and—unlike the Record Office—fees attend almost every stage of the inquiry. Here things stranger than fiction nestle; while the genealogist will find it an inexhaustible store.

I have to thank the Right Hon. the O'Conor Don, D.L.; Sir William H. Cope, Bart.; Mrs. John Philpot Curran; Daniel O'Connell, Esq., D.L.; D. Coffey, Esq.; Jeremiah Leyne, Esq.; the late Lord Donoughmore, and the late Mr. Justice Hayes for the communication of manuscripts from the archives of their respective houses. The Rev. Samuel Haughton, F.T.C.D., kindly copied for me some memoranda made in 1798 by the Rev. John Barrett, Vice-Provost T.C.D., regarding students of alleged rebel leanings. Sir Charles Russell, when member for Dundalk, obligingly made inquiries concerning Samuel Turner; Mr. Lecky transcribed for me a curious paper concerning Aherne, the rebel envoy in France, and has been otherwise kind. My indebtedness to Sir Bernard Burke, Keeper of the Records, Dublin Castle, dates from the year 1855.

The late Brother Luke Cullen, a Carmelite monk, left at his death a vast quantity of papers throwing light on the period of the Rebellion. No writer but myself has ever had the use of these papers, and I beg to thank the Superior of the Order to which Mr. Cullen belonged for having, some years ago, placed them in my hands.

The array of notes and authorities on every page is not the best way to please an artistic eye; but in a book of this sort they are indispensable and would be certainly expected from the oldest living contributor to 'Notes and Queries.'

While there are many persons who enjoy a fox hunt, there are others would vote it a bore; and readers of this mind had better, perhaps, pass over the various stages of my chase after Samuel Turner, and come to something that may suit them better.

49 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin:
New Year's Day, 1892.

Footnote

Table of Contents

[1] Vide *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vii. 211; viii. 42-44, 45, 191, 240, etc.

[2] See Froude's *English in Ireland*, vol. iii. sec. vi.

[3] I have been further encouraged by the very favourable judgment of an acute critic, the late Mr. Hepworth Dixon, regarding a book of mine, written on the same lines as the present. See *Athenæum*, No. 1649, pp. 744 *et seq.*

CHAPTER I
A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

Table of Contents

It is now some years since Mr. Froude invested with new interest the Romance of Rebellion. Perhaps the most curious of the episodes disclosed by him is that where, after describing the plans and organisation of the United Irishmen, he proceeds to notice a sensational case of betrayal.[4]

> An instance has now to be related [he writes] remarkable for the ingenious perfidy with which it was attended, for the mystery which still attaches to the principal performer, and for his connection with the fortunes and fate of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.
>
> Lord Edward's movements had for some time been observed with anxiety, as much from general uneasiness as from regret that a brother of the Duke of Leinster should be connecting himself with conspiracy and treason. His proceedings in Paris in 1792 had cost him his commission in the army. In the Irish Parliament he had been undistinguished by talent, but conspicuous for the violence of his language. His meeting with Hoche on the Swiss frontier was a secret known only to a very few persons; Hoche himself had not revealed it even to Tone; but Lord Edward was known to be intimate with McNevin. He had been watched in London, and had

been traced to the lodgings of a suspected agent of the French Directory; and among other papers which had been forwarded by spies to the Government, there was one in French, containing an allusion to some female friend of Lady Edward, through whom a correspondence was maintained between Ireland and Paris. Lady Edward's house at Hamburg was notoriously the resort of Irish refugees. Lord Edward himself was frequently there, and the Government suspected, though they were unable to prove, that he was seriously committed with the United Irishmen. One night, early in October, 1797,[5] a person came to the house of Lord Downshire in London, and desired to see him immediately. Lord Downshire went into the hall and found a man muffled in a cloak, with a hat slouched over his face, who requested a private interview. The Duke (*sic*) took him into his Library, and when he threw off his disguise recognised in his visitor the son of a gentleman of good fortune in the North of Ireland, with whom he was slightly acquainted. Lord Downshire's 'friend' (the title under which he was always subsequently described) had been a member of the Ulster Revolutionary Committee. From his acquaintance with the details of what had taken place it may be inferred that he had accompanied the Northern delegacy to Dublin and had been present at the discussion of the propriety of an immediate insurrection. The cowardice or the prudence of the Dublin faction had disgusted him. He considered now that the conspiracy was likely to fail, or that, if it

succeeded, it would take a form which he disapproved; and he had come over to sell his services and his information to Pitt. In telling his story to Lord Downshire he painted his own conduct in colours least discreditable to himself. Like many of his friends, he had at first, he said, wished only for a reform in parliament and a change in the constitution. He had since taken many desperate steps and connected himself with desperate men. He had discovered that the object of the Papists was the ruin and destruction of the country, and the establishment of a tyranny worse than that which was complained of by the reformers; that proscriptions, seizures of property, murders, and assassinations were the certain consequences to be apprehended from their machinations; that he had determined to separate himself from the conspiracy.[6] He was in England to make every discovery in his power, and if Lord Downshire had not been in London he had meant to address himself to Portland or Pitt. He stipulated only, as usual, that he should never be called on to appear in a court of justice to prosecute any one who might be taken up in consequence of his discoveries.

Lord Downshire agreed to his conditions; but, as it was then late, he desired him to return and complete his story in the morning. He said that his life was in danger even in London. He could not venture a second time to Lord Downshire, or run the risk of being observed by his servants. Downshire appointed the empty residence of a friend in the neighbourhood.

Thither he went the next day in a hackney coach. The door was left unlocked, and he entered unseen by anyone. Lord Downshire then took down from his lips a list of the principal members of the Executive Committee by whom the whole movement was at that time directed. He next related at considerable length the proceedings of the United Irishmen during the two past years, the division of opinion, the narrow chance by which a rising had been escaped in Dublin in the spring, and his own subsequent adventures. He had fled with others from Belfast in the general dispersion of the leaders. Lady Edward Fitzgerald had given him shelter at Hamburg, and had sent him on to Paris with a letter to her brother-in-law, General Valence.[7] By General Valence he had been introduced to Hoche and De la Croix. He had seen Talleyrand, and had talked at length with him on the condition of Ireland. He had been naturally intimate with the other Irish refugees. Napper Tandy[8] was strolling about the streets in uniform and calling himself a major. Hamilton Rowan[9] had been pressed to return, but preferred safety in America, and professed himself *sick of politics*. After this, 'the person'—as Lord Downshire called his visitor, keeping even the Cabinet in ignorance of his name—came to the immediate object of his visit to England.

He had discovered that all important negotiations between the Revolutionary Committee in Dublin and their Paris agents passed through Lady Edward's hands. The Paris letters were transmitted first to her

at Hamburg. By her they were forwarded to Lady Lucy Fitzgerald[10] in London. From London Lady Lucy was able to send them on unsuspected. Being himself implicitly trusted, both by Lady Edward and by Lady Lucy, he believed he could give the Government information which would enable them to detect and examine these letters in their transit through the post.

Pitt was out of town. He returned, however, in a few days. Downshire immediately saw him, and Pitt consented that 'the person's' services should be accepted. There was some little delay. 'The person' took alarm, disappeared, and they supposed that they had lost him. Three weeks later, however, he wrote to Downshire from Hamburg, saying that he had returned to his old quarters, for fear he might be falling into a trap. It was fortunate, he added, that he had done so, for a letter was on the point of going over from Barclay Teeling[11] to Arthur O'Connor,[12] and he gave Downshire directions which would enable him to intercept, read, and send it on.

Such an evidence of 'the person's' power and will to be useful made Pitt extremely anxious to secure his permanent help. An arrangement was concluded. He continued at Hamburg as Lady Edward's guest and most trusted friend, saw everyone who came to her house, kept watch over her letter-bag, was admitted to close and secret conversations upon the prospect of French interference in Ireland with Reinhard, the Minister of the Directory there, and he regularly kept Lord Downshire informed of everything which would

enable Pitt to watch the conspiracy. One of his letters, dated November 19, 1797, is preserved:—

'A. Lowry writes from Paris, August 11, in great despondency on account of Hoche's death, and says that all hopes of invading Ireland were given over.

'I then saw Reinhard, the French Minister, who begged me to stay here, as the only mode in which I could serve my country and the Republic. I instantly acquiesced, and told him I had arranged matters with Lord Edward Fitzgerald in London for that purpose. I showed him Lowry's[13] letter. He said that things were changed. Buonaparte would not listen to the idea of peace, and had some plan which I do not know. I told him the spirit of republicanism was losing ground in Ireland, for the Catholics and Protestants could not be brought to unite. I mentioned then what Fitzgerald told me in London, viz., that after I left Ireland they had thoughts of bringing matters to a crisis without the French. Arthur O'Connor was to have had a command in the North, he himself in Leinster, Robert Simms[14] at Belfast; that the Catholics got jealous of this, and Richard McCormick,[15] of Dublin, went among the societies of United Men and denounced the three as traitors to the cause, and dangerous on account of their ambition. All letters to or from Lady Lucy Fitzgerald ought to be inspected.

'She, Mrs. Matthieson, of this place, and Pamela[16] carry on a correspondence. Lewins, Teeling, Tennant, Lowry, Orr, and Colonel Tandy are at Paris. Tone expects to stay the winter there, which

does not look like invasion. Oliver Bond is treasurer. He pays Lewins and McNevin in London. Now for myself. In order to carry into effect the scheme which you and Mr. Pitt had planned, it was requisite for me to see my countrymen. I called on Maitland,[17] where I found A. J. Stuart,[18] of Acton, both of them heartily *sick of politics*. Edward Fitzgerald had been inquiring of them for me. I went to Harley Street, where Fitz told me of the conduct of the Catholics to him and his friends. He said he would prevail on O'Connor, or some such, to go to Paris. If not, he would go himself in order to have Lewins removed. Mrs. Matthieson[19] has just heard from Lady Lucy that O'Connor is to come. I supped last night with Valence, who mentioned his having introduced Lord Edward and O'Connor to the Minister here in the summer, before the French attempted to invade Ireland. They both went to Switzerland, whence O'Connor passed into France, had an interview with Hoche, and everything was planned.[20]

'I feared lest Government might not choose to ratify our contract, and, being in their power, would give me my choice either to come forward as an evidence or suffer martyrdom myself. Having no taste for an exit of this sort, I set out and arrived here safe, and now beg you'll let me know if anything was wrong in my statements, or if I have given offence. If you approve my present mode of life, and encourage me so to do, with all deference I think Mr. Pitt may let me have a cool five hundred,[21] which shall last me for

six months to come. To get the information here has cost me three times the sum, and to keep up the acquaintance and connections I have here, so as to get information, I cannot live on less.'[22]

The betrayer, before his interview with Downshire closed, supplied him with a list of the Executive Committee of United Irishmen. This list, duly given by Mr. Froude, includes —

> Jackson and his son; Oliver Bond; John Chambers; James Dickson; Casey, a red-faced Dublin priest; Thomas Addis Emmet; Dr. McNevin, a physician who had great weight with the papists;[23] Braughall, John Keogh and R. McCormick, who belonged to the committee, though they did not attend; Samuel Turner; Lord Edward Fitzgerald; Arthur O'Connor; Alexander Stewart; two Orrs, one an attorney and a dangerous person, the other of Derry, described as a clever, sensible, strong-minded man; B. Teeling; Tenants, of Belfast; Agnew, of Larne; Lawless, Lord Cloncurry's son; Hamill, of Dominick Street[24]; Inishry,[25] a priest, a canting, designing man, who swore in Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Lawless.[26]

Lord Downshire, who negotiated in this affair, had weight with Pitt. The husband of an English peeress, and the son of Lord North's Secretary of State, he was a familiar figure at Court. He had sat for two English constituencies; and in the Irish Parliament as senator, borough proprietor, governor of

his county, and one of the Privy Council, he wielded potent sway. His later history and fall belong to chapter ix.

Footnote

Table of Contents

[4] *The English in Ireland* (Nov. 1797), iii. 278.

[5] It was October 8, 1797.

[6] But it will appear that he continued to the end to play the part of a flaming patriot.

[7] Cyrus Marie Valence, Count de Timbrune, born 1757, died 1822. His exploits as a general officer are largely commemorated in the memoirs of his friend, Dumouriez. After having been severely wounded, he resided for some time in London; but was expelled by order of Pitt on June 6, 1793. He then took up his residence in a retired outlet of Hamburg, which our spy soon penetrated; and he at last wormed himself into the confidence of Valence. The General afterwards resumed active military service, and fought with distinction in Spain and Russia.—Vide *Discours du Comte de Ségur à l'occasion des Obsèques de M. Valence*; *Souvenirs de Madame Genlis, &c.*; Alison's *Hist. Europe, 1789-1815*, x. 189.

[8] The strange career of Tandy—who was made a general by Bonaparte—is traced in chapter viii. *infra.*

[9] Some notice of Hamilton Rowan's adventurous courses will be found in chapter xv. *infra.*

[10] Lady Lucy Fitzgerald, sister of Lord Edward, married in 1802 Admiral Sir Thos. Foley, K.C.B., died 1851.

[11] Bartholomew Teeling was his correct name. In 1798 he was hanged in Dublin.

[12] Arthur O'Connor, nephew and heir of Lord Longueville, sat in Parliament for Philipstown, and spoke so ably on Indian affairs that Pitt is said to have offered him office. In November 1796 he joined the United Irishmen, and from that date his life is one of much activity and vicissitude. Excitement and worry failed to shorten it. He became a general in the French service, and died, aged eighty-eight, April 25, '52.

[13] Alexander Lowry was the treasurer for Down. Tone describes Lowry and Tennant as 'a couple of fine lads, whom I like extremely.'—*Life*, ii. 433. Aug. 1797. Their youth and ingenuousness would make them easy prey.

[14] Robert Simms had been appointed to the chief command of the United Irishmen of Antrim; but he is said to have wanted nerve. James Hope, in a narrative he gave Dr. Madden, said that Hughes, the Belfast informer, once proposed to him to get rid of Simms by assassination. Hope pulled a pistol from his breast and told Hughes that if ever he repeated that proposal he would shoot him.

[15] Richard McCormick, originally secretary of the Catholic Committee, and afterwards an active 'United Irishman,' and styled by Tone, in his *Diary*, 'Magog.'

[16] The wife of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Moore's *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald* says that she was the daughter of Mde. de Genlis by Philippe Egalité, Duke of Orleans; but a letter appears in Moore's *Memoirs* from King Louis Philippe denying it, and Mde. de Genlis calls her a child by adoption. Pamela was a person of surpassing beauty; her portrait arrests attention in the gallery of Versailles. R. B. Sheridan proposed for her, but she rejected him in favour of Lord Edward. Died 1831; her remains were followed to Père la Chaise by Talleyrand.

[17] The allusion may be to Captain Maitland—afterwards General Sir Thomas Maitland, Governor of Ceylon, a son of Lord Lauderdale. He was in Parliament from 1774 to 1779, and from 1790 to 1796, when he sat for the last time in the House—a circumstance which may, perhaps, explain the remark that he was sick of politics. Died 1824. In 1800 he was Colonel Maitland, and in the confidence of Lord Cornwallis.

[18] Who Stuart was, see p. 36 *infra*; also Lord Cloncurry's *Memoirs*, p. 63.

[19] Madame de Genlis states in her memoirs that her niece, Henriette de Sercey, married M. Matthiessen, a rich banker of Hamburg. The General Count Valence married a daughter of Madame de Genlis, and resided near Hamburg on a farm where the latter wrote several of her works.

[20] The expedition of Hoche to Bantry Bay in December, 1796.

[21] 'I just made a couple of betts with him, and took up a *cool* hundred.'—*The Provoked Husband*, by Vanbrugh and Cibber, ii. i. 311, ed. 1730. See also Smollett's *Don Quixote*, bk. iii. c. viii.

[22] Froude, iii. 277 *et seq.*

[23] Alexander Knox, in his *History of Down*, errs in saying (p. 26) that 'Dr. McNevin was an influential member of the Established Church.'

[24] All these men, unless Hamill and Inishry, are to be found in books which treat of 1798. The first is noticed in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, March 1, 1834 (p. 274). In 1797 Mr. Hamill was indicted for defenderism and acquitted, 'and the witnesses for the Crown were so flagrantly perjured that the judge, I have heard, ordered a prosecution' (Speech of Henry Grattan in Parliament, May 13, 1805—*Hansard*, ii. 925).

[25] As regards 'Inishry,' no such cognomen is to be found in the pedigrees of MacFirbis or O'Clery, or any name to which it might be traced. The name that the spy gave was probably Hennessy—which Downshire, in writing from dictation, may have mistaken for 'Inishry.'

[26] Long before the publication of Mr. Froude's book, Arthur O'Connor, in a letter to Dr. Madden, states that 'Lord Edward took no oath on joining the United Irishmen.'—Vide their *Lives and Times*, ii. 393.

CHAPTER II
ARRESTS MULTIPLY

Table of Contents

It was not easy to separate the threads of the tangled skein which Mr. Froude found hidden away in the dust of the past. But, lest the process of unravelling should tax the reader's patience, I have transferred to an Appendix some points of circumstantial evidence which led me, at first, to suspect, and finally to feel convinced, that 'the person' was no other than Samuel Turner, Esq., LL.D., barrister-at-law, of Turner's Glen, Newry—one of the shrewdest heads of the Northern executive of United Irishmen.[27] Pitt made a good stroke by encouraging his overtures, but, like an expert angler, ample line was given ere securing fast the precious prey.

One can trace, through the public journals of the time, that the betrayer's disclosures to Downshire were followed by a decided activity on the part of the Irish Government. The more important of the marked men were suffered to continue at large, but the names having been noted Lord Camden was able, at the threatened outburst of the rebellion, to seize them at once. Meanwhile an influential London paper, the 'Courier' of November 24, 1797, gave a glimpse of the system that then prevailed by announcing the departure from Dublin for England of Dr. Atkinson, High Constable of Belfast, charged, it is said, with full powers from Government to arrest such persons as have left

Ireland, and against whom there are charges of a treasonable or seditious nature.

> The former gentleman is well known, and will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Belfast, for the active part he took in assisting *a Northern Marquis*, [28] and the young apostate of the County Down, to arrest seven of their fellow-citizens on September 16, 1796; since which period these unfortunate men have been closely confined without being allowed to see their friends, and now remain without hope of trial or liberation.

'The young apostate of Down'—thus indicated for English readers ninety years ago—was Lord Castlereagh, afterwards Minister for Foreign Affairs, and well twitted by Byron for his Toryism; but who, in 1790, had been elected, after a struggle of two months' duration and an outlay of 60,000*l.*, Whig Member for Down. Like Pitt, he began as a reformer; like Disraeli, he avowed himself a Radical; and presided at a banquet where toasts were drunk such as 'Our Sovereign Lord the People.' Ere long his policy changed, and his memory is described as having the faint sickening smell of hot blood about it.

Mr. Froude's work has been several years before the world; it has passed through various editions. Thousands of readers have been interested by his picture of the muffled figure gliding at dark to breathe in Downshire's ear most startling disclosures, but no attempt to solve the mystery enshrouding it has until now been made.[29]

The name of Samuel Turner obtains no place on the list of Secret Service moneys[30] expended by the Irish Government in 1798—thus bearing out the statement of Mr. Froude that the name of the mysterious 'person' was not revealed in the most secret correspondence between the Home Office and Dublin Castle. At the termination of the troubles, however, when the need of secrecy became less urgent, and it was desirable to bestow pensions on 'persons who had rendered important service during the rebellion,' the name of Samuel Turner is found in the Cornwallis Papers as entitled to 300*l.* a year. But a foot-note from the indefatigable editor—Mr. Ross—who spared no labour to acquire minute information, confesses that it has been found impossible to procure any particulars of Turner.

For years I have investigated the relations of the informers with the Government, and Samuel Turner is the only large recipient of 'blood-money' whose services remain to be accounted for. Turner's name never appeared in any printed pension list. Mr. Ross found the name at Dublin Castle, with some others, in a 'confidential memorandum,' written for the perusal of the Lord Lieutenant, whose fiat became necessary. The money was 'given by a warrant dated December 20, 1800,' but the names were kept secret—the payments being confidentially made by the Under-Secretary.

At this distance of time it is not easy to trace a life of which Mr. Ross, thirty years earlier, failed to catch the haziest glimpse; but I hope to make the case clear, and Turner's history readable.

Previous to 1798 he is found posing in the double *rôle* of martyr and hero—winning alternately the sympathy and admiration of the people. Mr. Patrick O'Byrne, an aged native of Newry, long connected with an eminent publishing firm in Dublin, has replied to a letter of inquiry by supplying some anecdotes in Turner's life. It is a remarkable proof of the completeness with which Turner's perfidy was cloaked that Mr. O'Byrne never heard his honesty questioned.[31]

> In 1836 there was a tradition current in Newry of a gentleman named Turner, who in the previous generation had resided in a large red brick house situated in the centre of a fine walled-in park called Turner's Glen, on the western side of Newry, in the County Armagh. Mr. Turner had been in 1796 a member of the great confederacy of United Irishmen, one of the leaders who, for self and fellows, 'pledged his life, his fortune, and his honour' to put an end to British supremacy in Ireland. About the date mentioned the notorious Luttrell, Lord Carhampton, who was commander of the forces in Ireland at the time, and was then making a tour of inspection of the army, had to pass through Newry. The chief hotel in Newry at that time adjoined the post-office. The gentry and merchants of Newry generally went to the post-office shortly after the arrival of the mails to get their letters, and while waiting for the mail to be assorted promenaded in front of the hotel, or rested in the coffee-room. Mr. Turner wore the colours he affected—a large green necktie. Lord Carhampton, while his horses were being changed, was looking out

of the coffee-room windows of the hotel, and his eye lighted on the rebel 'stock:' here was a fine opportunity to cow a rebel and assert his own courage —a quality for which he was not noted. Accordingly he swaggered up to Mr. Turner and, confronting him, asked 'Whose man are you, who dares to wear that rebellious emblem?' Mr. Turner sternly replied, 'I am my own man. Whose man are you, who dares to speak so insolently to an Irish gentleman?' 'I am one who will make you wear a hempen necktie, instead of your flaunting French silk, if you do not instantly remove it!' retorted Lord Carhampton. 'I wear this colour,' replied Mr. Turner courageously, 'because I like it. As it is obnoxious to you, come and take it off.' Carhampton, finding that his bluster did not frighten the North Erin rebel, turned to leave; but Turner, by a rapid movement, got between him and the door, and, presenting his card to the general, demanded his address. Carhampton told him he would learn it sooner than he should like. Turner thereupon said, 'I *must* know your name; until now I have never had the misfortune to be engaged in a quarrel with aught but gentlemen, who knew how to make themselves responsible for their acts. You cannot insult me with impunity, whatever your name may be. I will yet find it out, and post you in every court as a coward.' The Commander of the Forces withdrew from Newry, having come off second best in the quarrel he had provoked. Mr. Turner, for reasons connected with the cause in which he had embarked, was obliged to lie

perdu soon after, and so Carhampton escaped the 'posting' he would, under other circumstances, have got from the Northern fire-eater.

The general accuracy of Mr. O'Byrne's impressions is shown by the 'Life and Confessions of Newell the Informer,' printed for the author at London in 1798.[32] Newell travelled with the staff of Lord Carhampton, and in April, 1797, witnessed the scene between Turner and him.

Newell's pamphlet, which created much noise at the time and had a large circulation, did not tend to weaken popular confidence in Turner. It appeared soon after the time that he had begun to play false; but Newell, with all his cunning, had no suspicion of Turner.

The late Mr. J. Mathews, of Dundalk, collected curious details regarding the rebel organisation of Ulster in 1797. With these details the name of Samuel Turner is interwoven, but, although the object of Mathews was to expose the treachery of some false brothers, he assigns to Turner the rank of a patriot and a hero. How the authorities, by a *coup*, made a number of arrests, is described; and how Turner, after some exciting adventures, got safely to France.[33]

The spy on this occasion was Mr. Conlan, a medical practitioner in Dundalk. A sworn information, signed by Conlan, is preserved among the Sirr MSS. in Trinity College, Dublin. It is dated 1798, when Turner himself was betraying his own colleagues to Pitt! Conlan states that one evening, after Turner had left his house at Newry to attend a meeting of United Irishmen at Dundalk, the officer in command at the barracks of Newry got orders to march on Dundalk and arrest the leaders. An officer's servant apprised Corcoran,

who was an adherent of Turner's. Corcoran mounted a horse and galloped to Dundalk, where he arrived in time to warn Turner. Conlan recollected Turner and Teeling travelling through Ulster and holding meetings for organisation at Dundalk, Newry, Ballinahinch (the site of the subsequent battle), Ronaldstown, Glanary, and in Dublin at Kearn's, Kildare Street,[34] where the principal meetings were held. [35]

I find in the Pelham MSS. the examination of Dr. John Macara, one of the Northern State prisoners of 1797. It supplies details of the plan of attack which had been foiled by the arrests. 'Newry was to be attacked by Samuel Turner, of Newry aforesaid, with the men from Newry and Mourn.'[36]

It was not Conlan alone who reported Turner's movements to the Crown. Francis Higgins, the ablest secret agent of Under-Secretary Cooke, announces that Turner had sent 'letters from Portsmouth for the purpose of upholding and misleading the mutinous seamen into avowed rebellion;'[37] and some weeks later he states that 'Turner had returned from Hamburg with an answer to the Secret Committee of United Irishmen.'[38]

We know on the authority of James Hope, who wrote down his 'Recollections' of this time at the request of a friend, that Turner, having fled from Ireland, filled the office of resident agent at Hamburg of the United Irishmen. The Irish envoys and refugees, finding themselves in a place hardly less strange than Tierra del Fuego, ignorant of its language, its rules and its ways, sought on arrival the accredited agent of their brotherhood, hailed him with joy,

and regarded the spot on which he dwelt as a bit of Irish soil sacred to the Shamrock. The hardship which some of the refugees went through was trying enough. James Hope, writing in 1846, says that Palmer, one of Lord Edward's bodyguard in Dublin, travelled, 'mostly barefooted, from Paris to Hamburg, where he put himself into communication with Samuel Turner.' The object of Palmer's mission was to expose one Bureaud, then employed as a spy by Holland. 'Palmer,' writes Hope, 'gave Turner a gold watch to keep for him.' He enlisted in a Dutch regiment, and was found drowned in the Scheldt. 'When Turner,' adds Hope, 'was applied to for the watch by Palmer's sister, he replied that he forgot what became of it.'

Hamburg in troubled times was a place of great importance for the maintenance of intercourse between England and France. Here, as Mr. Froude states, 'Lord Downshire's friend' had vast facilities for getting at the inmost secrets of the United Irishmen. Hope's casual statement serves to show how it was that this 'person' could have had access to Lady Edward Fitzgerald's confidence, and that of her political friends at Hamburg.

Footnote

Table of Contents

[27] In chapter vii. my contention will be found established on conclusive testimony, which had failed to present itself until years had been given to a slow process of logical deduction. *Vide* also Appendix to this volume.

[28] 'The Northern Marquis' was, of course, Lord Downshire.

[29] 'A Lanthorn through some Dark Passages, with a Key to Secret Chambers,' was the title originally chosen for the present book, but I finally laid

it aside as being too much in the style of old Parson Fry's 'Pair of Bellows to Blow away the Dust.'

[30] How this book got out of the Castle and was sold for waste paper by a man named Fagan is a curious story in itself. The volume is now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy.

[31] A prisoner named Turner, Christian name not given, indicted for high treason, is announced as discharged in December 1795, owing to the flight of a Crown witness.—Vide *Irish State Trials* (Dublin: Exshaw, 1796); Lib. R. I. Academy.

[32] *Vide* pp. 21-2. Newell's pamphlet will be found in the Halliday Collection, vol. 743, Royal Irish Academy.

[33] *Vide* Mr. Matthew's narrative in *The Sham Squire*, sixth edition, pp. 355-363.

[34] This place of rendezvous was, doubtless, chosen because of its proximity to Leinster House, where Lord Edward mainly lived.

[35] Major Sirr's Papers (MS.), Trinity College, Dublin. Conlan's information makes no mention of a remarkable man, the Rev. William Steel Dickson, D.D., a Presbyterian pastor of Down, and described by the historians of his Church as ready to take the field. Dr. Dickson, in his *Narrative*, admits (p. 193) that he had been 'frequently in the company of Lowry, Turner, and Teeling.' Turner was a Presbyterian and possibly wished to spare a pastor of his Church.

[36] The Pelham MSS. Examination dated September 6, 1797. Pelham, afterwards Lord Chichester, was Chief Secretary for Ireland at that time, and his papers are a useful help in throwing light upon it. A large portion of them are occupied by a correspondence with Generals Lake and Nugent regarding Dr. Macara; he offered to inform if let out on bail. Lake hoped that he would prove a valuable informer; and, as he was far from rich, could not afford to reject pecuniary reward; but, although Macara at first seemed to consent, his replies were finally found to be evasive.

[37] Higgins to Cooke, MS. letter, Dublin Castle, June 7, 1797.

[38] *Ibid.*, August 29, 1797. Five weeks later Turner makes his disclosure to Downshire.