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0521813867 - Irish Opinion and the American Revolution, 1760-1783

Vincent Morley

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Introduction

An understanding of the evolution of Irish opinion in the early eighteenth century is a prerequisite for any attempt to assess the impact of the American revolution on the outlook of the various sections of the population. The purpose of this introduction is to furnish the necessary benchmark by briefly tracing the evolution of political attitudes during the two generations from the Williamite Revolution to the accession of George III. Although the following account is not based on original research, it offers a view of popular consciousness which differs in important respects from those provided by existing surveys of the period.

Throughout the eighteenth century Irish society was deeply divided along largely coincident lines of ethnic origin, religious belief and political opinion: 'Our people, are so heterogeneously classed', wrote one member of parliament in 1775, 'we are no nation.'¹ The task of characterising the political outlook of the three principal denominations on the eve of George III's accession could scarcely have been avoided in any event but it is made all the more necessary by the prevalence of representations in the historical literature that distort the true state of opinion in eighteenth-century Ireland. I refer in particular to the general portrayal of the Catholic majority as politically apathetic, the widespread attribution of a tradition of 'colonial nationalism' to the dominant Anglican community, and the common tendency to associate Presbyterianism with republicanism.

Catholic opinion

The outlook of Irish Catholics in the first half of the eighteenth century has received remarkably little attention from historians. This neglect can be partly explained by the exclusion of Catholics from the political nation after 1691. State papers for the period provide little first-hand information about their attitudes and there were few contemporary publications

¹ Charles O'Hara to Edmund Burke, 28 August 1775, in R.J.S. Hoffman, *Edmund Burke, New York Agent* (Philadelphia, 1956), p. 597.

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on political subjects by Catholic authors. Faced with the silence of the sources on which they normally rely, historians have tended to view the Catholic community of the early eighteenth century as a historiographic black hole from which no light can emerge – an attitude encapsulated in the intellectually indolent and unscholarly concept of a ‘hidden Ireland’. Some writers, equating failure to publish with political indifference, have represented the Catholic population as an inchoate mass, normally passive and apathetic, occasionally provoked to acts of agrarian violence by transient and localised factors, but always lacking a coherent ideology or a national perspective. Writing in the 1890s about the period of the American revolution W.E.H. Lecky, the father of modern Irish historiography, asserted rather than demonstrated the political passivity of the rural masses: ‘The mass of the population remained torpid, degraded, and ignorant; but, although crimes of violence and turbulence were common among them, those crimes were wholly unconnected with politics.’² This view has remained largely unchallenged by historians during the intervening century. In the 1940s, R.B. McDowell justified the omission of any investigation of Catholic opinion from his groundbreaking study of Irish public opinion in the eighteenth century in terms that differed little from those employed by Lecky in the heyday of empire.³ Maurice O’Connell still reflected mainstream historical thinking when he argued in the 1960s, on the basis of reductionist reasoning rather than an examination of the primary sources, that the Catholic masses are unlikely to have been interested in the American revolution and that their views are, ultimately, unknowable.⁴ More recently still, S.J. Connolly has written that the Catholic populace of the 1740s was cut off from the world of politics by barriers of language and poverty.⁵ But the Catholics of the eighteenth century were not an undifferentiated peasantry sunk in squalor and ignorance. Their community embraced a middle stratum of comfortable tenant farmers, craftsmen, schoolteachers, publicans, shopkeepers and priests, a stratum which was increasingly literate in English and which maintained a vigorous oral and manuscript-based literature in Irish.

The documentary record left by eighteenth-century Catholics is far from blank. In two regions – the province of Munster and an area straddling the Ulster–Leinster border – the compilation of manuscript anthologies of vernacular poetry and song was common. Much of this verse

² W.E.H. Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, II (London, 1892), pp. 202–3.

³ R.B. McDowell, *Irish Public Opinion 1750–1800* (London, 1944), pp. 5–6.

⁴ Maurice R. O’Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1965), p. 32.

⁵ S.J. Connolly, ‘Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian state’ in Alexander Grant and Keith Stringer (eds.), *‘Uniting the Kingdom?’: The Making of British History* (London and New York, 1995), p. 194.

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was inspired by contemporary events, both at home and abroad, and it furnishes a unique insight into the political sentiments of the rural population. The importance of this source for students of popular opinion can hardly be exaggerated but it has been largely ignored by those who have previously investigated the impact of the American revolution.⁶ This neglect must be principally attributed to the common inability of historians of eighteenth-century Ireland to read the language that was spoken throughout most of the country and by the greater part of the population in their period. The failure of historians to comprehend the political culture of the majority of the Irish population, as reflected in the attributions of ignorance and apathy noted above, is a predictable consequence of their inability either to utilise the vernacular sources or to assimilate the findings of scholars who publish in Irish.⁷

As might reasonably be expected, the popular political verse of the early eighteenth century indicates continuing support for the principles espoused by the Catholic community during the seventeenth century – that is, for the ‘god, king and country’ ideology of the Confederate Catholics. The vernacular literature expressed the hope – at times, the expectation – that the Revolution settlement would be overthrown, thereby freeing the Catholic church from Penal restraints, restoring the legitimate dynasty to the throne, and securing Ireland’s position as one of three equal kingdoms linked by a personal union of their crowns. Catholicism, Jacobitism and Irish nationalism are intimately associated in the political literature of the period.⁸ A poem composed around 1715 by the County Armagh poet

⁶ For two brief but perceptive exceptions, see David Doyle, *Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, 1760–1820* (Dublin, 1981), pp. 168–78 and Liam de Paor’s foreword to Diarmuid Ó Muirthe (ed.), *Tomás Ó Míocháin: Filíocht* (Dublin, 1988). For relevant work by Irish-language scholars see Diarmuid Ó Muirthe, ‘Amhráin i dtaobh Cogadh Saoirse Mheiriceá’ in Seosamh Watson (ed.), *Féilscribhinn Thomáis de Bhaldráithe* (Dublin, 1986) and C.G. Buttimer, ‘Cogadh Sagsana Nuadh sonn: reporting the American revolution’, *Studia Hib.* 28 (1994).

⁷ A substantial secondary literature on the political outlook of the Catholic community in the early eighteenth century has been produced in recent years, but this is due more to the efforts of Irish-language scholars than historians. See Breandán Ó Buachalla, ‘An mheisiasacht agus an aising’ in P. de Brún, S. Ó Coileáin and P. Ó Riain (eds.) *Folia Gadelica* (Cork, 1983); Ó Buachalla, ‘Seacaibiteachas Thaidhg Uí Neachtain’, *Studia Hib.* 26 (1992); Ó Buachalla, ‘Irish Jacobite poetry’, *Irish Review* 12 (1992); Mícheál Mac Craith, ‘Filíocht Sheacaibiteach na Gaeilge: ionar gan uaim?’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 9 (1994); Vincent Morley, *An Crann os Coill: Aodh Bui Mac Cruitín, c. 1680–1755* (Dublin, 1995); and Éamonn Ó Ciardha, ‘A fatal attachment: Ireland and the house of Stuart, 1685–1766’ (PhD thesis, Cambridge, 1998). Breandán Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar: Na Stiobhartaigh agus an tAos Léinn 1603–1788* (Dublin, 1996) is now the pre-eminent work.

⁸ It would be tendentious to describe a demand for political autonomy grounded on a sense of ethnic identity by any term other than ‘nationalism’. Those who object that its use in

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Ragnall Dall Mac Domhnaill illustrates the fusion of religious, dynastic and national sentiment in a potent ideology which retained the loyalty of the Catholic masses throughout most of the eighteenth century. The poet engaged a pre-Reformation churchyard in conversation:

The poet:

*Féach ár bpian le sé chéad bliain aige Gaill in éigean,
gan rí dár rialadh de Ghaeil, mo chian, i rioghacht Éireann.*

Creggan churchyard:

*Le ceithre chaogad atá treibh Gael ina ríoraí tréana,
ins na trí riochta, nach mór an t-ionadh a ndéan tú de bhréaga!*

The poet:

*Ar ghrá do ghaoltaí a theampaill aolta an dearbh an scéal so?
an de threibh Mhíle an aicme chéana tá tú d'fhéighliú?*

Creggan churchyard:

*A dhuine ba rí agus sinsir fíor den ardhreibh chéanna,
seisear díobh, idir fhear agus mhnaoi, dar gabhadh géilleadh.⁹*

(‘Consider our torment for six hundred years by violent foreigners, with no king of the Gaels ruling us, my grief, in the kingdom of Ireland.’ ‘For four fifties [i.e. 200 years] a lineage of Gaels have been mighty dynasts in the three kingdoms, isn’t it a great wonder all the lies you tell!’ ‘For the love of your relatives, O lime-white church, is this story correct? Are they of the Milesian race, the same group you are watching over?’ ‘Sir, there have been kings and true ancestors of the same noble lineage, six of them, counting men and women, for whom allegiance was won.’)

Here can be seen, in close association, expressions of religious loyalty to the pre-Reformation faith represented by Creggan churchyard; dynastic loyalty to the house of Stuart; and national loyalty to ‘ríocht Éireann’, ‘the kingdom of Ireland’. Clearly, the ideology of *iris agus athartha* (faith and fatherland) which had facilitated the fusion of previously antagonistic Old Irish and Old English communities in the early seventeenth century survived the social and political upheavals which took place later in the century. Given its primarily oral nature, the ideas and expressions employed in vernacular literature could be much more outspoken than was possible in the case of printed material, and they varied little from region to region or from generation to generation. One may note, for

an eighteenth-century context is anachronistic should note that the earliest citation of ‘royalism’ in the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates from only 1793; those who find the very concept of eighteenth-century nationalism problematic are referred to Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1997) for a cogent critique of marxist theories that represent nationalism as a product of the French revolution, democratisation, capitalism and mass literacy.

⁹ ‘*A Chreagáin uaibhrigh, fána mbíodh sluaite d’uaisle ríoraí*’ in Enrí Ó Muirgheasa (ed.), *Dhá Chéad de Cheoltaibh Uladh* (Dublin, 1934), p. 29.

example, the similarity between the sentiments expressed by the accomplished County Kerry poet Aogán Ó Rathaille in a poem composed before 1715 and those of an anonymous west Ulster folk song from around the middle of the century:

*Beidh an Biobla sin Liútair is a dhubhtheagasc éithigh,
 is an bhuion so tá ciontach ná humhlaíonn don gcléir chirt,
 á ndíbirt tar triúchaibh go Newland ó Éirinn;
 an Laoiseach is an prionsa beidh cúirt acu is aonach!¹⁰*

(That Bible of Luther's and his evil lying doctrine, and this guilty gang who don't submit to the true clergy, will be expelled across countries to *Newland* from Ireland, and Louis [XIV] and the prince [James III] will hold court and assembly!)

*Tá Séarlas Óg ag triall thar saíle,
 beidh siad leis-sean cúpla garda,
 beidh siad leis-sean Francaigh is Spáinnigh
 agus bainfidh siad rince as éircigh.¹¹*

(Young Charles [Edward Stuart] is voyaging over the sea, there'll be a few guards with him, there'll be Frenchmen and Spaniards with him, and they'll make the heretics dance.)

The prevalence of popular Jacobitism is confirmed by sources other than vernacular verse. Its extent can be gauged from the insignificant number of Catholic priests – fewer than forty in all of Ireland – who took the oath of abjuration prescribed by an act of parliament in 1709, although the penalty specified for refusing to take the oath was banishment from the country. While the priests could plausibly argue that they were unable in conscience to swear that they took the oath ‘heartily, willingly and truly’ given the severe penalties prescribed for non-jurors, it is clear that the main obstacle lay in the requirement to swear that the son of James II ‘hath not any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm’. Small though the number of jurors was, it was a cause of concern to one parish priest, William O'Daly of Kilfenora, County Clare, who expressed his views on the subject in verse:

*Mo scíos, mo lagar, mo scairteacha im chlí breoite,
 an tioradh trasna so ar eaglais chrioch Fódla,
 gan díon dá maithibh is gach teallaire mí-eolach
 ag scriobh gurb d'Anna is ceart sealbh na dtri gcoróineach.¹²*

¹⁰ ‘An trua libhse faolchoim an éithigh ’s an fhill duibh’ in P.S. Dinneen and Tadhg O'Donoghue (eds.), *Dánta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille* (London, 1911), p. 166.

¹¹ ‘A Shéarlais Óig, a mhic ri Shéamais’ in Énri Ó Muirgheasa (ed.), *Céad de Cheoltaibh Uladh* (Dublin, 1915), p. 151.

¹² ‘Mo scíos mo lagar mo scairteacha im chlí breoite’ in RIA Ms. 23 C 8, p. 127.

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(My woe, my weakness, the innards of my body are ailing, this scorching of Ireland's church, with no shelter for its worthies and every ignorant upstart writing that possession of the three crowns is Anne's by right.)

Continuing papal recognition of James III as *de jure* monarch ensured that he retained the power to nominate bishops to Irish sees, a fact which encouraged ambitious members of the clergy to exert their influence on his behalf. It may be noted in passing that Fr O'Daly, the author of the above verse, was promoted to the bishopric of Kilfenora in July 1722.¹³

The Irish regiments in France and Spain represented another link between Catholic Ireland and the exiled dynasty. Although these regiments were in the service of the Bourbon monarchs rather than that of the Stuart pretender, many of their members were politically motivated. State papers record the arguments used by one recruiting agent in 1715:

some of the enlisted then objected that they feared they were to go and serve the French king, or to go to Newfoundland. Luke Ford then assured them that they should serve none but King James the Third, and that he was afraid the king would be in his march for England before they could reach him, that he was sure they should return before the end of harvest and should not fight till they returned.¹⁴

Prominent officers in the Irish regiments held dual commissions: one from the king in whose army they served and one from the Pretender.¹⁵ The politicised nature of the Irish regiments was noted by a hostile observer writing in 1728 at the height of the Anglo-French *détente*:

As long as there is a body of Irish Roman Catholic troops abroad, the chevalier [James III] will always make some figure in Europe by the credit they give him; and be considered as a prince that has a brave and well-disciplined army of veterans at his services; though he wants that opportunity to employ them at present, which he expects time and fortune will favour him with.¹⁶

The existence of this force exerted a considerable influence on the thinking of both Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. While it sustained the hope of a military reversal of the Revolution settlement in the minds of the former, it served to remind the latter of the continuing threat of a Catholic *revanche* and of their ultimate dependence on British power.

The varying fortunes of the Stuart pretender can be traced in the output of Irish Jacobite verse. The flood of poetry and song predicting his

¹³ T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne, *A New History of Ireland*, IX (Oxford, 1984), p. 362.

¹⁴ PRO, SP 63/373, fo. 34; I have normalised the punctuation. With respect to the political motivation of the Irish regiments, see also Vincent Morley, 'Hugh MacCurtin: an Irish poet in the French army', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 8 (1993).

¹⁵ Morley, *An Crann os Coill*, p. 103.

¹⁶ Charles Forman, *A Letter to the Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Sutton for Disbanding the Irish Regiments in the Service of France and Spain* (Dublin, 1728), p. 17.

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imminent restoration during the War of Spanish Succession, and again around 1715, declined in subsequent years as the Anglo-French alliance instituted by the regent of France in 1716, the exposure of the Swedish plot of 1717, and the failure of the Spanish expedition of 1719, all combined to lower popular expectations of an early change of régime. None the less, such hopes were deferred rather than abandoned:

*Tiocfaidh bhur Séamas cé gur moilleadh a theacht
le mioscais na Swedes is Régent cliste na gcleas.*¹⁷

(Your James will come although his arrival was delayed by the spite of the *Swedes* and the cunning *Regent* of the tricks.)

While the Anglo-French alliance endured there could be no hope of a French invasion, with the result that Spain, the weaker of the two Bourbon powers, and its smaller Irish brigade assumed a new prominence in the poetry. The following verse by the County Limerick poet Seán Ó Tuama dates from the 1730s:

*Tá Pilib is Séamas glé is a ngeal-bhuíon
ag téacht le gasraí Spáinneach,
go stoirmeach faobhrach fraochta fras-ghníomh,
mar aon le treabh Gael ársa.*¹⁸

(Philip [V] and noble James [III] and their splendid band are coming with detachments of Spaniards, storming, eagerly, angrily, in a hail of deeds, together with a host of veteran Gaels.)

But as France and Britain drifted towards war after more than twenty years of peace the focus of popular attention shifted from Philip V to Louis XV. The County Cork poet Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill applauded the outbreak of the War of Austrian Succession:

*Tá Laoiseach ina lóchrann go leon-bhuilleach léimeach
go díoltasach dó-bhriste i ndóchas daingean,
a mhuintir le dóirsibh Hannover is Bhrémen,
tá cuing ar an Holónt is ní leomhfaid preabadh;
tá sé anois ullamh le nochtadh na lann,
beidh carnadh aige, is coscairt is cogadh na gceann,
dá shíneadh le Seoirse gan ró-thuirse in aon chor,
sin críoch ar mo sceól is tá an brón ar Bhreatain.*¹⁹

¹⁷ ‘*Ar thulaigh im aonar ag déanamh cumha is mé im spreas*’ in Risteárd Ó Foghludha (ed.), *Seán Clárach 1691–1754* (Dublin, 1932), p. 52.

¹⁸ ‘*Is tuirseach fá dhaorsmacht péine i bhfad sinn*’ in Risteárd Ó Foghludha (ed.), *Éigse na Máighe* (Dublin, 1952), p. 98.

¹⁹ ‘*Éistigi lem ghlórtha a mhórshliocht Mhilésius*’ in Risteárd Ó Foghludha (ed.), *Seán Clárach 1691–1754* (Dublin, 1932), p. 55.

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(Louis is a guiding light, striking and audacious, vengeful, invincible, firm in optimism, his men are at the gates of Hanover and Bremen, Holland is hobbled and they won't dare to move; he is ready now to unsheathe the blades, he'll have slaughter and havoc and a war of the chiefs, waging it against George without any respite, there's an end to my story and Britain is in sorrow.)

The course of Prince Charles's Scottish campaign in 1745–46 was closely followed in Ireland. Writing in the interval between the battles of Falkirk, the last Jacobite victory, and Culloden, the County Limerick poet Aindrias Mac Craith (*'an Mangaire Sógach'*) exulted:

*Tá coscar is bascadh orthu roimhe seo,
tá eagla suite ar an gcóip,
ag Falkirk do cailleadh na mílte,
tá Campbells go cloíte agus Cope;
beidh sealbh na Banba ag Gaelaibh,
is na Danair seo choiche gan treoir,
beidh Carolus feasta ina rí againn
is beidh an ainnis go cinnte ar na Seóin!*²⁰

(They are already slaughtered and crushed, the whole crew is stricken with terror, thousands were killed at Falkirk, the Campbells are beaten and [General] Cope; the Gaels will have possession of Ireland, and these Danes will be forever powerless, Charles will be our king henceforth and the 'Johns' will surely be afflicted!)

But if the evidence of the vernacular literature leaves no doubt that Jacobite sentiment prevailed among the common people in the 1740s, it is likely that the remnants of the Catholic gentry who risked losing their estates if they gambled incorrectly on the outcome of a French invasion were already more equivocal in their sympathies. When Prince Charles's army withdrew into the Highlands after the battle of Falkirk, Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, a member of the Catholic gentry, made the following dispassionate entry in his diary: *'Ag sin drithle déanach de choinneal taoi dul as re trí fichid bliain, mur dtoirmeascann Dia.'*²¹ ('There's the last flicker of a candle that has been going out for sixty years, unless God prevents it.') But only five months earlier, after Prince Charles's entry into Edinburgh, O'Connor had made a more revealing entry: *'Mac Mic Rí Séamais anos in Albain ag buairt na dtrí riocht. Níl fhios nach amhlaidh as fear.'*²² ('The son of King James's son is now in Scotland, unsettling the three kingdoms. One doesn't know that it isn't for the best.') In this cautious double negative one senses the equivocal emotions of a Catholic man

²⁰ *'A dhalta nár dalladh le dlaoithe'* in Ó Foghludha (ed.), *Éigse na Máighe*, p. 205. 'Seón Buí' or 'Sallow John' was a common pejorative term for the English and the Anglo-Irish.

²¹ Síle Ní Chinnéide (ed.), 'Dhá leabhar nótaí le Séarlas Ó Conchubhair', *Galvia* 1 (1954), 39.

²² *Ibid.*

of property, torn between the hope of his coreligionists for the overthrow of the Revolution settlement, and the fear of fresh political upheavals that he shared with all members of his class.

A year after the restoration of peace Charles O'Connor made his first venture into print with a pamphlet in support of the Dublin-based patriot Charles Lucas that attempted to trace Ireland's parliamentary tradition back to pre-Norman times.²³ In several subsequent publications O'Connor sought not only to rehabilitate the historical reputation of the ancestors of the Catholic community, but also to persuade a Protestant readership that Catholics no longer posed a threat to the Revolution settlement and that Penal legislation only served to damage the economy by depriving Catholic tenants of the incentive to improve properties they could only hold on short-term leases. O'Connor insisted that Catholics were loyal to the established constitution and that a simple oath of allegiance to the reigning monarch was the only requirement which might justly be imposed on them. Writing in the guise of a moderate Protestant in 1755 he argued that Catholics should publicly declare:

That 'they owe all political obedience to the present government, as it hath long been established by law: That they do not owe the pope, or any other foreign potentate, any civil subjection whatsoever. . . .' Such a declaration from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, presented by a proper deputation of the whole party, must, undoubtedly, go a great way towards rendering the uprightness of their principles as evident, as the uprightness of their conduct, for near seventy years past, is demonstrable.²⁴

But assurances concerning the benign nature of contemporary Catholicism carried little weight with Irish Protestants, who realised that the loyalty of the Catholic population had never been tested. The passivity of a disarmed, untrained and leaderless people during the previous two generations might more plausibly be attributed to their lack of opportunity for rebellion, and to the maintenance in Ireland of a large standing army, than to a new-found enthusiasm for Revolution principles and the Hanoverian succession. An anonymous pamphlet of 1755 made the obvious riposte to O'Connor's protestations of Catholic loyalty:

Suppose 10,000 Frenchmen were landed in this island, either with or without their cat's paw [Prince Charles Edward], (and this it is well known, we had some fears of lately) – I only ask the author of the *Case*, if he does not in his conscience

²³ [Charles O'Connor], *A Counter-Appeal, to the People of Ireland* (Dublin, 1749).

²⁴ [Charles O'Connor], *The Case of the Roman-Catholics of Ireland*, third edition (Dublin, 1756), pp. 33–4.

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believe, that some of his friends would be glad to see them – and rejoice to find the good old Catholic cause in so thriving a way.²⁵

It was a question that O’Conor could not have answered honestly, but it must be acknowledged that his own publications testify to the emergence of a body of Catholic opinion which hoped to reform rather than overthrow the existing political order. This current was given organisational expression with the formation in July 1756 of a Catholic Committee in Dublin by O’Conor, his fellow pamphleteer John Curry, and others.

In O’Conor’s view, the start of the Seven Years War made the need for Catholics publicly to declare their loyalty more pressing than ever but a proposal to this effect met with stiff resistance even among the respectable tradesmen and merchants of the Catholic Committee. O’Conor addressed the arguments of those who opposed such a loyal remonstrance in a letter to his ally, John Curry:

Another objection is deemed strong and very apologetic for our silence, ‘That our masters know we hate our bond and consequently must think that our allegiance is forced and unnatural.’ But those masters ought to be informed and some I hope may be persuaded that our religion requires of us in such cases to bear patiently what we hate.²⁶

It was undoubtedly true that the Catholic bishops counselled obedience to the established authorities and would never have countenanced any attempt at domestic rebellion, but the attitude they would have adopted in the event of a large-scale French landing – a development which would have created an alternative, Catholic, civil authority – must be more doubtful. When the archbishop of Armagh and five other bishops, acting in consultation with Lord Trimblestown, a leading Catholic nobleman, drafted a pastoral letter in September 1757 that would have instructed the clergy to ‘offer up a prayer to the Almighty God, beseeching his Divine Majesty to bless our good and gracious sovereign, King George and his royal family’ at the end of Mass on Sundays, the opposition of the other archbishops resulted in its suppression.²⁷ Strongly anti-Hanoverian sentiments were certainly held by members of the lower clergy. News of the French capture of Hanover in July 1757 inspired the following expression

²⁵ *Remarks on a Late Pamphlet, Entitled, the Case of the Roman Catholicicks of Ireland* (Dublin, 1755), p. 24.

²⁶ O’Conor to Curry, 20 August 1756, in R.E. Ward, J.F. Wrynn and C.C. Ward (eds.), *Letters of Charles O’Conor of Belanagare* (Washington, 1988), p. 21.

²⁷ For the text of the draft pastoral see Patrick Fagan, *Divided Loyalties: The Question of the Oath for Irish Catholics in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 120–3.