

# **Napper Tandy**

**The Story of a real Irish Patriot**

**by Brian Igoe,**

**Published: 2016**

\*\*\* \*\*

## **Table of Contents**

**Introduction**



**Chapter 1 ...**

**The Last Invasion of Ireland.**

**Chapter 2 ...**

**Meath and Dublin.**

**Chapter 3 ...**

**London, Philadelphia.**

<b>Chapter 4 ...</b>	<b>North Sea and Bergen.</b>
<b>Chapter 5 ...</b>	<b>Hamburg.</b>
<b>Chapter 6 ...</b>	<b>London.</b>
<b>Chapter 7 ...</b>	<b>Dublin.</b>
<b>Chapter 8 ...</b>	<b>Lifford.</b>
<b>Chapter 9 ...</b>	<b>Bordeaux.</b>



**Historical Note.**

**Principal Sources.**



## Introduction

*I met with Napper Tandy and he took me by the hand,  
How is dear old Ireland, and how does she stand?  
It's the most disgraceful country that I have ever seen,  
They're hanging men and women for the wearing of the green.*  
—Anon, 1798

If you ask most people today, they will never have heard of Napper Tandy, unless they are Irish. Then they may, just MAY, remember the words of the ballad quoted above.

By way of introduction, some words on the state of Ireland in general and Dublin in particular in the second half of the 18th century, the backdrop against which much of this story is painted, may be of interest. If not, skip forward to Chapter 1.

It was in many respects a lawless place, quite literally, for there was no effective police force until well into the 19th century. And yet they were an extremely litigious crowd, those Georgian Irish. They fought with their tongues and their pens with great skill. But equally they fought with their swords and their pistols too. It was quite common for two barristers to retire from the courtroom and settle a dispute in this way.

They seem not to have been all that proficient as marksmen, though, because there were far fewer injuries than duels. One such occurred at the Assizes of Waterford, when Kelly and Egan fell out over a point of law. They crossed the River Suir in a boat so as to be in a different County, Kilkenny, and were taking their positions when a Justice of the Peace for Kilkenny, a large man by the name of Harry Hayden, interposed himself and instructed them to desist. They told him to

remove himself or they would shoot him, and then break every bone in his body. He declared his authority as a Justice of the Peace. They said it would make no difference if he were St. Peter himself. The Justice decided that discretion was the better part of valour, the barristers exchanged shots, missed, and returned to the court. They found, as expected, the bench, jury and spectators quietly waiting to hear if one of them was killed.

There were many, many such occasions. Curran, later Master of the Rolls, and Fitzgibbon, later Lord Chancellor and Earl of Clare, fought with enormous pistols, 12 inches long. Both appear in our story. Then there was Bully Egan, Chairman of the Dublin Quarter Sessions who fought more duels than anyone, including Kelly of the Waterford story. Scott, later Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Earl of Clonmel, fought Lord Tyrawly over his wife and the Earl of Llandaff over his sister, and many others. The list of big name duelists is very long, and even includes Grattan and O'Connell.

And they drank! How they drank! In Thomas Street, close to Napper Tandy's business, nearly every third house was a pub – 52 licensed premises out of 190 houses. Sir Jonah Barrington, the judge and author, recollected a pre-Christmas weekend when the weather was too bad to hunt: 'A hogshead of superior claret was therefore sent to the cottage of old Quin (sic) the hunter, and a fat cow, killed and plundered of her skin, was hung up by the heels. All the windows were closed to keep out the light. One room, filled with straw and numerous blankets, was destined for a bed-chamber in common, and another was prepared as a kitchen for the use of the servants. Claret, cold, mulled, or buttered, was to be the beverage for the whole company, and in addition to the cow above mentioned, chickens, bacon and bread were the only admitted viands. Wallace and Hosey, my father's and brother's pipers, and Doyle, a blind but a famous fiddler, were employed to enliven the banquet, which it was determined should continue till the cow became a skeleton, and the claret should be on its stoop.'

A dozen partygoers were said to have been at this debauch. A Hogshead is 381 bottles, which works out at an incredible 31.7 bottles per person! Ruttly, the contemporary Quaker historian and author, wrote that 8,000 tuns of wine were imported in 1763, the bottles alone being valued at £67,000. A tun is 1,236 litres, or 13,184,000 bottles of wine. The habit was universal among the Ascendancy classes, the aristocrats and gentry, and among the poorer people. But while the rich drank mainly claret, the poor drank whiskey and beer, much of from Guinness's brewery. The excesses of the rich were truly appalling.

Their idea of sport was of the same order—cockfighting, bull-baiting, or just plain fighting. To go out after dark without protection was to risk assault and robbery, if not death. Gang wars were a common sight. Gambling was an addiction. People from all walks of life gambled on everything, from cards to the size of a load of turf, and when the National Lotteries were introduced in 1784 the gambling fever knew no bounds. People gambled their very clothes in the certain knowledge that next time they would win. It was a licentious town.

Transport was developing apace in Ireland at this period, radiating out from Dublin. The first of the canals in Ireland, the 165-mile-long Grand Canal, was started in 1756 and completed in 1803. It linked Dublin in the east to the River Shannon in the west, and was built largely to move grain and peat (peat is widely

used in Ireland for heating) to Dublin. It was also a Godsend to Arthur Guinness, who used the canal to transport his beer and to transport the raw materials to his brewery which was just starting at the time. He even used the water of the Grand Canal for brewing. This stretch of the Grand Canal is still used today by the Guinness Company, though not, one hopes, for the Guinness! Lest we become conceited, it is worth pointing out that the Grand Canal in China was 1,114 miles long and completed over a thousand years earlier!

Then, forming a spur to the south at Athy, came the Barrow Navigation which was the canalised River Barrow, partly canal and partly river, established in 1792, 42 miles long. Also starting in Dublin, The Royal Canal served Maynooth and Mullingar before joining the Shannon system 50 miles north of the Grand Canal, near Longford, in 1817.

There were many more—the Newry canal, the Coal Island Canal, the Upper and Lower Boyne, the Ulster Canal, the Ballymore and Ballyconnell, and others, and of course the great Shannon River system itself. Canals were big business in the first half of the 19th. century.

Apart from freight, the canals also offered barge-like ‘passage boat’ and ‘fly-boat’ passenger services. The journey from Dublin to Tullamore could be done in less than 9 hours by 1834 in a fly-boat, an average of 7 miles an hour which was faster than most coaches and a great deal more comfortable! They were long ‘narrowboats’ with covered seating for passengers. They were usually towed by two horses (often galloping!) and travelled much faster than any other boats on the canal. They had ‘right of way’ over other boats, which had to release their towlines to let the fly-boat pass. They could also go to the front if there was a queue of boats at lock gates.

There was terrible poverty in Dublin then. One house, No. 6, in Braithwaite Street for example, contained 100 people. That was in the Liberties to the west of the city and south of the Liffey. In Whitelaw’s 1798 census of Dublin the census officer writes

‘Into the backyard of each house, frequently not ten feet deep, is flung, from the windows of each apartment, the ordure and other filth of its numerous inhabitants; from whence it is so seldom removed, that I have seen it nearly on a level with the windows of the first floor; and the moisture that, after heavy rains, oozes from this heap, having frequently no sewer to carry it off, runs into the street, by the entry leading to the staircase... When I attempted ... to take the population of a ruinous house in Joseph’s Lane, near Castlemarket, I was interrupted in my progress, by an inundation of putrid blood, alive with maggots, which had, from an adjacent slaughter-house, burst the back-door, and filled the hall to the depth of several inches. By the help of a plank, and some stepping stones, which I procured to the purpose (for the inhabitants, without any concern, waded through it), I reached the staircase. It had rained violently, and, from the shattered state of the roof, a torrent of water made its way through every floor, from the garret to the ground. The shallow looks, and filth of the wretches, who crowded around me, indicated their situation, though they seemed insensible to the stench, which I could scarce sustain for a few minutes.’

But in stark contrast, Dublin's Northside became during the century a beautiful city. Building development in the 1700's started with the Old Library building of Trinity College, begun in 1712, followed by the Printing House and the Dining Hall. And then, around 1720, came Luke Gardiner. He had built the family's fortunes as a banker. He was also what today would be called a Property Developer and had bought large areas of Northside Dublin, north of the river Liffey. His first major enterprise there was the construction of Henrietta Street. It was named after the wife of the new Lord Lieutenant in 1720, Charles FitzRoy, the 2nd Duke of Grafton and one of the descendants of Charles II of England. It was built as an enclave for the rich and famous, and so was not a street which led anywhere. There was no way out. It was a cul-de-sac ending with the Inns of Court, and still is. Architect to the first six of the houses was a descendant of the 17th century rebel leader Rory O'More, Edward Lovett Pearse, a name which appears again and again in Dublin. He was an exponent of the Palladian style of architecture, developed in Italy from Roman and Greek temple designs, and much admired and used by Thomas Jefferson in the United States later in the century. (Jefferson, aside from being a lawyer and the 3rd President of the United States, was also an accomplished amateur architect).

As a commercial venture it was brilliantly successful, and when completed it was occupied by five peers, a peeress, a peer's son, a judge, a member of parliament, a Bishop and two wealthy clergymen as well as Luke Gardiner himself. These were classical Georgian houses, with their regular structure and porticoed doors. Dublin City, or the leading citizens anyhow, promptly gravitated towards Henrietta Street and the new developments north of the Liffey, and the area now known as Northside was born. O'Connell Street was constructed in the 1740's, and was originally called Gardiner's Mall. That's where the houses were, the up-market residential area which in later times would be called 'Georgian Dublin'. Public buildings were still just on the south side, though not far from the river, so they were readily accessible to the new Northside residents. The new Parliament Building in College Green started in 1729 was one. It was another Edward Lovett Pearse building, and is now the Bank of Ireland. St. Patrick's Hospital for 'idiots and lunatics', near Kilmainham, paid for by funds bequeathed by Jonathan Swift, was another.

This was the Ireland into which Napper Tandy was born.

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Last Invasion of Ireland.**

It was the 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1798. Napper Tandy was afloat, which he hated. She was a corvette. Her name was the ANACRÉON. What a name for a bloody ship-of-war, he thought. Whether she was named after a Greek composer of drinking and love songs or a French composer of operas, it was not a name for a war-ship.

She was fast, though, that he admitted. And well-armed, this 100 ton corvette, with her fourteen four pounders and a pair of swivels, but her main protection was her speed. The fastest vessel in the Navy of France, they said, and with her yellow hull and new top masts she was any young officer's dream command. But God, how she pitched. He clutched his hand to his mouth and made once more for the scuppers. What it was to be so old. He felt all of his 61 years today.

After a while he felt sufficiently recovered to return to the ward-room, where he found Rey. General Rey. A real General this Rey, not a paper general like himself. Brigadier General Tandy! The thought amused him unreasonably, even though he understood the necessity. If he was caught he could claim to be a prisoner of war, and exchanged. Otherwise he could be condemned as a traitor, and hanged. Rey had done very well indeed in Bonaparte's Italian campaign the previous year, and was a real professional. Most of Tandy's countrymen had retired to their bunks, but he preferred to feel sick in the fresh air than sicker in the nauseous cabin.

"Please God we're in time, General" he said as he entered. "It's taken us six bloody days to get this far, and Humbert must have been there well over a month. I wonder how did they do..." he tailed away, accepting a glass of wine from the wardroom servant.

"If anyone could do it, Jean-Joseph should have been able to. A lot depends on how the fighting around Wexford went. 20,000 troops should have kept the English occupied there, I should imagine. Even Irish troops". This last under his breath, as he had no wish to offend this huge ugly Irishman who had so impressed Talleyrand and the Directory in Paris. And who technically was in command here.

"Ye have the numbers right, General, but they were short of equipment. The English will have had around 10,000 men in the area, but well-armed and equipped, far better than our lads. So will the numerical superiority be enough? Your opinion would be far more valuable than my own".

"It depends on how they are led, those Irish. Ah, good evening, Citoyen Capitaine" this to their Captain, Captain Blankmann, who had just come in, "and how goes the vessel? Shall we land in Ireland tomorrow?"

"Indeed we should do, Citoyen, although nothing is certain at sea. But I expect to sight the northern tip of the Inishowen peninsula at dawn tomorrow" said Blankmann. "If the wind holds".

"The wind! The wind! Always the wind! I would have thought we have had enough wind to last us a lifetime in the last six days. Ah well, let us contain our impatience. A glass of wine with you, Capitaine".

"Thank you. Well, Citoyen, we are some miles off the north east coast now, the wind has veered nicely for us, but in the last hour it has been dropping."

"General Tandy will be pleased, anyhow" smiled Rey. "He really suffers in the rough weather".

"As do his compatriots, Citoyen, every last one of them!" laughed Blankmann, "although I'm sure we'll see them all on deck in an hour or two. God send the wind doesn't drop too much".

"Humbert was to land in Donegal and should be well established by now."

"Well, tomorrow should see us in Donegal ourselves" said Blankmann, "if the wind holds!".

“She steadies, though, does she not?” queried Tandy. “The floor seems less unsteady, I’d swear. My nausea is quite gone”.

“Indeed, she does, Sir. The deck is now as stable as your own home” laughed Blankmann.

Tandy was up before dawn the following morning, unable to contain his excitement. As usual, he was immaculate. How he always appeared so resplendent in the close confines of the ship was a mystery. The men said he slept in his uniform, with its twin lines of embroidery on the facings and pockets, its huge epaulettes, its high stiff gold laced collar. Early as he was, the sailors were there before him, holystoning the decks which was how they met every new day. The sky seemed to be brightening on his left, he thought, as he gazed forward hoping for a glimpse of his homeland, even though he knew that was an impossibility just yet. Would Humbert have been successful, he wondered? Would the day bring a new dawn for Ireland? He dreamed of the future. He would be the Liberator, the toast of all Ireland. And more importantly he would be with his family again. How was his son, he wondered, with his pretty little wife Mary, and their son James Napper Tandy they had called him! He supposed he should be flattered. Half an hour passed, and his reverie was interrupted. A cry from the masthead brought him promptly back to the present.

“Sail Ho!” came the cry. He had been expecting a cry of ‘Land Ho’. Blankmann had materialised beside him.

“Where away?” cried the Captain to the masthead lookout.

“Two points fine on the starboard bow, Citoyen” came the response. “A Frigate. And there’s another, Citoyen, smaller. A Corvette, I’d say”.

“We have to put about, with your permission, Sir”. This to Tandy. “We can’t risk a confrontation, they’re too heavy for us. The frigate alone will have twice our firepower, and they are always very well handled, these English frigates. They’ll be patrolling the entrances to Lough Swilly and Lough Foyle. Which means they’re expecting us. I suggest we head north and consider our options. And the wind” he smiled.

“It’s your command, Blankmann, whatever you think best.”

“All hands!” roared Blankmann, followed by a stream of orders Tandy did not understand, and the deck dissolved into a chaos of rushing feet and flapping sails as the vessel slowly swung away from the land. Bitterly disappointed, he sought the shelter of the wardroom.

Rey was there. Of course. He never seemed to sleep. So was Blackwell. Colonel Blackwell. An odd fish, that fellow, thought Tandy. Charming wife, though. Originally from Ennis he had started for the priesthood, gave that up a studied medicine, and then the army, all by the age of 21, and all in Paris. Now he was 35 and a Colonel, and above all bilingual, completely fluent in English and French, and that alone made him invaluable at the moment. Tandy was well aware that his own French, though serviceable, was heavily accented.

“We’ve been rumbled” he said as he came in. “They were waiting for us. Or Bompard. Or both. They seem to be a step ahead of us always. Spies everywhere. So what the hell do we do now?”

“Try further west, I should think” responded Blackwell. They tossed the problem around and around all morning. Soon they were joined by the other Irish, Will

Corbet from County Cork, Donovan, McCann, Orr, McKenna and three or four others. They were very crowded in the little Brig's wardroom, but at least the sea was now calm. Too calm, they found out, when Denize, the first lieutenant came in around midday.

"I regret, Messieurs, that we have lost the wind. We are becalmed. The Captain has asked me to advise you, and to say that he thinks the wind will return when the sun goes down, and he expects it to be suitable for passage westwards."

"Where are we now?" asked Tandy.

"Approximately 45 nautical miles north of Donegal, mon Général." Here he spread a chart on the table and pointed out their position.

"I propose we should head in this direction" said Tandy, pointing, "towards Tory Island."

"That makes sense" said Blackwell. "Come" in rapid French to Denize, "Let us go and discuss the position with the Captain".

Dawn the next morning saw Tandy on the foredeck again, excited again, his reverie interrupted again, by the same cry.

"Sail Ho!".

His heart sank to his boots. Surely to God the bloody English weren't here too.

Captain Blankmann materialised next to him again, and hailed the lookout:

"Where away, and what d'ye see?"

"Dead ahead, Citoyen, sloop. Small trader, I'd say".

"He's a good, Jacquot, if he says she's a trader, a trader she is. And she's bound to be English. Maybe a little prize money, Sir?" "Maybe", replied Tandy quietly, his excitement mounting, "but more importantly, maybe a little information".

"Some deception is called for, Mon Général," said Blankmann, "because as you see, the wind is foul for an approach to her directly. We need to carry on this tack, gradually but unnoticeably coming closer to the wind, until we can turn and sail down to her. She is working out from the islands, and in this wind that will take her almost all day. We shall also hoist English colours, so as not to alarm her."

"Is that not contrary to the rules of war, Capitaine?" asked Tandy.

"Not at all, M'sieu. It is merely a ruse de guerre, so long as we hoist our own before we open fire."

And that is what happened. It took almost all day, six or seven very nerve wracking hours, but eventually they were able to run down on the vessel, a 50 ton sloop, fire a single unshotted gun, launch a boat and so take possession of the sloop. She was the SWAN, sailing in ballast from Lough Foyle to Galway, her home port, and her master and owner William Kelly came aboard the ANACRÉON quite willingly, no doubt to see could he bargain for his vessel. He sat down with Tandy and Blackwell in the wardroom, Captain Blankmann in attendance, but speaking little English he had only a slight grasp of what was said.

"You are good Irishman, I'm sure" opened Blackwell.

"I am of course, Your Honour" said Kelly, addressing Tandy who he assumed was in charge, dressed as he was in the full uniform of a French Brigadier General, a very flamboyant affair. But when Tandy spoke he was clearly Irish, not French as Kelly had supposed, nor English. He relaxed, leaning back. Tandy, pleased to be able to hold forth in his own language for once, enlightened him.



“We are here to bring supplies to General Humbert of France, but we have had difficulties in getting here. Our first attempts at landing were frustrated by two large English men of war” he exaggerated, “and now we seek a suitable port free of English, and we seek General Humbert. If you can assist us you may keep your vessel. If not, not.”

“Well, you’re straight forward, anyhow. Let me tell you what I can. First, I’m from Galway, and that vessel there is my livelihood and my life. As it is for the five lads aboard her, they’re all family. Second, your French General landed at Killala Bay in Mayo, not Donegal. He took Ballina without any opposition at all, stole a march on the English at Castlebar by going around the back door and belting the hell out of them. They fled to the east, so fast the locals are calling it the Races of Castlebar, and they could have gone as far as Athlone so far as I know. Well beyond Mayo anyhow. But that was two weeks ago now. Anything could have happened since then.”

“And tell me now, were there many Irish supporting him?”

“Not many. The United Irishmen raised maybe 1,400 men. But nothing in the nature of a general rising, no Sir. The people round here are too poor to rise, and would not risk what little they have. Have you ever tried to grow crops in Mayo? Potatoes is all, and none so many of them either. Galway, now, if you’d all landed in Galway, that’d be different, but this part is just too damned poor.”

Tandy said nothing for a long time, and Blackwell respected his silence. For this was the most disappointing news. Humbert could be anywhere from Castlebar to Dublin, captured or victorious. And they were here, in a French corvette, off Tory Island. Miles away still.

“You’re an honest man, Kelly. I wish more were like you. We’ll make a plan for your boat, but first we need to get our own into port. Where would you suggest, from here?”

“How about Dunfanaghy?” interposed Blackwell.

“Ah, no Sir, ‘tis too close to Letterkenny and there may well be British there who ye’d best avoid at first. I’d suggest Inishmacadam, or Rutland Island they call it now. It’s not too far, it has a good port and excellent holding ground off, all the facilities ye’ll need, and being an island is seldom visited by those without business there”.

Blackwell had been carrying on a running commentary in French for Captain Blankmann, who now said he had no charts of the area.

“We’ve no charts with that much detail, Kelly” said Blackwell. “Would you show us the way?”.

He thought about this a little before answering, and then said he could do that, but arrangements would have to be made for his own vessel. The crew were under the impression that he was detained by a French pirate, and he couldn’t just leave them. Eventually it was decided that he would send his son, who was the Mate, a message to go to his brother in Galway and say that he was being held for a ransom of a hundred guineas.

“He owes that sum, d’ye see” laughed Kelly, “so I’ll get that back and ye’ll get your pilot! They’ll bring the money to Inishmacadam”.

And so it was arranged. The weather took a hand now, as ever. It blew a gale, a contrary gale. For two days. So it was late in the morning of Sunday September 16<sup>th</sup> that they finally reached their destination.

The ANACRÉON was still flying English colours, and signaled for a pilot as any English ship would do. The pilot duly arrived, a man named Teague Boyle who was well known around those parts as an expert coastal pilot as far south as Limerick. He knew Kelly, and the two were soon chatting away in Irish as he brought the ship into a safe anchorage. The shore was close by, and the houses seemed very numerous for so remote a location, thought Tandy. In fact it was a flourishing herring port, and they had unknowingly arrived at the largest commercial operation in this part of Ireland. It boasted, among other facilities, a post office, the mail time to Dublin being just three days. This would prove to be significant.

In the meantime, the formalities of their arrival had to be completed. The customs launch came alongside, and her hapless crew on boarding were incarcerated with Kelly and Boyle—for the time being only, they were assured. By now there were fifteen of these temporary prisoners. Tandy, resplendent in his blue and gold, interviewed each of them separately, and all told the same story—the French had been defeated and the Irish combatants slaughtered.

And then, onto that sombre scene came another boat, this one full of United Irishmen. They were full of bravado, but said that all Ulster would rise if they could, but for the time being they could not. There was a 25,000 strong English force abroad who would kill you as soon as look at you. But locally they could raise around 5,000, they said. Indeed, this being Sunday, there would be perhaps a thousand of them at Mass not so far away.

Tandy left them on deck and retired to the ward-room where he called a meeting. There was himself and Blackwell, Rey, the other four French army officers, Colonel Ameil, and Captains Luxemburg, Le Duc, and Borie, and of course the ship's Captain Blankmann.

"Gentlemen" said Tandy, "We need to decide now what is to be done. The situation as I see it is this: General Humbert has been defeated and his force imprisoned. There is an increase in English presence throughout the north, and the local Irish in Ulster are unwilling or unable to support us. These fellows aboard now, however, claim to be able to raise 5,000 good men. Maybe that is true, but my countrymen are prone to exaggeration. So do we land, or do we go home?" There was a long pause.

"There is no immediate threat which I can see." Rey as the senior French Officer eventually spoke. "We came here to support Humbert's people with men and munitions. True, we have heard rumours of his defeat, but as you said, Tandy, your countrymen are prone to exaggeration. We can land and make ready to support if and when needed, and bide our time until the position is clarified. I see nothing in the present situation to threaten that course of action. Let us land and see for ourselves how much truth there is in all these reports. Quite apart from anything else, the men are heartily sick of being confined in this little boat—sorry, Citoyen Capitaine, ship, but you will admit it is somewhat crowded". That brought a laugh, and lessened the tension. Everyone now chipped in with their views, and the conversation became general. In the end it was agreed to land an exploratory

force, to be led by Rey and Tandy. Tandy would be responsible for the Irish Volunteers.

The first thing to do was to seal off the island, so Colonel Ameil and Captain Borie moved immediately to seize all small craft and so cut communications with the mainland. Men were landed and a camp set up. Lookouts were posted and the deputy postmaster, a man named Francis Foster, confined to his house. And a big meeting was called at which a makeshift flagpole was erected and the new flag of Ireland was hoisted, a golden harp on a green background with the words *Erin go Bragh* underneath. The camp was named 'Headquarters of the Northern Army of Avengers.' Laudatory pamphlets were handed out signed by General James Napper Tandy, but since these were written in English and the intended recipients spoke and read only Irish, their impact was negligible.

Mail was due that day, Sunday, and the boat carrying it was intercepted by Tandy in person, and the newspapers scanned. They confirmed the worst—Humbert had been defeated and taken eight days earlier, on 8<sup>th</sup> September, so nothing was to be gained by proceeding with the landing. The sea sick soldiers would have to endure a little more. They had formed the basis of a good working relationship with the islanders during their short stay, but now determined on leaving. All the temporary prisoners were released around 10 pm that night, and at dawn the following morning, September 17<sup>th</sup>, ANACRÉON set sail.

Tandy decided to head for Norway. A direct course for France would almost certainly have run them into English naval patrols, for the news of their landing would have reached the vessels in Lough Swilly before they could work their way past.

"It's like this" said Tandy to Rey and Captain Blankmann when they were discussing it that morning. "Quite apart from the wind" he smiled at Blankmann, "assuming it blows in the right direction, the cat will be well and truly out of the bag by now. There'll be horsemen nearing Letterkenny as we speak. That's at the end of Lough Swilly, and its only twenty miles from there to Derry and Lough Foyle. By the end of the day every Royal Britannic Navy vessel between here and Belfast will be on the lookout for us. Our best chance is to sail north I think. With Anacréon's turn of speed and sailing qualities, the English would have no advantage since we are all starting from around the same latitude, and we have a head start. Even if they knew where we were going, which they don't. They'll surely expect us to head the fastest way possible for France. Am I right, Captain?"

"Indeed you are, Citoyen, you should have been a sailor!" laughed Blankmann. "It's likely to take five days or so, though. Can you put up with the sea for so long?"

"The alternative is even less pleasant" smiled Tandy, and retired.

Dawn next day found the ship heading towards Bergen in Norway with a fine following wind and a relatively calm sea. Rey found Tandy gazing over the stern towards Ireland.

"We so nearly made it, you know" he said. A few days earlier, ten maybe, and we might have given Humbert the support he needed".

"Sadly, my friend, we have to live life as we find it, not as we would like it to be" mused Rey. "But tell me, Tandy, what got you into this business in the first place?"

“That’s a long story, Rey my friend. It’d take all day to tell.”

“We have all day” laughed Rey. “All week, perhaps”

“Well, if you wish. I’ll start at the beginning. I was born sixty-one years ago...” and the story kept them occupied, Tandy talking and Rey entranced, for the whole of the next two days.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Meath and Dublin.**

I was born in 1737, at the Jenkins house near Drewstown in County Meath. That was because my father was an ironmonger in Dublin, with premises in Charlotte Street. Infant mortality was high in Dublin in those days, due to the generally poor sanitary arrangements, and the chances of survival of both myself and my mother were considered greatly enhanced by being in the countryside. And rightly so.

The Jenkins were my mother’s people, and their house became as much mine, I felt, as our own house in Dublin, and much more fun. My Grandmother, that’s my mother’s mother, was a Naper of Loughcrew, also in County Meath. They often put an extra ‘p’ in the name, to make it Napper, which is where I got my second name.

Anyhow the whole thing must have gone well, because here I am! My first real memory is of the Jenkins place, too, and of snow and ice. The great freeze of 1740 to 1743. It must have been the third year I remember I suppose, as I would have been too young else. There was snow, FEET of snow, blocking the drive and covering the fields. The rivers were all ice, too, and we children had a great time. I know now, of course, that the impact on the general populace wasn’t so great. The ice was reported to be nineteen inches thick on the Shannon. The ordinary people had little or nothing in the way of heat, even the turf was frozen, while we had huge log fires. The staple foods of the people in Meath were barley and wheat then, and harvests of virtually everything had failed for the last two years. 400,000 people died in those three years.

My next real memory is of school. I wasn’t allowed to go to the school down the road like the other lads in Charlotte Street, but was sent off into the country again. My father was a countryman at heart, and came from a country family, but being the fourth son he’d had to make his own way. He had an aptitude for metal-work, and I suppose that was why he drifted into ironmongery. The school chosen for me must have been a bit of an experiment, though, because it was a Quaker School, and we weren’t Quakers!

How to describe Ballitore School? Well, for a start you need to understand a little of those extraordinary people, the Quakers. They call themselves not Quakers, but the Society of Friends. That pretty much describes the school actually, for the teachers were not ogres with whips as are so many, but friends. And it worked. Our Euclid and our grammar were not beaten into us, but presented in such a way that we loved it, and worked the harder. And it wasn’t

just the school that was Quaker run, but the entire village. There was nothing there but marsh when the first Quakers arrived in the previous century, and drained an area and built a flour mill. They were from Yorkshire, over the water in England, and more of their people followed. So the only Catholic Irish we saw were the servant girls who came in. The school belonged to a lovely, kind old English man named Shackleton, Abraham Shackleton. He must have been approaching 60 when he taught me. I was there from the age of eleven until I was sixteen, and such learning as I have I owe to those Quakers. Even what passes for my French!

But you don't need to hear about my schooldays. They were happy, is the main point I make. I was insulated there from the troubles that beset Ireland at the time. And the Penal Laws, of course, affected us not at all. For we were Protestants. I never queried it then, the difference between us and the Catholics. It just ... was.

Anyhow back in Dublin my father was doing well in his trade. This was the time when Dublin was growing. While I was at school we had moved from Charlotte Street to Cornmarket Street, down by the river, I suppose to be nearer the other ironmongers. Skilled tradesmen tend to live near others of the same skill in Dublin, which increases turnover to the benefit of all. The development of Dublin, which for the previous fifty years had been on the Northside, the area to the north of the river, was now coming back on the Southside where it had started, and where Cornmarket Street was situated. All the great squares were developing around Fitzgerald's Mansion, which seemed to act like a magnet. All the world loves an aristocrat in Dublin, unlike Paris! Fitzgerald, who was Earl of Kildare then, had built this enormous mansion, a chateau you'd call it in France, when I was a child, and called it Kildare House. Later he became Duke of Leinster so the house was renamed Leinster House. He's the fellow who ran the Volunteers in Dublin, but I'll come to that. Of course all the Ascendancy Aristocrats wanted to be near him, so Merrion Square was laid out, and Fitzwilliam Square, and St. Stephen's Green was developed, and College Green. All the huge houses built around them needed railings, and gates, and nails ... nails! Literally millions of nails! And pots and pans and fire irons and scuttles. It was a prosperous time for ironmongers.

And so I became an ironmonger then, and worked with my father. At the age of 23 I was admitted as a freeman, 'by birthright', to the Guild of the Holy and Undivided Trinity! Isn't that a grand name? In fact, it was the Merchant's Society. And brave stout fellows we thought ourselves, too! My son followed me in his time, and at about the same age. He had become a soldier, a Lieutenant in Bengal with the East India Company by then. And a year after young James was admitted, I was made Junior Master! The papers were very kind about it. They said that my parts eminently entitled me to every mark of esteem my fellow citizens could bestow, or something like that! So next year, '89, they made me Senior Master! The Church, the Protestant Church that is, the one around the corner from where we used to live in Cornmarket, St. Audoen's, made me a Master too, of their Guild of St. Anne's. Perhaps I should have stuck to business. I was involved in public works, as well, and helped quite a bit with our new canals. I was even a shareholder in the Grand Canal company. And still am! It's taking a long time to

finish it, though. But it's a hard thing not to try and improve things when you see stupidity and arrogance ruling everywhere. But I digress.

I was fully involved in business for four or five years after that, but then I got married. That happened in '65, when I was 28 years old. Her name was, as I should say, Anne, Anne Jones. She's from Platten in the County Meath not far from my cousins and the Jenkins, and of course I knew her well. We had often danced the night away when I was staying there. And she was possessed of a large fortune which is never a bad thing in a wife! So we had our own house, in Dorset Street, number 16 it was. A very grand place, we thought it! On the Northside! There was a theatrical family near us, the Sheridans, Thomas and Frances. He ran the Theatre Royal. One of their sons, a boy called Richard who was around 15 years of age at the time, later became very famous in London where I think he owns a big theatre. I heard tell he's in politics, now, too. They used to live down the road at number 12. Dorset Street is close to Rutland Square, which used to be one of the most fashionable areas to live.

The ironmonger's business, though, remained in the old family premises on the Southside, at Cornmarket Street. Increasingly I had been finding it difficult to work with my father there. He was still very active, and in fact remained so for another twenty-five years, so we were inclined to squabble. We agreed that for the time being at any rate I would seek pastures new, which was how I became a land agent—much more respectable than an ironmonger, my wife insisted! And respectability somehow brought influence.

My enquiring mind brought me to the forefront of all kinds of things, for these were stirring times. In the countryside the Whiteboys were protesting the practice of enclosures of large areas of hitherto common land. This was done by often absentee landlords to supply the increasingly profitable European market with beef. The Whiteboys invaded estates, filled in the enclosing ditches, hamstrung cattle, and generally made themselves troublesome. And in the city thinking Protestants were joining movements aimed at the removal of the bar which separated the Catholic Irish from us Protestants. That meant the removal of those iniquitous Penal Laws. Catholics couldn't vote, couldn't become lawyers or join the police or hold any other public office, or buy freehold land, or send their children to the only University in the country (Trinity College) or abroad to be educated, nor could they run their own schools, or own a horse worth more than £5 or a hundred and one other things. Their parcels of land were getting smaller and smaller too, as they were subdivided under the inheritance laws applicable only to Catholics, so that it became impossible to plant enough barley and wheat to survive.

These laws would have to be removed in Parliament in Dublin, but the English Parliament would have to agree as theirs was superior to ours, and in theirs sat all the Landlords whose Estates were being invaded. So it became an anti-English protest. 'Burn everything British,' Dean Swift was crying, 'except their coal.' A book written over 70 years earlier by William Molyneux, known mainly for his scientific studies, was republished, and was very popular. It was called the *Case of Ireland being bound by Acts of Parliament in England*. I was 31, and absorbed every page, and felt that it made a great deal of sense. And in fact the worst of those Penal Laws have now been removed, thanks to Henry Grattan and his friends in

Parliament, and I flatter myself thanks to my own tub thumping out of it. But much still remains to be done.

It was around this time that I met Dr. Charles Lucas. He was an active political activist, if you understand me. He was the darling of the Protestant populace, and always stood up for anyone or anything which he felt was being badly treated by the Administration. He and I and another gentleman much like Lucas formed ourselves into a 'Society of Free Citizens'. We saw ourselves as Champions of the People, and took upon ourselves the responsibility of explaining local legislation and regulations to ordinary people who didn't really understand them, and protesting to the authorities where both the people and we ourselves thought that the legislation was unreasonable. I got involved in dozens of similar things over the next few years.

My protests against the legislative agenda of the new Lord Lieutenant in 1767, the Marquess Townshend, kept me much in the public eye while he stayed. I spoke repeatedly at the hustings in favour of different candidates for local and Parliamentary elections. I had a different style of speechifying to most of the plum voiced would-be politicians in those days. I could speak in the language of the people with their broad local Dublin accents, use their own rough humour to them, and generally make them understand me. It didn't do my reputation in the corridors of power much good though. They didn't like me. But they were beginning to fear me! And that, I knew instinctively was very valuable indeed.

Townshend left in '73, and soon after that things began to happen. But at first those that affected us were happening outside Ireland, in America. For 1775 was the year in which the American War of Independence broke out. That had a huge impact in two quite different ways. The first was psychological. I had been following with increasing indignation the escalating legislative assault on America from London—the Tea Act and the Boston Tea Party, the Massachusetts Government Act, which altered the Massachusetts charter and restricted town meetings; the Administration of Justice Act, the Boston Port Act, which closed the port of Boston until the British had been compensated for the tea lost in the Boston Tea Party, and the Quartering Act of 1774, which allowed royal governors to house British troops in the homes of citizens without requiring permission of the owner. Outrageous, I thought. So when the Americans actually took up arms against this high handed authoritarianism, I was elated!

The other impact on us was quite different—the English withdrew huge numbers of troops from garrisons in Ireland to fight in America! That meant that we had official sanction to 'protect ourselves.' So a Militia was formed, made up of volunteers from all walks of life. I joined that crowd with enthusiasm, but first a quite unexpected thing happened. I was approached to know would I join the Dublin Corporation Common Council as a Representative of the Guild of Merchants! You need to understand what this means. The Dublin Corporation consists of a Lord Mayor, 23 aldermen, and most importantly, a common council. The Lord Mayor is elected annually from among the aldermen by a majority of them, but with the approval of the common council. The aldermen are elected for life from among those common-councilors who have served as sheriff. The sheriffs are annually elected at Easter by the Lord Mayor and aldermen from a list of eight freemen nominated by the common council, and must have property of at least

£2,000. The members of the common council are chosen from the different guilds, which was what was happening to me. There are 25 of these, at the head of which our Merchants' guild which returns 31 representatives out of the total of 96. The others come from the 23 minor guilds, from Tailors to Apothecaries. So the Common Council is really the Government of Dublin.

Looking back, I think that this honour, the result of many hours of tub thumping and speeches at elections, was the beginning of my real career, my Political Career. It was from that point that I resolved that I would do everything in my power to help to bring about the end of the authoritarian and ill advised rule of London in Ireland. Just like the Americans. And I was 38 years old—ancient, I thought! And by sheer good luck, as a Common Councilor, I was in a position to do something.

I was seen as a Whig, which is to say that I was seen to favour the opposite to rule by the established aristocracy. The term encompassed a wide range depending on time and place, and was pretty loose. If you supported a constitutional—as opposed to an absolute—monarchy, you were a Whig. If you were seen to favour Republicanism, you were a Whig. Or worse, a Revolutionary, like you! I was proud to be called a Whig. I also came to be called the unofficial Lord Mayor of Dublin! That was due to my voice of course, and the fact that I used it at every opportunity, and usually succeeded in persuading ordinary people that I was right. So I supported popular nominations to important positions such as the Sheriff, and I opposed people I thought venal. And I usually won, which is why they began calling me the unofficial Lord Mayor. I talked, I talked, oh God how I talked! And much to the alarm of Dublin I publicly supported the American rebels! And in 1777 they nominated me as Sheriff! That happened for each of the next seven years, and at each successive nomination I was rejected by Dublin Castle! And that I really did see as an honour.

I mentioned the Militia. That was very important to me, for it was a fundamental departure from the past. In the past we had the English Army. Now we had our own citizen army. A very different thing. And I wore gaudy uniforms and paraded, for they made me the Colonel in charge of the Volunteer artillery. I've always been fond of gaudy uniforms as ye'll have noticed, but there's reason in my madness, for not only do the common people love them, but it saves me a fortune in tailors' bills! You can wear the same uniform everyday and nobody thinks it odd, but wear the same civilian clothes every day and you are soon recognised as a pauper.

The Artillery job was again almost accidental, but by Jasus it was useful! Gradually the Militia began to look like a real army. We were a citizen army, but an army for all that. We were goldsmiths, ironmongers, drapers, all sorts. But we had guns. Big guns! The threat we were established to counter was real enough, and it was seen as coming from your fellows, from the French. France, as y'know, had supported the Americans in the War of American Independence, and the possibility that French soldiers might descend on Ireland was seen as very real indeed, and not welcomed by Protestant Dublin. I suppose it was during that time that I started writing to friends in France, and that was to be a great help to me later.

I need to explain a bit of background to you here, otherwise the story of the Volunteers makes little sense. In Ireland since the imposition of King William's



repression at the end of the last century, we were not allowed to trade as we wished with England, or her colonies. Or indeed any foreign countries. It wasn't an anti-Catholic thing, for it applied to everybody. And since the big trading houses were mostly Protestant, it was we Protestants who were most affected. So neither our cattle nor our beef, which were (and are) excellent, and would have sold well abroad, could be exported. Our sheep and mutton and wool could not be exported. And the same applied to everything we tried which looked like succeeding in export markets, from timber to glass. That created poverty, and many country people were too poor to pay their rents. That I saw at first hand, for collecting rents was my job then, as a Land Agent. Processions of unemployed paraded the streets of Dublin carrying a black fleece to emphasise their poverty and its cause. It wasn't just the Catholics either who paraded, but the Protestants too, even the Landlords whose rent was no longer forthcoming.

So we, the Protestant business community, supported wholeheartedly the Volunteers. Again, I was talking, talking, talking. Rabble Rousing, Dublin Castle called it, men who scarcely understood my speeches in the broad Dublin argot. Talking all that summer of 1778, explaining what Free Trade meant and the profits that would ensue to the members of the Dublin Corporation. The Corporation was in reality autonomous, independent, the Government of Dublin if not Ireland, and by the end of the summer they were demanding Free Trade. And it was quite clear that the English Government were unwilling to let us compete with the English. Hitherto they had been able to fall back on the English army if we protested too much. Now the English army was in America!

It was a combination of our Volunteers outside Parliament and Grattan and his Patriot Party's persistence inside which was to win the day. On November 4<sup>th</sup> next year it was King William's birthday, which was normally celebrated with parades and drums and music. I was in charge of the artillery, Colonel Tandy! And so I had the guns, and had them, and the statue of King Billy in front of Parliament where we were parading, bedecked with banners proclaiming:

1. RELIEF TO IRELAND.
2. VOLUNTEERS OF IRELAND. MOTTO:  
*"QUINTQUAGINTA MILLE JUNCTI PARATI PRO PATRIA MORI"*
3. A SHORT MONEY BILL—FREE TRADE—OR ELSE!
4. THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION!

It may have been a bit crude, especially the dog Latin bit which was supposed to mean 'Fifty Thousand are joined together and ready to die for their country'—Grand words! But the message was clear. And the message was received. Three weeks later Grattan's motion that 'at this time it would be inexpedient to grant new taxes' brought Government to a halt—without new taxes they couldn't function. It was of course an understood stratagem. Free Trade, or else! It was well understood by the MP's voting that they were holding a pistol to the head of the Ministers. So those Ministers had no option but to concede the right to trade within the empire, and on the equal terms which Grattan and we Volunteers deemed were Ireland's by right! That was implemented in the spring, and made us popular overnight. It had worked!

The next step was use this coalition which we had forged—the Volunteers, the Public, and the Patriot Party in Parliament—to give the Government of Ireland, the real Government, back to the Parliament of Ireland. Because until then it was fettered by an old law, Poyning's Law, which meant that the Parliament in England could overrule them. So what we needed, I reasoned, was the repeal of Poyning's Law. I persuaded the freemen and freeholders of Dublin city to issue declarations in the spring of 1780, right after the Trade victory, in favour of 'such a modification of Poyning's Law as should effectually prevent all usurped, improper and unconstitutional interference between the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland'.

Then I tried to get the Volunteers to do the same thing, but ran up against a problem. The Commander of the Dublin Volunteers, Fitzgerald who was now the Duke of Leinster, had to agree. And he didn't. He mouthed platitudes about constitutional points being forced at the point of a bayonet. What had we just done? I countered. We got our Free Trade at the point of a bayonet, did we not? But he was implacable. I strongly suspect it was because he liked neither me nor my accent, although he never said so to my face.

He wasn't really fitted for the job and cared more for his pleasures than for the sort of legislative independence the Volunteers were aiming for. He vacillated, and was really unwilling to make himself any more unpopular with his peers. So we replaced him in 1780 with a man of an altogether different stamp, Lord Charlemont. For one thing Charlemont was older, around 52 in 1780. I'd met him some years before with Charles Lucas who was his doctor. But more than that, he was committed. He was committed to the Patriot Party of Flood and Grattan which was working so hard for all the things I believed in. And once he became Commander of the Volunteers he committed himself wholeheartedly to that too. It was under him that the Volunteers became a real force to be reckoned with in Ireland fifteen years ago.

So now the Volunteers were supporting the Dublin Corporation. The publicity outside Parliament and Grattan and the Patriot Party inside had done their stuff. By May 1782 we had won that fight too. And so there I was, in my grand uniform with my Volunteers behind me, guarding the approaches of Parliament, as the passing of Yelverton's Act in London was announced. It was nothing less than the complete repeal of Poyning's Law and all related legislation. Now we had teeth!

The next few years seemed very full at the time, but looking back on them now they seem like only the run-up to the United Irishmen. The Affair of the Custom House was in 1781, and I was already 44 years old. I was fairly prominent in commercial circles as well as political ones by then, and my cousin Thomas back in Meath had been High Sheriff of Drewstown the year before. My wife and I had moved back south to be nearer my father who was 75, and now lived just up the road at number 21, Cornmarket Street.

There was a move afoot to move the Custom House further east, downstream along the river, following the eastward development of Dublin. There were good commercial reasons for doing this, even though the old Custom House built 80 years earlier was in good repair and was a very handsome edifice. Larger ships were coming down, and inclined to get stuck on 'Standfast Dick' as it was known,

a reef in the middle of the river. The Custom House really had to be where the ships were, or close to them.

What I thought wrong was the scale of the new place. It was a fellow named Beresford, John Beresford, was the man responsible. He was the Commissioner of Revenue, and had had a grand new palace designed by a London architect. Palaces were going up everywhere in the great Palladian style, but they were all built by wealthy individuals as a sort of statement of their wealth. This one was to be built with public money, and I thought it unreasonable. Anyhow I joined a protest led by the High Sheriff of Dublin who was of like mind, and we led a small crowd to tear down the fences by the North Wall surrounding it. But the small crowd quickly became a big crowd, and a major disturbance resulted. Nothing came of it in the end and the great new Custom House was of course built, but my presence had been noted. And many agreed with my views, from Grattan down, and I met with all of them quite frequently.

There was John Curran, a rising young Barrister, and a very unlikely Barrister he looked, too, with his slight, spindly frame, his sallow face, and his deformed hand. But he was a tiger in the courtroom, is a tiger I should say. And a good friend and very honest. There was Arthur Wolfe, a man of my own age who is now Lord Kilwarden. There was Sir Edward Newenham who I could never quite make out, but who always supported me. There was George Ponsonby, who never seemed to be able to make his mind up whether he was a lawyer or a politician, but was bloody good at both. And of course, superior to all of us in every way, Grattan, Henry Grattan. In every way except for his physical appearance that is, for this fearless, brilliant, bold champion of Ireland and Irish freedoms was a small bent figure, meagre, yellow, and ordinary. He would be quite likely to appear, if you called on him at home, with one slipper and one shoe, his breeches' knees loose, his cravat banging down, his shirt and coat-sleeves tucked up high, and an old hat upon his head. He did of course dress correctly when out, but nothing could disguise his frame save his oratory which rapidly made one forget it. In spite of which he was a fearsome duellist, and fought frequently and with cool ferocity. There were quite a few others, and we formed together a sort of unofficial Cabal.

I had supported the reform programme which came out of the Grand National Convention of Volunteer Delegates in November the next year, but I was beginning to find myself marginalised in the Protestant Community by my support for the cause of Catholic Emancipation. Although at Grattan's level the people with whom he associated were too august to be threatened by an inflow of Catholics, at my more humble level people felt very threatened. And with justice! But that still didn't justify the retention of a system that was fundamentally just plain wrong. So I had to tread carefully. My high profile subjected me to verbal assaults from the government-controlled press, where we were caricatured as 'America bitten Patriots', quite unjustly. I was also suspected of 'reasonable intrigue' with you French—but they were premature, my critics. For at that time it was parliamentary reform, not political independence, that I sought.

Essentially it was turning into a class thing. Our family are country folk, though well-off country folk. We were also 'in trade', and we are considered socially inferior by the aristocracy. We considered ourselves to be superior in the things that mattered, for those so-called gentry often behaved like hoodlums, caring

nothing for whom they might hurt. 'Bucks', those young over indulged super rich chinless wonders called themselves. And they drank. God, how they drank! No man was considered by them to be a serious drinker in Dublin who could not 'take off his gallon coolly'—eight pints of Bordeaux wine in an evening. And to be a serious drinker was considered by these people to be a badge of manhood. And such was their idea of fun that they would often participate in the gang warfare which terrorised parts of Dublin then. There were two notorious gangs, the Liberty Boys and the Ormond Boys, and they usually joined the Liberty Boys, as did the students from Trinity College. They would spend the evening joyfully fighting alongside people whom in the normal course of the day they would contrive not to notice. To do so would have been considered degrading for a gentleman. Duelling, drunkenness, bull-baiting, all were rife. My inclination as much as my accent separated me from these people. Yet these were the people that presumed to look down on me.

Some things stand out in my memory of those years, like the time when the attorney-general, John FitzGibbon, issued statements about me which I considered defamatory at best. Specifically, among a lot of unspecific diatribe, he alleged that my 'Bills would not be taken upon Change'. Unlike so many aristocrats, I had never had a Bill refused by anyone in my life, so I was quite safe in placing a long newspaper advertisement in which I called him a CALUMNIATOR and a LIAR. I then paraded in front of Parliament wearing a large sword, tantamount to a challenge. He declined it, on the grounds that I was not a gentleman!

I remained active, but was becoming rather frustrated. Dublin was in turmoil in '84, many were out of work. I was by now in effect running the Dublin Corporation, and I continued at the head of the Volunteers. And so when I supported something, or objected to it, I was heard. I objected strenuously to William Pitt's proposal for a commercial union between Britain and Ireland in 1785. I objected strenuously to the new and wholly ineffective police introduced 1786. I supported strenuously the Prince of Wales during the regency crisis of 1788–9, largely because Curran was supporting him, as well as the playwright Sheridan who used to live virtually next door to me as a youngster, and Edmund Burke who had been to the same school as me, although earlier. I supported strenuously the rights of the common council in an acrimonious dispute with the board of aldermen over the nomination of a lord mayor. And so on.

And all of that ended with my becoming Master of the Guild of Merchants in 1788. The *Hibernian Journal* wrote in 1788 that I was

'a proper person to represent the metropolis in parliament'.

And in 1789 I was received into Henry Grattan's new Whig Club. As Lord Clare wrote (and I memorised!)

'Mr. Napper Tandy was received by acclamation as a statesman too important & illustrious to be committed to the hazard of a ballot.'

The Whig Club was a little overrated I thought, more of a dining club, so I founded a support group in the city, the Dublin Whigs. I supported the elections of Henry Grattan and Lord Henry Fitzgerald as MPs for Dublin city. But I still remained a social outcast from the circles of the Ascendancy Establishment, to my great delight!

You know better than I what happened then, of course. The Bastille was stormed by the mob and the *Gardes Françaises* on July 14<sup>th</sup> 1789, and the Revolution in France was irreversibly started. I was elated with the motives and the fact that like the Americans the French were proving that you didn't have to put up with an autocracy simply because it had been there time out of mind. Developments were quite slow, ye'll remember. For a while it was patriotic in Dublin to support the new France. We even paraded on the second anniversary of the Bastille affair, with myself and a 200 strong unit of Volunteers. We paraded at night, with an illuminated display lighting the slogan 'we do not rejoice because we are slaves; but we rejoice because of the French being free'. And that October, in Belfast, the Society of United Irishmen was formed. And on November 9<sup>th</sup> I was asked to convene a Dublin branch.

By now I was Mayor of Dublin in all but name. I called a meeting, inviting a mix of Catholics and Protestants, 18 people in total. Our objective, I explained, was a Citizen Club. We preferred not to have lawyers, orators, professional critics, as they tend to turn clubs into cock-pits. I'd arranged for one lawyer though, a brother of Lord Mounigarret named Butler, and he took the Chair. He was really the only 'man of fashion' as the Ascendancy families called their men, there. The others were Professionals and Merchants and people of that ilk, like myself. We adopted all the Resolutions which had been drawn up in Belfast, and named ourselves The Society of United Irishmen. Some of the clauses I thought sailed pretty close to the wind and could have been actionable, but Butler didn't bat an eyelid, and so they were adopted unanimously. We then balloted on other names for inclusion in the Society, a further 18 people—including Rowan and Tone of course, and I was elected Secretary. We thereafter formed a Committee to draw up our rules. There were six of us, led by myself and Dr. Drennan. Our purpose was recorded as that of 'forwarding a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a community of rights, and a union of power among Irishmen of all religious persuasions, and thereby an impartial and adequate representation in Parliament.'

The objective of the Society was as its name implied, to unite Irish men and women, of whatever faith. The main divisions of course were Protestants and Catholics but there were others, notably the Presbyterians who were mostly in Ulster. I'd expected a Society like this to be a populist, radical grouping, one that would need molding and directing if it was to achieve anything. And I was only partly right, because it came to be dominated by professional people. Foremost among these was a most unlikely individual for a patriotic revolutionary, Theobald Wolfe Tone. Apart from myself, of course!

Wolfe Tone was an educated young man, around 26 or 27 years of age at the time. He came of a family of successful coach builders and had been through Trinity College. Although not without incident. You'd never imagine it to look at him, but he became involved in a duel there, and the other fellow died. So he was sent away from the University for a year. And during that year he spent most of

his time with a lady, the wife of an MP named Richard Martin. The ladies always found him attractive, though the Lord knows why, for to me he seemed a pallid, weedy, insignificant looking fellow. But that didn't stop him from marrying, while still at University, a 16-year-old girl! And not just any girl, but one with important connections, Martha Witherington. She and her children are in Paris, now, you may have seen them. In the end, though, he did well at Trinity, and developed a great love of history and music and of writing.

And it was his writing made his name. He was brilliant in that department. He'd a head on him, too, and had most recently written a diatribe in favour of Catholic Emancipation after watching a debate in Parliament. 'An Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland' it was called, and it attracted a great deal of notice. That debate brought him something else, too, the friendship of Thomas Russell who was also watching it. They took to each other immediately. Russell was a Cork man who had been with the British army in India for a while. Joined up when he was 16! Anyhow he was 23 now, and was posted to Belfast later that year, and after Tone's article he asked him to come up there, and with a group of like-minded people they started the United Irishmen there.

So that's how it started. I felt so old at my ripe old age of 52! I thought of these two as a pair of children, for indeed I'd been older than they then were when they were born! Russell was hugely influential through his close friendship with Tone, but didn't spend a great deal of time in Dublin. The man who did was called Archibald Hamilton Rowan. Another child! Though I'm sure he thought himself very mature at 38—I know I did! Rowan was a huge man. Tone and I were both around 5' 8", but we felt like pygmies beside him. And a very handsome man too, with his large wide forehead and his courteous manner. He always had a large dog with him, and carried a big stick. He was known for his great work for the Dublin poor and under privileged. Tone was quite the opposite – slight and almost effeminate, with a hatchet face, an aquiline nose which he always appeared to look down, he seemed totally listless. Until he started writing! In print, he was very effective indeed.

Looking back on it, I made a cock of the United Irishmen after the first few years. Especially over the Toler affair. Toler was the Solicitor General, and so a very important fellow. I hear he was appointed Attorney General this summer, much more important. Thinking to defend my reputation and thereby that of the Irishmen, I managed to arrange for a duel with John Toler who had libelled me. Personally. He made fun, in public, of my admittedly ugly visage. It was all a bit involved, but the net result was that Parliament had decided that a gross breach of privilege had been committed—by me! The Sergeant at Arms was sent to bring me before the Bar, where I duly appeared and refused to answer questions. Now Parliament, you must understand, has the power to commit anyone to prison during the currency of the present sitting. I knew that this was the last session and that accordingly I could not be held beyond a few hours, and that is exactly what happened. I was held, at the old Newgate Prison, and released later in the day to great celebrations! But it was to turn out to be a Pyrrhic Victory.

They prosecuted. I was told that the prosecution was for having sent a challenge to the "Solicitor General, John Toler". I had no hesitation in rising to that, because I hadn't. When I arrived at the Court as requested, though, they read out not that

charge but a whole heap of technical charges arising out of the subsequent events. I was well defended mind you. Emmet was there for me, Thomas Emmet. He and his brother Robert were two of our most valuable United Irishmen members. And the Recorder and three others.

Toler took the stand first, and explained how he had made arrangements to meet my Friend Colonel Smith at another's house. He started to read my letter to him.

"Objection, My Lord!" cried Emmet. "There is no evidence that those letters were indeed written by my client, and they should therefore be inadmissible". The objection was not sustained though, and Toler continued. He expressed surprise that I should have taken exception to anything he said. He concluded by saying that if I was found guilty, he hoped the court would be as lenient as possible! His aim was of course to create the impression of injured innocence. At this stage I was asked whether I wished to comment on the evidence so far.

"My Lord," says I, "I freely admit to having written the three letters read out by the witness, but only the first two were, to the best of my knowledge, delivered. How the witness obtained the third, I do not know. And as for the conversations alleged to have taken place between the gentleman who would have acted as my Second had it come to that, Colonel Smith, and the witness Toler, this is the first I have heard of them. Nobody prior to this relayed these conversations to me." So they called Smith. McNally, one of my team, asked him:

"Colonel Smith, it has been said in this Court that you asked the witness Toler if he would propose a time and place for a duel between himself and my client. Is that in fact what happened?"

"It is, my Lord" said Smith to the Judge.

"And was that request to the witness Toler made with, and upon the authority of, my client?"

"No, My Lord. He had no knowledge of it, either before or after. It was made entirely upon my own initiative. Mr. Toler had said in response to the first letter that he supposed Mr. Tandy had put his honour into my hand, and it was in response to that statement that I put the question."

The Judge, the Lord Chief Justice, asked at this point:

"Let us be clear, Colonel Smith. Were you, or were you not, empowered by Mr. Tandy to issue a challenge to Mr. Toler to fight Mr. Tandy?"

"No, my Lord, I was not so empowered."

"So what happened then? In your own words if you please."

"Mr. Toler said to me that if Mr. Tandy wished to issue a challenge, he would meet him in half an hour".

"And did you deliver that message to Mr. Tandy?"

"I did, my Lord".

"And what did he say?"

"He said he had no intention of issuing a challenge to Mr. Toler, but that the affair would be put in the public papers."

"My client" interposed McNally, "would place his pen in opposition to Mr. Toler's sword, a much more civilised form of combat."

And so it went on and on. I can't remember the detail, but the general import was that all I had done was to ask for an explanation, that I had been arrested in

the street like a common criminal and thrown into a common prison, all without having been tried or even accused of a common offence, and so on. There was also much talk as to where the offences had taken place and into whose jurisdiction they fell, all a bit over my head. But at the end of the day, after an absence of what seemed like about five hours but which I am told was an hour and forty minutes, the jury returned. After the usual preliminaries they were asked,

“How find you the Defendant—Guilty or Not Guilty?”

“Not Guilty, My Lord,” said the foreman, “on all counts”.

I will confess to a feeling of relief! Toler was a famous duellist with pistols, who had even fought with ‘Fighting Fitzgerald’ perhaps the most famous duellist of the century. He won a lot of arguments this way, legal and otherwise, and so rapid was his promotion and success that he was said to have shot up into preferment. I was fêted afterwards, all over Dublin. There were bonfires, illuminations, ‘respectful addresses’. The Whig Club elected me their President, and even their fellows in London, the Grand Lodge of Constitutional Whigs, extended honorary membership to me with lots of flowery and flattering compliments. The United Irishmen appointed a special committee to draw up a declaration of approbation of my actions, and that too was flowery and flattering. It all went to my head, I’m afraid, and I sought a formal investigation by the Volunteers, anticipating yet one more round of plaudits.

I got the investigation in the shape of a formal Court Martial, and it unanimously acquitted me of any imputation of cowardice in not meeting Toler, but it also gave it as their opinion that my approach to the whole Toler affair had been “imprudent and unadvised”. The findings were confirmed by Lord Charlemont. It was a dash of cold water, and effectively dampened my ardour. For they were quite right. I’d lost my temper because of the sort of taunt about my appearance that I should have been used to, since I’d been on the receiving end of such taunts since my schooldays. And I’d been lucky to escape without a duel. For Toler was a noted and successful dueller, and I’d never fought one in my life! So perhaps there was something in the cowardice allegations.

They may have dashed my ardour, but that of the United Irishmen seemed renewed. They issued writs on everyone involved in the Toler affair on the side of Government, from the Lord Lieutenant down. They were based on a technicality, that the supposed authority of a Lord Lieutenant was based on an order given under the Great Seal of England and was therefore of no effect in Ireland. In the proceedings which followed Emmet created a sensation by declaring “I boldly assert that there has been no legal viceroy in Ireland for the last six hundred years, and not only will Counsel for Lord Westmorland not deny the fact but they will not dare to let his patent come under a train of legal investigation”. This was all Tone’s work of course, even though the writs were in my name. He was a great fighter with the pen, and never expected to win, but rather to embarrass and keep the whole subject of devolution and emancipation in the public eye.

The wolves were closing in on me. First a case was brought against myself and Rowan for distributing libelous and seditious papers and the rest. We were bound over on our own recognizance to the first day of the next term, some time off, and then the case was postponed again. In the meantime, I had joined the Defenders as part of the United Irishmen’s plans to unite with them, but a spy at the



ceremony reported the fact to Government and I was issued with another summons, this time in Dundalk. I was on my way there to answer it, stopping at Castlebellingham for the night at the Hughes', my son James' parents-in-law. There my nephew caught up with me (another James Tandy!).

"Mr. Butler and Mr. Tone sent me after you" he said, "to tell you that they thought that this was a trap of some sort. They think you should at least ask Mr. Dowling to go to the court first, and see can he find out what it's all about. But they see no reason to get you to Dundalk except to get you out of Dublin. They're afraid to move too strongly against you in the city."

It made a sort of sense, and so Matthew (Dowling, my attorney) went ahead into Dundalk while I waited with the Hughes. In due course he returned, and the news was not good. It appeared that in addition to the misdemeanour with which I had been acquainted, a case of felony was set down to be heard against me. Moreover 19 young men had been convicted on capital felony charges the previous day, 'reasonable offences', the very charge set down against me. The court was full of packed juries and hired informers. The Defenders' oath I'd taken was technically treason. I'd be convicted for sure if I turned up, and more than likely hanged.

They advised me to fly. So fly I did.

## **Chapter 3**

### **London, Philadelphia.**

First I went to England as the nearest place not in Ireland! I was an outlaw in my own country, which saddened me greatly. I, who had so recently been a Prince! That was the beginning of my exile. It has not yet ended. And it was the end of my direct involvement with the United Irishmen in Ireland, of course. War between England and France had broken out a few weeks before the Castlebellingham flight, as I think of it, and so my influence on affairs was always too little and too late from then on.

Butler, Tone and the rest kept up their public support of France, very laudable you may say but also suicidal so far as the Society was concerned. Not to mention their own safety. The suspicious attitude of Government hardened over the rest of the year. Then early in 1794 that English Priest from Paris, William Jackson, turned up in Dublin to negotiate with the Society. And young Tone, without me there to moderate his enthusiasms, provided him with a detailed report as to how Ireland was ripe for a French invasion! He was a garrulous fellow, Jackson, quite unsuited to the task set him, and soon got himself arrested. He was charged with Treason and in the end committed suicide. Tone fled at last then, to America, where I met up with him.

But that was all in the future. The present saw me in Holyhead in short order, and then in London. My passage to Holyhead took twenty-four hours, from Holyhead to Chester took thirty-six hours, and from Chester to London three days. It's a long way! On the way, with hours in a coach with nothing to do, I began to

worry about the hue and cry I expected from Dublin. There wasn't a lot I could do about my appearance! But I changed my name to James Fitzpatrick, and felt very nervous for a while. In London security was excellent, and quite put Dublin to shame in the matter of civil law and order. The force which kept this order so effectively was called 'The Bow Street Runners' after the Magistrates Office in Bow Street which was their base. The Magistrate put out a weekly broadsheet with the names and descriptions of known criminals wanted by the authorities. When I discovered that I was not on it, I began to relax.

I was in England for around two years, the two worst years of my life, they would have been, had it not been for my dear wife who eventually joined me. It may not have been necessary to hide, and indeed Dublin Castle, having got rid of me, seemed happy to forget all about me. Nevertheless, I took precautions. I wrote frequently to my son James. But always I did so under an alias, and to a friend's address, to be on the safe side. Apart from occasions of sheer fright, my life in London was quiet. I rented rooms near the centre in Coventry Street, in the house of a music seller. I went to the theatre frequently. There used to be one just around the corner as it were, The King's Theatre in the Haymarket, where carts carrying hay and straw for sale to owners of horses were standing. However, it was burned down a year or two ago and has not yet re-opened, but the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, not far in the other direction, is excellent and has continually changing programmes. After my wife joined me, we decided to move out into the healthier air of the countryside, and took a house in Chiswick for ninety guineas a year which I thought very reasonable.

I met two people of interest while in England. One was a youngster, Irish, and Catholic to boot, but a very impressive youngster. London is full of transient Irish, mostly of the lower class employed as coal-heavers and ballast-men or on the Paddington Canal. Many, it was supposed, came over as professional beggars, though all would say they were looking for work. Many were of the poorest class of cottars from Galway, Roscommon and Mayo who came to earn money during the summer in order to be able to pay their rents and subsist during the winter. Some stayed in London for years sending money periodically to Ireland. They lived in slum areas which I stayed well clear of.

But this man was a student lawyer who had rooms next door to mine in Coventry Street. He came from an old Catholic family in Kerry, and his name was Daniel O'Connell. The other person was to have a more lasting impact on my life, or what was left of it, because it was he persuaded me to go to America. He was an American, and his name was John Jay, and I met him not in London but in Chiswick. He was the President's special emissary to London to negotiate a treaty to put off what might well one day become a war over British seizing of American goods on the high seas on the way to France.

In this he was successful, and I met him just after the Treaty had been signed, on November 19th 1794. So he was in a good humour, and undertook to give me various introductions if I would come to the America. I gave it a lot of thought. I could do little from England, but much from America, and in the end I decided to go. I very nearly didn't though, because to my shock, my horror, my ineffable grief, my wife refused to come. We argued for two days, but she was adamant. Mainly it was the sea voyage which frightened her to the point that she was prepared to

leave me. She had been ill enough on the 48 hour crossing from Holyhead, but weeks at sea was more than she could contemplate, even to stay with me. So I went to America and she went to Ireland.

I arrived in America at the town of Wilmington early the following year. Now, for the first time since that awful day in Castlebellingham, I felt truly safe, and was able to use my own name. I would have been tempted to stay there longer if only it hadn't been so expensive! The town was a major port, like Dublin, by virtue of being the furthest point which was easily navigable by large vessels in Delaware Bay, which is the best landing point for Philadelphia, my destination. Philadelphia was only 30 miles away, and Wilmington had been popular both as a seaside resort and as a merchant marine port since the French war brought a sudden increase in trade to merchants in the United States. That and the fever outbreak in Philadelphia in '93, which drove many of the wealthier citizens out of the city to Wilmington, which they liked so much they stayed.

Philadelphia, though, was the capital, and the second largest city in America. Philadelphia was where I should have to be to meet the people I needed. I arrived in there in June that year (1795) which by chance was the same time almost to the day as that of the new French Minister to the United States, Pierre Adet. To me he seemed like a child – how often I say that! Old age, I suppose, for he was 32 years old! He was a scientist by profession, a chemist, and was well respected internationally as such. So his appointment to represent the French Directory in Philadelphia seemed curious. He was very approachable though, and we got on well. At least, that was my impression.

“France lost a lot of friends over the excesses of the Terror, you know” I said to Adet.

“And so did I!” he responded. “That madman Robespierre... but that time of lunacy is behind us now. Tell me, if you have just come from England, do you know the real story behind Jay's negotiations?”

“As a matter of fact, I do” I responded. “I met him just before I left, and he was full of enthusiasm for a profitable and peaceful future for America. But you must have had reports? It was signed last November!”

“Only the briefest”, said he.

“Well, the thing was crafted here in Philadelphia before he left, mainly by Alexander Hamilton and George Washington. Their principal requirements were British withdrawal from the posts that they had occupied in the Northwest Territory, wartime debts and the US-Canada boundary to be sent to what they called arbitration, which is a novel idea. Both sides agreed to accept the decision of an independent commission. They also wanted rights to trade with British possessions in India and the Caribbean, and in exchange agreed to a sort of ration for American cotton exports. The British agreed to vacate the six western forts by June 1796, and to compensate American ship owners whose vessels had been taken by the British Navy while trading with France. In return, America gave most favoured nation trading status to Britain, and acquiesced in British anti-French maritime policies. The one thing they wanted but failed to get was an end to the impressment of American sailors into the Royal Navy. So on balance not good for France, but not a declaration of war either.”

"I can see I shall have my work cut out here!" he said. "Ah well, c'est la vie ! But you're an Irishman. What are you doing here?"

So I explained at length how I had become increasingly active against English domination in Ireland to the extent that I had eventually had to flee, how I had lived incognito in England, and now how I had come to America to see what level of support there might be for an independent Ireland.

"After that", I concluded "We're for France. I'll be meeting some of my colleagues here this week to discuss it".

"Well, keep me advised" he replied. "I might be able to help." We chatted about generalities, and about the new turnpike road just opened to serve the town of Lancaster 62 miles away.

That was the end of my first meeting with Pierre Adet, but we were to meet several times more. That turnpike road, by the way, is a really remarkable achievement, and a great advance in road making. They borrowed from the ideas of a Scots engineer named John Macadam and an Englishman named Thomas Telford, and combined the best of the pair. So they use a base of large cobblestones topped with several layers of different-sized crushed stones. while the centre of the road is raised to improve drainage. They call it a camber, from the nautical word describing a ship's deck. Both ideas were Roman, of course!

I shouldn't have been surprised at the number of Irish, many of them Irish Protestants like myself, in Philadelphia then. Wolfe Tone arrived shortly after me, with his wife Martha and children, and put down roots just over the State boundary in New Jersey, curiously in a village with the same name as his home town in Kildare, Bodenstown. How I envied him, having his wife with him! So did Rowan who promptly got himself involved with a fellow called McClenachan in a protest march against the Jay Treaty.

It was the middle of July by then, and through Jay's introduction I had been lucky enough to strike up an acquaintance with Governor Thomas Mifflin of Pennsylvania. A most interesting man, at a little over fifty he was closer to me in every way than most of the youngsters who seem increasingly to run the world these days. My Quaker education also created a bond, since he too was a Quaker, though they had disowned him for becoming a soldier. And a very good soldier he turned out to be, too. He finished as a Major General (a real one, like you my dear Rey!) before eventually becoming Governor here. It was partly through him that young Adet treated me with such respect, not my undoubted ability or the splendid uniform I was now wearing. Green though, not blue!

For the rest of that year and most of the next, 1796, I was involved in correspondence—correspondence with Ireland where I found I was pretty much able to run the activities of the now underground United Irishmen, and with France (through Adet) where I was gradually getting the feel of the post terror administration and sowing the seeds which I hoped would grow into French support for a successful United Irishmen rising. I was becoming very suspicious of Leonard McNally. He had been a friend, and indeed he had represented me in the Toler affair, and very well too. But he's a playwright at heart, and I think maybe he is living inside one of his plays. He spends a lot of time in London, and London seems to have an uncanny way of knowing what we're at before we do it.

Which brings me, I suppose, to Bantry Bay. Young Hoche, you will remember, had just covered himself in glory at Quiberon, and Carnot, to whom Adet had referred me, thought him a suitable person to lead the expedition. How many men were there with Hoche? 15,000? Certainly enough, anyhow. I had been working on the Directory most of the year, but they of course had other concerns—Napoleon, Austria, Spain, the Cisalpine Republic or whatever Napoleon's creation in northern Italy was called. It took a lot of persuading them that the way to England was through Ireland, and that 15,000 soldiers landed in the south west where Catholic support was strongest, and that meant anti-English fervour was greatest, could well be sufficient to gain a country.

I wanted to go to New York in July, but I was only a little over half way there, at Princeton, when I was struck down with a fever and the ague, and had to return. How I missed my wife! But she, thank God, continued supportive even if she was in Ireland. That kept me out of action for a few weeks. It would have been much longer except for the help of my friends—Dr. Reynolds who treated me, M'sieu Adet who sent his carriage to take me driving every day when I was recovering, Rowan who practically nursed me. That's when you know who your friends are, when everything goes wrong. Anyhow, finally, at long long last, Carnot wrote to say that the expedition I had proposed was being mounted, and that Hoche would lead it. I was ecstatic!

But you know what happened then, of course. The wind, the bloody, bloody, wind. God how I hate boats. They are unreliable, uncomfortable, often downright dangerous. But the sea is always with us, we needs must cross it, so we need boats. Usually they eventually arrive where they are going. But Hoche was unable to land! The main fleet was anchored in Bantry Bay, but Hoche was unable to reach them, and they wouldn't move without him! *Incredible!* And so the 15,000 sea-sick soldiers had to return to France. Poor old Tone was with them, too! They got back to France safely, though. Someone sent me a cartoon by that Englishman Gilray who is very good, I think. It showed the French warships being tossed about during a storm blown up by Pitt, Dundas, Grenville and Windham, whose heads appear from the clouds, blowing! Hoche as you know was sent off to the Rhine frontier, where he did rather better beating the Austrians at Neuwied. And then they sent for me!

So that's how I got back to France. It took us 48 days to cross the Atlantic, and I shall never forget them! Rough, sea sick, miserable, very happy to be on dry land again. Even in Hamburg! In fact, the way I was received, especially in Hamburg! I was welcomed like a long lost cousin in the French Consulate, dined twice with the consul, and given all the necessary papers to go on to Paris. Not only that, but passage was arranged for me on a Danish vessel, and an English speaking gentleman was attached to me for the trip. Thankfully, the sea behaved itself as we sailed down the coast, which we hugged very close due to the always present rumours of English naval ships. Anyhow, we eventually arrived in Paris, where my friend Pierre Adet in Philadelphia had offered me the use of his house. And very welcome it was, too, as I was short of funds by now. This fact had one unexpected result, whether for good or ill I still do not really know. It was my dress. As you know, civilian fashions for men in Paris are expensive. But in a uniform, so long as it is gaudy, as I mentioned earlier you can wear the same thing every day and

everyone thinks you a grand fellow! So that is what I did. Tone was in and out of Paris around this period, too. It was June, I think. Was it only last year? How time flies! Tone had been here kicking his heels for most of last year, it seems, living beyond his means, as usual. He has always had a champagne appetite, that man. And a beer income! According to Madget, still translating at the Ministry, he spent his days moping, and his evenings dining expensively and alone, or at the theatre, alone. He would have run out of funds, but for the appointment of chef de brigade and the posting to join Hoche in that abortive winter attempt on Bantry Bay. Last summer when I arrived in Paris, he was with Hoche still, but is now on the Rhine.

Last summer, too, was when I got to know Blackwell. And his wife! Perfectly innocent, I assure you, but she is a charming lady, even if she is English. Although he is Irish, I didn't really know him before, because apart from our different religions, he has been in France since he was 11 years old. For the last few years, of course, he has been quite active. Most recently, and relevantly, he was with Hoche and Tone on that trip to Bantry Bay, and his commentary on the mismanagement that attended it doesn't bear repeating! Incidentally, it was in his house that I met young Murphy, the fellow Blackwell wanted to kill! Perhaps he was a spy, and perhaps that's why he wanted to hightail it to the hills, but it wouldn't have helped anyone to kill the fellow. And Blackwell could have been wrong.

Anyhow, the rest of the story you know, I think.

## **Chapter 4**

### **North Sea and Bergen.**

It took Tandy two full days to tell his story. By the time he had finished the weather was getting worse, and although the mariners seemed not to notice it, Tandy as usual at sea, felt wretched. And then, shortly after midday, there came from the masthead the cry:

"Sail Ho!" Then after a short pause "Two sail! A brig and a larger vessel, three masts anyway!"

"Where away?" This from Captain Blankmann.

"Straight to leeward, Sir! They'll be in sight from the deck in fifteen minutes, I'd say!"

"Prizes, General, I believe".

"You know, Captain" replied Tandy, "it is quite amazing what an effect excitement has on sea sickness. Five minutes ago I felt dreadful, but now with the prospect of some action this day, I am fully recovered. Is this usual?"

"Oh, quite usual Sir, I do assure you", smiled Blankmann.

In the event it proved rather more exciting that Tandy would have wished, but the fact was that no matter how many Generals there were aboard, at sea the vessel's Captain was legally and indubitably the boss, and he made that quite clear. So, since they had the wind gage, they lost no time in bearing down on the

two vessels, and came up with them about 4 p.m. The brig was easily overcome, and after disabling her for the moment by inflicting damage on her sails, they set about the three masted merchantman. She was a heavily armed merchantman, and so rather than trade broadsides and damage her which would have reduced her value as a prize, they took advantage of the wind gage to board her.

“Quite the little tiger, our good Captain” commented Tandy to Rey. Both Generals had armed themselves with muskets and were helping as best they could firing into the English merchantman.

“It’ll do his reputation no harm, provided we all survive” replied Rey.

“Not to mention his pocket!” laughed Tandy.

The difference between a French Naval Officer and a Merchant ship captain who was not paid to fight for his country became apparent. The merchantman loaded his nine pounders with grape but Blankmann was expecting it, and had ordered his entire crew to lie down while the broadside thundered, and by the time it was over that blessed wind gage enabled them to lay alongside. The grapnels flew, the order to board was about to be given but the Union flag of England came rushing down. She had struck!

She proved to be the TOM, a heavily armed merchantman under Captain John Webster of Kirkham, and the brig was the LANGTON of Lancaster under Thomas Roper. Both were out of St. Petersburg. Both were bound for the west coast of England and both laden with hemp, flax, tallow, and iron, valuable prizes for Blankmann and his crew.

But then the wind changed.

“That damned wind,” grumbled Tandy, “it always seems to blow in the opposite direction to where we want to go. And now it’s getting rough again ... Oh, Dear God!” And he vanished.

“Mon Général” Captain Blankmann had come across to Rey, “the wind is foul for France”.

“Comment?”

“With this wind, Sir, we cannot sail towards France. The closest we can make is Bergen.”

Rey thought for a few moments. Bergen was a friendly port, in theory anyhow, and besides French forces were not far away, there was a French Consulate there. He made up his mind.

“Bergen it is then.”

“Général Tandy will not be pleased”.

“No doubt he would prefer it to being captured by the English!” laughed Rey, “Besides it’s where he wanted to go from Ireland in the first place.” And so it was towards Bergen that the three ships set course. Very slowly, as the LANGTON was still undergoing repairs.

Next morning, however, shortly after dawn an English Sloop of War was sighted.

“She’ll be up with us shortly” murmured Blankmann to his two Generals, “We’ll have to abandon the LANGTON”, which is what happened.

The following morning they sighted Norway at dawn, and by 8 o’clock the pilot had arrived, in a squall of rain.

“It’s a beautiful city, Bergen” commented Rey as he walked the deck with Tandy, “when you can see it”.

“Ah, it’s a grand, soft day!” laughed Tandy in a stage Irish brogue. “If ye lived in Ireland ye’d soon get used to it.” Then, more intelligibly, “Do you realise it’s just four weeks since we left Dunkirk? It seems like as many months. And now I have to get back to Paris. Without risking the English. By land, I suppose. I was studying the map just now—’tis a long way! About 400 leagues, with Hamburg exactly half way.”

By 5 o’clock they had entered the harbour, the usual courtesies being observed and thunderous salutes fired which scattered all the sea gulls, and Colonel Ameil was sent ashore to pay a courtesy call on the Governor of the place, and to seek formal permission to enter. That night they spent aboard, but the following morning the two Generals and their staff went ashore to a series of receptions.

The receptions seemed interminable to Tandy, his mind mainly on what to do next. Blankmann was proposing to sail to Dunkirk, and he was very tempted to go with him. The danger of course was from the English Navy which was very active in these parts. The Tom which arrived after them, had only just eluded an English Frigate. He and Blackwell talked long and hard about what to do. Blackwell, in spite of his French status, was known, and known to be Irish. They were in the same boat, as it were. Eventually they decided to let most of their baggage go on the ANACRÉON with Captain Blankmann and Rey to Dunkirk. They would travel by land. The baggage was to arrive safely in the end, and the prize, the Tom, went with them. She was sold, and sold well, more than defraying the costs of the expedition. But for Tandy and Blackwell it was to prove a fateful decision.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Hamburg.**

The French were following developments carefully, and the French Consul in Bergen had warned them to be especially careful. Hamburg, he said, was liable to be the most risky part of their trip. There was no realistic way of avoiding it, and it was a Free Port, in effect an independent country. They were very much influenced by the English, because the Royal Navy had the ability to close their front door as it were—to stifle the trade on which the port was built.

So when an American Merchant from Philadelphia named Jones (Tandy) with his companion Mr. Bleifest (Blackwell) set out on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1798 they were somewhat apprehensive. No reasonable disguise could change Napper Tandy much, so they decided to travel so slowly as to arrive in Hamburg after the English, undoubtedly warned of their activities, would expect them. They would have got tired waiting and concluded that the pair had gone by sea after all, they hoped. So they did not arrive in Hamburg until November 2<sup>nd</sup> in the depths of a very cold winter.

They discussed where they should stay. Eventually they opted for the American favourite as being less likely to be frequented by English, and more likely to attract whatever Irish there were there. Things went well that first evening in the Wappen



von Amerika. No sooner had they washed and changed out of their traveling clothes when coming into the bar room they saw William Corbet.

“Corbet!” cried Tandy, “and how in the name of all that’s Holy did you get here? You’re supposed to be in Dunkirk long since! We’ve been thinking of you, wrapped up warm in an Inn where they speak French, not freezing to death in this arctic chill here!”

“By boat, of course” said Corbet, smugly. He had been with Tandy on the ANACRÉON trip, and stayed with the vessel. “I got to thinking as how I shouldn’t have deserted ye, and asked Blankmann could he leave me off on the coast here. He did. And I’m here! And m’name by the way is Peters. And may I present my friend Mr. Robe here? Better known perhaps as Mr. Hervey Montmorency Morres of Rathealean Castle near Nenagh in the County Tipperary. Morres? This is General Napper Tandy whom you know of, and his friend is Colonel Blackwell”

“I’m pleased to meet you, Sir.” said Tandy, looking somewhat bemused. “I know of you, of course. But I know you weren’t with us. How do you come to be in the company of Captain Corbet, and here in Hamburg?”

“Well, Sir, this is the way of it. I led the party of United Irishmen who met with General Humbert at Killala Bay last August, and...”

“You mean you were with Humbert on that campaign? Until the end? Ye must tell us about it, please. Have ye time now?” It was around three in the afternoon, and they had no other engagement.

“Well, Sir, I’ll give ye the short version for now, as I’m hoping to accompany you to Paris, and we’ll have plenty of time to examine the detail. The French arrived on August 22nd, and the next day established themselves in the town of Ballina, just down the road. The English reacted by sending General Lake, the victor of Vinegar Hill, to Castlebar, and he was followed by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis himself. Now Castlebar, you may now, is a day’s march south of Ballina, and our probable first destination. But we, instead of taking the direct route down the road, made a forced march over the mountains to the west of Lough Conn, which lies between Ballina and Castlebar. The next day was amazing! He’s a fantastic man, that General Humbert. One of Napoleon’s rankers, you know. He had achieved total surprise, coming from almost the opposite side of the town to where he was expected! We captured eight very useful field pieces to add to the two he had brought, and the English fled precipitately, first to Hollymount and then to Tuam. Some even went as far as Athlone, fleeing from Catholic Connacht. It was really a very surprising defeat for the English, ‘the Races of Castlebar’ as the locals promptly nicknamed it. And so we were able to occupy all the important towns of the area—Westport, Newport, Swinford, and Ballinrobe. It couldn’t last though. We were too few and they were too many, and in the end they had us caught at a place called Balinamuck. The French surrender was accepted, but not the Irish one. It was a massacre, one I’ll never forget or forgive as long as I live. That bastard Lake!”

“But you’re here,” said Tandy into the pause, “how did that happen?”

“By accident. I was thrown from my horse, banged my head on a tree stump, and lay unconscious half in a stream for God knows how long. I was left for dead. I made my way home to Nenagh eventually, but the English there had reports that

I'd been with Humbert, and so I fled. It took me two months, and that's another story... but here I am!"

"And did none of our poor fellows escape that massacre?"

"Precious few. Those that could run like hares," he paused, "or had horses and could stay on them" he added wryly.

They fell to talking, and the evening wore on, and they supped and drank and went to bed in comfort for the first time in a month.

Neither Tandy nor any of the others knew it at the time, but the English administration in Ireland had become very militaristic over the summer, and control over the countryside was becoming effective. It was not a happy relationship which their methods fostered, but it was effective. In the village where Tandy went to school, for example, Ballitore in County Kildare, the names of the inhabitants had to be posted on all house doors, and the authorities could enter at any hour, day or night, to check on them. Houses were searched for firearms, and notices were put up demanding that the arms taken by the 'United men' should be returned. If they were not, and were found, the military were billeted on the unfortunate's house, and plundered them of all arms. A detachment of King's County Militia was sent from Athy and these men, led by an old Ballitore boy, were welcomed by the people, but perhaps they were too friendly for they were soon removed, the villagers escorting them on their way with tears and lamentations. They were replaced by the Tyrone Militia, mostly Orangemen, and these were much more officious. Smiths were whipped publicly in an attempt to extort confessions that they had manufactured pikes for the United men, in vain. Men of whom the authorities were suspicious were arrested and shot. And this was a Quaker village!

In Hamburg the following afternoon Tandy and his fellows dined, much refreshed by almost 12 hours sleep. Blackwell, Corbet, his friend Morres all joined Tandy. They still had much to catch up on.

"You know Lord Edward's widow is here? We're asked to sup this evening" said he. He meant Lady Pamela, whose husband Lord Edward Fitzgerald had been a leading United Irishman, but had been captured at the beginning of the summer hiding out in the Liberties of Dublin, wounded while resisting arrest, and died of his wounds on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

"I hadn't an idea", said Tandy. "I'd assumed she'd go to France. Mind you, I don't know how her relatives there have feared."

"Not well. Lost everything except their lives, and those they kept only because they fled to England ahead of the guillotine. Poor girl, she's had a hard time of it recently."

That evening they were duly entertained by Lady Pamela. Tandy was totally captivated, and she was certainly captivating. She was dressed in a heavy silk gown with the usual fashionable décolletage, her lustrous brown hair ending in ringlets on her shoulders framing her childlike innocent face. Indeed, she was only 25 at the time. So young to be a widow, thought Tandy.

Young or not, she was totally in control. Her bloodlines were those of the Genlis family, leading French aristocrats, and the House of Bourbon. Her natural father had been executed in 1793, and her half-brother would become King of the French 32 years later.

“It is good to meet you, General” she smiled at Tandy. “May I present two of your countrymen? Mr. Samuel Turner from Newry, and Mr. Ducket?”. Conversation never lagged, and the company sat talking until midnight. Little did they know, as they made their way happily to their hotel ready for an early start for France next day, that it would be their last such evening for a long time.

For at 5 o’clock next morning there was a hammering on Tandy’s door. Samuel Turner had betrayed them, as unknown to any of them he had been a paid informer for the British Government for over a year. They still did not know it, of course. They were separated, Tandy being lodged in a dungeon in the city ramparts, and the others in a prison overlooking the Gänesmarkt. The conditions were at first atrocious. They were chained, arms to legs and both to the wall, there was no furniture of any kind, and the temperature was freezing. Outside the city gates people were literally freezing to death, it was so cold.

Two weeks later the Senate ordered that their chains should be removed, and by the end of the year they were reasonably comfortably housed, with beds, food and wine. Then the prison Governor was changed, and clothes and books were provided, a violin found for Morres and a German teacher for Blackwell. In spite of, or perhaps because of, British propaganda there was plenty of publicity and a lot of sympathy for the captives. During the day they were allowed to be together, but at night Corbet was taken back to the Gänesmarkt.

“Good God!” cried Blackwell as they sat gazing out at the winter landscape one day, “Will ye look at this! We’re in funds! The folks at home have sent us £2,000! Would you believe that!”. There was an astonished silence for over a minute. £2,000 was huge sum of money, perhaps ten years’ salary for a Major General.

“D’ye think”, mused Tandy, “it’d buy us out of here?”

“Suppose one of us tries?” Blackwell thought aloud. “It’d be cheaper, and if it works, the others can follow the same way.”

“Who should it be, do you think?” asked Corbet, who as a Captain was junior to the other two.

“How about you, Corbet?” said Morres. “You have a genuine French commission, and if anything, goes wrong, I hope you don’t mind me saying that you’re more, ah... expendable than the General and the Colonel?”

“Of course I don’t” responded Corbet, “it’s no less than the truth. Besides, with our fame abroad the way it is, there’s not much personal risk, I think. But it’s damned cold still, out”.

They talked around and round the idea, and eventually decided upon an attempt to be made at the end of March, when it would be warmer, if only a little warmer. Corbet made friends with the guards, and obtained implements with which to remove the bars of his window, and a rope down which to climb from it. And as they talked and discussed it with the guards, so the plan developed. The guards were to take Corbet with them to collect Napper Tandy, and all four were to be provided with horses and travelling equipment.

“Sam Turner came to see me last night” said Corbet one morning a week before their planned departure.

“What did he think of our plan?” asked Tandy.

“He thought it would work, assuming we actually had the cash” said Corbet. But he was wrong, for once having told Turner, the plan was of course blown.

Turner reported it to the British Minister in Hamburg, Sir James Crawford, and he reported it to the Governor or Praetor as he was called, and he tightened up security and changed the guards. And so they remained immured. The Senate of Hamburg were in a very difficult situation, as whatever they did must upset either England or France, both of whom had sent repeated and extremely strongly worded demands for the Irish four.

Six months later they were still there while the Senate vacillated, trying desperately to find a painless remedy even though it was increasingly clear that none existed. Eventually, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1798, the British won the day, and the Irish four were handed over. It was probably Napoleon who was responsible in a convoluted sort of way, because he was in Egypt and the situation at home in France was chaotic. Nobody was the boss, so the British were able to act with impunity. Napoleon returned when he heard of the bedlam at home, but it was too late for Napper Tandy. After November 10<sup>th</sup> 1798 when Napoleon was finally undisputed ruler of France, things might have been different. But by November 10<sup>th</sup> Tandy and his friends had been guests of the British Government for over a month.

There was a sorrowful farewell from the Praetor who had become very friendly over their long period of incarceration. They donned their best uniforms, and were taken at the dead of night from their various places of detention to a warehouse by the wharf. Here they were handed over to Captain Sayer of the sloop XENOPHON, Tandy was stripped of his magnificent 30 guinea uniform and, far worse, of his Presentation Sword, and dressed in a ridiculous assortment from the slops of the XENOPHON, including a huge cloak and hat intended to hide the wearer's identity so far as possible. Their period of detention at the hands of the British began. The XENOPHON was not a large vessel and their time aboard her was proportionately uncomfortable. Even in port. And in port they were, for another 12 days.

"The bloody wind, again" grumbled Tandy.

And 'the bloody wind' continued to make a misery of their lives for virtually the whole month. They were kept locked in separate cabins, a Marine outside their doors, unable to communicate with each other or anybody else, and the weather was frightful. So frightful that it took them two full weeks to reach the safety of the naval base at the Nore on Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. A King's Messenger named William Ross, supported by a number of Bow Street Officers and equipped with two post coach-and-fours were waiting for them at Sheerness. It was four thoroughly miserable United Irishmen who were led from the sloop in handcuffs into the Port Admiral's Barge and handed over to Ross for transport to London.

## **Chapter 6**

### **London.**

It was three days later, Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1799. Napper Tandy was a pale shadow of his former self. He was naturally a large man, but now very sickly

looking, and his thick head of hair was less thick, and quite white. He looked about 70 years of age, people were saying. In fact he was 62. And of course he was dressed in the costume from the XENOPHON.

They were lodged in the notorious Newgate Prison, where the Central Criminal Court now stands, on a charge of High Treason. Newgate for ordinary prisoners was described by contemporaries as a hell on earth, but two rooms were found for Tandy and his friends above the chapel. This was the King's Messenger's doing, and very grateful they were for it too, for the stink and bedlam like sounds arising from the main prison quarters were horrifying, worse by far than anything to be found in Ireland. A part of the smell, they were told, was due to the putrefying corpses of those either executed the previous week or dead of natural causes whose families could not afford to remove them for burial. Certainly anything could be bought for money in prison, from food to furnishings and maid service, and such was the furore created by the arrival of the famous party that their prison conditions would have been supportable.

The King's Messenger, William Ross, had proved to be a most gentlemanlike young man, and was responsible for this. He had been in the coach with Tandy and Morres on the way up from Sheerness, and had gone out of his way to ensure that they were warm and well fed at inns along the way. His normal job, he said, was to track down and arrest villains, and it sat ill with him to be transporting such men as his enforced guests now. One was a full General who had been shamefully treated, and the other an obvious gentleman and man of parts. The day after their incarceration he appeared at their rooms with some papers.

"I thought you might be interested in this" he smiled as he handed over the *Times*. "Page 3."

'As Napper Tandy and his Associates' read Tandy, aloud to the others 'in consequence of the interest which seems to have been attached to the possession of their persons, are now become the subject of general conversation, we copy the following description of their persons from a morning paper, which seems to have taken a complete survey of them.

Napper Tandy is a large, big boned, muscular man, but much broken and emaciated. His hair is quite white with age, cut close behind, cut close into his neck, and he appears much enervated. He wears a large friar's hat, a long silk black grey coat, and military boots.

Blackwell and Morres seem to be about five and thirty'

"Almost spot on!" interjected Blackwell who was actually 36.

"They are two tall, handsome looking men, wore military dresses, and have a very soldier-like appearance.

Peters is a raw young fellow, with a prodigious deal of native boldness. He is thin, about middle size, apparently not more than four or five and twenty, and has much the look of a foreigner.

Colonel Blackwell had the command of the French troops that landed in the North of Ireland: the Commissions he and Morres bear are in the French army. Napper Tandy was also in that expedition.'

"And you've passed into the English language!" laughed Ross. "The prisoners in the main men's wing—they've a bar there for those who can afford it—are drinking

Napper Tandy's in honour of the toffs over the chapel! They seem to know a good deal about you, too. The walls have ears in this place."

"And what, pray, are they served as a Napper Tandy?"

"Why, a brandy! It's a sort of slang they use to disguise what they are saying from the gaolers. But they are so used to using it that they use it all the time in gaol. Apples and Pears means stairs, Adam and Eve means believe, and now Napper Tandy means brandy!"

"Well, well. Fame at last" smiled Tandy.

"That's better. The first time I've seen you smile since we left Sheerness" said Ross quietly.

Then he took Morres aside. "I'm afraid I have some sad news for you, Sir," he said. "Your wife passed away while you were in Hamburg, on November 24<sup>th</sup>."

There was a silence. Then Morres said "Do you know, that is the very date on which I was arrested? Poor Louise. She was but 26 years old. Thank you for telling me".

The following week, after bringing the papers in, which had become his custom by now, he announced:

"I'm to take you to Dublin! So we'll be out of this place, anyhow."

"I suppose that's good news" Tandy said quietly. "Though what awaits us there I haven't an idea."

So it was that at the crack of dawn—in fact an hour before that crack, at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning, November 11<sup>th</sup>—the party set out in a pair of four horse coaches once again, this time for Chester. Blackwell made a point of refusing to travel with Tandy, as indeed he had done coming from Sheerness, and had been morose and quiet for some time now.

"What ails the fellow?" said an exasperated Ross to Tandy as they were climbing aboard their carriages.

"It's me, I fear", said Tandy. "He sees himself, quite reasonably, as a regular officer of the French army. In truth he is more French than Irish now, having been there since he was eleven years old, and I am sure he thinks that he has every right to an honourable exchange with an officer of like rank from the English army held in France. He has a point, too. And he feels that an overt association with me, whose French Commission though senior to his is more recent, indeed political really, will lessen his chances of getting it."

"Still, there's no need to be quite so offensive."

Their first port of call was Chester, which they reached in a marathon two-day sprint, changing horses at intervals and stopping only for meals. Three days later they were in Holyhead where a vessel, the postal packet LOFTUS, had been set aside for them at great inconvenience to the passengers who were expecting to sail and who had already boarded. Including a number of horses and carriages belonging to Colonel Needham!

The wind was against them again. Predictably, said Tandy. It happened every time he had to take a boat.

"Would you were not on mine, then" said James Furness, the Captain.

"My sentiments entirely, Sir" agreed Tandy.

They eventually arrived in Dublin Bay on Sunday November 17<sup>th</sup> and landed at the Pigeon House barracks on the Poolbeg peninsula. Here they said their

farewells to Ross who had become quite friendly with Tandy, but whose duty was now done. They had been expected, as they seemed to be everywhere. But this was Napper Tandy's home town, so it was hardly surprising. Here he was very much a hero, and there were huge crowds. Tandy, always conscious of his appearance, was still dressed in his ridiculous Xenophon garb, and asked that they might avoid the centre of the city. That was in everyone's interest, and so a cavalry escort was provided and they took the south circular road to Kilmainham. Even so, there were great crowds to greet him at the South Wall, and barricades had to be thrown across the road behind them to prevent the people following the carriages.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Dublin.**

So now it was Sunday November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1799. In Dublin the master of their immediate fate was Major Henry Charles Sirr. This officer had actually been born in Dublin Castle, where his father had been Town Major before him. So although he didn't precisely inherit the post, having been commissioned into the 68th Regiment of Foot, he was certainly born to it. And had been duly appointed to it the previous year, once more living in the Dublin Castle where he had lived as a child.

He had already built for himself a reputation as an efficient officer, and it was he who had inflicted the wound on Lord Edward Fitzgerald from which he subsequently died. So although he and Tandy came from the same segment of Dublin society and might be supposed to have been friends, they were not. Sirr was totally opposed to everything Tandy stood for. Widely regarded by everyone from all walks of life as a cross between a witch hunter and a policeman, he was not popular.

Nevertheless, they were well enough treated at Kilmainham gaol where they were lodged. Their fame—notoriety?—meant that they were treated as political prisoners, and in Ireland you never knew whether today's political prisoner might not be tomorrow's boss. "State Prisoners", they called them. The "New Gaol", Kilmainham was generally known as then. It had only been completed three years earlier, and was a considerable advance on its predecessor, called the Newgate. And as alike as chalk and cheese to the Newgate in London! All the same for ordinary prisoners it was noisy and often overcrowded, but at least it had no dungeons. It had vast Victorian halls with tiers of cells and gangways which today's prisoners would have recognised.

So at Kilmainham, as at Newgate in London, they were kept away from the normal prison and prisoners, although all were accommodated in a single large room. But they were well fed and warmed, important in winter time Dublin. Their first visitor was Tandy's long suffering son.

"God in Heaven, Father, you look dreadful!" said he when first laying eyes on Tandy.

“Well, we’re been well enough treated here, as you see, and also in England thanks to a very gentlemanlike King’s Officer who had charge of us. But before that things were a bit difficult. And the Holyhead boat treated us to its usual excessive turbulence for an excessively long time, and I’m no sailor.”

“He suffered terribly before that, poor fellow” Morres interjected, “in fact he looks better now than he has for weeks.”

“I do beg your pardon” said Tandy in haste, “Morres, may I present my son James Tandy, a wine merchant here? James, I name Mr. Hervey Montmorency Morres of Rathealean Castle near Nenagh in the County Tipperary. My wits are astray, I fear. I should have introduced you the moment you came in. I apologise.”

“Your Servant, Sir” said James, and the two exchanged brief bows before James went on:

“And your clothes! Where did you get that ... that...” Words failed him, and Morres explained about the ship from Hamburg, and his father’s uniform and sword. “They left the rest of us our uniforms, though, and I’ve often wondered why.”

And so the talk went on. As he was leaving, James said “Mother proposes to visit you tomorrow, and I shall come of course, and bring some decent clothes. We have all the old things you left behind, though I fear they may be somewhat loose on you now.”

“That’s kind of you, son. But I’d rather not see your mother in this condition and in this place. Make some excuse, can you, until I look a little less like a scarecrow and am otherwise accommodated?”

“Certainly, Father, if that’s what you wish” said James uncertainly as he left. In fact, Tandy’s wife was relieved. She hated the idea of going to Kilmainham Gaol to see her husband, illogical though she knew the feeling to be. She had become quite used to being on her own, and it would be far better to wait until he was released.

Early in December there was some excitement. Napoleon, by now back in charge in Paris, was negotiating for Tandy’s release and had given instructions to General Brune to see what could be done. A General was offered in exchange, but the negotiations came to naught. They did, however, serve to emphasise to the English authorities that the whole Tandy affair needed to be handled with unusual care. Lord Cornwallis in Dublin Castle was instructed that under no circumstances was Napper Tandy to be put to death. Nobody told Tandy of all this, of course, although they did receive a copy of the Times in which Napoleon’s approach was reported. And so it was that Tandy was told that he could expect to come to trial early in the New Year, the New Millennium in fact, the Nineteenth Century.

Blackwell was behaving increasingly strangely, complaining especially about his food. He was moved away from Tandy and the others so difficult had he become, and for a while took his meals with the general prisoners in the vast Victorian hall. About that, however, he wrote in a letter of complaint to the Lord Lieutenant, no less, ‘the smell of Victuals and the manner in which they are served I find too much for my constitution’. Significantly, he signs himself ‘Chef d’Escadron Blackwell’ the French version of his Colonel’s rank. Tandy, asked to comment on the same food and being told why, wrote: ‘our provisions—that is to say Beef-Mutton-Lamb-Pork-Bacon—are perfectly sound and good; well dressed and cleanly



served—and the Vegetables and Fish, of various sorts, which we get are of an equal good Quality, as is our Tea-Sugar, Bread and Butter (which is always fresh)...’ The letter was signed by Tandy and Morres. The New Millennium came. There were delays. Delays, they were told, because of the absence of the Chancellor, John Fitzgibbon, the Earl of Clare. A man of pure evil, thought Tandy, who remembered well the man’s refusal to fight him, on the usual grounds that he was no gentleman. Clare’s politics were more extreme than those of Genghis Khan, and he and Major Sirr between them were making of Dublin a Hell on earth for Catholics and little better for Protestants who were in any way liberal. Would these people never learn the lessons of history? The Chancellor’s personal presence was necessary because of the method of procedure that was adopted, Attainder, which he had to personally certify to the Court of the King’s Bench in Dublin.

“And what the Hell is Attainder?” asked Tandy of no-one in particular when he heard.

“It’s a declaration by Parliament that a certain person or list of persons is guilty of a crime. So it avoids the need for a trial. It’s seldom used nowadays, though, or so M’Nally tells me” replied his son. “It was used in Ireland mostly in the reign of Dutch William.”

“So what has it to do with me, then?”

“Well, there is a kind of a sort of Attainder being claimed here, based on the Fugitives Act in ’98, which listed fifty-one ‘fugitives’ headed by yourself Father, and stated that they were ‘attainted’ if they did not render themselves up before December 1<sup>st</sup>. By that time, of course, you were in the hands of the British, so there’s no chance of a process based on the Act succeeding, but it may well be used to start proceedings”. And that is what in due course happened. So when they eventually got their day in Court, it was just that to start, a day. Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 1800.

That morning Tandy and Morres took especial care over their appearance.

“You’re looking a deal better, Tandy, I must say” said Morres, surveying their efforts. “Almost human! But should we really powder our hair, do you think?” In England the practice was going out of fashion, due to a new tax introduced a few years before on hair powder.

“I think so. In Ireland fashions are always a few years behind, and we need to look like gentlemen, not prisoners. And isn’t it the elegant young buck y’are y’self, anyhow? But you’re right. Civilised food and civilised bed, not to mention civilised drink! Amazing what a difference it makes.”

And so thought the gentlemen of the Press, too, on seeing them appear in Court that morning. ‘The appearance of James Napper Tandy,’ they wrote ‘instead of having suffered injury from his late imprisonment, is much improved; he was dressed in a plain blue coat, and had his hair powdered—Harvey Morres is a handsome looking young man, was dressed in black, his hair powdered, and seems to have the manner of a gentleman.’

The Court assembled. The Chief Justice, Lord Kilwarden, presided. A likeable man, but strict in criminal cases, although absolutely fair. He had a round, almost chubby, face, the effect accentuated by his voluminous curled wig and judicial robes. Sitting with him were William Downes who would succeed Kilwarden as Chief Justice three years later, a very fair judge whose leanings were if anything

towards the Whigs and Grattan, and opposed to the new tendency for the use of the military and courts martial; and Mr. Justice Chamberlain, again a very correct judge.

Tandy glanced around the courtroom as he took his seat, until he saw, on the opposite side, John Toler.

“What’s that fellow doing, the Solicitor General?” he whispered to his adviser, his old friend McNally, by his side.

“That’s John Toler, but he’s been promoted. He’s the Attorney General, not the Solicitor General now, and he’s leading the Prosecution against you. He was Solicitor General one time, right enough, but he’s been in this job for nigh on two years now. There’s talk of a Peerage in it for him, too, if he keeps his nose clean.”

“Dear Lord,” sighed Tandy, “He refused to fight a duel with me once, as you know, on the grounds that I was no gentlemen. He’s an enemy to me, regardless of present circumstances.” At which point Toler rose, adjusted his gown, and spoke, in rounded, pompous, English tones.

“May it please the Court” he said with a small bow to the Bench, and then launched into a long, an overlong the Chief Justice appeared to think, speech larded with legal jargon like Certiorari, Mittimus, Habeas Corpus. Essentially he was explaining how the prisoners came to be here, and with what they were charged, much as James had explained it to his father the evening before. He finished “I hope they will be well advised by their Counsel and by the Court, who in these cases are bound to be their Counsel, before I am put to the distressing necessity of making the last application to the Court.”

“Why can’t he speak bloody English” muttered Tandy. But now the Chief Justice, Lord Kilwarden, was speaking. He had a deep but uninteresting tone of voice.

“Are the prisoners in the Court, Gaoler?”

“He knows damn well we are” muttered Tandy under his breath.

“They are, My Lord” responded the man from Kilmainham.

“Stand up and bow” muttered McNally. So they did, most respectfully. Attorney General Toler now resumed in his pompous tones:

“The regular mode of proceeding now, My Lord, would be for the tenor of the Act of Attainder to be read in Court. Thereafter, I will move that execution be awarded against the prisoners.”

“No, Sir, and do not presume to instruct me. The regular mode of proceeding now is for the Crown to first call upon the prisoners to hold up their hands, in order to formally identify them. And then to read the record, distinctly, to them. Clerk of the Crown, proceed.”

“James Napper Tandy and Hervey Morres, hold up your hands” responded that harassed looking individual. This they did. The man then read the record.

“Prisoners” then said Lord Kilwarden, “is it your wish to have Counsel assigned?”

“I thank your Lordship for reminding me of that; it is my wish to have Counsel assigned”. Attorney General Toler was looking distinctly uncomfortable. This was not how he had planned the affair at all. Identify Tandy, read the act of Attainder, and off he goes to the hangman, that’s how he had seen it. The affair of the duel two years ago would then be finally over. Nobody would call him a coward again, if

his challenger had been proven to be a criminal and executed. He longed for that sweet revenge.

Lord Kilwarden went on: "You may name any number of Counsel you have in mind. In cases of this sort there is no restriction. It so appears in Johnson's case in Foster's Reports." Sir Michael Foster was a very just English Judge who even though he had died over 30 years ago was much quoted on English benches, especially his paper 'A report of some proceedings on the commission of *oyer and terminer* and [gaol] delivery for the trial of the rebels...' to which Kilwarden was now referring. Not at all what Toler wanted to hear.

"Then, My Lord, I pray that Mr. George Ponsonby, Mr. Curran, Mr. M'Nally and Mr. Ridgeway may be assigned to me." Morres was now asked the same question, and responded:

"I pray that Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Curran, Mr. MacNally, and Mr. Bushe be assigned".

And these names were even worse news for Toler. George Ponsonby was a 45-year-old Parliamentary friend and associate of Grattan, and a legal high flyer who had been Attorney General during Fitzwilliam's brief Ministry. In legal terms, a heavyweight. Curran was if anything even more famous. A brilliant cross examiner, he was fearless before even the most vicious judges, and sometimes even challenged and fought them, as he had once with Fitzgibbon, now Lord Clare. But in this case the Judge was an old friend, who had as Arthur Wolfe, before his elevation, given him one of his first famous cases. Both were staunch Whigs, and both had been associates of Napper Tandy during his heyday in the '70's and '80's. MacNally was something of an enigma. He had represented Tandy in his previous brush with the law and with Toler, and was a smooth, elegant man who had come late to the law and who also wrote plays with some success. He had an expressive countenance and fine, sparkling dark eyes, and was one of the first United Irishmen. He overtly shared the political beliefs of his client, and represented many high profile rebels. Ridgeway was more of a law reporter than a legal practitioner, but his mother was a Tandy, and so he could be trusted. While Bushe was another of the young Parliamentarians of Grattan's party, and a rising young lawyer who would become a famous judge. So it was a very high powered line-up, all told.

There was still the question of agents, additional personal assistants through whom the counsel would be briefed. Lord Kilwarden asked "Do the Prisoners wish to have agents assigned to them?"

McNally answered for both: "My Lord, Mr. Tandy desires that Mr. Alexander Cooke, attorney, may be assigned as his agent. Mr. Morres prays that Mr. Alsop, attorney, may be assigned for him."

The Clerk of the Crown, at Toler's instance, then said loudly:

"James Napper Tandy, hold up your right hand. What have you to say why execution should not be awarded and done upon you?"

But before Tandy could respond, Curran interjected:

"My Lord," he started. And Kilwarden listened. He'd always liked this man. "My Lord, I must pray for a reasonable time in order that the agents may receive instructions from their clients." (a legal fiction, this, for it was counsel than needed the time. "Moreover, your Lordship will recognise that proceedings by Bill of

Attainder are somewhat novel in our courts, and it may be necessary for the counsel for the prisoners to look into precedents, and to consider the prisoners' defence". This was a shot across Toler's bows. It signaled their intention to fight, if that was not already apparent. But with words, Toler would fight too. He stood up.

"My Lord", said he, "the Crown admits that the usage in such cases is allow counsel for the prisoners a reasonable time to prepare for the defence. But what is reasonable?" He then went on for some time about reasonable time, and concluded "The Crown therefore considers that in these circumstances 48 hours is sufficient time, and accordingly moves that the prisoners be brought up on Wednesday next, February 12<sup>th</sup> 1800."

Lord Kilwarden looked curiously at Toler, and then rumbled

"You agree, Mr. Attorney, that they should have time necessary to prepare their defence. And you mention Wednesday as the day for trial. Do you recollect that Wednesday will be the last day of the term? Consider in what situation you will be, if the arguments on the case, and they may be very long, should be protracted until Thursday morning."

And now I have a hostile judge, thought Toler, as well as brilliant opponents. It's going to be a long case, and there's no guarantee of winning it. Still, I must go through the motions. Aloud, he said:

"If, My Lord, on Wednesday the prisoners should lay any substantial reasons before the Court whereby their trial should be postponed, then the Court must then decide as the Court's discretion will direct. For myself, I see no reason why they should not be brought up tomorrow."

"What's this, Mr. Attorney? You have already agreed to Wednesday! Surely you will not now seek to shorten that time?"

Ponsonby now stood.

"My Lord, with respect to my learned friend, I must emphasise that in my own view under such circumstances four days would be a usual and reasonable time to grant."

MacNally and Curran contributed to the discussion, but in the end Lord Kilwarden had little option but to agree to Wednesday, and it was so agreed.

That evening the lawyers all congregated in Kilmainham and held a lengthy meeting with their clients.

"I think we have them" opened Curran, "As I see it, the present case is brought on the strength of the inclusion of your names in the Fugitives Act, under which you were supposed to turn yourselves in by December 1st 1798. But at that time, you were already a guest of His Majesty, is that not so?"

"It is indeed" said Tandy. "And had been, for just four days under two months."

"So there at the start we have prima facie evidence on the wrongness of the mechanism of committal. We can easily draw that argument out all day, and at the end concede, and we have bought time because the case must then be put off until the next term."

"How long is that?" asked Tandy, who was beginning to grasp the legal niceties facing him.

"Three months. The new term starts on May 5<sup>th</sup>."

"And meantime we stay here, I suppose?"

"I'm afraid so. We'll see what we can do to improve conditions. But bear in mind that a hostile judge today could have had you hanged tomorrow. Fortunately, this one, old Arthur Wolfe, is an old friend of mine and the other two are scrupulously correct. But let me go on—that three months is a Godsend. We can use the time to publicise your case in Dublin city among all your old friends as well as among Parliamentarians—the Jurors will be Dubliners, and by the time of the case we can ensure that every last one of them is with you.

Ponsonby joined in the conversation, saying:

"Curran's quite right, of course. I suspect the day will end with a request which we shall be obliged to accede to for a plea in bar *instanter*, possibly *ore tenus*, immediately and verbally for the uninitiated, but we must be prepared with a parchment copy. And also I feel certain that your French friends are working hard too, and will in the end have you freed, even though it will mean living in France for a while."

"There are worse fates, I can assure you! So I'll just have to get used to this sword of Damocles over my head, and pray the horse hair doesn't break".

"I'm not sure that's quite the right metaphor, but yes, that's the general idea." And the conversation turned to Greek legends and classical literature and their relevance to the present day.

So next day Tandy and Blackwell listened mostly, while their learned team of Attorneys went through all the options which they might face on the morrow. Around 4 pm they had arranged for dinner to be served, and after that the Attorneys retired to their homes and Tandy and Blackwell to bed.

Wednesday morning, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1800. The Court of the King's Bench in Dublin. There was ice on the windows. There was no fireplace, and although a few braziers had made their appearance it was very cold. Along the end of the huge oblong room there was a raised platform, and another on top of it. On that was the seat for the Chief Justice, Lord Kilwarden, flanked by seats for Justices Downes and Chamberlain, not yet present. Below them sat the recorders and other writers, eight of them, while on the floor of the Chamber, immediately below the Justices and their staff, sat the Attorney General on the left, and the Counsel for the Prisoners on the right. The Prisoners themselves and their agents were in a balcony approached by steps from the floor as well as by a curtained door at the back, and behind them was the public gallery, crammed to overflowing today. Opposite them on the left side of the room was a similar arrangement where sat the jury, and the rest of the room at the opposite end to the Justices was occupied by all manner of other court officers, and today anyone else possessed of a wig and gown who had the remotest excuse to be there.

The Clerk of the Crown called for silence, and for all to rise for the entrance of the Justices, who duly took their seats. The Attorney General wasted no time and immediately addressed the Court. The theatre began.

"My Lord, I now pray that execution should be awarded against the prisoners." And sat down again.

The Clerk of the Court then regularised the request calling on the Gaoler to present the prisoners, who were not legally there until this point, and then asking them what they might wish to say why execution should not be awarded and done upon them in the quaint ancient legal jargon still used. Now it was time for the

play to begin, as Curran had put it the previous day. He stood up, bowed to the Bench, and started.

Ponsonby now came forward. They were past masters at this theatre, Curran and Ponsonby, and knew just how to irritate Toler and gain Lord Kilwarden's sympathy.

"As my Learned Friend Mr. Toler knows full well," he said slowly, emphasising the 'Learned Friend' in a manner which came close to mockery, and omitting the usual courtesy of the title, proceeded to decimate Toler's position. Eventually the compromise foretold the previous day by Ponsonby was reached, and the trial was postponed until May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Now they could work. Firstly, they needed Crawford to come from Hamburg. Crawford at least. James Tandy was deputed to organise this for his father. There were several drafts of the approach to Sir James Crawford, or Crawford as it was sometimes spelt now, but in the end James Tandy wrote the following letter on March 10<sup>th</sup>:

*'Dublin, March 10, 1800.*

*Sir—The subject of this letter must be my apology for the trouble it gives you. I beg permission to acquaint you, that in consequence of proceedings in this kingdom, against my father, James Napper Tandy, and also against Mr. Hervey Morres, whom you caused to be arrested in Hamburg, in the month of November, 1798, the Court of King's-Bench in this kingdom, has appointed a trial to be had in the beginning of next Easter term. Upon this trial, my father has been advised, and has so sworn, that you will be a material witness. I am therefore to request and intreat your attendance in Dublin, on the 28th day of April next; and that you will immediately apprise me of your arrival, in order that such an arrangement may be made, that as little delay as possible may occur.*

*If your travelling expenses be an object to a person of your rank and situation, they shall be paid to you.*

*Permit me to request your immediate answer, whether it will be in your power to attend in Dublin at the time appointed.*

*I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient humble servant,  
JAMES TANDY.'*

The letter was duly sent to Hamburg through a friend in Dublin Castle in the Secretary's Office. Unfortunately, Sir James was not in Hamburg but in London, and so the letter caught up with him there, but not until April 10<sup>th</sup>. Sir James replied the following day:

*London 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1800.*

*Sir—I yesterday received your letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> of March. This delay must have arisen, as I conceive, from its having been by mistake sent to Hamburg: but as it came to me along with many others, I did not observe by what post it was brought. Nothing else should have prevented my answering it by return of the post.*

*If I can, by any act of mine, consistently with my duty to his majesty, be of any use to a man in your father's situation; or if he, or his family fancy that I can, their request shall be attended to; and in such a case, neither the expense, were it much heavier, nor the trouble, would be any consideration with me. I have, however, some business on my hands here, which may, perhaps, prevent my arrival in Dublin so early as the 28th instant. It indeed may happen that I cannot, without prejudice to my own affairs, reach that city until the middle, or perhaps a little past the middle, of the Easter Term: pray therefore inform me, whether in the case, the trial cannot be deferred. At all events, be assured of my readiness to comply with your wishes; and that any act by which I can administer any consolation to yourself, your father, or his family, will give me a degree of pleasure, equalled only by the pain which the discharge of those duties has sometimes occasioned me.*

*I am, Sir, your most obedient humble, servant,  
JAMES CRAWFORD.*

James Tandy also wrote to the First Officer of Justice in Hamburg, Matthias Meyers, and his assistant William Wallbom, calling upon them to attend as material witnesses and offering to defray their expenses. In addition, he had sent one George Smith with subpoenas to all three men, and having done that, all agreed that there was nothing further to be done in the matter of the witnesses, and that there should be no difficulty in getting further postponements pending their arrival if necessary. They now turned their attention to what now would be called a Public Relations exercise in Dublin. Again, this would fall mainly on the broad shoulders of James Tandy.

"Are ye still a member of the Guild of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, James?" Asked his father.

"Indeed I am" James replied, "and of the Vintner's, too".

"Well, now, the Sheriffs, as you know, maintain the jury lists, and"

"Say no more, Father, for I'm way ahead of you"

"I think it's time we left you two Tandy's" said Curran quickly, "a Good Night to you, and we'll see you next week" with which the Attorneys all left, and father and son were on their own for the first time for a long time.

"Did I offend them, that they left so quickly?" asked Tandy.

"No of course not!" laughed his son, "But there are things they know they don't know, if you follow me, and don't want to know either. For the next month I'll be attending the Common Council meetings far more than usual, and by the beginning of the new term there won't be a man in Dublin that doesn't know your trouble and how ill used you are. Including everyone eligible for jury service."

Time went by. May arrived. May 3<sup>rd</sup> arrived, but Sir James Crawford did not. There were further adjournments, and the case eventually came to court on May 19<sup>th</sup>, a Monday, Sir James having arrived late on the preceding Thursday night. The legal arguments went on for hours, but essentially boiled down to the question of whether or not the fact of his arrest by the King's Agents prior to the date specified in the King's Act of Attainder was tantamount to a surrender in terms of the Act, or whether the fact that his position as a guest of the King in the King's gaols was involuntary made a difference. Lord Kilwarden advised the Jury

accordingly, and they retired. After a very few minutes they returned. Their spokesman said quite simply “we find for the prisoner”.

An astonished Attorney General had no choice but to withdraw the case against Morres which was to have been heard separately, and both prisoners were returned to Kilmainham. Morres was to stay there until the end of the year when he was bailed by the Lord Mayor, Richard Manders. John Toler had no particular interest in Morres, but he had in Tandy. The affair of the duel back in '98 had become a gargantuan affront in his mind, and his quest for vengeance passed all reason now.

A witness who had been summoned to the last trial but not in the event been needed was Francis Foster, who had been the postmaster at Inishmacadam, now called Rutland, in Donegal when Tandy had landed there with the French in the Anacréon. He was now required to enter into a bond to prosecute Tandy when he was removed to Donegal to answer for his crimes in that county. That was sufficient to detain Tandy, or rather to keep him in detention, and he was indicted at Lifford Assizes on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1800, for having entered Rutland as a French Officer with an armed force.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Lifford.**

Lifford is actually the county town of Donegal, although many suppose that the larger Letterkenny fulfils that rôle. Today Lifford is a small town of only 1,400 residents, while Letterkenny has over 17,000.

In 1800 those distinctions did not of course apply, but Lifford was still the County Town, and accordingly that was where the court was which dealt with the offence with which Tandy was charged, for Rutland was also in Donegal. Tandy was not asked to appear in person when he was indicted there, remaining in the relative luxury of Kilmainham. Once established, the indictment was sufficient grounds to hold him. In 1800 everybody had other things on their minds. It was the year of the Act of Union. England and Ireland became one. And so the Irish Parliament dissolved itself, and Ireland sent MP's to London instead, with catastrophic effects on Dublin. The huge business which an active parliament in the capital city created, from property construction to candlestick makers, butchers to carriage makers, all vanished in the year of 1800. And John Toler ceased to be Attorney General, and was now Baron Norbury of Ballyorenode, County Tipperary and Chief Justice of Common Pleas.

So it was not until March 27<sup>th</sup> the following year, 1801, that he was moved to Lifford. In the meantime, however, ‘young’ James Tandy, now over 30, had not been inactive. As a youth he had served as a Lieutenant in the East India Company, where he was under Lord Cornwallis. He was of course a lowly Lieutenant in his 20's while Cornwallis was Governor General and in his 40's. Cornwallis was now Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Tandy a vintner with a



notorious father. But Cornwallis had always been antiseptically fair and honest, and was known to be horrified at the standards of prejudice and idiocy which prevailed among the leaders of the Dublin Ascendancy. So Grattan was a natural ally, Castlereagh a close friend, and guests who sought to enliven the vice-regal table with the happy news of the murder of yet another Catholic priest got short shrift. So taking his courage in both hands James approached Cornwallis, and mentioning his very brief association in India when he was younger, sought Cornwallis' support for his father.

To his surprise, Cornwallis was very sympathetic and approachable, and wrote to Lord Portland. Portland was Home Secretary but with special responsibility for Ireland where he too had been Lord Lieutenant. At this time the two were involved in blatantly illegal vote buying in order to ensure the passage of the Act of Union. A total of £30,850 was sent to Ireland between October 1799 and May 1800. Secret service money was used for paying government supporters, propaganda, purchasing seats in parliament, and establishing annuities. Sixteen Irish members were granted secret annuities ranging from £300 to £1000 a year. So they were very close, and Portland was predisposed to accept recommendations from Cornwallis. So Cornwallis wrote to him the following letter, dated February 16<sup>th</sup> 1801 when Tandy was still in Kilmainham:

*Dublin Castle  
February 15 1801.*

*My Lord, Mr. Napper Tandy is to go down to the County of Donegal in order to take his Trial at the Assizes that are to be held there in the ensuing Month.*

*This unfortunate old Wretch is now become an object of universal contempt, mingled, I believe, pretty generally with some grains of compassion. There is scarcely a doubt that He would be condemned, but I have been informed by the Crown Lawyers that it is not a matter of absolute certainty. He wishes to plead guilty, and confess his crimes in the fullest manner, if he had reason to hope that He might be pardoned on condition of his being banished from His Majesty's Dominions for Life.*

*Considering the incapacity of this old man to do further mischief, the mode by which he came into our hands, his long subsequent confinement, and lastly the streams of blood which have flowed in this Island, for the last three years, I am induced to request that your Grace will submit the above proposition to His Majesty's favourable consideration.*

*I have the honour to be with great*

*Truth and Respect,*

*My Lord,*

*Your Grace's most faithful*

*and obedient humble servant,*

*Cornwallis*

*His Grace*

*The Duke of Portland*

In England there was a famine developing among the poorer classes, and Portland was very fully occupied. So it was not until 6 weeks later that he replied:

Whitehall, April 1, 1801.

*My Lord, The circumstances under which your Excellency's dispatch of the 15th February might apologise for its having remained for some time unanswered, but I shall not attempt to excuse the neglect I have committed, and shall only express my hope that this shall reach you in time to remove any doubt that my silence may have occasioned respecting the sentiments of the King's Government with regard to the measure you recommended relative to Napper Tandy, the considerations on which it was founded, and the conditions you propose to annex to it, in all of which I am to assure your Excellency of the entire concurrence of His Majesty's confidential servants.*

*I am willing to flatter myself that the deference so justly paid to your Excellency's opinion and judgment, and the confidence with which it has been the intention of the King's Ministers unreservedly to repose in you, will have left you no doubt of giving effect to the measure you suggested with regard to Napper Tandy, and that you will have indulged that humanity towards him, which the consideration of his age and infirmities have appeared to you to admit, and which so distinguished your own character.*

*I have &c  
Portland*

Tandy, meanwhile, had been moved to Lifford, where his Trial came up on April 7<sup>th</sup>, Chamberlain who had sat with Lord Kilwarden on his case in Dublin the previous year was the Judge, assisted by Justice Fox. Tandy's legal team had perforce changed, and now comprised Messrs. Rolleston, Schoales and Sinclair. Tandy had no knowledge of the outcome of his son's approaches to Cornwallis, but he did have a general expectation that a guilty plea would be met with a conditional pardon, though by no means a certainty. But here in Lifford his sympathetic Dublin jury was absent, so a conviction was in any case likely, and a pardon more likely to follow a guilty plea than a not guilty one. Besides he was aware of the increasing uneasiness being felt about the means of his capture as Napoleon's influence grew. There was already talk of peace.

The trial opened with the usual long winded preliminaries, which went on for an hour or more, but eventually Napper Tandy expressed a desire to address the Court:

"My Lords," he said, "It is not my intention to give any further trouble to your Lordships on this occasion. I am very sorry your Lordships already have had so much. I am happy in having an opportunity of returning my acknowledgment to the Attorney General through this proceeding. In the discharge of the duties of his office, he had never forgotten the feelings of a man. My Lords, I have read the copy of the indictment with which I was served in Kilmainham. I admit that the facts contained in it are true, and I have no doubt that they can be proved. Why then should I put your Lordships, and the Court, to the trouble of going through the form of a trial? Of course I desire to plead 'guilty' to the indictment."

There was a stunned silence. Eventually Chamberlain asked if Tandy realised that a guilty plea meant that his life was forfeit, and suggested that he confer with his able Counsel before making a final decision. Tandy responded immediately,

saying that he had already mentioned his intention to his Counsel, that he realised the consequences of his action, and trusted that he would be able to meet it with the resignation of a Christian and the fortitude of a man.

There was nothing left for the Court to do but to pronounce sentence, and fix the execution date for May 4th.

By now of course Portland's letter had been received in Dublin, and orders granting a reprieve, an indefinite stay of execution, were issued. However he was still in Lifford, and in Lifford's small gaol he stayed, in much less comfortable circumstances than he had enjoyed at Kilmainham. He was 65 years old now, and the tribulations of the last three years had aged him considerably. He looked and behaved more like a 70-year-old, and yet had to share a cell with two debtors, Samuel Lawson and Alan Chriswell. However, he was able to order his food and drink from outside, so things could have been worse. The prison diet on its own was miserable, about a pound of meal or gruel, a pint of buttermilk and a pint of fresh milk a day. This lasted for almost year. His wife came down for a month, and he seems to have been able to make himself presentable and keep a good table.

It was an eventful year, primarily for James Tandy who was involved in almost continuous discussions with Dublin Castle on his father's behalf. A new Lord Lieutenant, Lord Hardwicke, had been appointed in March and adopted a firmer line than had Cornwallis. There were threats of transport to Botany Bay, offers of exile to America or Portugal, and various other ideas tossed around.

The end when it came was sudden, and nothing to do with Dublin Castle at all. The French had insisted on Tandy's release to France before the final Peace of Amiens could be signed. That treaty had been agreed by both sides in all its essentials, with Lord Cornwallis conducting negotiations for the British, and it may well have been his influence, *sub rosa*, which resulted in the apparently disproportionate French insistence on Tandy's release. But released he was, initially to the custody of his son, in Wicklow. Dublin Castle refused to allow him to sail from Dublin, lest his presence there cause disturbance, such was the old man's influence still. After three years and 103 days of incarceration he was put aboard a boat named the FAVOURITE NANNY, Captain Gunderson. He landed in Bordeaux on March 14<sup>th</sup> 1802. The Peace of Amiens was definitively signed on March 27<sup>th</sup> 1802.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Bordeaux.**

Tandy's last sea voyage was calm. For the first time in his experience in the last few years, the wind was neither contrary nor strong. In fact, for two of the six days the voyage occupied they were completely becalmed. Captain Gunderson was a friendly fellow who did his best for his passengers, who included apart from Tandy, a family from Wexford named FitzHenry and a barrister, Barnes. Tandy was grateful for the distraction, because apart from the difficulty of getting back to

relatively normal life with its freedoms to which he had become a stranger, he was apprehensive as to how he would be received in France, and by whom, and on what he was to live. There was a limit on what his son could send him, and he was very conscious that he had been a great burden to him both financially and personally over the last three years. He was worried about his wife, too. She had been a little distant when they had parted at Lifford, and although she had not said so, he felt that she was embarrassed by his incarceration which was beginning to pale on her friends in Dublin.

They arrived in Bordeaux on Sunday, March 14th. 1802. He was surprised to be greeted very civilly by the port authorities. No advance warning of his arrival had been given, but his reasonable command of the language, his instantly recognisable appearance, and his General's commission combined to ensure that he was given full diplomatic treatment.

"Bien sur, Citoyen Général" said the customs officer to his query about transport, "A Carriage has already arrived, Citoyen, and awaits you."

How could that be? He was puzzling over this question, when there was a disturbance on the other side of the hall, and he strolled over to see that the FitzHenry's were having their baggage thoroughly searched. He did his best to explain that they were his friends, but then FitzHenry started to gesticulate and speak loudly in English about his horse, in the expectation that if he spoke loudly enough he would be understood. Tandy immediately realised that horses had been declared prohibited imports, and addressed the officer explaining that it was his horse, and it was promptly released. Two others were sent back to Ireland.

Tandy's carriage had actually been supplied by some of the large 'Irish' community then resident in Bordeaux, mostly involved with wine. There was a Dillon originally from Mayo, and a Barton from Fermanagh at least three generations back who actually met him. He was taken to the biggest Inn in the town where he was given extremely comfortable rooms, and that evening royally entertained. Intrigued by the sheer number of apparently Irish people there, or at least people with Irish names, he made notes from time to time so as to remember them. In addition to his hosts Dillon and Barton, there were McCarthy's whose ancestor Dennis came over fifty years or so before and who ran the biggest Irish trading establishment in Bordeaux, MacCarthy Frères. There were O'Byrnes from Wicklow who had been here since 1750 and who now had vineyards at Château La Houringue-O'Byrne. There was a Jean-Baptiste Lynch, a member of an old Irish family which had been established in Bordeaux since the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There was a very impressive man in his forties called Luc-Tobie Clarke, originally from County Down. They came from Dromantine, near Newry, he said. There were Boyds from Belfast, and a friend of theirs who really was himself from Ireland, named Phelan, Bernard Phelan. Apart from young Bernard Phelan they seemed mostly to be second, third or even fourth generation Irish, most having settled here in the wine trade early in the century to avoid the Penal Laws. 'Les Oies Sauvages', they called themselves, 'the Wild Geese'. They drank his health again and again, in bumpers, so that when he finally got to bed he slept until midday the following day.

Next day brought loads of visitors. Tandy didn't even know where he was, but nobody else seemed to have any trouble finding him. The first was the American

Consul, William Lee, who had been appointed to his position by President Jefferson in 1801, so was now well established and extremely friendly. He had with him Theodore Peters, who was the American Commercial Agent. Both seemed overly flattering, he thought, congratulating him on his 'defeat of the English', as they put it. He was asked to a dinner the following week.

"I think you will find your time has been appropriated for the next two days or so" he said mysteriously as he left.

That mystery was solved with the arrival General Dufour, who was the officer commanding the city and the district, and he was accompanied by no less than 26 officers, all in full uniform.

"I have already sent an officer to advise the First Consul in Paris of your arrival" said he. "There is not a man in France does not rejoice on this occasion." Tandy wondered whether he had understood correctly, but asked:

"Should I apply for a passport to go and thank him personally for everything?"

"I will make enquiries", replied Dufour. "He is so busy these days that even those of us close to him have trouble getting an appointment to see him."

"I certainly have no wish to waste his time" said Tandy, "I merely wish to assure him of my total loyalty to him and to my adopted country, and to express my thanks for his intervention".

"I understand, Citoyen. But for now, we wish to extend to you the hospitality of Bordeaux. Tonight a dinner has been arranged in our Mess where you will meet the ladies, followed by a visit to the opera. Tomorrow we wish to show you our fair city, and would be pleased if you would take the salute at a parade in the afternoon. After that we will leave you in peace!"

And so it went on, and on, and on. But they paid his bills, a very necessary requirement, for Bordeaux was expensive. The American dinner was especially memorable. William Lee, the Consul, was an erudite man who had attained his position because of the influence of several influential and powerful friends such as Elbridge Gerry, George William Erving, and James Monroe. He was a Francophile who had travelled widely on the continent, and had embarked upon a lucrative commercial career in Bordeaux, since consuls had no set salary. And the Consulate, known as Fenwick House after the first American Consul Joseph Fenwick appointed 15 years earlier, was a grand place. Lee had invited the whole Irish contingent.

Tandy found himself sitting next to a man named John MacCarthy, who to his surprise addressed him in English, the English of County Tipperary.

"We've all heard of you, of course," he opened, "but we're all anxious to hear more of your adventures. I know you were rather tired when we met last week, and it was really unforgivable of us to foist that dinner on you."

In truth Tandy had been tired, very tired, and had perhaps had rather more than he should have done in the wine line.

"Why, Sir," replied Tandy, "I'd be happy to oblige you with my tale sometime. But tell me, you are clearly an Irishman from Ireland—how come you to be here? I had thought most of the Bordeaux wine Irish were descendants of the original Wild Geese, thinking in French now, speaking no Irish and talking English as a foreign language."

“You’re largely in the right of it” laughed MacCarthy. “The founder of our business was a fellow named Denis MacCarthy of Castle Cloghan near Skibbereen. He fought with the Jacobites, and beat a well advised retreat after the Battle of the Boyne. He married a Fitzgerald from Waterford, Jane her name was, and they had a wine trading business with Bordeaux. So he came here and never looked back. Now Denis was my Uncle, and had no children of his own, so he invited myself and my brother Dan over back in 1755, and here we still are. There you have our family history in a nutshell.”

“I’ll bet there’s a lot more to it than that. You don’t build a successful trading house like MacCarthy’s on luck alone,” smiled Tandy. “my own nutshell’s content is far less exciting. My family came to Ireland with Cromwell, and my own branch sprang from a younger son and have been ironmongers in Dublin ever since. It was as an ironmonger that I was fortunate enough to rise to some administrative prominence in Dublin, and it was as an admirer of the Americans in their fight against the English for exactly what we were fighting for, free trade, that I got involved in politics. I was instrumental in the founding of the United Irishmen, and I joined the Catholic society called the Defenders mainly to express my sympathy for our Catholic countrymen. I was never able to speak with the refined tones of Grattan, but I could always hold an audience of middle class Dubliners. But I had to flee the country after my joining the Defenders came to light, and went eventually to America where I made a number of influential friends which is why I’m here this evening, and thence to Paris. There they made me a General and put me on a boat to Ireland with some military gentlemen, but that little invasion didn’t work out. On my way back to Paris I was captured in Hamburg by the British, after which I spent three years and 103 days in British gaols. I was condemned to death but as you see not executed, but ‘banished’ and so came here. So there you have my story in a nutshell!”

“I’ll bet there’s a lot more to it than that too. You don’t build a revolution like yours on luck alone!” he laughed again. At which point they were interrupted by the major domo who announced Mr. William Lee who was to act as toastmaster:

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Citizens and Friends” quoth he, “I give you a toast to our esteemed First Consul, Napoléon Bonaparte”. All stood, and all drank the toast. Lee continued,

“And now, please rise and drink to the health of the President of the United States, Mr. Thomas Jefferson”. “The President” they all intoned as they drank.

“And now finally, I wish to propose a toast to our guest of honour, who met Mr. Jefferson while in Philadelphia a few years back. He has had a distinguished career in Ireland as a merchant, civil administrator, Volunteer Officer and Member of Parliament, and has followed it with devoted service to the French Republic, having wished to follow the example of the United States in throwing off the English Imperial yoke. I refer of course, to Général de Brigade, or Brigadier General, Napper Tandy. In bumpers, please, ladies and gentlemen!”

‘Bumpers’ involved filling their glasses to the brim, so there was a pause while this was done, and then draining them. A signal honour from the Consul.

That dinner marked the end of the formal entertainments attendant upon Tandy’s arrival in Bordeaux, much to his relief as his liver was starting to protest.

Sadly, his wife still refused to leave Dublin, despite entreaties and threats. He would have to get used to it.

Spring came, and with it Rue Moncheuil, No 2, Section 4, Bordeaux. That was the house he took, and with the house came an apparition such as he had not seen for many a long day. Her name was Marie. Marie Barrière. She was, she said, the *Femme de charge*, the Housekeeper. Tandy was instantly enchanted. He had always loved the ladies, especially those in France. He liked the clothes they wore, as he wrote to his son—he seemed to be writing to his son almost daily—‘a chemise, vulgarly called a Shift in your Country, and a thin Muslin gown constitutes the entire female Dress, some, indeed old-fashioned people, may have a bit of Handkerchief about the neck, or Bosom, but those who know how to Dress consider such an encumbrance, &, of course, despise them. The women in general walk remarkably well (indeed, I think the same may be said of them thro’ France) and the covering, which shows their shapes, makes them the object of my admiration’. Tandy exaggerated, of course, but not by that much. Muslin was extremely popular in France then, and was to remain so for another twenty or thirty years.

Spring also brought showers of gold, much to Tandy’s gratification. Indeed, the house and Marie would have been impossible without them. His son had been able to send him only £160 a year, perhaps £8,000 (\$12,000) or so in today’s money in terms of what it would buy, and while in the country districts he might have been able to live on that, in Bordeaux he could not. It was Dufour who brought these showers of gold, General Dufour who had wined him and dined him when he first arrived. He had asked him if honorary Generals like himself were given salaries, more in hope than expectation. Dufour had been non-committal, but a few days later had produced a document he called a Memorial, saying in effect ‘sign here please’. It had been forwarded to Paris. That had been six weeks ago. Now, May 16<sup>th</sup>, Dufour called again, and smilingly presented him with a draft for 5,000 francs, the new French currency which had replaced livres. That would equate to a salary of around £160,000 today, real wealth to Tandy. This, he was told, was an advance on back-pay of 6,000 francs due to him. Then, ten days later, he received a flowery letter from Paris begging to enclose the following:

*Paris, 26 mai 1802*

**ARRÊTÉ**

*Article 1er.—Le général Napper Tandy, victime de son dévouement à la cause de la liberté française, jouira d’une solde de retraite de 3,000 francs.*

So now he had a regular income. With it was a requirement that he adopt the dress of a *Général de Brigade*. But shortly after, because the salary was deemed inadequate, it was decided to promote him to a full *Général de Division*, or Major General, for whom the half pay salary was 3,000 francs a month. This was wealth.

Wealthy or not, he had always been careful of his money, and he was horrified at the cost of the General’s uniforms. He wrote to his son ‘*An entire dress would cost at least Eighty Guineas, exclusive of sash and Hatt, which would be upwards of Twenty more*’. That would be 2,000 francs or so, practically a year’s salary! This prompted an energetic, and eventually successful, search for the trunks of

clothing, including uniforms, which he had left on board the *Anacréon*. Food, too, exercised his thrifty mind. This was cheaper. '*Beef as good as you can get,*' he wrote '*5d per pound. Mutton, 6d per pound.*' and so on, through vegetables, soap, candles, fish. And brandy, he noted at 4/3d per gallon. A servant cost him 8 guineas a year, plus a bottle of wine a day! Putting that in perspective, a guinea would have been about 25 francs, so he was earning 120 guineas a year. 6d means six pence, of which there were twelve in a shilling. There were 20 shillings in £1, and 21 shillings in a guinea. Converting these sums to modern money is almost impossible, really, as £1 in 1800 would equal £52 today using the retail price index as a yardstick, but £770 using average earnings as a yardstick. So using the former, Tandy's 6 penny pound of beef would have cost £1.30 (\$1.90) today. Whichever way you look at it, Tandy was now comfortably off.

Marie! There was of course a big age differential. That, he was man of the world enough to recognise, for she was 30 years younger than he, and he, he supposed, was an old man now. 65!

Unfortunately, at 65 he did not seem to have lost his youthful urges, and his wife had made it quite clear she had no intention of joining him in Bordeaux. And his mind continued as active as ever. He had a lot in common with Marie, too—a love of chess, for example, and of music. She was a talented performer on the piano, and he had bought an almost new Erard Grand at a cost of a thousand francs. He himself enjoyed singing and had a fine voice still, and they enjoyed musical evenings quite often. They would go for long walks in the countryside around the vineyards of Medoc on the other side of the river, something he hadn't done since his youth. Sharing a bed seemed to come quite naturally.

By the following February, to his intense delight, a son was born, too. Gradually Napper Tandy was becoming French, and was accepted as part of French Society in Bordeaux. Ever active, he started a commercial association with his son's wine business in Dublin, selecting and exporting vintages from Bordeaux and Medoc to him. Corks, also. His son had always maintained an extremely close relationship with him and would continue to do so until his death. So Tandy was always sending requests for small articles he found difficult to get in France. Forks, for example. Forks in England and Ireland had only two prongs at that time. 'The forks will be really useful to me, particularly in carving, for I do not like your four prong'd forks, and here you meet with nothing else, all silver'. In this article at least, France led the English!

That summer of 1802 and the winter of 1802/1803 were probably the happiest time in Tandy's life. There were no threats of any sort with which to contend, the weather was idyllic in summer and mild in winter, the food and drink superb, company always available and convivial, and above all there was a loving woman always present. They went through a marriage ceremony that autumn, and lived openly as man and wife. Marie knew of Tandy's marriage in Ireland, but it seemed a long way away. And then Tandy became ill.

Dysentery was not uncommon in those days, but not usually fatal. But after twelve days it was clear that he was not going to recover, and so he asked Marie to send the others who had called to pay their respects from the room.

"Marie, dear," he said weakly, "I fear I am going. So there is one thing we must do"



“Of course you’re not going, dear” she interrupted, but he went on,

“I am, love, and you must try to be brave. Now listen, please. If I simply leave you my belongings in my Will I fear my wife in Ireland will contest it. So I have had a draft drawn in your name for three thousand francs which I have saved. Please open that desk draw and take it”. In tears the weeping woman did as he asked, for it was in fact quite clear to her, too, that the end was close.

“Don’t weep, my dear, remember the good times, and find comfort in our son. Now, please send in Markey and Gomez the elder, for I need them to witness my Will”.

That evening, August 24<sup>th</sup> 1803 at 10 pm, Napper Tandy died, in his bed, at home, his hand in his beloved Marie’s.

### **Historical Note.**

While this book is written in ‘novel’ format, the characters, events and principal situations have been interpreted according to available historical fact. I have relied heavily on Rupert J Coughlan’s excellent and scholarly biography, Napper Tandy, but I have also referred to a host of other publications. These are listed under ‘Principal Sources’ at the end.

**The ANACRÉON.** This was a real ship, and the names mentioned as connected with her are real, as for example her Captain and First Lieutenant. That also applies to everybody who appears in the book – there are no fictitious characters. The voyage described in Chapter 1 is also accurate, both as to timing and route. Tandy’s dislike of rough sea is my invention.

**Leonard MacNally.** Unknown to anyone outside the British Secret Service until after his death twenty years later, MacNally was a traitor to the United Irishmen’s cause and at the time was receiving from the Government secret funds an annual salary of £300 – worth perhaps £200,000 or \$300,000 today, in addition to his legal fees.

**Young Napper Tandy.** The birth of Tandy seems to have gone unrecorded, so I have placed it outside Dublin for the reasons stated in the narrative. I have also followed Coughlan in placing it in 1737, based on the evidence of a deposition of his son to the Privy Council in 1802 as to his father’s age, which he said was then 65. There is a commemorative plaque on the spot where his house is thought to have stood putting his date of birth as 1740, but for this there is no evidence. The reference to deep snow is again based purely on the fact that there was a series of three very hard winters from 1740 to 1743, and there was deep snow.

**Abraham Shackleton** was as described in the book according to papers left by his daughter, Mary Leadbeater. Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, was a direct descendant in the fifth generation.

**England.** James Fitzpatrick is a name for Tandy during his sojourn in England which I have invented. It is fairly well documented that he used a false identity there, but I have been unable to trace what it was. Likewise, while the dates of his residence in England are established, the location is not, so I have invented what

seemed plausible. He went to a great deal of trouble to hide himself. The meeting with Daniel O'Connell is a figment of my imagination, as is that with John Jay. The same applies to visits to theatres and so on. Historically, these people and these theatres were in London at the time, and there is a strong possibility that he attended them, but no evidence. His wife was with him, and did return to Ireland, but there is no evidence as to her reasons.

**Philadelphia.** My evidence for the meetings I have described is circumstantial. That they took place is a matter of record, mostly in Tandy's letters which were voluminous, but the subjects covered are not.

**Hamburg.** The conditions under which they were at first imprisoned in Hamburg may have been a good deal worse than described here. The memoirs of Corbet in particular describe conditions which rank with the worst I have ever read of anywhere. However, the only evidence extant of the conditions to which Tandy himself was subjected are as described.

**London.** 'Napper Tandy' IS Cockney rhyming slang for Brandy, and Newgate prison DID have a bar for those that could afford it, but there is no evidence that places to origin of the slang phrase as described—it seems possible, though.

**Dublin/Lifford.** The Court cases are mostly taken from court records. I have no evidence that Napoleon's insistence on Tandy's release prior to the signing of the peace of Amiens was a fiction contrived by Cornwallis, but it seems possible. Cornwallis when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had given his word to the Tandy family that a pardon would be arranged, Cornwallis was the English negotiator responsible for the Peace, and Tandy's use to France more or less at an end. On the other hand, Napoleon was always generous to those who had served him, and even to their families. Wolf Tone's widow, for example, received a pension in France for the rest of her life after her husband's death.

**Bordeaux.** I have taken some liberties with the last period of Tandy's life in Bordeaux, about which I have been able to find relatively little evidence. All the Wild Geese families did live in Bordeaux as described, but I have no evidence to support the presence of specific individuals at specific dinners, although the dinners themselves, and the toasts at the US Consul's dinner, are a matter of record. The Death scene, too, is supposition. It is however a fact that Tandy's wife and son in Ireland did contest the Will, successfully, but when they were able to look at the assets, very little cash remained. So it seems to me likely that Tandy made provision for Marie Barrière in cash. He was clearly lucid on the day he died because his Will and the record of death are both dated August 24<sup>th</sup> 2003.

Generally, the situations and the facts are as I have described them, but the conversations and thoughts I have put into the mouths and heads of the characters are my own invention. They are based on what I think may well have been said or thought.

I have rejected the general assumption by the few who have written anything about Tandy that he was a drunkard and a poltroon. These can be traced to one specific source, a paid informer named Orr. He seems to have been justifying his payments by wildly exaggerating statements of a disaffected colleague, Colonel Blackwell. Orr was generally believed, notably by Castlereagh, which lent him credibility. But independent evidence of Blackwell's vituperative and unfounded

abuse is plentiful. Tandy's actions do not accord with those of a habitual drunkard. Moreover, nobody else has suggested that he was one. Rather, I tend towards Rupert Coughlin's view, and think he was a relatively sober middle class character in an age when drunkenness was just one of the vices which seem to have been considered an achievement by the Ascendancy.

Napper Tandy has not been misunderstood so much as not understood. Except perhaps by the French, who honoured him. He was a founder member of the United Irishmen. He was condemned to death but not executed. He led 'the last invasion of Ireland' as described in the book.

All this is true, but almost irrelevant to the man and his contribution to Ireland. His name comes into a ballad, the Wearing of the Green, and that is about all most Irish people know about him. Most other people have never even heard of him, although a London cockney may think the name is just rhyming slang for a brandy (and an Australian drinker for a Shandy!).

In fact, Tandy's real claim to fame is as a Municipal Activist and Parliamentary Reformer. Had he died in 1795 he would be known as one of Ireland's greatest. He was a fearless defender of what he conceived to be right and true. Had he lived in the television age he might have ended up as President. But the fact that others, less intelligent than he who achieved far less, died so horribly and so young has denied him his rightful place in Irish history. I mean, of course, Wolfe Tone who fatally injured himself by cutting his own throat the day before he was due to be hanged, aged 35; and Robert Emmet, who was hanged and his corpse beheaded just three weeks after Tandy's death in Bordeaux. He was 25. Tandy died in bed, of Dysentery, aged 66.

### **Principal Sources:**

Coughlan, Rupert J, *Napper Tandy*: Dublin: Anvil Books Ltd., 1976.

Leadbeater, Mary. *The Leadbeater Papers*: London: Bell and Daldy, 1862.

Walsh, John Edward. *Sketches of Ireland Sixty Years Ago*: Dublin: James McGlashan, 1847.

Musgrave, Sir Richard. *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland*: Dublin: Robert Marchank, 1802.

Froude, James Anthony . *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* Vol. 3: London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1872.

Lecky, William Edward Hartpole. *A History of England in the Eighteenth Century* Vol. 7: London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1890.

Kennedy, Charles Stuart. *The American Consul: A History of the United States Consular Service, 1776-1914*: Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Clarke de Dromantin, Patrick. *L'exode de toute une noblesse pour cause de religion*: Bordeaux: University Press.

Madden, R.R. *The United Irishmen, their Lives and Times*. Dublin: J Madden & Co., 1846.

The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, October 2008.

Various newspaper extracts from the *Times*, the *Irish Times*, the *Freeman's Journal*, Wilson's Directory, and Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*.

