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United Irishmen-The London Connection.

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UNITED IRISHMEN---THE LONDON CONNECTION

The American War of Independence, the French Revolution and Thomas Paine's book "The Rights of Man" caused a revolutionary spirit to sweep Europe. The Society of United Irishmen was formed in Belfast on the 18th October 1791 on the basis of equal rights for all irrespective of religion, and radical reform of parliamentary representation. Its aims were constitutional reform by purely constitutional means.

On the 9th. November 1791 a branch of the United Irish Society was formed in Dublin with Simon Butler as chairman and James Napper Tandy as secretary. This attracted members from the Catholic committee. It was pledged to an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish Nation in parliament and to promote a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, communion of rights and union of power among Irishmen of all religious persuasions. A government spy Thomas Collins was unable to report any illegalities in its proceedings. Close contact was established with English radical societies.

In the meantime, the English Revolution Society was founded in 1788 to commemorate the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

Its aims were:-

- (1) That all civil & political authority is derived from the people.
- (2) That abuse of powers justifies resistance.
- (3) That the right of private judgment, liberty of conscience, trial by jury, freedom of the press and freedom of election ought ever to be held sacred & inviolable.

They demanded the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Dr. Richard Price was the main speaker at the centenary meeting.

In November 1789 Revolution societies sent letters of congratulation to the French Directory on the success of the revolution. Toasts were also drunk to the liberties of Ireland. Flood & Horne Tooke were among important members at meetings in the London Tavern. Sheridan was also involved.

The London Corresponding Society was formed in March 1792 to join two movements--the Society for Constitutional Reform and the London Revolution Society. Maurice Margarot became president of the new society and Thomas Hardy secretary. In May 1792 a Seditious Writings Proclamation was passed making correspondence and press articles difficult.

Belfast on the 14th July 1792 organised a feast and procession of Volunteers to celebrate the anniversary of the Revolution. 6000 assembled at the Linen Hall and voted an address to the new republic.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald in August 1792 proposed a toast to the Republic of France at a Paris banquet which was reported by British government agents, with the result that he was cashiered from the Army in 1793 without pension or recompense.

On 1st. February 1793, France declared war on Britain. Wolfe Tone went to France to seek help for a rebellion, and the United Irishmen went secret.

The Convention Act was passed in Ireland in July 1793, having been proposed by Lord Clare. This made delegate assemblies illegal in Ireland. This same act remained in force until 1878.

Archibald Hamilton Rowan who had lived in London, and the Hon. Simon Butler lodged a protest at the Lord Advocate's office about the trial of Thomas Muir, a Scottish republican and about the disparaging references to the United Irishmen. Archibald Hamilton Rowan received some of his education in Westminster School and was a fairly fearless type.

He was tried for Treason and sent to Newgate Prison in Dublin on 29th. January 1794. At his trial Philpot Curran saved him from the Death sentence. Thomas Collins had been informing on Rowan. Aided by his attorney Matthew Dowling Rowan escaped from prison and managed to get to France where he was initially treated as a British spy. With the help of Irish friends in France he went to America on the 11th. June 1795. The spy Collins fled for a while to the West Indies but was used again later to spy on Valentine Lawless the son of Lord Cloncurry in 1797. Matthew Dowling was Lord Cloncurry's solicitor.

The Rev. William Jackson was sent as an emissary of the United Irishmen to the French Committee of Safety. He arrived back on a mission to Ireland at Hull from Hamburg on the 26th. February 1794. Nicholas Madgett, an Irish exile with an intelligence post in the French navy had suggested that Jackson should be sent to evaluate French sentiment and sympathy in Ireland & England masquerading as an American. He was an Anglican clergyman and had previously served in St. Mary's in the Strand and the Tavistock church in Drury Lane. In London he visited William Stone

a coal & coke merchant in Rutland Place, Upr. Thames Street. This man's brother, John Harford Stone, a radical was resident in Paris.

By this time the infamous informer Samuel Turner in Hamburg had sent information to Pitt. Another informer, a United Irishman & attorney offered to accompany him to Ireland. His name was John Cockayne. He befriended the Rev. Jackson and encouraged him to speak freely to him. Leonard McNally, also a government agent treated the Rev. Jackson to a dinner in Dublin. The reports Jackson sent to France were intercepted by British agents.

Cockayne betrayed him. Fortunately Lord Edward refused to meet him. The Revd. Jackson was arrested on 28th. April 1794 and tried for High Treason in April 1795 with Cockayne as witness for the prosecution. Only one witness was needed to convict a man in an Irish court. When charged he dropped dead in the dock from taking poison possibly with the connivance of his wife.

At this stage the two main wreckers of the 1798 rebellion, Leonard Mc Nally and Samuel Turner were at work, while posing as enthusiastic United men. In fact their identities were not discovered until at least 50 years after the event. On 4th. May 1794 the United Irishmen were suppressed in Dublin. Only revolutionaries remained as members other than government agents. Most of the Defenders became United Irishmen and took the secret oath.

James Quigly also known as Fivey was born in 1762 at Castleraw, Co. Armagh. He was educated at Dundalk grammar school and was ordained as a Catholic priest in January 1785. In March 1785 his bishop sent him to the College of the Lombards in Paris for Theological studies. Fr. Quigly's liberal views did not altogether please the superior, the Rev. John Baptist Walsh.

After the Revolution he had to flee France on the 12th. October 1789 and returned home. He found that the Peep of Day Boys were raiding Catholic homes in Co. Armagh. The Defenders, a Catholic organisation fought them. Fr. Quigly tried to make peace. He ministered in Dundalk for three years. He seemed to be in contact with Neilson and Russell in Belfast.

It was not until his own home and family business were destroyed in the summer of 1795 that he adopted revolutionary ideas. His father was injured and the family was maltreated. Actually his brother Robert had previously asked a magistrate for protection but none was afforded. Both his father's & brother's businesses were destroyed. The Quigly family went to Dundalk on the 21st. September 1785.

Valentine Lawless (the future Lord Cloncurry) swore Fr. Quigly into the United Irishmen in his father's house in Merrion St. Dublin about May or June 1796.

In February 1797 Leonard Mc Nally was reporting Fr. Quigly's movements. Several of Fr. Quigly's friends were gaoled in Dublin and Dundalk, but he himself got a friendly warning. He fled to Liverpool and then to Manchester lodging at the sign of the Fire Engine, kept by Isaac Perrins. He discussed his plans with a Belfast weaver called James Dixon who asked him about the United Irish oath, for the Manchester Corresponding Society. A collection was made for Fr. Quigly's mission which amounted to £60. Robert Gray, a government informer got to know of his mission. Before leaving Manchester Fr. Quigly helped to organise societies. At a later date James Dixon and Mary Perrins, wife of Isaac were to give evidence in April 1798.

Fr. Quigly went to London and was nearly assassinated in Ficcadilly. In London he stayed with the Binns brothers at 14 Plough Court, Fetter Lane (this has become Plough Lane today). John Binns was now chairman of the London Corresponding Society. He met Valentine Lawless and Col. Despard at secret meetings in Furnivals Inn cellar (where the Prudential Assurance building is situated now). Benjamin Binns wrote a document for Fr. Quigly to take to France depicting English grievance and disaffection in the army & navy from the revolutionary committee of England.

Another refugee from the North of Ireland the Rev. Arthur Mac Mahon, a United Irishman and Presbyterian minister of Holywood, Co. Down was forced to come to London. He met Fr. Quigly and arranged to go to France with him because Fr. Quigly was a fluent French speaker. The Rev. Mac Mahon got up a subscription for Fr. Quigly's expenses and collected £25 including £15 from a Mr. Bell in the city.

They travelled together to Cuxhaven and met Samuel Turner, the United Irish representative in Hamburg also the main British informer. Edward Lewins, the honest representative in Paris was suspicious and refused to meet them. Tone and the French government were cautious with Mac Mahon and distrusted Fr. Quigly.

Napper Tandy on the other hand welcomed them and advised that Edward Lewins should be replaced as representative in Paris. Napper Tandy was unaware of Samuel Turner's perfidy and thought Lewins was not active enough. Fr. Quigly soon ran out of money because he could not act as chaplain without taking an oath which he thought schismatic.

He returned to London on the 30th. November 1797 and was soon followed by the Bow st. constables. Samuel Turner had passed on information to Lord Downshire. Turner was known in correspondence as Lord Downshire's friend as he did not want his identity revealed. After lodging with the Binns' brothers, Fr. Quigley obtained money from Valentine Lawless and returned to Dublin on the 5th. January 1798 with Benjamin Binns and William Bailey. He stayed at the house of a man called James Dixon on Ushers Quay.

Francis Magan, a constant visitor to Dixon's house, reported his presence to the Castle. Mc Nally and other spies followed him. Fr. Quigly visited Lord Edward Fitzgerald and discussed the Lewins case with him on the 11th. January. He also sent messages to the Northern committee that a French invasion was coming.

To avoid detection he left Dublin in the dark with a relation called Valentine Derry and stopped a night at Rusk. He probably travelled from Drogheda to England.

On February 11th. 1798 he reached London and stayed with the Binns' brothers. He visited Valentine Lawless at his home in 31 St. Albans St. where he had dinner with Arthur O'Connor, who had left Dublin after being tipped off by Sheridan in January. Suspicion fell on O'Connor because of his articles in the "Press". On the 22nd. December Peter Finnerty the publisher of the "Press" was arrested for seditious libel. Lawless was collecting money for his defence.

Valentine Lawless in his journey from Ireland had been friendly with a person called D'Auvergne not realising that he was a spy. After he founded an United Irish group in the Temple, and had helped destitute Irish, he was being watched. Pelham, the chief secretary in Ireland sent Leonard Mc Nally over from Dublin to track Lawless.

It was agreed that Arthur O'Connor should go to Paris to replace Edward Lewins and Fr. Quigly should travel at the same time. Fr. Quigly posed as Captain Jones attended by two servants Allan and O'Leary and travelled via Whitstable to Margate. Arthur O'Connor posed as Captain Morris and travelled via Canterbury with John & Benjamin Binns. Two Bow St. runners Fugeon & Rivett were in pursuit and caught up with the party in the Kings Head Inn at Margate on the 28th. February 1798, where they had stayed the night and were just eating breakfast. A search was made in their belongings. A document purporting to be an address from the London republicans to the French Directory and a diary were found in Fr. Quigly's greatcoat.

O'Connor's portmanteaux had £900, a military uniform and papers relating to Lord Edward.

They were all charged with High Treason. Meanwhile an Irish priest, the Rev. John Waring, had informed the Duke of Portland, the Home Secretary, on the 15th. February about the United English movement in Manchester and information about Fr. Quigly's involvement there had petered through.

The prisoners remained in the Watch Tower of Margate for a few days and on the 6th. March were committed to the Tower of London awaiting collection of evidence against them.

On April 11th. William Wickham, the Whitehall secretary found a Frederick Dutton from Newry, a man of disrepute to swear to Fr. Quigly's handwriting. He, Dutton claimed to have seen Fr. Quigly write his name for the purpose of getting a watch raffled, which belonged to a poor man under sentence of death.

Fr. Quigly wrote a letter to Lord Edward but the messenger passed it on to the government. They were kept in strict isolation in the Tower and examined many times, sometimes by the Privy Council. They were in the Tower from March 6th. to April 7th. 1798.

On April 7th. they were sent to the County gaol in Maidstone. Matthew Dowling managed to visit him there and sent a message to Valentine Lawless for funds to defend them. Lawless sent £300 and engaged a skillful attorney named Foulkes to defend Fr. Quigly, and asked Thomas Braughwell, the land agent of his father, a lawyer, to help a distressed member of his priesthood laying ironed in the dungeons of the gaol.

He also wrote to John Joseph Henry a brother in law of Lord Edward who subscribed generously. The letter to Braughwell was intercepted and Henry Grattan was arrested in mistake for "Little Henry" and later released.

The trial started on the 12th. April. On April 30th. all the prisoners pleaded not guilty. Fr. Quigly asked for Bernard Coile & Valentine Derry as witnesses. On 21st. May, O'Connor had Lords Norfolk, Moira, Suffolk, Oxford, John Russel, Thanet, Charles Fox, Sheridan, Whitbread & lawyer Erskine pleading in his defence that he was of good character but rash.

Three judges were in attendance, and all the picked jury were English which proved to O'Connors advantage. Judge Buller leaned heavily on Fr. Quigly and a verdict of guilty was found in his case. John Binns had offered to take the blame for the papers found in Fr. Quigly's pocket but Fr. Quigly would not let him.

All the others were acquitted and Fr. Quigly was condemned to be hung, drawn and quartered while pleading his innocence to the charge. When the sentence was read he was reported to have taken a pinch of snuff and murmured 'ahem'.

A United man, John Taylor put out the lights in the court and a tussle took place trying to rescue Fr. Quigly but Fr. Quigly thought it unwise.

Wickham informed secretary Cooke in Ireland using Francis Higgins, the Catholic informer as messenger. A book entitled "The Sham Squire" has been written about this infamous character who deceived even Daniel O'Connell about his patriotism.

O'Connor was arrested after leaving court and spent the next few years in Fort George prison in Scotland.

Lord Holland said after the trial, that Fr. Quigly was condemned on false and contradictory evidence.

The Catholic bishop of London, Bishop Douglas, was asked for a priest to attend him. A certain Father Griffiths was sent, he alone was given permission by the government. He had helped to break the naval mutiny at the Nore.

Fr. Griffiths refused to give Fr. Quigly absolution until he had given him some information he required about the United Irishmen. Fr. Quigly would not agree to this condition which was repeated for nine days. Fr. Quigly mentioned this episode in memoirs he wrote before the end. Valentine Derry faithfully visited him every day.

On the day of the execution Fr. Griffiths relented and gave him absolution and the sacraments. At 11 a.m. on the 7th June 1798 he was chained to a hurdle and dragged to Pennington Heath a mile from Maidstone where he was hung and beheaded. He read his prayerbook for 15 minutes on the scaffold, around which, a huge crowd had gathered. He then recited a psalm, forgave his enemies and Fr. Griffiths, and after a prayer told the hangman he was ready.

Tone on hearing of his execution proposed that a monument should be erected to this hero when freedom was secured.

Fr. Quigly's remains were reburied in the ground of the Catholic church of St. Francis of Assisi, Maidstone, where a Celtic cross was erected to his memory. The inscription reads

"Pray for the soul of Revd. James O'Coigly a native of Ireland who was put to death on Pennenden Heath June 7th. 1798.

"Chuir daoine dá chineadh Gaedhealach féin suas an comhartha seo agus na trí fuinneóga os cionn na h-altóra le taisbeant fheabhas is thaithnigh leó a dhílseacht dá chreideamh agus don tír a bhfuair sé bás ar a son"

"This memorial & the three windows over the altar have been erected by a number of his fellow countrymen as a record of their admiration for his LOVE OF CREED & COUNTRY FOR WHICH HE DIED"

Three windows are to be seen in the church.

Returning to the London Corresponding Society which paralleled the growth of the United Irishmen in London, a meeting on the 14th. April 1794 expressed indignation at the imprisonment of United Irishmen in Dublin. John Thelwall was chairman at a large Chalk Farm meeting at which a number of government spies were present. Thomas Hardy the secretary was arrested on the 12th. May; Thelwall, the Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, Horne Tooke and Lovett were arrested at later dates. Habeus Corpus was suspended on the 22nd. May. Some were confined in the Tower until the 24th. October and then removed to Newgate prison. They were all released by December 1794 but became inactive in an official capacity after that.

John Binns, the Dublin plumber's mate & journalist became chairman in December. A huge meeting was held at Copenhagen House Islington on the 26th. October 1795 with over 100,000 people in attendance. Binns read the "Address to the Nation". The Seditious Meetings Act was then passed on the 7th. December 1795.

On the 11th. March 1796 Binns and John Gale Jones were arrested. Francis Place a self educated tradesman and tailor became secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Binns & Jones had paid extensive visits to the naval dockyards Portsmouth and Chatham among them. They had also been to Birmingham to form a corresponding society. The sedition case against John Binns came up in Birmingham. The Crown was expected to make much of Binns' visit to Portsmouth prior to the mutiny. Place carefully arranged the defence and engaged Samuel Romilly to act on his behalf with a mute prompter Dr. Samuel Parr to condition the jury's emotional responses. He seated the respected old Whig schoolmaster in a large chair facing the Jury box. As the prosecution presented their arguments he would make faces and shake his head in disbelief. When the defence, however, made a point he would show his appreciation and gaze in admiration.

Spies at the meeting at the Swan Tavern in Birmingham reported what Binns had said at the time, and were allowed to carry on until they brought up about Corsica, and the male Corsicans having voting rights under King George including Napoleon, which caused great laughter in the court to Binns benefit.

Samuel Romilly allowed the other two witnesses to give their evidence and then showed how much they contradicted one another. The prosecution was made to look ridiculous, when summing up for the defence he asked for the Crown witnesses to be questioned again, which the Crown were reluctant to do. Then Romilly made a brilliant speech to the Jury. The Jury acquitted Binns. Shortly after Binns and Place brought out a book "The Trial of John Binns", from the shorthand transcript, with a dedication to the Jury:—"the men who have given me liberty to publish and who have delivered me from the hands of my enemies".

One of the secretaries of the Society, Thomas Evans, took temporary accommodation at 14 Plough Court. Leading members now were Evans, John Binns, Dr. Robert Watson, Col. Edward Despard, Crossfield and Hodgson. Six including Binns were arrested at a meeting at St. Pancras but released because of the crowds supporting them. Robert Watson, a friend of Despard was arrested in 1797 for sending intelligence to France. He was imprisoned until release in 1799 when he went to France.

The United Irishmen used to meet in Furnivals Inn cellar with other seditious bodies. Some meetings were held in the Freemasons Arms in Gt. Queen St. Lawless, Bonham, and Despard frequented the meetings. Among Lawless's friends were a Mr. Stewart of Acton Mr. Agar, nephew of the Archbishop of Dublin, Richard Curran the son of Philpot John Bonham, and Treanor a secretary of Lawless.

At a meeting on the 19th. April 1798 at Wych St., Drury Lane, Evans & Despard were arrested. Despard was kept in Cold Bath Fields gaol, Clerkenwell for some weeks. More about Despard later. Bonham was next arrested and lodged in the same prison.

Some references must be made to the series of naval mutinies. The French invasion was to take place when the mutinies occurred. Part of the plan was secret so it is difficult to ascertain how much the United Irishmen were involved for there was general dissatisfaction with conditions in the Royal Navy. Sufficient to say that a large proportion of the navy (estimated 11450 men), marines (4058 men) was Irish and the Irish were significant among the leaders of the mutiny.

William Duckett was an organiser of the mutiny on behalf of the French committee. He worked with Turner at Hamburg and Tone suspected something which made him distrust Duckett not knowing that Turner was the traitor. Crews were told to hoist the Irish green flag with Erin go Bragh on it. It is not confirmed whether this happened or not.

John Gale Jones and John Binns had made visits to the naval dockyards of Deptford, Chatham, Portsmouth and Gosport on behalf of the Corresponding Societies. An Irish naval recruit and lawyer called Lee was enlisting men at Plymouth by oath in the United Irishmen. There was talk of setting fire to forts. Lee and two others were arrested, found guilty of mutiny and executed by firing squad.

In February 1797, a small group of sailors met clandestinely on the H.M.S. 'Queen Charlotte' to make a mighty protest about the wrongs they suffered. Their leader was a quartermaster's mate of the 'Royal George', a Belfastman called Valentine Joyce. He had served a sentence for sedition and had lost his tobacco shop in Belfast as a result. The grievance committee made him leader because he could read and write. He composed an extraordinary petition for redress of inequitable pay and copies of it were circulated to each ship, first of all in the Spithead (or Portsmouth) area and intended for the whole fleet. Delegate assemblies were formed on each ship and at least one third of the delegates had Irish names. The petition was addressed separately from each ship to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. The protest achieved some success and some promises were made to relieve their grievances. No punitive action was taken against the delegates there.

The following report was made in 1797 about the LCS committee
" The mutiny which took place in the fleet, if considered in all its circumstances,

" will be traced to the intimate connection with the principles and practices described by Your Committee, and furnished the most alarming proof of the efficacy of those plans of secrecy and concert, so often referred to, and of the facility with which they are applied for inflaming and heightening discontent (from whatever cause it proceeds) and for converting what otherwise might produce only a hasty and inconsiderate breach of subordination and discipline, into the most settled and systematic treason and rebellion. These principles and this concert could alone have produced the wide extent of the mutiny and the uniformity of its operation in so many and such distant quarters. The persons principally engaged in it, even in its early stages, were many of them United Irishmen. The mutineers were bound by secret oaths to the perpetration of the greatest crimes. And attempt was made to give the ships in the mutiny, the name of 'The Floating Republic'."

The mutiny spread to the Nore (Thames Estuary area), mainly through the efforts of Charles Mac Carthy who was executed at a later date. From there it spread to Gt. Yarmouth. Richard Parker, an Exeter man led the mutiny in the Nore. He was 30 years old and had been a lieutenant in the navy before, a schoolmaster and carpenter also. His methods were more militant and the government were more hostile to his demands. Many of the ships hoisted a red flag and he blockaded the Thames with 24 ships. Troops at Gravesend were ordered to fire on the ships but being mostly Irish mutinied as well. Pitt used a Catholic priest (reckoned to be Fr. Griffiths) to encourage men to submit. In the end fighting broke out between ships and Parker succumbed. He was court marshalled and hung. A number of other leaders including many Irish were hung or shot. Parker was hung on the 30th. June 1797.

Edward Marcus Despard, mentioned before, had served with distinction for the British in the American War was made Lt. Colonel in 1784 and superintendant of English affairs at Yukatan or Honduras. He was also an engineer and had built fortifications in Jamaica. He even slept in the same tent as Horatio Nelson. He was slighted by the government at Honduras and not sufficiently reimbursed. He pressed his claim in the House of Commons but was treated with contempt, which left him in a rebellious mood. He joined the United Irishmen and agreed to become leader in London.

When he was arrested in April 1798 he was consigned ironed to Cold Bath Fields gaol, Clerkenwell, put in a cold dark cell devoid of furniture, without a fireplace or glazed windows. Valentine Lawless and his friend John Reeves, an attorney, visited him. A letter from his wife Catherine was read in Parliament stating that he was some months in jail without fire, candle, chair, table, knife or fork, book, or glass in window. Lawless wrote to Wickham and the Duke of Portland with little result. Eventually he was put in a room with a fire. Lawless also offered Despard's wife and family asylum in the bosom of his own family at Lyons near Clondalkin.

Lawless was by now coming more under the notice of Pitt. Pitt did not like him after a pamphlet he had published previously in Dublin criticising the projected Union of Ireland and Gt. Britain. Things came to a head after a St. Patrick's day banquet in the Freemason's Tavern, Gt. Queen St. Lawless went dressed in green and slumped when the toast to the queen was proposed. In a search of papers at Lord Edward's house in Dublin a seal made by Lawless was found.

Among Lawless's associates in the Temple were a Mr. Stewart of Acton, Mr. Agar, nephew of the archbishop of Dublin, Richard Curran the son of Philpot, John Bonham, and Treanor a secretary of Lawless. Bonham had been arrested in April and lodged in Cold Bath Fields gaol. The others were arrested on 21st. May on warrants from the Secretary of State on suspicion of high treason. They were examined in the Duke of Portlands office on the June. Curran and Treanor were discharged after a short examination.

In a letter of William Wickham references were made of the difficulty of bringing suspects to trial:-

"It is evident under the present circumstances and with the evidence of the nature of that of which Government here is in possession strong and decisive as it is, that none of the persons can be brought to trial without exposing secrets of the last importance to the state, the revealing of which may implicate the safety of the two kingdoms."

Lawless was obstinate with his interrogators and the three remaining in custody were released on recognisances on 30th. June 1798.

Lawless went, on release to the North of England, met Mary Ryal of Scarborough and fell in love with her. He became engaged to her and notified his father of his intentions. Lord Cloncurry told him he would need money to support a wife and advised him to return to law studies in the Temple.

Due to correspondence between Lord Castlereagh in Ireland and William Wickham the Bow St. constable Rivett arrested him on the 14th. April 1799 under a warrant by the Duke of Portland.

The Privy Council examined him and Pitt, the prime minister asked him why he had helped Fr. Quigly and how he knew John Bonham. He was reprimanded for visiting Furnivals Inn and having been in company with Despard. Pitt told him he was a United Irish organiser. Lawless asked him to bring his accusers. He refused to answer questions and was committed to the Tower at the same time as Bonham.

Lawless was sent to a room in the Tower previously occupied by Benjamin Binns and said it was not good enough for an heir to the peerage, and drew the Governor's attention to it. He was given a better room in a garret overlooking Tower Hill. At first he was treated badly by the warders and denied writing materials. Foulkes acted on his behalf and Lord Moira was very helpful in negotiations with Portland. His sisters Charlotte & Valentina wrote and kept his spirits up. Lord Cloncurry made Charlotte an attorney at law to his will so that the property could not be taken.

His father died but Valentine was kept in prison until Pitt resigned as Prime minister. Mr. Burne a barrister lawyer of Lord Cloncurry managed to visit him in 1800 and pleaded with Portland. Edward the cruel Irish Secretary visited him often. Another famous visitor was the Limerick-born royal physician Sir John Macnamara Hayes an old friend of his.

In February 1800 the Act of Union was passed through bribery and corrupt honours. Two women were sent to importune Lawless but he repulsed them. On the 3rd. March 1801 both he and Bonham were released on bail. The bail for Lawless was set at £5000 and Bonham £500. Immediately Lawless brought up summonses against Pitt and Portland for false imprisonment. An act was passed through Parliament in one night to make his summons invalid against people in high office. However he did not lose the peerage and became Lord Cloncurry.

On release after a short stay in Ireland he went to France and Rome with his sisters. Napoleon asked to see him and they spoke together at a dinner in 1803. Lord Cloncurry, an ardent patriot lived until 1853.

Col. Despard was arrested again in the autumn of 1798 and spent time in various gaols including Shrewsbury and Tothill Fields. He too was released in March 1801 and met up with William Dowdall and started planning a second revolution.

It was said that Despard planned to seize the Tower of London, Bank of England and assassinate the King. Stopping mailcoaches and enrolling guards under oath was in the plan, and Irish dockers were to be involved.

The recruiting in the army was conducted by James Farrell and William Bacon. Secret meetings were held at the Two Bells and Coach & Horses in Whitechapel, Running Horse and Brown bear in St. Giles, Bleeding Heart in Covent Gdn, Hoop & Ram in the Mint, the Flying Horse at Islington and the Tiger on Tower Hill. A guardsman called Thomas Windsor informed on him.

On the 16th. November 1802 he was arrested with 40 others at the Oakley Arms in Lambeth. Despard and six accomplices were executed. He was tried at the New Sessions House in Horsemonger lane on the 7th. February 1803. Sergeant Best defended Despard. Nelson's evidence said he was a brave officer and had slept in the same tent with him in 1779 in the Spanish.

On hearing his condemnation Despard refused to attend chapel or receive the sacrament. He was drawn on a hurdle to the county gaol at Newington with the six others. He delivered a long address on the scaffold and was loudly cheered by the crowd. His head was cut off and the remains handed to his widow who was present. Afterwards he was buried close to the north door of St. Pauls Cathedral. Proceedings of the trial were reported in the Gentlemen's Magazine.

The Rev. Arthur O'Leary who founded St. Patrick's, Soho was a paid government agent. Dr. Hussey who Founded Maynooth had an ear to the government appeared to have Irish sympathies as he warned people of government surveillance.

William Paulet Carey, a United Irishman kept a paint shop in Marylebone Rd.

James Napper Tandy came through London on the 31st. October 1799 to Newgate prison after his arrest at Hamburg, before being brought to Ireland. Crowds gathered to see this brave man.