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**An Impartial Narrative of the
Most Important Engagements
Which Took Place Between His
Majesty's Forces and the Rebels,
During the Irish Rebellion, 1798.**

John, of Dublin Jones

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PREFACE.

The Editor with the most profound respect, submits to the Public the following narrative.—It forms a small portion of a more extended work, calculated to contain the particulars of every remarkable occurrence, connected with the Rebellion, which happened in the course of the last year;—a year which will constitute an epoch in the history of Ireland, and the events of which ought to be universally known.

The moment of action is not the most favourable to accuracy of detail:—Notwithstanding the purest intentions and the most scrupulous regard to truth, much will remain, for candour to extenuate and information to supply. Impressed with this sentiment, and feeling the importance of the subject, the Editor has waited iv till the season of tranquility, and now presents to the public eye, the produce of his exertions. He wished to postpone the Publication in order to complete it, but he yields to the entreaties of his Friends, and finds it necessary to make some sacrifice to the eagerness of public curiosity: The remaining part is in preparation for the Press, and as he continues to be supplied by those who were witnesses at the transactions, and consequently most capable of communicating correct intelligence, he hopes soon to accomplish his design.

The Reader will perceive from the following specimen, that the accounts of the Battles are not arranged in chronological order; neither do they boast of any great pretensions to literary merit; v but they will be found to have a recommendation more valuable than either—authenticity. The Editor was less solicitous about the style of the work, than the truth of it, and where, upon investigation, the matter conveyed to him proved correct, he has given it in the language of his correspondent.

If History be, as it has been elegantly described, "Philosophy teaching by Example,"—what example more necessary to be held out to public view, and transmitted to posterity, than that which shews the dreadful effects of a Revolution attempted by force? Where the visionary politician enjoys for so short a time his sanguinary triumph—suspected even by those whom he calls his friends, he is superseded by such as are more ferocious than himself, while

the fury of Fanaticism equally destroys *his* prospects in the mad effort to exterminate vi one religion and substitute another.

The perusal of such transactions must suggest useful reflections. The surviving Loyalist will rejoice in the triumph of *law* and the restoration of *order*. The surviving Rebel will repent of his folly, and enjoy the comforts which Law and Order distribute.

Such are the motives and such the object which influence the Editor of this little Work. From those who may approve of it, and whose situation and leisure furnish the opportunity, he requests further assistance. Particulars of Engagements, not included in this part, will be thankfully received, and due attention paid to them in the subsequent Publication.

vii

CONTENTS.

- Description of Clonard,
Battle of Timahoe,
Junction of the Wexford and Kildare Rebels,
Battle of Clonard,
Mrs. Tyrrell's sufferings while prisoner with the Rebels,
Character of Col. Perry and Priest Kearns who were executed
LETTERS.
- I. Battle of Carlow,
II. Battle of Ross,
III. Battle at Castlecomber, &c.
IV. Battle of Kilcomney,
V. Second Account of the Battle at Kilcomney,
VI. Battle of Saintfield,
VII. Battle of Kilbeggan,
OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS.
Battle of Naas
Battle of Kilcullen,
Battle of Hacketstown,
LETTERS.
- VIII. Battle of Arklow,
Account of the depredations of the Rebels at Gorey – their
IX. sacrilegious treatment of the Church, in which they immolated two Protestants,
X. Situation of the Rebels on Vinegar-Hill,
Description of Vinegar-Hill – the Battle,
The Rebels are defeated,
XI. Accurate detail of the effects of the Rebellion in the County Wexford.

Battle at Oulard,

Attack at Enniscorthy,

Battle at the Three Rocks,

Atrocities of the Rebels and the sufferings of the Loyalists in Wexford, &c.

Names of Clergymen and principal Gentlemen put death,

APPENDIX.

Copy of an Affidavid made before the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, relative to the attack on Prosperous

Account of the murder of Capt. Swayne — Burning of the Barracks, and the cries of the Soldiers consumed therein — Murder of Messrs. Stamer and Brewer, &c.

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A NARRATIVE, OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS, IN THE *IRISH REBELLION*, 1798.

CLONARD is situate about Twenty five miles from Dublin on the Western road leading to Mullingar. Tho' constituted a post town, it is a very small village, consisting of an Inn and a few thatched houses; but from its situation being on the confines of two counties, Kildare and Meath, and having a bridge across the river Boyne, which opens a communication from Dublin 4 to Westmeath, and from thence to Athlone and the Province of Connaught, it must be considered as a very important pass in all times of commotion and war. On the Dublin side of the town is situated the mansion house of the Tyrrell family, and at present belongs to *John Tyrrell* Esq. It is an old fashioned house, fronting the road from which it is separated by a high wall and a court yard; having an extensive garden upon its right, and a sheet of water upon the left. — Mr. John Tyrrell, being a Magistrate of both Counties, Kildare and Meath, and having exerted himself early to suppress the disturbances which were occasioned by the Defenders, naturally became an object of their resentment, and having been repeatedly menaced with an attack, he fortified his house by building up the original hall door, opening another, which might flank the approach to the house, and barricading all the lower windows, so as to render them musquet proof.

Upon the institution of the Yeomenry, Mr. John Tyrrell was honoured with a Commission to 5 raise a Corps of Cavalry, which was immediately embodied, under the Title of the *Clonard Cavalry*, and Thomas Tyrrell, and Thomas Barlow, Esqs. were appointed Lieutenants. This Corps soon distinguished itself by its unwearied exertions to preserve the peace of the neighbourhood; but in the course of the Spring of 1798, Mr. John Tyrrell the Captain, receiving positive information of a conspiracy to take away his life, thought it prudent to retire with his family into England.

The command of the Corps consequently devolved upon Mr. Thomas Tyrrell, the first Lieutenant, who had also at this critical period been appointed High Sheriff of the County of Kildare. — Upon the tenth of May 1798, he received an official letter, ordering

the Clonard Cavalry upon permanent duty; in this emergency Mr. Thomas Tyrrell, finding his own house at Kilreiny about one mile and a half from Clonard inconvenient, and in truth indefensible from its situation, removed with his family to his Kinsman's house at Clonard, before described, where he mounted a guard of one Serjeant and 18 men who were to be relieved every week.

Orders were about the same time issued to Captain O Ferrall of the Ballina Cavalry, to mount a permanent guard at Johnstown, near the Nineteen Mile house, which were accordingly complied with: but upon the 16th of May, reports of a general rising having been circulated, and being corroborated by encreasing outrages in the neighbourhood, Captain O Ferrall was permitted to fall back from Johnstown to Clonard in the night time for protection; repairing to Johnstown at four o'Clock in the morning, and retiring to Clonard in the evening.

In this way matters went on for some time, when the country becoming still more disturbed and apprehensions of an attack upon Clonard becoming more serious, Lieutenant Thomas Tyrrell repaired to Dublin, with an escort of his Corps, leaving the command at Clonard with Lieutenant Barlow. The object of this visit to Dublin, was to represent to Government the situation of that part of the country, the daily apprehensions of an attack, and the necessity of a reinforcement. Lord Castlereagh, to whom these representations were made, answered, that under the existing circumstances no force could be sent to Clonard, but Mr. Thomas Tyrrell was authorized to raise some Supplementaries, for whom he would be supplied with arms and ammunition.

Pending this application in Dublin, viz. upon the 29th of May the Rebels assembled to the number of 800 in the village of Carbery, five miles from Clonard, where they burned the Protestant Charter School and several houses; they then proceeded through Johnstown, burning and destroying the house of every protestant near the road. Towards evening they halted at a place called Gurteen, where they destroyed the house of Mr. Francis Metcalf. — When intelligence of these transactions reached Clonard, Lieutenant Barlow marched out with a party of the guard, and being joined by Captain O Ferrall they went in pursuit of the Rebels, but did not over take them, until

they had halted at Gurteen, where they had taken a very advantageous position upon each side of a narrow road, behind strong quickset hedges, so that Cavalry could not approach them with any prospect of success. Lieutenant Barlow halted his men, and then advancing some paces towards the enemy, took off his helmet, and challenged them to come forward. They however declined leaving their entrenchments, and night approaching, the Yeomenry with great reluctance returned to their Guard house.

On the 30th of May Lieutenant Thomas Tyrrell arrived safe from Dublin, with his escort, carabines for the Troop, musquets for the Supplementaries and a quantity of ammunition. The next day he enrolled nineteen well affected protestants to act as Supplementaries and dismounted.

By this time the Rebels had collected a very considerable force and every night committed some outrage and depredation. They encamped upon an Island in the bog of Timahoe, and also at Mucklin and Dreihid; they plundered almost every house in the neighbourhood of their respective places, drove away all the fat cattle and horse they could meet, and intercepted the supplies for the Dublin market.

BATTLE OF TIMAHOE.

Government being apprized of these proceedings, dispatched General Champagne to Clonard, where he arrived upon the 6th of June; and after consulting with Lieutenant Tyrrell, was escorted by him to Edendery, where the General expected a detachment of the Limerick Militia; but being disappointed in this respect, an express was sent to Philipstown to hasten the reinforcement, which arrived at Edendery upon the evening of the 7th; and on the next day, General Champagne, having arranged his plan of operations, marched from Edendery, with the following forces: A detachment of the Limerick Militia, under Lieutenant Colonel Gough; the Coolestown Yeomen Cavalry, under Captain Wakely and Lieutenant Cartland; the Canal Legion, under Lieutenant Adam Williams; the Clonard Cavalry, Lieutenant T. Tyrrell; and the 10 Ballina Cavalry, Captain O Ferrall. These several corps were distributed, so as that the Cavalry should surround the bog of Timahoe, while the Infantry attacked the Camp upon the Island: This judicious plan was completely executed, — the contest was obstinate for some time, owing to the small number of the Infantry, who led on the attack; but their firmness and discipline supplying the want of numbers, the Limerick, headed by the gallant Colonel Gough, and ably supported by Lieutenant Williams marched into the entrenchments, drove the Rebels from their camp, who were attacked in their flight by the Cavalry and many of them put to death. The Camp was entirely destroyed; and a great quantity of prisoners and considerable booty were carried off by the victors!

On the 29th of June, Lieutenant Tyrrell having received information that a large body of Rebels had stationed themselves upon a hill near his dwelling-house at Kilreiny, and had committed various robberies in the course of the preceding night, 11 he went to Kinnegad to solicit a reinforcement and sent an express to Edendery for a force to co-operate with him. The Kinnegad Yeomen Cavalry, under Lieutenant Houghton, and a small party of the Northumberland Fencibles immediately marched with Lieutenant Tyrrell to Clonard, and from thence being joined by his own Corps, he proceeded to *Fox's hill*, where the Rebels were posted to the amount of 600. — The attack was began by the Clonard Supplementaries, who displayed

great steadiness upon this occasion; the Kinnegad Corps and the Northumberlands supported the attack with great zeal, and the Edenderry force consisting of a detachment of the Limerick, Lieutenant Colonel Gough, the Coolestown Cavalry, Captain Wakely and the Canal Legion, Lieutenant Williams, having fallen upon the Rebels from the opposite side, they were routed with considerable slaughter. Their commander, one *Casey*, his brother and another Leader were killed in this action, and their bodies brought to Edenderry, where they were exposed for several days.

12

JUNCTION OF THE WEXFORD AND KILDARE REBELS.

It might have been hoped, that these successes would have established tranquility in this neighbourhood, and probably such effects would have followed the military exertions, were it not for the irruption of a large column of Wexford Rebels into Kildare, under the command of Colonel *Perry* who being immediately joined by Colonel *Aylmer*, commanding the Rebel Camp at Prosperous, was prevailed upon to abandon his intention of penetrating into the North, and to adopt a plan suggested by *Aylmer*, of attacking Clonard, pushing on from thence by Kilbeggan to the Shannon and surprising Athlone. In pursuance of this plan, the Rebel Forces amounting to 4000 men made a movement towards Clonard.

BATTLE OF CLONARD.

Lieutenant Tyrrell was totally unapprised of the intention, or motions of the enemy:—his guard were extremely vigilant during each night, but not apprehending any danger in the day 13 time they frequently dispersed through the village for the purpose of recreation and refreshment. This happened to be the case with many of his men upon Wednesday morning the 11th of July, on which day, about eleven o'Clock Mr. *Richard Allen* galloped into the Court, and brought intelligence that he was pursued by a piquet guard of the Rebels, whom he narrowly escaped as they were well mounted; and he was confident a considerable force was approaching. The alarm was instantly given—every exertion was made to collect the scattered men, and parties were stationed in the most advantageous positions. As the enemy were expected from the Dublin side, six of the Corps (including Mr. Allen and Thomas Tyrrell junr. the Lieutenant's son, and only fifteen years of age) took possession of an old Turret at the extremity of the garden; and which commanded the road. Such was the rapidity with which the Rebels advanced, that the firing actually commenced from this quarter upon their Cavalry before the entire guard could be collected, and the gate leading into the Court yard 14 was under such necessity closed to the exclusion of several, so that when Lieutenant Tyrrell came to ascertain his strength, he found he had only *Twenty-seven* men, including his own three sons, the eldest of whom was only seventeen years old! Such a critical situation required the coolness of a man innured to military danger, and all the exertion, firmness and skill of a veteran soldier. But although Lieutenant Tyrrell never had served in the Army, his own good sense supplied the want of experience, and his native courage furnished resources adequate to the magnitude of the occasion. He found his men as zealous as himself, determined to maintain their post and to discharge their duty to their King and Country, or fall in such a glorious cause. After sending a supply of ammunition to the advanced post at the Turret, and stationing other out-posts, he retired into the house with the main body, from which he selected the best marksmen, and placing them at particular windows gave directions that they should not fire without having their object covered, he had the rest of the 15 men secured behind the

walls and incessantly employed in loading musquets and carabines for the marksmen at the windows.

The firing as we have observed commenced from the Turret at the extremity of the garden. About 300 of the Rebel Cavalry lead on by one *Farrell* formed their advanced guard, and approached the Turret in a smart trot, without appearing to apprehend any danger. The first shot was fired by young Mr. Tyrrell, which mortally wounded *Farrell*, and being followed by a general discharge from the rest among the body of the Cavalry, threw them into great confusion, in which state they fled out of the reach of the firing. The Infantry however coming up, many of them contrived to pass the Turret under cover of the wall, and numbers were posted behind a thick hedge on the opposite side of the road, from which they kept up a smart fire against the Turret, but without doing any material mischief.

The Infantry who had passed the Turret being joined by a party who came by a cross road (for it seems their plan was to surround the house by 16 advancing in different directions) they stationed a guard upon the Bridge to prevent any reinforcement arriving in that direction. About ten or a dozen of this guard were in a very few minutes shot by the marksmen from the windows, upon which the rest fled; not one of the Rebels ventured afterwards to appear upon the Bridge, so that the communication with the Western road was in a great measure preserved, the importance of which to the little garrison in Clonard will appear in the event of the day.

The enemy being thus defeated in their first onset in both points of attack, became exasperated to an extravagant pitch of fury, and determined upon the most savage revenge. A large party contrived to penetrate into the garden, by the rere, and some of them immediately rushed into the Turret. The Yeomen stationed there were upon an upper floor—they had the precaution to drag up the ladder by which they ascended;—the Rebels endeavoured to climb upon each other, so as to reach the upper story, but they were killed as fast as they appeared; others 17 then ran their pikes through the ceiling, and fired shots but without effect—the conflict was obstinate—twenty seven of the Rebels lay dead on the ground floor, when at length, a quantity of straw was brought and set on fire. The building