

**Rev Thomas McWilliams, Presbyterian Minister of Freeduff,
1837-1863 by Peter Morell McWilliam**

In 1848 the proceedings of the Presbytery of Ballybay were enlivened by the emergence of a family quarrel. Rev Thomas McWilliams and his wife Anna (Russell) stated their intention of taking proceedings against Rev John Morell and his wife Mary (Russell) with respect to the property of Mrs Park of Newry, deceased. This lady appears to have been the grandmother of the two wives. The Presbytery declined to become involved and the matter faded from view, probably ending with the premature death of Mary Morell in 1849. While it is possible that this disagreement had purely personal and family origins, it is hard to escape the conclusion that political disagreements were an additional factor and may point to tensions within the Presbyterian Church at the time. While John Morell was a mainly pastoral minister his politics appear to have been conservative. Certainly his brother, Charles, who was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1868, was a committed conservative and supporter of Rev Henry Cooke. In addition a third of the Russell sisters, Sarah, was also married to a Presbyterian minister, Rev Henry Henderson, who was a noted anti-Catholic polemicist.

This article examines the career of Thomas McWilliams in the period from his installation in Freeduff Presbyterian Church in 1837 through to his involvement in the Tenant League around 1850 as detailed in local newspapers and church records and his interaction with both local Catholic clergy and his own ministerial colleagues. Outside of the public record there is very little direct information about Thomas. However there is a fair amount of personal information from the next generation which fills out the picture.

According to his son, William, Thomas was born in Carnteel, near Aghnacloy, Co Tyrone in 1804. This certainly fits with Presbyterian records. These state that the Aghnacloy committee certified his attendance at Old College Belfast in 1826 and that he was licensed for the Holy Ministry by the Presbytery of Tyrone in 1834. I have no idea where he was based immediately afterwards but I suspect it may have been in the Newry area because on the 14th January 1837 he married Anna Russell, daughter of a Newry attorney, three months before he was ordained in Freeduff Presbyterian Church on the 27th April 1837.

By the 1830s when Thomas McWilliams started his ministry in Freeduff many Presbyterians had moved away from the radicalism of the 1790s. This was exemplified by the appearance of Rev Henry Cooke, one of the leading figures in the Presbyterian Church and self-declared conservative, at Hillsborough in November 1834. This meeting expressed opposition to the National Education System and reform of the Tithe system (1). Cooke controversially announced the 'Banns of Marriage' between the Established Church and Presbyterians. His activities were opposed by McWilliams' neighbour and ministerial colleague, Daniel Gunn Brown of Newtownhamilton in a pamphlet signed John Knox, Jun, which protested the linking of Presbyterianism with Prelacy (Cited in 2).

Thomas' first appearance in the public record sets the tone for his entire ministry. At this time it would not have been common for Presbyterian ministers to share a public platform with Catholic priests. However on 2/04/1838 he (& Brown) shared a platform in Cullyhanna at a meeting addressed by the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, Dr William Crolly, a number of local Catholic priests, and a number of lay people, both Protestant & Catholic, including RG Wallace, Joseph Donaldson & James Jenkins (3, 4). As well as McWilliams the last three named were either direct ancestors or relatives of the author.

The Newry Telegraph reported that, 'a numerous and highly respectable meeting of the inhabitants of the Parish of Lower Creggan and others interested in the tranquillity of the country was held at the village of Cullyhanna on Monday 2nd instant. The assemblage was immense, nearly 3,000 persons of all classes and creeds being congregated'.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to try and create a more peaceful climate in an area that had seen a considerable amount of agrarian and sectarian violence over the previous few years.

The Rev Thomas McWilliams moved the fifth resolution. This motion was simply a vote of thanks to Fr Michael Caraher for the trouble he had taken to organise the meeting. The motion was seconded by another local Presbyterian, Mr Joseph Donaldson, probably the Clerk of the Kirk Session in Freeduff.

McWilliams said:

"I stand forward here on the present occasion to use my influence as a minister of the Gospel, in endeavouring to unite all parties in the bond of love and affection. (Cheers). From my earliest days, I have done all that I possibly could to live in peace with my fellow-man, and from my childhood, I and my family repudiated party exhibitions of every kind. I love my countrymen of all denominations. I love my country with all her faults. (Loud cheers). But I complain that whilst you are enduring misery and poverty, without any fault of yours, you should also be calumniated. I have heard with regret that disturbances have taken place - that outrages were committed in this neighbourhood. Fools that you are, will you thus put yourself in the power of your enemies? Will you not co-operate to the utmost of your power to preserve peace and order? (Cries of we will, we will, we will). For my part, I have travelled through the country at all hours, early and late, and I never was afraid. (Cheers). I am not actuated by any motive save anxiety for the good of my country, in making these remarks I see what I have long hoped for - a beginning of better days for Ireland. I trust that you will abstain from entering public houses, and putting yourselves in the way of mischief and temptation. You will join with me most cordially in expressing our obligation to the Rev Mr Caraher for calling this meeting". (Loud Cheers)

Rev McWilliams repudiation of party exhibitions is interesting in the context of his background. Aughnacloy with a population of 1,841 was home to eight Orange lodges in 1831. Only about 300 of these would have been Protestant males eligible to join the Order which gives some indication of its popularity. Assuming that the situation was similar ten or twenty years earlier it would appear that the family of Thomas would have been in the minority (5).

His appearance at the Armagh Assizes some 14 months later is more surprising and did not escape comment. This involved the trial of two Catholics (James and Peter Wade) for the murder of Bryan McCreesh. The defending attorney was Robert Wallace, a communicant of Thomas's, who lived at Cloghog Lodge. Thomas was called as a character witness.

`Rev Thomas McWilliams, Presbyterian minister, sworn by uplifted hand - knows the two Wades; has known them from observation for two years, and generally for three years; he thought them honest, industrious people; had said to others if they were as industrious as Wade's son they would be as well in the world as the Wade's are; has occasion on his Ministerial duties to pass their house frequently, and has seen them regular. Cross-examined by Sergeant Curry - Heard the elder Wade was charged with stealing arms, but he was honourably acquitted; witness was speaking to Alexander Donaldson, a pious hearer of his, who said he thought Wade was not guilty of stealing arms, as had been alleged. Sergeant Curry - You may go to Creggan, Mr McWilliams. Have you seen Dr Cooke, lately? (A laugh) (6, 7).

One of the issues at Hillsborough was the National Education System. The Church of Ireland declined to become involved and continued running their own parish based schools without government funding. Throughout the 1830s Presbyterians also declined involvement though a desire for funding kept them in communication with the Commissioners. A major sticking point surrounded access of priests to Catholic pupils during school hours. Presbyterians were not prepared to give the appearance of encouraging 'popery'. The issue was resolved in 1840 with the 'compromise' that Catholic clergy could take religious classes outside of school hours. It is interesting that Thomas McWilliams was prepared to vest a school with the Commissioners in Cloghog and then Tullnavall in 1847 under the joint patronage of Father Patrick Lamb, though the latter subsequently opened his own school in 1849 in Cullyhanna.

The extracts from the various newspaper articles show that Thomas was a political liberal who was not afraid to stand alongside local priests in defence of his congregations (in contrast to many, particularly in areas further north and in Belfast where there were few Catholics). While Thomas McWilliams may have had political differences with some of his Presbyterian ministerial colleagues, on social issues he was clearly a man of his time. Concluding his remarks to the Cullyhanna meeting he said:

"I trust that you will abstain from entering public houses, and putting yourselves in the way of mischief and temptation".

An article in the Newry Telegraph in January 1839 reports on a temperance meeting in the school house of Tullinavall, near the village of Cullyhanna. Clearly he supported the temperance campaign first publicised by Rev John Edgar in Belfast in 1829 - a decade before Father Mathew's Total Abstinence Campaign (8).

The Church and ruling elders also kept a close watch on the morals of the congregation as numerous reports throughout the Session Minutes indicate. Indeed apart from lists of new communicants these are the only entries in the Session Minute Books throughout the famine period:

18th Nov. 1837: Alexander ----- and Mary ----- expressed sorrow and repentance for sin of fornication. They both separately received a suitable reproof and admonition and were again admitted into communion with the Presbyterian Church.
Signed; Joseph Donaldson, Clerk & Rev Thomas McWilliams

Mar 25th 1847; Joseph ----- appeared before the Session to submit to the discipline of the church for the sin of fornication; after a suitable rebuke & exhortation he was restored to Church fellowship and privileges, which was subsequently reported to the Congregation.

Mostly his private character has to be inferred from his public statements but there is one possible hint.

When he resigned as minister due to ill-health in 1859 Thomas Croskery was appointed as assistant and successor. Croskery later wrote a biography of a well-known Liberal minister Rev AP Goudy and one small extract many refer to Thomas:

Young as he was he was imperious, and firmly held his own way, in spite of obstruction and hostility. He took the whole work of the Church upon his shoulders, for New Lightism had virtually destroyed the organisation of Church-Courts. Perhaps some of the Glastry people thought he took too much upon himself. It reminds me of a predecessor of my own at Creggan, in Co Armagh. He was once riding up to the meeting-house on the Sabbath morning. One of the elders said to another:

'Minister rides a nice powney.'

'Aye, that he does,' was the reply:

'it can carry minister, session, and committee without turning a hair.'

Mr M-- had for many a year dispensed with the 'helps' of government.

This extract hints at a somewhat authoritarian personality though I can't of course be sure of the attribution to Thomas since one of Croskery's earlier predecessors was Rev William McClaine (9).

There is no mention of the famine in Freeduff session minutes nor have I been able to find any reference to Thomas McWilliams in the Relief Commission Papers. It is however clear that the famine had a serious effect on the Presbyterian community in south Ulster.

At the Synod of Armagh on May 20th 1851 the Ballybay Presbytery lamented that, owing to embarrassment among the agricultural population, and the tide of emigration that was flowing, the ordinances of religion had been much neglected, and the progress of

religion consequently retarded. Clogher Presbytery reported a falling off in the attendance on public worship, in consequence of emigration, more manifest than in the previous year (10). More detail on this phenomenon is recorded in a series of contemporary congregational visitations undertaken by the Presbytery of Ballybay:

1851, 1st Newtownhamilton visitation: 120 families; 5 1st communicants on average but when things were good we had 27.
1852, 2nd Ballibay visitation: 200 families in Congregation; no mention of emigration.
1853, Broomfield visitation: 34 families left in last 4 years principally by emigration: 85 families at present.
1853, Creggan visitation: 80-90 families belong to the congregation: 30 have emigrated within the last 6 years.

However he was clearly present throughout the period and his earlier and subsequent interaction with various local priests make it likely that he participated in the local relief efforts.

While in December, 1847 a meeting, at which Thomas was present, of the Presbytery of Ballybay, in common with almost all Northern Presbyteries, resolved "to petition both Houses of Parliament in behalf of Tenant Right" maintaining a consistent and unified Presbyterian position on this issue was always problematic. Towards the end of the famine land values had collapsed and tenant right was valueless without rent reductions. Conservative ministers objected to forced rent reductions as an infringement on property rights but there were also liberals, like Rev AP Goudy, who objected to ministers sharing a public platform with Catholic priests.

It is this light that we should view a dinner held in Crossmaglen and reported in the Dundalk Democrat. In 1850, with Rev Michael Lennon of Crossmaglen, Thomas visited the agent of a local landlord, Ralph Jordan, seeking an abatement of rents for tenants in Cloghog & Freeduff townlands. They were successful and their success was celebrated at a dinner in Crossmaglen attended by Jordan with his wife and agent. Father Lennon was President for the evening while Rev McWilliams was Vice-President. Rev Brown also attended and spoke. Thomas thus risked offending two influential elements within the Presbyterian community (11).

The Tenant League appears to have been founded at a meeting in Ballybay on Tuesday 1st October, 1850. Rev David Bell of Derryvalley, Ballybay was one of the organisers. Rev Daniel Gunn Brown was on the platform and spoke. He also chaired a soiree held that evening. Father Lennon was also present. Thomas McWilliams was not listed among those present but in January, 1851 he was on the platform of a meeting held outside the county gaol in Armagh. Brown took the chair but both Lennon & McWilliams proposed resolutions (12, 13).

Many of these tensions can be seen in the report in the Belfast Newsletter of a meeting of the Synod of Armagh on May 20th 1851. Secular matters like the Tenant League were not mentioned but can be imagined in the background. While it was possible to conceive

of a common interest between Northern Presbyterian tenants and their Catholic counterparts, North and South, any such alliance was always going to be vulnerable to confounding political issues, be they religious or nationalist. It was essential that religion and the national question were kept out of the League of if the movement's secular goals were to be realised. While the Home Rule question always lingered in the background, in the event it was religion in the form of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill which proved more disruptive.

In 1850 the Catholic Church set up a network of its own bishops in England. Anti-Catholic elements denounced the Papal move as "papal aggression". The Ecclesiastical Titles Act was passed in 1851 as an anti-Roman Catholic measure by Prime Minister Lord John Russell in the wake of widespread popular "no popery" outbursts. Public opinion and elite opinion also turned heavily against the Oxford Movement (Tractarian movement) inside the Church of England, which led some very prominent figures to become Catholics. Tractarians (or Puseyites) were denounced as traitors burrowing inside the Anglican church.

At the Synod the land question was never mentioned but Bell, Brown and McWilliams were forced to argue that Popery, Prelacy and particularly Puseyism were virtually equivalent threats to Presbyterianism to moderate a proposed anti-Catholic statement.

The following exchange shows the depth of unease within conservative ranks at any hint of cooperation between ministers and priests. Note that the Moderator for the year, Rev David Bell, who was active in the Tenant League, appears to have resigned his ministry in 1853 and is reputed to have joined the IRB. The Rev Charles Lucas Morell, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1868, was a brother of Rev John Harris Morell, Thomas' brother-in-law:

Mr CL Morell: When the people saw their ministers walking arm-in-arm with Popish priests, dining at the same table, the priest saying grace and the minister returning thanks, they felt disgusted, and many determined to walk no more with them

Moderator (Mr Bell): I call Mr Morell to order he has attacked the character and conduct of certain individuals, some of whom are not present to defend themselves. This is not right.

Mr Morell: It is not your character, sir, I attack. It is the character of the Presbyterian church I am anxious of preserving. It has been greatly injured, and the injury is progressing.

Mr McWilliams: The character of the ministers has not been injured by what Mr Morell alludes to. Quite the contrary (10).

By 1852 agricultural prices were recovering, slowing the impetus behind the Tenant League and thereafter I have found no political references to Thomas in the local newspapers from then till his death in 1863.

Money was always an issue for ministers in small rural congregations like Freeduff. He was in receipt of *Regium Donum* from the government and this was augmented by a stipend from his congregation although the latter was frequently in arrears.

A note in the Kirk Session minutes records that he 'purchased a farm of 12a 3r and erected and constructed a manse on it in the year 1842 leaving a debt of £140 on it due his heir, to be paid by his congregation'. In the minutes of the Presbytery of Ballybay for 1849 it is recorded that 'Rev DG Brown preached in Creggan & met with Session, Committee & Congregation; £20 stipend paid; Manse seriously encumbered'.

To underline the financial difficulties he was facing after the famine, during a Presbytery visitation in 1853 it was stated that "80-90 families belong to the congregation (30 have emigrated within the last 6 years)" and that £240 were owed the minister for the manse". Even then some members of the session couldn't resist a mild dig, stating that the minister's preparation ought to exhibit more care.

While one presumes that Thomas' income was affected by the loss of a third of his congregation as a result of the famine, the family was still able to afford a good education for at least some of the children.

The eldest son, John Richardson, emigrated to Australia in 1853 but since he was only 14 I suspect it was more in the nature of a 'runner' than driven by necessity. He went straight to the goldfields in New South Wales but quickly turned to journalism and ended his life as the owner editor of the Coonamble Times in NSW. The second son, Russell, was educated in Dundalk Endowed School and subsequently TCD before entering the Church of Ireland. The third son, Charles, studied medicine at RCSI before practicing as a doctor in Crossmaglen.

In the Presbytery minutes on 7th June, 1859 it was noted that Rev DG Brown is to tell Creggan it is in a position to choose an assistant and successor and on 17th July, 1860 that Rev Thomas Croskery was appointed as assistant and successor to Rev Thomas McWilliams.

The session minutes record that:

"being for some considerable time previous affected with Paralysis, on the 5th June, 1859 he preached his last sermon to the congregation and died June 15th 1863 aged 59 years at the Manse, Cloghog".

When Thomas died his widow and children had to leave the manse he had built. In Griffith's Primary Valuation, it was occupied by his ultimate successor, Rev John Anderson. Presumably at this point finances became more precarious.

Education was clearly important to the McWilliams. Thomas' grandson, Rev JM McWilliam left a short note about his grandmother, Anna Russell/McWilliam who survived till 1905. He described her as the best educated woman of her generation in the family and as very devout. It appears that education was not confined to the male members of the family. The only surviving daughter, Anna, emigrated to Argentina sometime after her father's death, where she was recorded as a governess in the 1893 census before returning to Ireland to live with her mother until the latter's death in 1903. William was apprenticed as a solicitor to a family friend (probably Joseph Dickie) but on qualification had to pay £200 in deferred fees. The youngest son, Thomas, also availed of the family

friendship with the Dickies to obtain a position in the Ulster Bank in Omagh.

In 1873 the latter wrote a long letter to his oldest brother, John Richardson, in Australia from Omagh.

<http://www.treasureyourexceptions.com/letters.html#TJM>

In a previous letter Thomas had apparently been contemplating emigration but this plan had been deferred for a reason not uncommon amongst young men in their early twenties - a love affair. To quote from the letter:

"At the time I last wrote to you I thought "Loves Young Dream" was only a dream of the past" and

"I can now join the great National motto, and cry "Ireland for the Irish"; and tho' my motives may not be purely patriotic, still my mother soil has a very fair chance of affording me "terra firma" for the remainder of my days, and a narrow little resting place at this end".

Reading this is almost unbearably poignant since I know how the story ended and where his 'narrow little resting place' is located.

He supplies short portraits of his surviving siblings including Charles who died in 1869 and Russell in 1871. Their death certificates state that they died of Phthisis (TB).

There is also a touch of what might have been when he comments in his note on himself:

"What he'd have been as a professional man must ever be a secret to the world as circumstances made it imperative that he should enter a bank at the age of 18. Up to that time his education was much neglected and left to himself, owing to family difficulties".

Footnote:

Mary Morell died in 1849 possibly from TB. John subsequently married Hester Dickson in 1852, had a second family with her and died in 1888. Thomas McWilliams resigned from his ministry due to ill health in 1859 and died in 1863. He is buried in Freeduff graveyard with Anna, who survived till 1905, and some of their children.

Thomas & Anna's second youngest son, William, became a solicitor in Monaghan town and married Hessie, daughter of John & Hester Morell in 1877. Hessie bore William 6 children before dying of TB in December 1887 aged 32.

Whether the differences of Thomas and Anna with John and Mary were political or a family quarrel, I doubt whether the two survivors, John & Anna considered that in the face of the ravages that TB had visited on their two families.

Hessie is the second name on the McWilliam family gravestone in Coolshannagh graveyard on the outskirts on Monaghan town. The first name is that of her brother-in-law, Thomas (also mentioned in the grave at Freeduff) who died in 1881 at William's house in Monaghan. I have not been able to locate his death certificate but I suspect that he also died of TB. 'Love's Young Dream' was never realized.

Afterthought

The exchanges at the Synod of Armagh give a sense of the conservative push back against Tenant Rights activists like Daniel Gunn Brown and Thomas McWilliams. Some were political conservatives who had more sympathy with landlords while others were uncomfortable with any public interaction with Catholic priests. Both of these tendencies are epitomized in a rather extreme form by the Rev Henry Henderson who developed something of a reputation as an anti-Catholic polemicist. He was also the brother-in-law of both John Morell and Thomas McWilliams. Thomas and John were married to two sisters, Anna and Mary Russell; a third sister, Sarah was married to Henry Henderson.

Henry Henderson was born in Belfast in 1820, graduated from Old College Belfast in 1841; he was licensed by the Presbytery of Belfast on 25 Sept 1842, ordained in Hollywood in 1844 and married Sarah Jane Russell in 1846. Henderson saw the congregation through the 1859 Revival & the eventful middle half of the 19th century. He became infirm & Mr Henry Haliday (lic. Dublin) was ordained as his assistant and successor on 8 Jan 1878. He died in 1879.

He appears to have been one of the first Presbyterian ministers to join the Orange Order. Frank Wright in his magisterial book 'Two Lands on one soil' describes him as one of the more rabid "No popery men" and quotes from an article in the Belfast Newsletter, 7th April 1873.

Efforts were made in 1873 to reinvigorate the official Orange Order, and Rev Henry Henderson delivered a speech which Rev Warick, who led the five remaining "official" lodges, described as "such as has not been heard before in Carrickfergus".

"Although Protestantism abounds in your neighbourhood and Popery, thank God, has but very, very small bounds in this district, yet Romanism just now is making gigantic efforts to attain supremacy in this country ----- Away with you Protestants out of the country! That is what they want to do, what Dan O'Connell said, to sweep us into the sea with cabbage stalks".

He went on to attack the concept of religious equality and suggested that Jesuits who were in difficulties in Europe might soon be coming to Ireland.

Without reading and citing articles he wrote as Ulster Scot for the Belfast Newsletter, the best way to get a flavour of Henderson's views is to consider two novella's that he wrote in the 1860s and published through the Belfast Newsletter.

The True Heir of Ballymore; Passages from the History of a Belfast Ribbon Lodge and
The Dark Monk of Feola; Adventures of a Ribbon Pedlar.

The Fermanagh Reporter commented;

'For those who like tales against Popery, we can honestly say that we have seen nothing equal to the present - so far as we have read'.

Henderson had an extreme anti-Jesuit prejudice, common among some extreme Protestants and probably deriving from the gunpowder plot in the early 1600s. The hero of Book II is Charles Lucas, probably as a compliment to

Rev Charles Lucas Morell, brother of Rev John Morell a noted evangelical conservative and Moderator of the General Assembly during the disestablishment debate in 1868. Effectively the plot of the book revolves around a Jesuit / Ribbon conspiracy to deprive a Protestant of his rightful inheritance.

Book I is of more direct relevance. It is noteworthy that the action in this book takes place near Newtownhamilton and Crossmaglen and some of the atrocities used in the book and quoted in footnotes come from this area, particularly an assault on Mr Chambre in 1852. Part of the plot includes collaboration between a Ribbonman and the local priest in Crossmaglen. The priest is not named but must indirectly implicate Rev Michael Lennon, the very priest with whom Thomas McWilliams had shared a celebratory dinner in 1850 as described above.

In fact Mr McWilliams' colleague, Rev Daniel Gunn Brown of Newtownhamilton, in evidence to a Parliamentary Commission investigating outrages in 1852, explicitly blames such outrages on bad landlord / tenant relations and declines to state that ribbonmen were involved. He also praises the work of local Catholic priests, Mr Lennon of Crossmaglen and Mr Lamb of Cullahanna in maintaining the peace.

In his conclusion to book I Henderson doesn't hold back;

'Let us, before casting aside our pen, make this concluding remark. We heartily wish well to our RC countrymen. We ardently desire their speedy emancipation from the thralldom and degradation of their unscriptural, intolerant, dark, despotic, persecuting, and bloodstained religion. But our belief is, that no statesmanship, no good government, no concessions will ever succeed in delivering our native land from Ribbon disloyalty, discontent, agitations, outrages, and savage assassinations until Romanism, through the agency of the light and powerful influences of the Gospel, is extirpated from the country. Ribbonism is the offspring of Romanism: The affinity between them is that of cause and necessary effect. They are, in reality, but one system. May God hurl it to destruction'.

Henderson lived in Hollywood, near Belfast, a world apart from the events he is fictionalising in this book. His implications had been explicitly refuted by evidence given by Rev Daniel Gunn Brown to a parliamentary commission investigating outrages in 1852.

Final punch line:

One of the pleasures of working with local newspapers in Monaghan for the period around and for a couple of decades before the turn of the 19th century is that there were two papers in the town: The Northern Standard was Unionist while The Peoples Advocate was Nationalist. Events can therefore be examined through two different perspectives. In December 1879 the Standard reported the death of Rev Henry Henderson and mentioned that a subscription was being organised.

The People's Advocate was less measured:

The Rev Henry Henderson, better known as 'Ulster Scot' amongst the Orange Brethren is dead. The luminary who has shuffled off the mortal coil was one of the greatest leaders of the Orange brotherhood, a contributor to the Orange press, & held a most sublime hatred of the Pope and Popery. In recognition of the indefatigable zeal in the cause he espoused, a meeting was called in

the Town Hall here, and a number of Tory gentlemen in long speeches referred in laudatory terms to the Rev Mr Henderson. Letters of apology were read from the nobility of Ulster, and before the meeting separated a subscription list was opened, but for what purpose I know not.

NB The Irish Times recorded in 1878 that he was declared bankrupt; it may be in this context that a subscription was raised.

It seems indisputable that Henderson chose the location of the novella with malice aforethought indirectly linking his brother-in-law with a fictional outrage.

It is of course ironic that Thomas' son, William, might have been involved in organising a subscription for Henderson's widow, William's aunt, 15 years later.

References

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- 98 Life of Rev AP Goudy, DD by Thomas Croskery, NLI, Ir 92 g 17
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- 13 Tenant League/Armagh, The Armagh Guardian, 27/01/1851

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