Agricultural Head Rents, Pre-Famine and Post-Famine*

CORMAC Ó GRÁDA

"No country can ever be held in just estimation", proclaimed Arthur Young in 1780, "when the rental of it is unknown": and Young, in his Tour in Ireland, proceeded to estimate the rental of this country.\(^1\) His was the rhetoric of the political arithmetician, but he was neither the first nor the last to embark on aggregate calculations. Several of the best-known past observers of the Irish scene, from Sir William Petty to the elder Wakefield, also left their own estimates. Some, like Wakefield's, were carefully worked out; others, such as Dean Swift's, were based almost totally on hearsay or speculation.\(^2\) Needless to say, it is difficult, if not impossible, to assess the accuracy of these estimates. Wakefield's, for instance, seems far too high, and those of several earlier writers, like Petty and Maxwell, are often based on faulty guesses at the contemporary population level of the country.\(^3\) Whether plausible estimates of the aggregate rental can be inferred from available estate accounts is at present unclear, though such accounts should inform us of movements in the rental at least. A start has been made in this work,\(^4\) but it is still much too early to risk sophisticated guesses at the rental during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The present paper provides estimates, necessarily somewhat tentative, of the rental in 1845 and 1852, and discusses briefly some of their implications for the economic historian.

*This note is based on a data-appendix to my dissertation, "Post-Famine Adjustment: Essays in Nineteenth-Century Irish Economic History" (Columbia University, unpublished, 1973). I am grateful to Professor Louis Cullen and an anonymous referee for their comments on a previous draft.

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Our starting point is an appendix to Raymond C. Crony's recent work on

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After much controversy and discussion, an Irish Poor Law broadly based on

the English model was introduced in 1838. Ireland was divided into new

administrative units called Poor Law Unions, and a valuation system similar to

the English one was introduced. However, these reforms were not entirely effective:

The following table gives the acreage of land, both under cultivation and un


cultivated, in each union for 1846, 1847, and 1848.

**Table 1. County's Estimate I. Amended (1847)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union</th>
<th>1846</th>
<th>1847</th>
<th>1848</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leinster</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munster</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connaught</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulster</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
<td>2,170,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: The acreage figures are for the year 1847, as estimated by the government.
would be at the order of:

Valuation was 55½ to 60½ in the ½ under lining value, the total rental calculated both valuations—and also allow for the depreciation that the improvements, town planning, etc., are more expensive—we are concerned with the rental element in large houses. As the more expensive, we take the

But the significance of the improvements in the valuations introduced as a guide in your figures. If we take the aggregate, one of a number of valuations, whose cumulated total amount to two-thirds of the poor law valuation, whilst the figure, one of Swithin's community, of which the expression on account lies the view that his valuation, in aggregate, would

work back across directly on account of variations in value in evidence to the 1843. This is multiplied by 0.7, the percentage of the coal revenue for the whole county

Here, 13,187.44 in the estimated Poor Law Valuation for the whole county

\[ \text{13,187.44} \times 0.79 \times 1.12 = 11,711.41 \text{ million} \]

Then be calculated as follows:

This being used, taking Swithin's valuation figure, the aggregate land rental can

be determined as follows:

The percentage of property are unproductive for 1½, so the percentage obtaining in 1875, with the inference between those parts of the valuation attributable to land and to the land itself. This figure is taken to be satisfactory for our purposes. The difference of 1½ per cent. Since the union was based, we can see the effect of the general situation was made, and obtained an average

Schedule B at the figures with the least possible estimate for each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Land value - 0% more</th>
<th>1% more</th>
<th>2% more</th>
<th>1½ - 2½</th>
<th>2½ - 3½</th>
<th>3½ - 4½</th>
<th>4½ - 5½</th>
<th>5½ - 6½</th>
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</table>

Valuation equals Land value

as follows:

Letting value is given as being the average of the figures, and the results may be employed.

Communities report the percentage difference between the valuations and the land rental, more precise information is available in one of the appendices to the report, the letting value, he thought, and one or two other forms of the rental.

It would be, taking the whole, probably from 0 to 1½, which, by the way, in terms, the poor law administration, though there was little evidence to his own district, at the current rental levels across. One would, an assistant is responsible in land and Valuation of 1½, the question of the work of the Poor Law Committee on Town-

Brum, was put into operation. This required a special valuation, which was

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£13,187,421 x 0.79 x 0.8 x 0.6 = £11.1 million

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The output and input costs combined seem to suggest that average non-landed
profitability of farms and orchards was found to be less than that of
landed farms, and only a few very intensive observations are offered here.
It would be rash to seek a standard of living among society in the figures
provided in Table 2, and only a few very intensive observations are offered here.

The broad concept of the average non-landed farm may be better or understood
of this nature than reductions in the amount of non-landed farms and orchards
reduced per capita per farm and orchard in order to ward off
landlords' efforts were considerable at times of depression in order to ward off
recession may have been the only way of keeping the landlords' efforts to improve. An addi-
tions may have contributed to the landlords' efforts to improve and add
produce. The ability of more lucrative investment alternatives—of the
small size of holdings, the uncertainty political situation, general economic
improvement and the rise in farming only a very small farming-on-investment element,
the farm in recent years have been over these years.

Irish landlords, unlike many of their English counterparts, were not enthusiastic
have posed a number of severe problems for the landlords.
problems, and the number of holdings, the uncertainty political situation, general economic
improvement and the small size of holdings, the uncertainty political situation, general economic
improvement and the rise in farming only a very small farming-on-investment element,
these landlords, even before or after the famine, have continued to exist.
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have posed a number of severe problems for the landlords.
problems, and the number of holdings, the uncertainty political situation, general economic
improvement and the rise in farming only a very small farming-on-investment element,
these landlords, even before or after the famine, have continued to exist.

This substantial increase was not the result of a rapid-turning landlord policy.

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Soltow estimates that increase in terms of 3.7% per cent, more or less in line with the stamp
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REFERENCES

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