

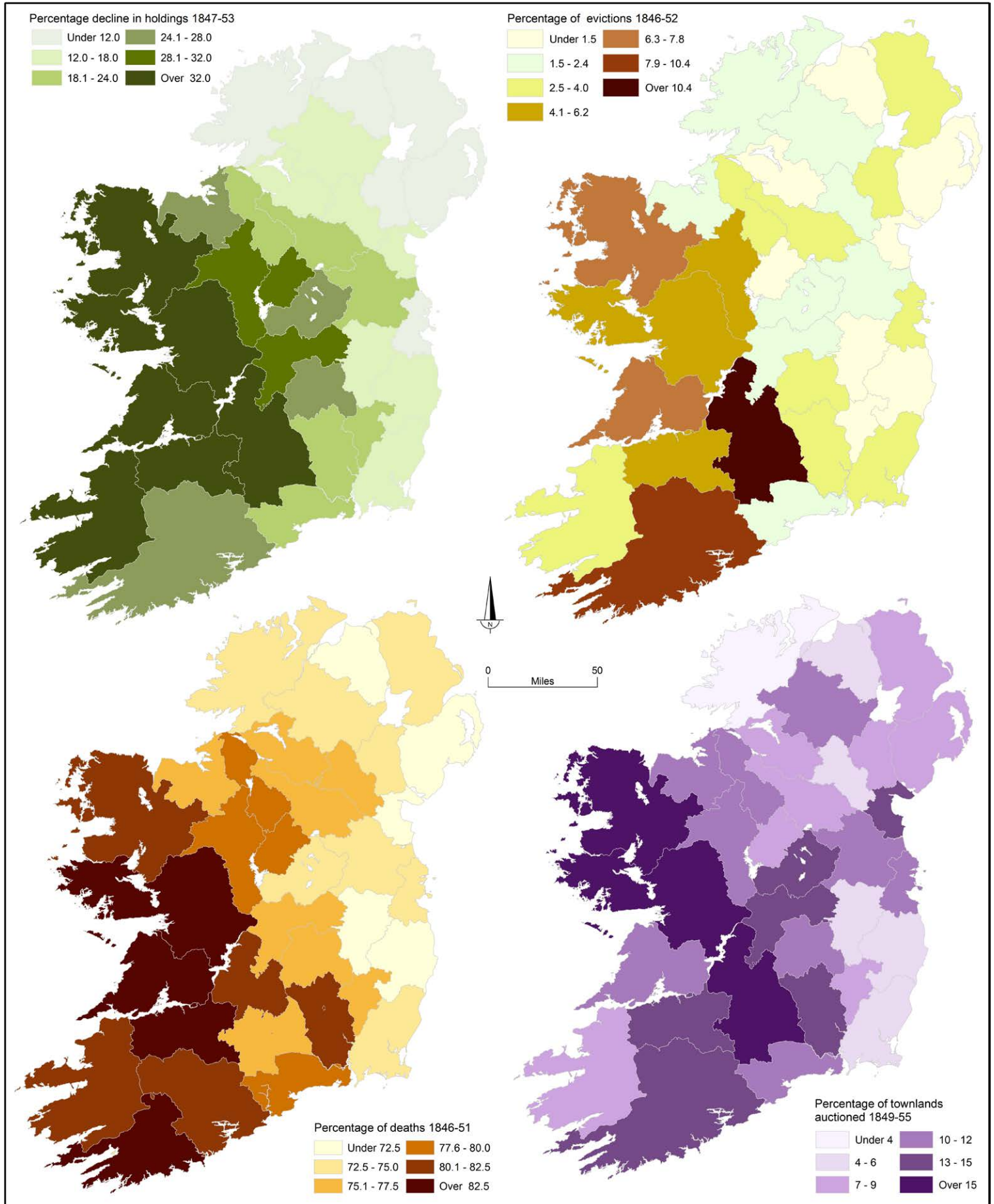
# Unit 1: Nineteenth-Century Ireland, 1845-1898

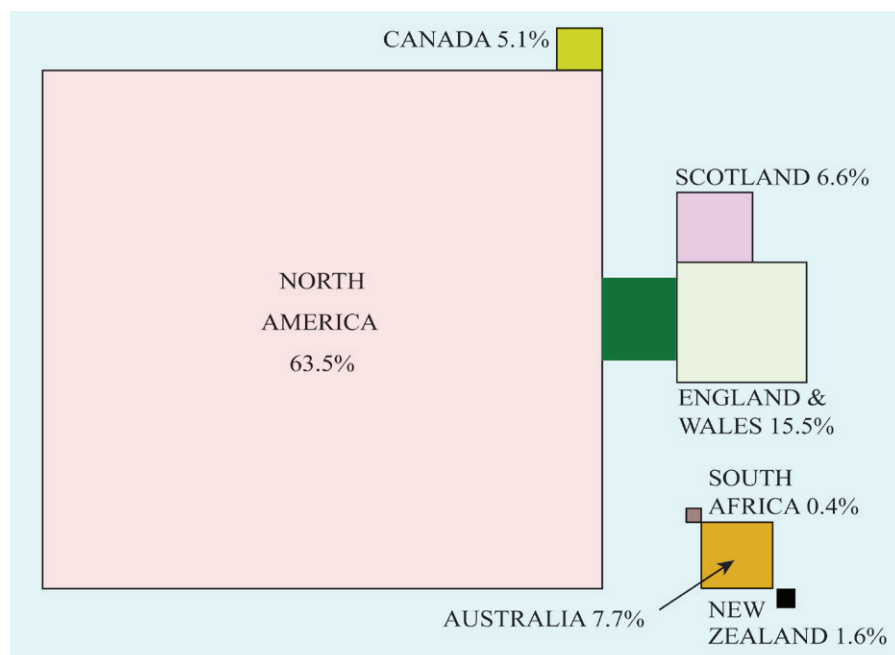
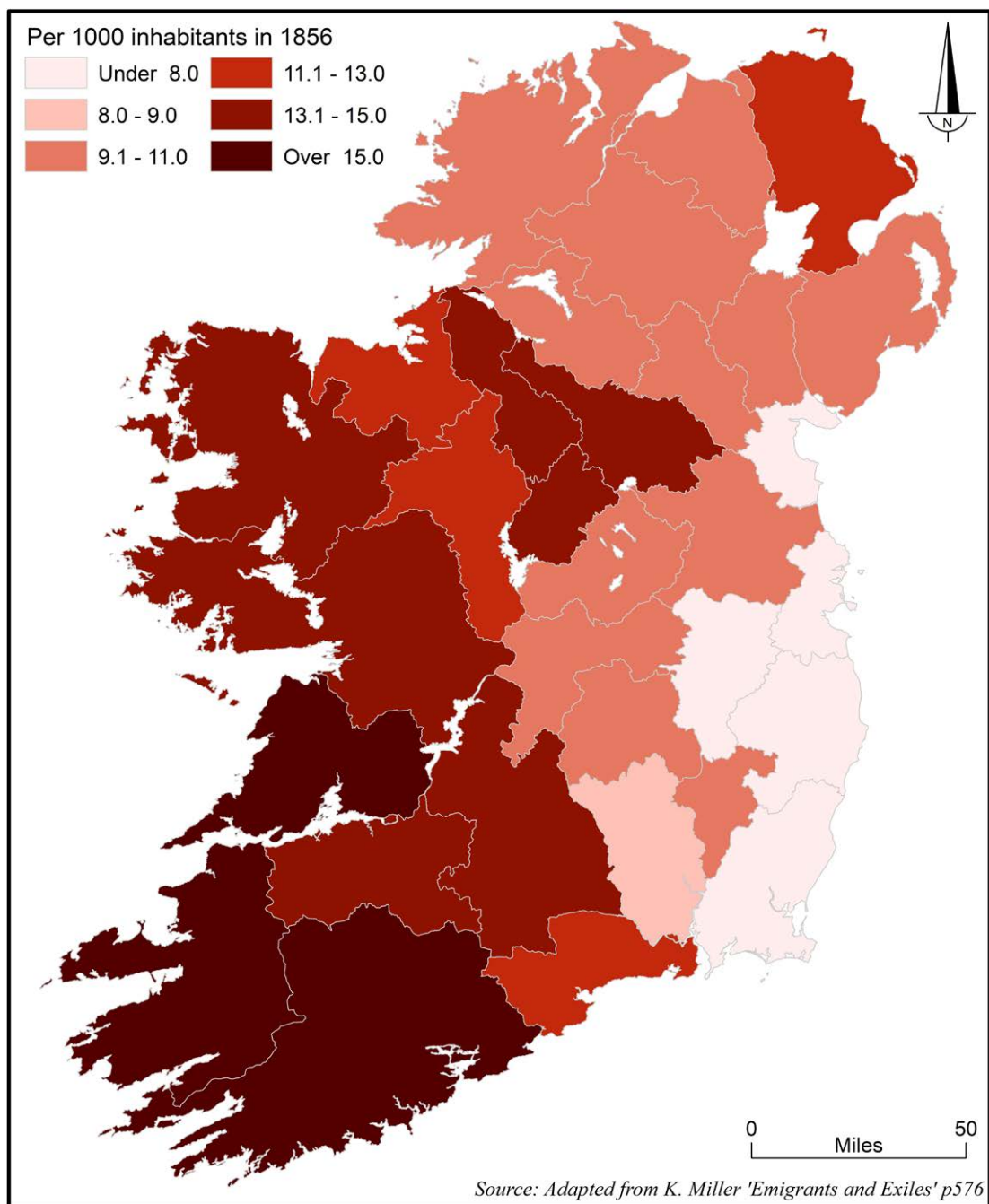
## *Document Pack*

# Contents

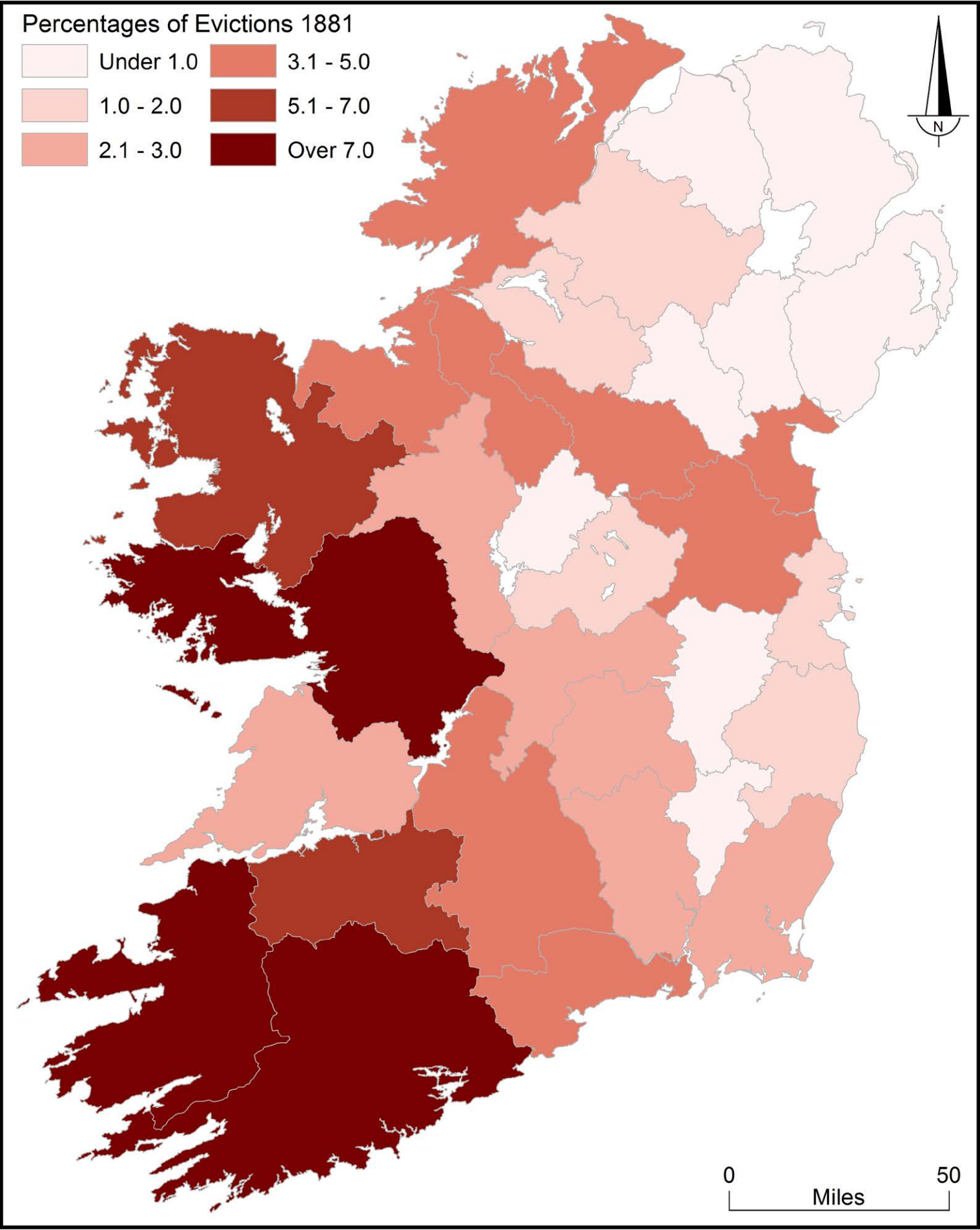
Source 1.	<b>MAP:</b> Four maps depicting the impact of the Great Famine: the scale of Famine fatalities, landlord evictions, the reduction in family holdings and estate changes. [Source: <i>Atlas of the Great Irish Famine</i> (Cork, 2012)]	<a href="#">p. 3</a>
Source 2a.	<b>MAP:</b> Map highlighting variations in the intensity of emigration from each county in the half-century after the Famine.	<a href="#">p. 4</a>
Source 2b.	<b>FIG.</b> Percentage of Irish-born living abroad in the late nineteenth century.	<a href="#">p. 4</a>
Source 3.	<b>MAP:</b> Distribution of evictions per county populations in 1881	<a href="#">p. 5</a>
Source 4.	<b>MAP (a):</b> Distribution of Land League meetings in 1879 <b>MAP (b):</b> Distribution of Land League meetings in 1880 <b>MAP (c):</b> Distribution of agrarian protests in 1879/8 <b>MAP (d):</b> Distribution of agrarian protests in 1881	<a href="#">p.6</a>
Source 5.	<b>DOCUMENT:</b> Irish National Land League membership card 1881 [Source, National Library of Ireland, EPH A172]	<a href="#">p. 7</a>
Source 6.	<b>DOCUMENT:</b> Illuminated address presented to C.S. Parnell by the Land League on his return from the United States, March 1880. [Source: National Library of Ireland, MS L 355]	<a href="#">p. 8</a>
Source 7.	<b>DOCUMENT:</b> Poster advertising a protest against eviction [Source, National Library of Ireland, EPH F257]	<a href="#">p. 9</a>
Source 8.	<b>DOCUMENT:</b> Propaganda poster calling Irish people to boycott paying land rents. [Source, National Library of Ireland, EPH 20]	<a href="#">p. 10</a>
Source 9.	<b>MAP:</b> The 1885 elections	<a href="#">p. 11</a> <a href="#">p.12</a>
Source Background and Captions		

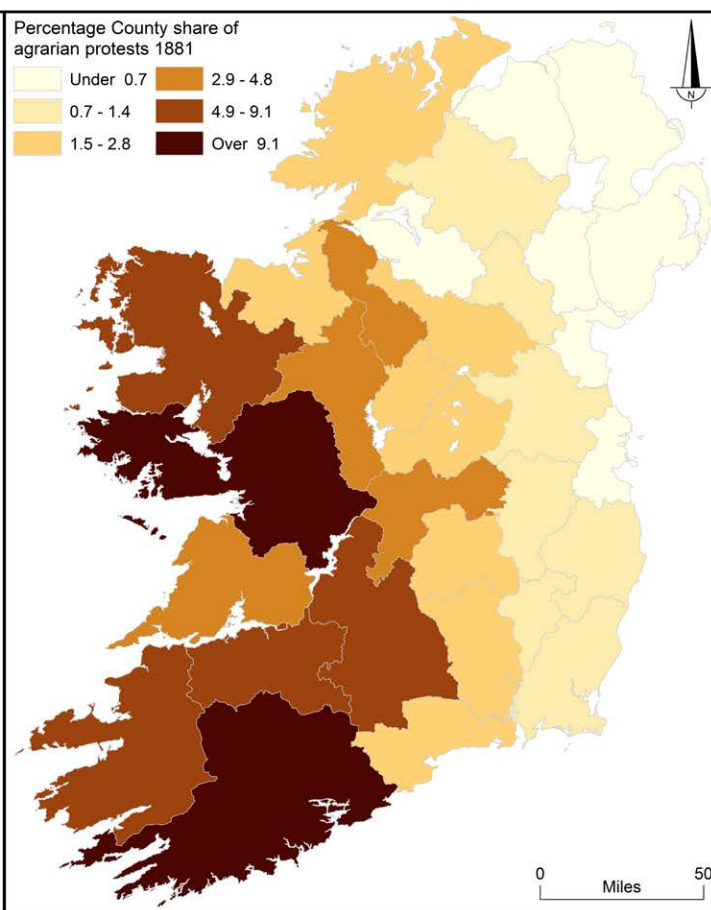
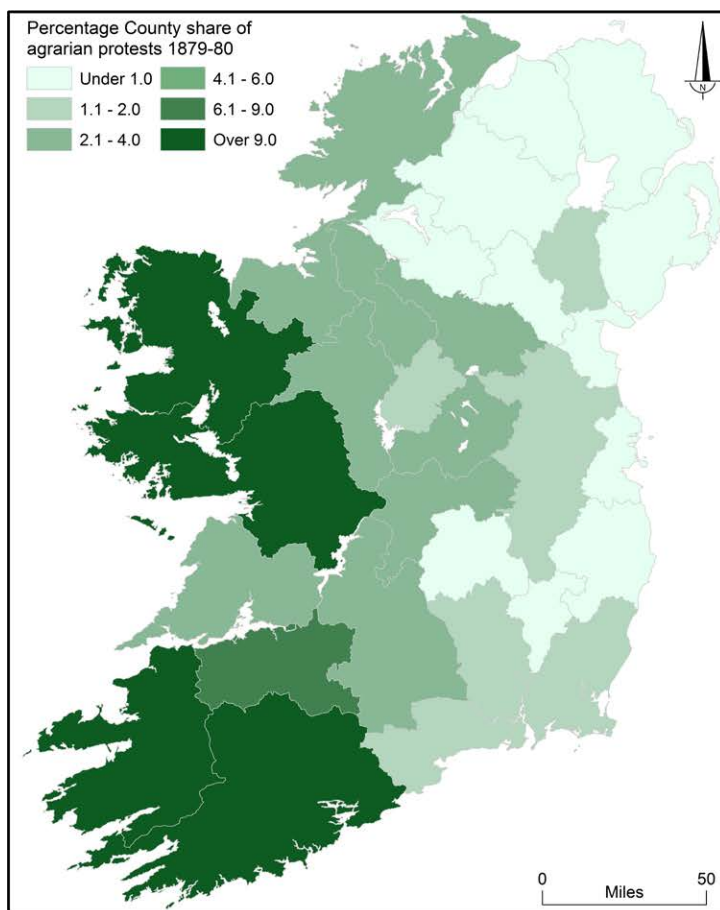
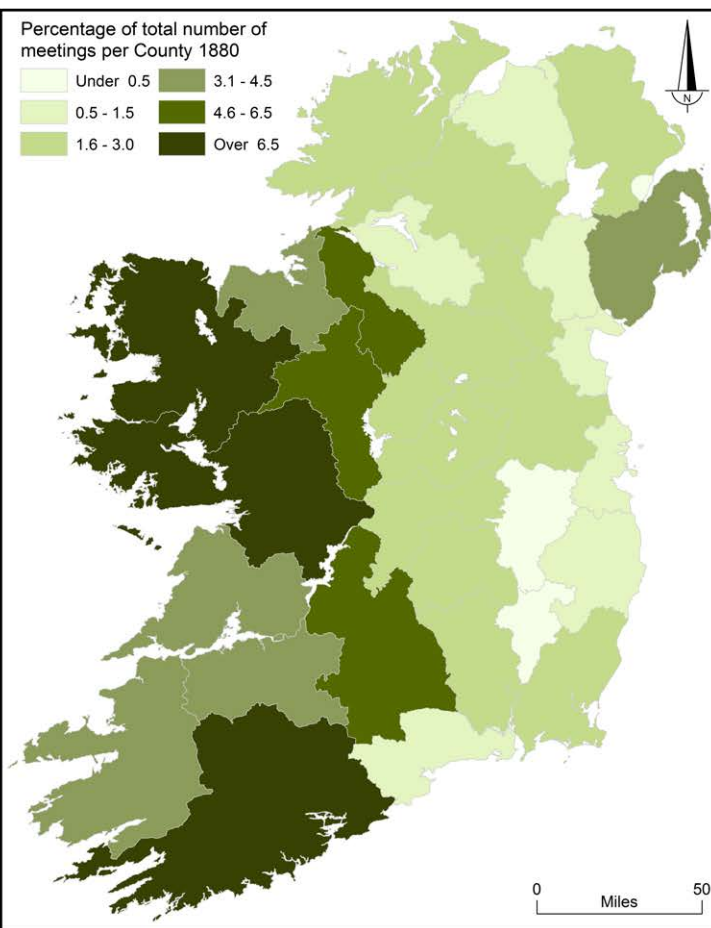
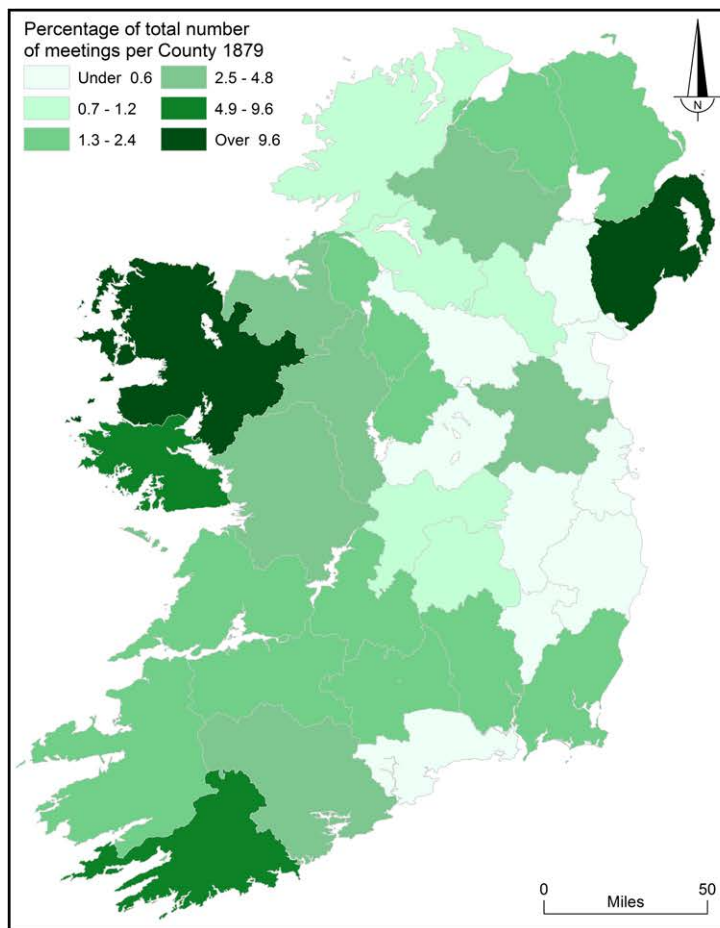














Keep a firm grip of your Homesteads \* The Land for the people

UNION  
IS STRENGTH

IRELAND FOR THE IRISH DOWN WITH LANDLORDISM

# The Irish National Land League

*John A. Keane* Branch

as admitted a Member

this 2 day of Dec 1881

*John A. Keane* Secy









# **HOLD THE RENTS!**

Who are the GAOLERS of  
**CHAS. STEWART PARNELL & MICHAEL DAVITT?**

Not MAD GLADSTONE or BLUNDERING BUCKSHOT, but  
**YOURSELVES, IRISHMEN!**

Who are content to seek and accept paltry REDUCTIONS, and to let  
the men who won them for you,—aye, and who will win much more, if  
you will but follow them faithfully,

*ROT and DIE in BRITISH DUNGEONS!*

## **IRISHMEN!**

When the cowardly and the selfish tell you not to mind the "Suspects,"  
but to do the best you can for yourselves, REMEMBER that the beggarly  
"shillings in the pound" you get as "Reductions" are STAINED with  
the LIFE

## **BLOOD OF JOHN DILLON,**

**WHO IS DYING FOR YOU :**

And that the chink of the vile money in your pockets is the RATTLE of

## **THE CHAINS OF MICHAEL DAVITT,**

**For you SLAVING in PORTLAND PRISON.**

Here is what the hireling LONDON "TIMES," your deadliest foe, and  
GLADSTONE'S well-bribed organ, says of you :---"The amelioration already  
"visible in the state of Ireland after a little more than three months of severe  
"and firm administration of the Coercion Acts affords NO GROUND FOR  
"RECEDING, but rather for PERSEVERING in the SAME COURSE . . . it  
"would be manifestly foolish to suspend coercive measures the moment they  
"are beginning to

**"PRODUCE THE DESIRED RESULTS"!**

**(THE PAYMENT OF RENTS.)**

## **IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN!**

Some of you Have Already Double-Locked the Dungeon Doors on your

**BEST AND TRUEST FRIENDS:**

**WILL YOU LET COERCION PROVE A FINAL SUCCESS?**

## **GOD FORBID!**



**THE  
LAND FOR THE PEOPLE.**

---

**A MONSTER  
LAND MEETING**

WILL BE HELD ON

**HUGH GARR'S FARM,  
AT  
KILBRENNON,**

**CONVENIENT TO ROCHFORDBRIDGE,  
ON SUNDAY, 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER,**

For the purpose of protesting against his eviction, and establishing  
a Branch of the Land League.

The following M.P.'s are invited to attend :

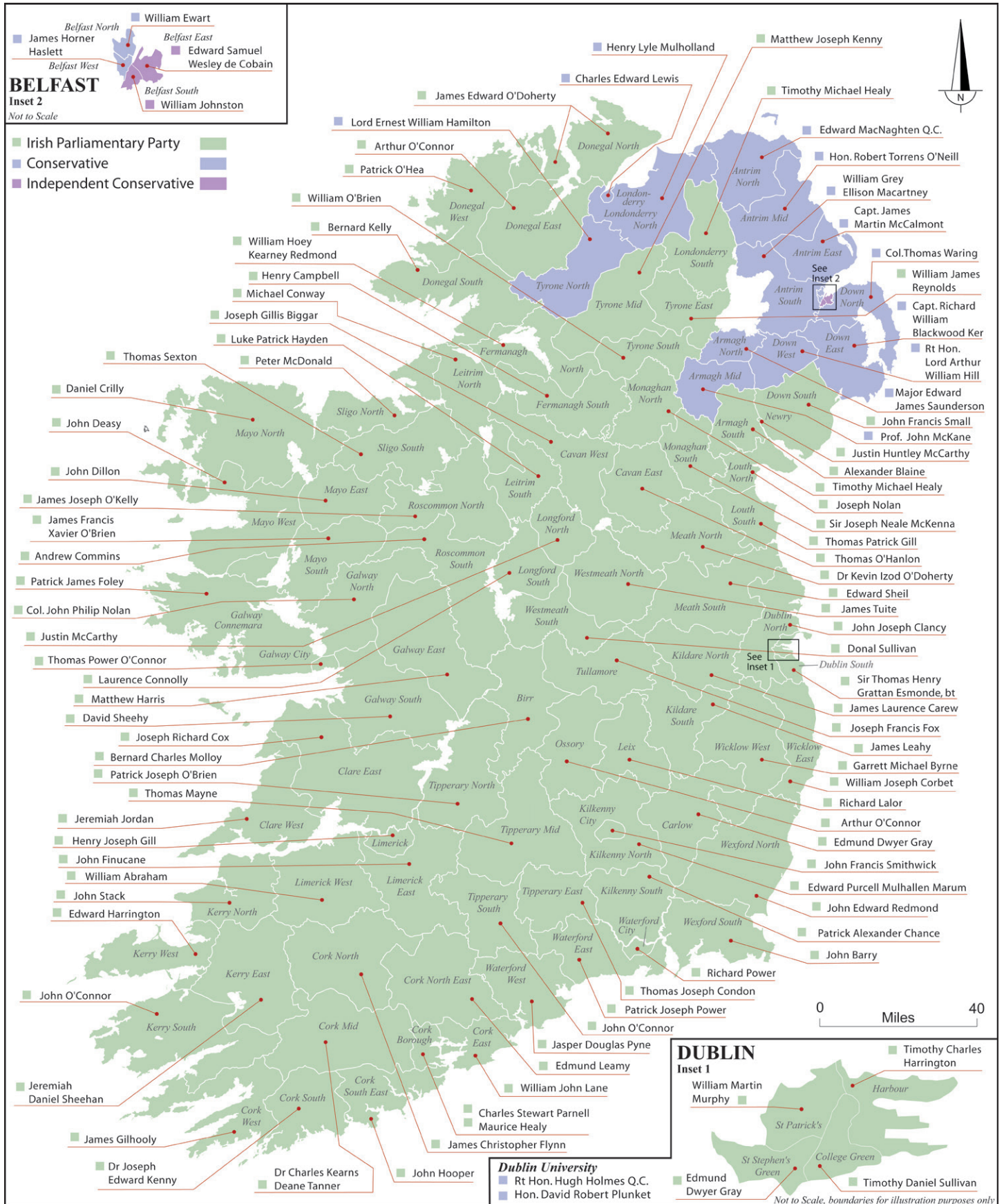
**CHARLES STEWART PARNELL,  
JOHN DILLON,  
THOMAS SEXTON,  
T. D. SULLIVAN,  
H. J. GILL.**

A Deputation from the Land League will be present.

---

**GOD SAVE IRELAND.**





## *Context and Captions*

### **Source 1.      MAP: Four aspects of the calamitous impact of the Great Famine**

These four maps summarise some of the most devastating aspects of the Great Famine, including striking regional variations in Famine fatalities and landlord evictions as well as the extraordinary disappearance of so many family holdings and the scale of estate changes at the Famine's end.

#### **Map a: Percentage reduction in number of holdings over 1 acre, 1847-53**

By 1853, the landscape of Ireland had been utterly transformed. The Famine years saw the rapid disappearance of almost 93,000 holdings of 1-5 acres in size. If you include the smallholdings under 1 acre in size, the number increases to 300,000. Smallholdings of 5-15 acres declined by almost 40% between 1845 and 1951. The north and east of the country lost far fewer smallholdings than the south and west where the loss was enormous. County Clare lost a staggering four out of every 10 farms (42.4%). Eviction by landlords was not the only reason for the enormous decline in smallholdings during the famine. Other people abandoned their homes to seek relief elsewhere or to emigrate. In other cases, entire families were wiped out by death.

#### **Map b: Percentage of Evictions, 1846-1852**

During the Famine, Irish landlords and their land agents engaged in a campaign of mass evictions. After 1847, the amount of money that Irish landlords were required to pay in Poor Law taxes increased. The more tenants on a landlord's estate, the higher his tax. This was a strong motive for many landlords, already carrying large debts, to clear their land of their smallest properties - those valued at £4 or less per year. These evictions occurred most frequently in the more remote, poorer regions of the country where the practice of subdividing the land into smaller and smaller holdings had been at its highest. It is estimated that over 100,000 families (approximately half a million people) were evicted throughout Ireland during the Famine years. Some were forced into workhouses, some managed to emigrate but many others died. Not surprisingly, the famine evictions left behind many bitter memories in Irish rural communities.

#### **Map c: Percentage of Deaths as a proportion of total deaths 1846-51**

Approximately 1 million men, women and children perished during the Famine. Some died of starvation, others of nutritional deficiencies, but the great majority were swept away by infectious diseases – typhus, fever, dysentery and cholera. Diseases spread as hungry people collected around food depots and soup kitchens or were crowded together in workhouses. The west and south of the country suffered the highest numbers of famine fatalities.

#### **Map d: Percentage of Townlands auctioned, 1849-55**

Even before the Famine, many landlords had large debts. These debts grew even larger during the Famine due to unpaid rents, higher Poor Law taxes and in some cases, heavy spending on relief schemes to help the victims of the Famine. In July 1849 the government passed the Encumbered Estates Act, which established a commission with great powers to sell landlords' property in order to clear their debts. The map shows the percentage of land in each of the 32 counties sold through the Encumbered Estates Courts.



**Source 2a.      MAP: Variations in the intensity of emigration from each county in the half-century after the Famine**

This map highlights the intensity of emigration from each county in the half-century after the Famine. Even before the Famine emigration from Ireland was high. As the famine intensified after 1846, the exodus from Ireland became an unstoppable flood. Close to a million desperate Irish people emigrated to overseas countries between 1846 and 1851. A further half million had left Ireland by the end of 1852. By 1891, four out every ten of the total Irish-born population were then living abroad.

*Adapted from K. Miller, Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish exodus to North America (Oxford, 1988), p. 576]*

**Source 2b.      FIG. Percentage of Irish-born living abroad in the late 19th century**

**Source 3.        MAP: Distribution of evictions per county populations in 1881**

South Tipperary with 692 evictions (2.9 per cent of total) represents the national average. Antrim is at one extreme with 147 (0.6 per cent) evictions, whereas east County Cork with 1888 (8.0 per cent), Kerry 1878 (8.0 per cent) and west Galway 1,773 (7.5 per cent) witnessed the highest number of evictions. Limerick 1,413 (6.0 per cent), Mayo 1,296 (5.8 per cent), Leitrim 1,162 (4.9 per cent) and Cavan 1,067 (4.5 per cent) also record very high levels of evictions. If one analyses the total number of evictions over the four years 1877 to 1880 with county populations in the census year of 1881, we get a clearer picture of the distribution of conflict and distress that accompanied these evictions. Now the focus shifts to the Connacht/Ulster/Leinster borderlands with Leitrim, Longford and Meath seeing at least one eviction per 77, 75 and 98 people respectively, revealing massive dislocations. Galway, with a ratio of one eviction to 114 people, Cavan 1:122 and Limerick 1:125 follow. Elsewhere, south and west of a line from Donegal to Louth and south to Waterford, evictions ran at a ratio of 1:200 people. The coastal counties of Leinster and the rest of Ulster reveal lower rates of evictions, again reaching a nadir in County Antrim with only one eviction for every 2,900 people. [Source: *Annual reports of evictions (Ireland) by the County Inspectorate of the Royal Irish Constabulary, Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, 1884–85]*

**Source 4a      MAP: Distribution of Land League meetings in 1879**

The epicentre of the movement in 1879 was County Mayo with thirty-seven branches or 21 per cent of the total number of Land League meetings across the island. These early mass meetings at Irishtown (April 1879), Castlebar (June and August 1879) and Milltown, County Galway (June 1879) reverberated throughout the rest of Connacht. In that year west Galway hosted fourteen (8 per cent) of the total number of meetings, followed by Roscommon's six (3.4 per cent) and Sligo and east Galway with 2.8 per cent each and Leitrim 2.3 per cent of the total. Clare (2.3 per cent) and Longford (1.7 per cent) were on the edge of this expanding western movement, now targeting not just bigger farmers but also their smallholding 'cattle-supplying' farmers. William Sharman Crawford's legacy in east Ulster saw a second epicentre emerge in County Down, where twenty-three Land League meetings and associated branches were founded in the last months of 1879 (13 per cent of the island-wide total).

The surrounding counties led by Tyrone (3.4 per cent) where women's Land League branches also emerged, saw six early meetings. County Londonderry hosted four (2.3 per cent), Antrim three (1.7 per cent), and two (1.1 per cent) in both Fermanagh and Monaghan. Of the total number of Land League meetings and branches formed in 1879 in west Cork, sixteen (2.3 per cent), east Cork followed on with six (3.4 per cent) and all the other counties of Munster (except Waterford with only one) held four meetings each. The parishes of the Munster province, therefore, constituted one fourth of all of the Land League energy in 1879, two and a half times that of Leinster, then the least involved province. Both Kilkenny and Wexford, with three and four Land League meetings each, could be constituted as outliers of the Munster surge. Otherwise, only County Meath – Parnell's own constituency – with five meetings, showed much inclination to get involved. Louth, Kildare and Wicklow generated no meetings, while Carlow, King's County, Queen's County and Westmeath only mustered six meetings between them in 1879.

*[Source: Land League Meetings and Agrarian Crime (Ireland) 1879 and 1880, Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, 1881 (5)]*

#### **Source 4b      MAP: Distribution of Land League meetings in 1880**

Distribution of Land League meetings in 1880. Mayo, with fifty-five meetings in 1880, still constituted the most dynamic core of the movement, but all the Connacht counties saw a significant intensification in participation, led by Roscommon with thirty-six meetings (6.4 per cent of the national total for 1880), an increase of thirty on 1879. West and especially east Galway and Leitrim each held more than thirty meetings and Sligo twenty two (3.9 per cent). Proximity to the dynamic Connacht core – now ablaze with protests, boycotting and large, well-marshalled meetings complete with marching bands – also affected nearby County Cavan, which instead of a single meeting in 1879 now held fifteen in 1880.

In Munster, the intensification of mobilisation saw the centre of action shift to east Cork, which held as many as forty-two meetings. Other Munster parishes and counties showed significantly increased participation to bring Munster's total to 160 or 28 per cent of the island-wide total. Archbishop Croke's stated support for the movement in May 1880, at the opening of Thurles Cathedral, added impetus to foundations in County Tipperary and further afield. Leinster reveals two distinct patterns. Along its western and northern edge – extensions of either the Connacht or Munster epicentres – there was significant growth in participation from Wexford through Kilkenny, Queen's County and King's County to Westmeath, extending eastwards into County Meath.

In contrast, the communities and counties of the 'Pale' – Louth, Kildare, Dublin, Wicklow and Carlow – remained least involved in the movement. Likewise, Ulster reveals two distinct patterns of activity. The Catholic-Irish in Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan all show significant intensification of protest. However, the remaining counties were only marginally involved, thus reducing Ulster's overall impact on the Land War by 10 per cent.

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*[Source: Land League Meetings and Agrarian Crime (Ireland) 1879 and 1880, Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, 1881 (5)]*

**Source 4c, 4d    MAPS: Distribution of agrarian protests in 1879/80 and in 1881**

An analysis of the distribution of protests and 'crime' suggests that the Land War against the landlords, their agents and especially process-servers, was most intense in Munster. Catholic populations were also most deeply involved. The national average was one recorded protest/'crime' per 1,162 persons in 1881.

**Source 5.        DOCUMENT: Irish National Land League membership card 1881**

This Irish National Land League membership card from 2 October 1881 belonged to Pat McDonagh. The Land League arose during a period of poor harvests, and as the winter of 1879–80 approached there was a fear that a famine would be experienced in Ireland. The seven-man executive of the Land League included five members who were either currently Irish Republican Brotherhood members or were closely associated with Fenianism: Michael Davitt, Patrick Egan, Joseph Biggar MP, Thomas Brennan and W.H. (Whiskey) O'Sullivan, along with the radical Home Rule MP, Charles Stewart Parnell, as president and Andrew J. Kettle MP.

*[Source: National Library of Ireland, EPH A172]*

**Source 6.        DOCUMENT: Illuminated address presented to C.S. Parnell by the Land League on his return from the United States, March 1880**

In December 1879 the Land League dispatched Parnell and John Dillon to the US to collect funds for the relief of distress in the west of Ireland. Parnell was granted the rare privilege of addressing the US Congress on 2 February 1880. In his speech to Congress he concentrated on the land situation and the current distress in Ireland, proposing that the landlords be bought out, if necessary by compulsion. The historic occasion is marked by this illuminated address, presented to him on his return to Ireland by the Land League. Parnell is praised for his fundraising efforts and for highlighting the plight of the thousands suffering hardship imposed by an 'infamous land system', and 'a felonious landlordism' and in so doing saving them from the 'fate which befel [sic] our famine-slaughtered kindred in '47 and '48'. The address was executed by Thomas J. Lynch, a Dublin artist. Signatures on the address include Patrick Egan, J.F. Grehan, Thomas Sexton, A.J. Kettle, R.J. Donnelly and Michael Davitt.

*[Source: National Library of Ireland, MS L 355]*

**Source 7. DOCUMENT: Propaganda poster**

Propaganda poster calling on Irish people to boycott paying land rents as they were damaging the work done by Charles Stewart Parnell and Michael Davitt. 'Hold the Rents! Who are the Gaolers of Chas. [Charles] Stewart Parnell & Michael Davitt? Not mad Gladstone or blundering Buckshot [Forster], but yourselves, Irishmen! Who are content to seek and accept paltry reductions, and to let the men who won them for you – aye, and who will win much more, if you will but follow them faithfully, rot and die in British dungeons!' [Source: National Library of Ireland, EPH 20]

**Source 8. DOCUMENT: Poster advertising a protest against eviction**

A poster from 1880 advertising a protest against the eviction of Hugh Carr from his farm in Kilbrennan, County Westmeath and calling also for the establishment of a local branch of the Land League. [Source: National Library of Ireland, EPH F257]

**Source 9. MAP: The 1885 elections**

The 1885 general election was the first to be held following the expansion of the franchise in 1884. The Irish electorate expanded over threefold, with many small farmers and labourers gaining the vote for the first time. The 1885 and 1886 elections were also significant in marking the birth of the Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist voting blocs in Ireland, and signposting the 'Ulsterisation' of Irish Unionism.

The results of the 1885 election saw Parnell's party holding the balance of power in the House of Commons. Eighty-five Home Rule candidates were elected in Ireland together with the nationalist T. P. O'Connor who was elected in Liverpool. Parnell's pre-election call to the Irish in Britain to vote for Tory candidates almost certainly cost the Liberals a number of seats, leaving them as the largest party but without a majority.

Despite this setback, Gladstone was impressed with the discipline of the Home Rule candidates during the election. His subsequent conversion to Home Rule provided Parnell with the opportunity to realise his ambition of a parliament in Dublin. By committing the Liberals to Home Rule, Gladstone had not only changed the complexion of his own party, but also the British political landscape. As Alvin Jackson explains 'The auction which Parnell had sought to encourage between the two British parties for the Home Rule trophy had therefore abruptly ended with Gladstone emerging as the inevitable purchaser – but a purchaser who could not in fact pay the price of legislative success. For the flinty attitude of the Tories meant that short of a major constitutional upheaval, Gladstone's conversion would always remain a symbolic rather than substantive victory'. [Source: A. Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998* (Oxford, 2010), p. 127].