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# Mountifort Longfield 1802-1884: economist and lawyer\*

by Alan A. Tait

## I

Mountifort Longfield is an arresting name. He was born in 1802, son of the Reverend Mountifort Longfield, in a place with another unusual name, Desert Serges of Desert Magee (near Mallow). He was brought up firmly entrenched in Burke's landed gentry, and, like so many of his peers, on leaving school he went to T.C.D. In 1823, he took his degree in science and was one of the early gold medalists of the College. (The gold medal had been instituted only eight years earlier and was given to those who had shown special additional knowledge in mathematics and physics.) In 1825 he was elected a Fellow and occupied, as a jurist, one of the two places that were then open to laymen. In 1828 he was called to the bar at Gray's Inn and in 1829 to the Irish bar. In 1831 he was awarded an LL.D. from Dublin University. In 1834 he became Regius Professor of Feudal and English law. In 1842 he became a Queen's Council. In 1858 he was made a judge of the Landed Estate Courts and in that capacity continued as one of the most respected authorities on Irish land reform. In 1867 he was appointed an Irish Privy Counsellor. Towards the end of a long life he returned to his original interest and in 1872 published a mathematics text, *An elementary treatise on series*. He died in 1884, at the age of 82.

That is an outline of a worthy career which had a substantial impact on life in Ireland. But it is a career surely matched by many other Trinity men through the long summer of Victorian Empire. I do not think we would celebrate Mountifort Longfield on Trinity Monday if that were the sum total of his contribution to the College, to his profession, and to his country. But of course it is not. There is a curious hiatus, a knot in the fine-planed plank of Longfield's legal career. This 'knot' in the woodwork is puzzling. Apparently out of character, maybe even a defect in the finely polished beauty of legal cabinetry. For two years only, Longfield turned his mind

\*This paper formed the text for the Trinity Monday Discourse on May 10, 1982.

## Alan A. Tait

(an undoubtedly powerful and original mind) wholly to a subject outside the thrust of his legal career, and in that two years created something so original that, had it been offered in England (or even Scotland) rather than Ireland, might well have advanced the whole course of economic thought by some fifty years. Longfield's merits may be summed up by saying that 'he overhauled the whole of economic theory and produced a system (in 1833) that would have served well in 1890.'<sup>1</sup>

So we are dealing with a most unusual man. It is not my intention to try to argue the finer points of economic doctrine, or to criticize one economist's comments on another economist's critical analysis of what Longfield meant; rather, I would like you to think of this as a sort of detective novel and to answer four questions; first, why did he apply for the job of Professor of Political Economy when he was already well established in a career as a lawyer and indeed in a career in which he continued with notable success? Second, how did he come to get the job? Indeed how did he come to be qualified for the job? Third, having got the position how did he come to make such an original contribution to economic thought? Finally, having made his original contribution, why did his thought have so little impact?

## II

Why did Longfield turn to economics at age 30 when already well launched on a legal career? I think like so many major influences in our lives, it was mainly fortuitous. He happened to be around when a rather peculiar mix of circumstances combined to tempt him temporarily into economics. In Longfield's case the *deus ex machina* which descended on him came in the unlikely form of the Archbishop of Dublin. However, this was no ordinary Archbishop. Archbishop Richard Whately had just relinquished the Drummond Chair of Political Economy at Oxford to take his ecclesiastical appointment in Dublin in 1832. It was Whately who, in his published lectures in 1831, had said that he preferred to call economics *Catallactics* or the science of exchanges. Despite (or perhaps because of) the support of Ruskin this name never caught on.

So here was this confident, somewhat eccentric, liberal clergyman and once in Dublin he had projects he wished to push. One was a scheme to establish a chair of political economy in the University of Dublin. This was achieved despite the suspicions of many in the

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

College, including the Provost, who, unnaturally, did not like being bounced by Whately into a scheme to support a new science considered by many to be suspect compared to the traditional disciplines.

In the spring of 1832 Whately suggested that a Chair of Political Economy be established on a part-time basis and that he would pay the salary of 100 pounds a year (a payment which he was to continue until his death). There were two minor curiosities about the proposal. One was that the maximum tenure of the chair would be five years and the other that the professor would publish at least one of the lectures which he gave each year. As an aside, perhaps we should note that the limitation of tenure led to there being eleven holders of the chair in the first fifty years of its existence and some very striking names there were amongst them: Longfield for one, followed by Isaac Butt, and in the mid-50s, John Elliot Cairnes, and later Charles Frances Bastable. Nor were these the only T.C.D. economists. In the middle of the century there was John Kells Ingram who managed to occupy the Chair of Oratory and English Literature, the Regius Professorship of Greek and the post of Librarian. (He also wrote *The history of political economy*, in 1888.) So the rapid turnover of holders of the chair gave rise to a spirited school of political economy in the University of Dublin. Perhaps it is also interesting to note that after 1887 when Bastable, at the end of his appointed five year tenure, ought to have retired from the chair, he convinced the Board that he was so valuable a holder of the position that the limitation on tenure should be abolished. The Board agreed and Bastable continued to hold the chair for the next 45 years. Another way to put this on the 150th anniversary of the Whately chair is that in the first fifty years of the chair there were eleven occupants and in the next hundred years there were four.

The Provost and Board received Whately's offer with deep suspicion but could hardly refuse, although the Provost did volunteer that, in the absence of anyone having full knowledge of the science, a person should be selected 'who would be of sound and safe conservative views'. Whately affected surprise that partisan politics should intrude into academic appointments but in fact it was Whately's own strongly held view that what was wrong with much of economics as then written and taught was that it was insufficiently founded on strong *moral* precepts. We may take it that it was Whately's intention to ensure that any candidate would have to understand the appropriate morality of the subject and not be

### Alan A. Tait

suspected of dangerously undermining society. But more of this later.

So, why did Longfield apply? First, we see there was the opportunity. This opportunity combined an increase of income with advancement and there seems little more to it than that. Many of us react to opportunity, income, and promotion and it is reasonable to assume that Longfield did so as well.

### III

Having applied, how did Longfield come to get the job? After all, it is one thing to want a job but quite another to be qualified to get it. We can suppose that Longfield was chosen from the short list of three because the answers he gave to the questionnaire prepared by Whately satisfied his examiner and indeed further, that his answers probably reflected many of Whately's own views. Whately was a Liberal and Longfield was a Tory, but he may have been the least dogmatic Tory available. For example, in the election to Parliament in August 1830, Lefroy — who was the High Tory candidate — got the votes of the Provost and Vice Provost and was clearly the establishment candidate; but Longfield voted for North, a moderate Whig, who received the fewest votes. Longfield's later statements on land tenure suggest he had more flexible, liberal, even reforming views than many of his Tory contemporaries and Cairnes much later (1864) described Longfield as 'entirely unprejudiced in his thinking'. So Whately probably perceived in Longfield an independent, questioning mind but I think Longfield would have to persuade Whately of something more, that he was a man who had some vision (Schumpeter's term) of economics. What would be this vision in the case of Longfield and Whately? To answer that we must understand something of the prevailing orthodoxy in economics in 1832.

The figure that bestrode the world of economics in 1832 was Ricardo. Without going into the contentious task of analyzing Ricardian economics, what we can say, and what is important for Longfield, is that Ricardo's presentation of economics led to an extremely depressing view of society.<sup>2</sup> In place of Adam Smith's optimistic idea of economic harmony Ricardo put dissension and antagonism as the centre of his doctrine. Ricardo maintained that the interest of the landlord is always opposed to that of the consumer and the manufacturer. The interest of the worker is eternally and

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

irreconcilably opposed to the employer. The only thing that could increase wages was a reduction in profits and *vice versa*. Wages would tend to be low and rents high and increasing.

Worse still the outlook for everyone, except the landlord, is a process of continuous pessimism — not only pessimism, but inequity and unfairness. In the distribution of the material product, before any other claim is considered, ‘a slice of the produce of the earth is assigned to the landlords in return for no service rendered’. Moreover, this unearned income grows progressively with the increase in population and there is scarcely any limit to the proportion of the annual produce which will be absorbed in this way. Wages will tend to be as low as possible, commensurate with the ‘minimum costs of producing men’.<sup>3</sup>

From this depressing, and quite correctly stereotyped dismal science view of economics, flows the river of socialism. The labor theory of value is the progenitor of Marx. The doctrine of Ricardian rent appears as a natural instigation to agrarian socialism. The antagonism between wages and profits, between the landlord and the consumer and manufacturer, and between the employer and the worker, is the basis of class war. Whilst I am not pretending that these political, economic and social consequences of Ricardo were seen by Whately and Longfield in as stark terms as this, nevertheless in the context of 1832 it would be surprising if this intelligent, politically conscious, reforming archbishop was not highly aware of the potentially explosive influence swirling around conventional Ricardian economics. The French Revolution was still a lively precedent. Acts prohibiting the combination of workmen were repealed in 1824, and of course the great reform bill of 1832 presaged far reaching political changes.

Then again, quite apart from the economic theories of Ricardo and the stirring major political changes, there was the place of religious thought in 1832 economics. It may seem most peculiar to the reader in 1982 to comment about the place of religion in economics, but there is no doubt whatsoever that to Whately this was an important matter and he would look in his candidate for the Chair of Political Economy for a clear commitment to a harmonious presentation of economics and theology.

And indeed Whately found in Longfield someone who would say, ‘The laws according to which wealth is created, distributed, and consumed, have been framed by the Great Author of our being, with the same regard to our happiness which is manifested by the laws that govern the material world’. ‘We shall find that all the

## Alan A. Tait

causes which diminish any source of wealth originate in vice or folly — in a course of conduct which our higher faculties forbid us to pursue,”<sup>4</sup> indeed, a man who reflected Whately’s own opinions.

So the ‘vision’ that Longfield apparently convinced Whately that he held was one of dissatisfaction with the grim world of Ricardian economics, or worry at the potential instability of society (and Longfield thought very highly of stability and hierarchy in social conduct), and of the need for political economy to present a more benevolent presentation of the working of economics that could lead to a more optimistic view of man’s condition on earth.

How Longfield came to be in a position to answer the questions posed by Whately on political economy is something of a mystery. There is no evidence that he had any particular interest in the subject before 1832 and one must suspect that between the arrival of Whately in Dublin, the proposal to pay a hundred pounds a year for the chair, and the circulation of the questionnaires, Longfield must have taken a crash course in the writings of Adam Smith, Ricardo, Nassau Senior, and most prudently, of Whately. However, as is shown by his later writings and judgments, Longfield was a man of strong character, strong views, strongly held, and of a wide range of interest in the general problems of the day. He would have studied Berkeley in philosophy in Trinity and would have been familiar with the economic arguments of *The Querist*. Like many of his contemporaries probably he read the *Edinburgh Review* and was familiar with the economic controversies in its pages.

With such a background he had, most likely, maintained an interest in the proponents of this new subject. After all, the early writings of economics are not difficult to understand. Adam Smith is readable today. Indeed, in those days even Prime Ministers could be swayed by reading Adam Smith (as was Pitt). Longfield did not consider economics a very demanding subject; in his first lecture he said, ‘It is the duty of every man who has a few moments of spare time for studies not professional, to dedicate to it that small portion which this science (political economy) demands’.<sup>5</sup> So Longfield probably had a natural interest in debating the problems of economics and no doubt on the announcement of the chair decided to supplement his income through a quick immersion in the more intricate theories of Ricardo and Nassau Senior.

So Longfield got the job and was appointed Professor of Political Economy in November 1832. He lectured in Trinity and Michaelmas terms of 1833 and it is these lectures published, as Black puts it, ‘under a colorless title of *Lectures on political economy*’ that form the

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

core of our interest in the economic thought of Longfield. In 1834, he lectured on the *Poor Laws* and *International trade* and these were published. Also in 1834, Longfield resigned his fellowship to become Regius Professor of Feudal and English Law — hence my comment above that his interest was wholly focused on economics for only two years. He held the two chairs until 1836 when he had to resign the one in Political Economy.

So we have some ideas about how Longfield came to apply for the job and how he got it. Why, in the short time he worked in the subject, is his contribution considered so significant?

### IV

In fact Longfield started his lectures in Trinity term with a (rather boring) general defence of the science of economics, much the same as had Whately in his Drummond lectures. But in his very first lecture, Longfield makes an appeal to his students to help educate people so that there will be more harmony in society and clearly he is making his appeal against the Ricardian spirit of class conflict. The students of Trinity College were told they had an obligation to help educate the working class in the true principles of political economy so that workers would understand what legislation would further their interest and what would hinder it. Appeals should be made to the workers' own reason so that 'they be taught to trace out accurately the entire set of consequences that would result from each law they might feel most inclined to call for and they will at the same time see how inevitably wild legislation would ensure their own destruction'. A worker must learn that 'the wages of his labor cannot be determined by the worker or his employer'.<sup>6</sup>

Longfield followed up this first lecture with conventional definitions of wealth and value and, indeed, in the first five lectures, Longfield is essentially derivative depending upon Smith and Ricardo. It is not until lecture VI and the subsequent lectures that Longfield's originality becomes apparent. The reason for this is, I think, quite apparent to any academic. We can imagine the young Longfield laboring in an unaccustomed subject trying to produce a new set of lectures. Some of us know the feeling of being faced with a class of students and just managing to keep ahead of them and writing lectures which perhaps are not as carefully thought out as they might be. However, we also recognize that between Trinity and Michaelmas terms comes the long vacation; in the long vacation

## Alan A. Tait

the young lecturer had the chance to get down to the business of examining his subject much more closely, thinking how to reconcile his subject matter with his vision of the interdependence of the class society and the need to present an optimistic alternative to Ricardian gloom.

After the long vacation Longfield returned to his lectures and concentrated on the determination of the market price through demand and supply for each of the main factors of production — land, labor and capital. He invented the idea of marginality and the importance of the marginal unit in determining effective demand. In this it is, perhaps, typical of Longfield that in making one of his most original contributions he makes it almost as an aside, as an introduction to his term's lectures. 'He builds up the notion of a demand schedule',<sup>7</sup> so that 'the market price is measured by that demand which being of the least intensity, yet leads to actual purchases'.<sup>8</sup> 'But the intensity of demand there is not only in different places, and among different individuals, but in many cases the same person may be said to have in himself several different demands of different degrees of intensity.'<sup>9</sup>

As elaborated by Longfield this became, as the most eminent historian of economic thought put it, 'a reasonably complete and reasonably correct theory of distribution based upon the marginal productivity principle, not only the marginal cost principle'. You will notice that Schumpeter says that from the marginal productivity principle Longfield was able to present a theory of distribution. As I speculated above, this may have been the ultimate anti-Ricardian 'vision' that Longfield hoped to achieve. What was this theory of distribution that Longfield was able to justify from his ideas of marginal productivity and marginal cost?

To understand this we have to appreciate that Longfield differed fundamentally from Ricardo in his theory of the determination of profits. Without being too unfair to Ricardo, the distribution of factor shares between the great divisions of economic society (land, labor and capital) depended on the productivity of actually farmed marginal land. As population increases a society is obliged to farm increasingly less productive land; this lowers the rate of profit on capital, which in turn diminishes the capitalist's desire to accumulate capital. In other words, more Ricardian gloom. This was a theory of profit which dominated economics well into the later part of the 19th century.

Longfield, remarkably for someone brought up in an economy pre-occupied by agriculture, repudiated this agrarian basis of profits

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

and looked to capital employed in manufacturing as the determinant of profit. Most people wishing to study profit and the theory of capital will start off by thinking about the capitalist and what he wants to earn on his capital or what machines he wants to use. Longfield, instead, thought about the laborer or worker and what capital he needed if he was to increase his output, and he postulated the image of a worker wanting to hire or rent a piece of equipment so that the worker's output could be increased. The example he selected, however, was suitably agrarian, a laborer needing a spade, but Longfield as a mathematician, again in an original manner, conceived of the technique of varying the amount of one factor, labor, while holding the other, capital — the spade — constant; a methodological innovation ahead of its time. In the more usual example when a worker is employed by a capitalist, then the employer will be prepared to spend the same sum to buy the machine to improve the worker's productivity. This intensity of demand for machinery is, in fact, the marginal product of the machine itself.<sup>10</sup> This rental price of machinery is determined for Longfield in the same way as the other prices, that is by supply and demand. As the economy expands, the increased amount of machinery will be applied to less and less efficient employments and hence the rate of profit will fall (much the same way as in the Ricardian case of profit on land falling). Does this mean even further gloom from Longfield this time?

Again, Longfield surprises us. He produces four innovative ideas. He sees a falling rate of profit and hence falling interest rates but he sees these as, first, drawing into production more and more ventures which previously were not undertaken as the high rate of interest discouraged people from risk-taking; thus the economy expands, providing more employment opportunities and more diversity. Second, if profits fall and wages rise, this will increase the demand for manufactured goods because workers will have more money to spend, and this in turn will expand production. In any case, Longfield argued that under capitalism, real wages were more likely to rise; wages depend on the productivity of labor and not on some mean-minded, grinding, view of subsistence for labor. 'The introduction of machinery might sometimes diminish wages,' but 'a machine is never resorted to, except for the purposes of producing commodities more cheaply' — 'and each man's labor will purchase more of the article than it did before.'<sup>11</sup>

Third, if population grows, this will expand the market for manufactured goods and increase the efficiency of machinery in all its employments.

### Alan A. Tait

Finally, four, if the outlook for wages is a happier one, then what about the outlook for rent? The relative return to landlords, under Ricardo, should expand through time until it becomes the largest share of the product of society; for Longfield quite the opposite was likely. The expansion of machinery and industry was likely to shrink the relative share of land and, again an original thought for the time, as workers' incomes rise, they tend to spend less on food and, increasingly, cheaper manufactured goods take a larger share of their income. This means that, if you like a modern economist's term, food is an inferior good and that in the longer run, as societies become more affluent, food forms a smaller share of the expenditures of households and other products loom much larger. Increasing returns to scale make manufactured goods relatively still more attractive.

Surely these four arguments — first, that falling rates of interest will actually expand the number of investment opportunities and expand employment; second, that rising wages will increase the demand for manufactured goods; third, that the expanding population will expand the market for goods; and four, that the relative importance of rent will decline and the market will demand more manufactured goods and less agricultural growth — surely then these four propositions are extremely 'modern'? Similar arguments are used frequently in discussions of policy matters today. One can see how Longfield, like Keynes in the 1930s, could view his theory as one that would help to sustain the capitalist system and help maintain the existing order of society.

All this was years ahead of Longfield's contemporaries' reasoning, and indeed we can add two more minor, but telling, examples of Longfield's originality. Longfield presents the idea that increases in capital stock allow extensions in the period of production (what the Austrian school came to call the roundaboutness of production, personified in the work of Boehm-Bawerk in the last decades of the 19th century). In another part of his lectures, Longfield calculated the rate of profit by converting value into labor units; that is, the stock of capital could be measured as the quantity of labor diverted from the production of consumer goods to capital goods, and this of course brings us to the economics of Marx, and of Joan Robinson and Sraffa today.<sup>12</sup>

Longfield went on to contribute further innovations of thought in the following year in the theory of free trade and in his analysis of the benefits to be gained from international trade, but enough has

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

been said to indicate his originality. The question remains, why did he have so little influence?

### V

If his ideas were so original, why were they ignored? Why did Longfield's ideas not influence others? This is the last piece of our puzzle, and I think we can put forward five reasons which illustrate something more of Longfield's character.

The first problem was that Longfield wrote and lectured in Dublin and that his work would have had a wider audience only if his published lectures were favorably reviewed and commented on. In fact, a review of his lectures does not appear to have sparked any interest across the Irish Sea. It is true that the book continued to be part of the recommended, indeed required, reading for students taking economics in T.C.D. up to 1872, but that may have been due more to the well known academic reluctance to change reading lists than to any great acknowledgment of the importance of Longfield's ideas. The only English economist to appreciate the originality of Longfield's theory of profit was Eisdell, who, for his pains, was himself ignored. The only significant influence that Longfield can be said to have had was on his successor in the Whately chair, Isaac Butt. But after that the influence of Longfield's early lectures was diluted and not only disappeared, but was in fact replaced and more or less repudiated by one of his later successors Cairnes, who in 1856 still promulgated the views of Ricardo. So Longfield's lectures and writings in Ireland never really made any major impact.

Second, it does seem that economists become well known and certainly nowadays famous, if they peddle in current controversies. This was true even in 1832. Ricardo was somewhat like Keynes in having a burning interest to secure a clear-cut answer to current questions, and he 'took the problems of the day and worked on them'<sup>13</sup> so that the problems of monetary policy and free trade were debated vigorously and made Ricardo's name famous in terms of economic and political policy. Longfield eschewed controversy. In one passage in his lectures speaking about the problem of slavery he said, 'I am not about to pronounce an opinion now on the advantages or disadvantages, the justice or the injustice, of immediate emancipation of the West Indian slaves. The question is too complicated with a variety of facts and circumstances, and is too

### Alan A. Tait

angrily agitated to be a fit subject for a professor's chair'.<sup>14</sup> So essentially Longfield did not see his position as befitting entering the lists of controversy and, therefore, his lectures were undoubtedly not very exciting to listen to and when published did not excite the reader.

A third point is that his arguments are not easy to understand. He did not make it particularly easy for the reader to appreciate that he was being given a completely new theory of profit and distribution. Whilst Longfield saw the virtues of those writers who could argue a case well, it was certainly not his style to do so. In speaking of Adam Smith, he said that Smith 'appears not to have possessed much taste or capacity for long or subtle chains of reasoning. *The Wealth of Nations* is written with very little attention to system, and this circumstance has probably tended to increase its utility. It prevented any error from infecting the entire work'. An erroneous 'principle could never lead the author far astray'.<sup>15</sup> Longfield felt he was grappling with the science in a much more complicated state than Smith had left it and with much more sophisticated ideas and he did not see it as his duty to make it easy. 'I have now, gentlemen, got over the driest and least interesting part of political economy,'<sup>16</sup> 'and I am sensible that my lectures have been obscure and uninteresting; but I proceed according to this order, putting first the most abstract principles, because I am convinced that it is the only method by which truth can be attained, or even any progress made. Had others done so my task would have been lighter. Next term I shall be able to engage with more interesting subjects, relating to the trade, commerce, and production of the different European kingdoms.'<sup>17</sup>

Another reason why Longfield did not continue to promulgate his ideas is that he was a busy man trapped by a completely different career. (Remember he accepted the chair in Law only two years after taking the chair in Political Economy and probably continued his law practice throughout.) Not only did he lecture in and practice law, it was clear he was in demand for College duties as well. For example, in 1833, acting as Council to the Board, he wrote (in atrocious hand writing, fee — three guineas), 'It is plain that in the Reform Act the legislature made many enactments reflecting matter of which they were totally ignorant. There is much obscurity in the entire act.' Or later, in 1836 he expressed an opinion on 'The power of the Board to restore the short morning service in Chapel'. Later (1849) he gives his opinion 'as to whether the University can confer a degree on an American who has followed the undergraduate

## Mountifort Longfield 1802–1884

course, without requiring that he take the oath of allegiance' (he felt the College could not).

Maybe he found his legal work more interesting. However, his economics continued to inform his judgments, on the state of Ireland, after the famine, and on absentee landlords, on the role of the state, ' . . . One great truth is gradually dawning on the public mind, that every matter of public importance should be undertaken by the state, and not be permitted to depend upon the casual contributions of benevolent individuals. Whatever ought to be given to the poor, beyond what they can attain by their own exertions, ought not to depend on the accident of their living in a rich and liberal neighbourhood.'<sup>18</sup> With regard to the law on properties, he requested the abolition of the law of primogeniture, stamp duties on conveyance, and compensation for tenant improvements — all contentious issues.

When he was 70, he published in the *Journal of the Statistical Social Survey Society of Ireland* (he was a founding member in 1847) a paper on the 'Limits of State interference with the distribution of *wealth*'; ' . . . the State retains the power of modifying it (*The Origin of Property in Land*) from time to time in accordance with the general interests of the community. The right of private property in land is a political not a natural institution.' Despite these references, it is clear that Longfield's principal commitment in the 50 years after publishing his lectures was to law, and to a very professional life. Of course, other busy professional men, Ricardo, Boehm-Bawerk, Keynes, continued to contribute to economics despite other professional claims but Longfield did not. And this brings us to our fifth and last reason why his ideas failed to catch on.

As Schumpeter says, 'New ideas, unless carefully elaborated, painstakingly defended, and "pushed" *simply will not tell*'.<sup>19</sup> Now nobody could describe Longfield as a pushy person, and I think one of the best examples of this comes from his own pen in the preface to his lectures. It says, 'I do not offer these lectures to the public without much apprehension, for I am well aware how easily a writer can deceive himself; and that the inventor of a system' (so he did realize he was *inventing* a system) 'is apt to consider his reasonings and deductions as clear, on account of his familiarity with them, while the unprejudiced public will judge them to be obscure and unintelligible. However that may be, neither neglect nor refutation will cause me any pain; I shall be contented to remain unnoticed: if civilly corrected, I shall take pleasure at being set right.'<sup>20</sup> These are not the words of a man aflame with the ambition to earn a name

## Alan A. Tait

and place in history. These are the words of a man who thinks he is right, who puts forward his ideas and who expects people to recognize what is right and learn from it. If they do not do so then so much the worse for them. 'I shall be contented to remain unnoticed' might almost be Longfield's own epitaph.

That might have been his view. It is not ours. Longfield was a singular man whose penetrating mind anticipated the major theoretical developments of his (temporary) discipline by fifty years. Longfield was a major intellect and I hope that this paper, in a somewhat discursive manner, has been able to convey something of the man and his times, something of a memorable Trinity man most happily commemorated on Trinity Monday 1982.

### Notes

1. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *History of economic analysis*, Oxford University Press, N.Y., 1954, p. 465.
2. Interpretation of Ricardo is controversial; those interested in an alternative view of Ricardian economics could consult S. Hollander, *The economics of David Ricardo*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1979.
3. Sir Alexander Gray, *The development of economic doctrine*, Longman, 1951, p. 182.
4. Mountifort Longfield, *Lectures on political economy*, Richard Milliken & Son, Dublin, 1834, pp. 222-23.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
7. R.D.C. Black, *The economic writings of Mountifort Longfield*, Augustus M. Kelley, New York, 1971, Introduction p. 14.
8. M. Longfield, *op.cit.* p. 113.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-15.
10. Lawrence S. Moss, *Mountifort Longfield*, Green Hill Publisher, Ottawa, Illinois, p. 71.
11. M. Longfield, *op.cit.*, pp. 219-20.
12. L.S. Moss, *op.cit.*, p. 82.
13. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *op.cit.*, p. 465.
14. M. Longfield, *Lectures*, p. 71.
15. M. Longfield, *Lectures*, p. 262.
16. M. Longfield, *op.cit.*, p. 262.
17. M. Longfield, *op.cit.*, p. 242-43.
18. M. Longfield, *Systems of land tenure in various countries, Ireland*, Macmillan, London, 1870, p. 16.
19. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *op.cit.*, p. 464.
20. M. Longfield, *op.cit.*, p. 8.