



### The burden of tithes, the power of landlords and the threats of eviction

In 1886, people in North-East Wales faced many challenges. They were required to give a portion of their crops and earnings to the Church (tithes), which was a heavy burden. Landlords had a lot of control over the land, making life difficult for the farmers. Many families also lived in constant fear of being forced out of their homes (eviction) if they couldn't pay their rent or tithes. This made life very hard for the people living there.

### The 1886 and 1887 fall in livestock prices

In 1886 and 1887, North-East Wales experienced a significant drop in livestock prices. This decline made it difficult for farmers to earn a decent income from their animals. The financial strain added to the existing hardships faced by rural communities in the region.

### The formation of the Anti-Tithe League

The Anti-Tithe League in Wales was formed in the late 1880s by John Parry in Llanarmon-yn-lâl. Its purpose was to oppose the compulsory payment of tithes to the Anglican Church. It gained significant support, particularly in areas like Denbighshire, where tensions were high. The League's secretary was David Lloyd George, who later became Prime Minister. The League's efforts were part of a broader movement across Wales.

### Timeline: The Tithe Wars in North-East Wales

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| 1836      | Tithe Commutation Act passed – tithes to be collected in money only.  |
| 1886      | Anti-Tithe League formed by John Parry in Llanarmon-yn-lâl.   |
| May 1887  | Authorities clashed with Anti-Tithe protestors, resulting in 31 agitators appearing in court.                             |
| June 1887 | Violent clashes in Mochdre. Riot Act read to disperse crowd.  |
| 1891      | The Tithe Act aimed to improve the situation by changing the responsibility for paying tithes from farmers to landowners. |
| 1893      | The Welsh Land Commission meant that farmers had fairer rent and more protection from the threat of eviction.             |

### Disturbances in support of farmers

In 1886, Mochdre became a focal point of the Welsh Tithe War, with significant anti-tithe protests escalating into violent clashes between protestors, 100 police officers and 200 soldiers, resulting in numerous injuries on both sides. The government responded by deploying police and soldiers to enforce the collection of tithes. In Llangwm, Denbighshire, similar disturbances occurred in May 1887, where farmers' refusal to pay tithes led to confrontations with law enforcement.

### The treatment of those who refused to pay tithes or were involved in disturbances

Those who refused to pay tithes could face seizure of their goods and livestock, which would be sold to cover the payment of their tithe debt. In some cases, entire farms were seized and sold at auction. Protestors were often arrested and faced legal repercussions, including fines and imprisonment. Following the clashes at Llangwm, 31 protestors appeared in court.

### The attempts to solve the tithe problem

The Welsh Land Commission, established in 1893, investigated the issues surrounding land ownership and tenancy in Wales, with the aim of making rents fairer and providing farmers with secure tenancy agreements with their landlords. The 1891 Tithe Act and the Welsh Land Commission aimed to shift the responsibility for paying tithes from tenant farmers to landowners in order to financially help farmers.

