**William Smith O'Brien** (1803 –1864) was an Irish Nationalist Member of Parliament (MP) and a leader of the  Young Ireland movement. Although he was a Protestant, he actively favoured Roman Catholic emancipation. He was the second son of  Sir Edward O' Brien 4th Baronet of Dromoland Castle, Co. Clare. He was a descendant of the eleventh century  Ard Ri (High King of Ireland) Brian Boru. He received an upper-class English education at Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge. Subsequently, he studied law at  King's Inn in Dublin and Lincoln's in London. He was a cousin of the Ffrench's of Monivea Castle.

William Smith O' Brien was convicted of high treason and was sentenced to death for his part in the "Famine Rebellion of 1848". The William Smith O'Brien petition was initiated throughout Ireland and the UK to plead for clemency for O'Brien. Below is a list of people from Monivea who signed the 1848 petition. Following the petition his sentence of death was commuted to deportation to Van Diemen's Land (1849). In 1854, he was released from Van Diemen's Land on the condition of never returning to Ireland. In 1856 Smith O'Brien was pardoned and returned to Ireland, but he was never again active in politics.

Information from: myHeritage, Findmypast.ie, National Archives of Ireland, Wikipedia.

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| To Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.  We the undersigned inhabitants of the Parish of Monivea in the County of Galway most humbly supplicate your most Gracious Majesty to extend Your Royal Clemency to W.S. O' Brien.  2nd Nov 1848 |  |

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| Name | Name | Name |
| Robert French D.L J.P, Monivea Castle | Michael Raftery | Pat Rooney |
| Stephen Roache, Ryehill | James Junr Loftus | John Flaherty |
| Peter Blake, Crumlin | Thomas Loftus | Thos Tully |
| Geo Powerin | Michael Loftus | Ml Flaherty |
| Rchd Maxwell, Clerk | Patt Rafterry | Pat Scandillion |
| Digby French M.D. | Pat Madden | Darby Scandillion |
| George French | John Madden | Michael Madden |
| Thomas J. Crowe | Robert Madden | Joseph Conmins |
| John Crowe | Mathias Ward | Ellias Cosgrife |
| James Crowe | Pat Davan | John Murphy |
| Richard Costello | John Quin | James Bane |
| William Connell | John Loftus | James Bevines |
| Silvester Cummins | Tom Milvile | Mark Coen |
| William Healy | Pat Nohely | Patt Fahey |
| John Moran | Pat Shea | Michl Rourke |
| Thomas French | James Davin | John Tynne |
| Patk Allen | Peter Tully |  |
| William Allen | Robert Tully |  |