

Church & State

An Irish History Magazine

And Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World

England: *Behind The Veil*

**Remembering
Dennis Dennehy and Pat Murphy**

Cry Freedom, Hebridean Style

Mairin Mitchell

Kilmichael Yet Again !

and much else!

No. 149

Third Quarter, 2022,

England: Behind The Veil

England has ditched the Prime Minister who took it out of the European Union, renewed the Labour base of the Tory Party, and engineered the production of an anti-Covid vaccine by decisive Government action. It has not yet decided what his successor is to be.

During the brief Johnston period, Ulster Unionism has become a player in British politics in a way that it never was before, and it is present in the British media as never before. And, unlike the SDLP, it is present as a participant, not as a complainant.

The Irish Protocol of the Brexit arrangement is in the doldrums. Johnston was determined to override it with British legislation. His earliest Tory critics appeared to be committed to enforcing it, but it is impossible to say whether they were just using it as a stick to beat him with, or were in earnest about establishing an economic border between Britain and Northern Ireland.

The former Fine Gael leader, Enda Kenny, apparently sold to the *de facto* EU leader Angela Merkel the idea that the Partition of Ireland was of a kind with the 1945 Partition of Germany. That was a very great delusion.

The Partition of Germany had nothing to do with the Germans. The Border was the meeting point between the two invading Armies that broke the power of the Nazi State—the Russian and the American—but which were in disagreement with each other at least as much as they had been with Hitler. It had nothing to do with the Germans. The two states did not represent two peoples.

The Irish Partition was in substance the product of a conflict between two peoples. It had been in development, through internal conflict within Ireland, for about 90 years before its formal establishment in 1921. A better line of division could have been drawn. A better form of government could have been established on the Northern side. But the division existed on the ground, and it could have been overcome in political arrangements only by war—British war against the colony it had established in Ulster four centuries ago and which had taken root, or war between the South and the North.

When the East German State was dissolved, its people had grounds for complaint about the conduct of the West German State, but there was no hint of national resistance to the unification.

The EU leaders bought Enda Kenny's story so easily because they wanted a way to punish Britain for its wanton act of leaving the Union. Over the decades they had bent over backwards, almost to the point of toppling, in granting Britain exceptions from the rules, and the thanks they got was that the British left it—with the obvious purpose of setting up in business against it. They did not understand that to British eyes they were all loser countries—countries they had defeated over the centuries, which had been remade into fanciful new forms just

the other day. Britain's destiny was not to become one of them, as if it too had exhausted its sense of national destiny.

At a moment when the Westminster Parliament was on strike against the Whitehall Government, Brussels negotiated a Brexit Agreement with it which placed the Customs Border of the Union between Britain and Northern Ireland, and it declared that Agreement to have the status of International Law.

Whitehall let that opinion be for the moment in order to restore the formal position of Parliamentary Sovereignty. When that was achieved, the Northern Ireland Secretary announced that International Law would be broken on the ground of necessity in order to deal with the intolerable situation brought about by the Protocol. One of Johnston's last acts as Prime Minister was to introduce a Bill giving Government Ministers "*Henry the Eighth powers*" for dealing with obstructive elements of the Protocol.

The British State began with Henry The Eighth and it has never lost contact with him. He took Britain out of the European consensus, and established the minor strand of Protestant dissent in Europe into the ideology of an anti-European Empire. Parliament was a Council of nobles which he used in governing. At his bidding, Parliament recognised him as head of the Church in England and declared England to be an *Empire*—an absolutely independent sovereignty.

After a crushing defeat in 1945 of the states which had joined Germany in the invasion of Russia in 1941, Britain treated attempts at European union with good-natured contempt. It soon found that, with American encouragement, a European structure had developed independently of it which would undermine its tried-and-tested Balance of Power method of keeping Europe down. It applied for membership, but was twice rejected by the founders, De Gaulle and Adenauer, on the grounds that its interests were hostile to European interests. When the founders were no longer in command, England found a Prime Minister who had taken part in some winding-up measures of the Empire and was convinced that English destiny was exhausted. Ted Heath believed that England must again reduce itself to the status of a European state.

Heath gained British entry into Europe, and was promptly dismissed from the Tory leadership by Margaret Thatcher, who quickly made it clear that Britain was not in Europe for the purpose of losing itself in it.

There followed about 45 years during which Britain diverted Europe from most of its original purpose, fostered delusions of grandeur in it, and encouraged its random expansions into countries with which it had little in common culturally.

Britain failed to prevent the formation of a common European currency, though excluding itself from it. And a moment was reached, under a Labour Government, when the fateful step

of joining the Euro was on the agenda. Tony Blair, in his phase of random radicalism, was for it, but his Chancellor, Gordon Brown, established a set of economic standards that must be met before Sterling—the currency with which the world market was constructed—was sucked into the Euro. These standards were not met, and were not intended to be met.

Joining the Euro would have been the point of no return. Gordon Brown was to the fore in the anti-Brexit movement a few years later, but it was he who had made it possible by preserving Sterling.

The possibility of separate destiny was saved while European sentiment was strong. The middle classes, remembering what English tradesmen had been like, could not bear the thought of losing their diligent and hardworking replacements from Eastern Europe. When the heartland Tories agitated for Brexit, Prime Minister Cameron decided to squash them for good by putting the matter to referendum in the certainty that it would be rejected.

Voting in a referendum is different in kind from voting in the election of a Government. It gives power to the populace to make a decision of State according to their heart's desire. And the populace did not feel that English Destiny had outlived itself, and that in future England would only have a glorious past.

Brexit was ordained by the will of the people but Parliament, elected in a previous era, refused to legislate it. It went on strike against the Government. The backbenches even persuaded themselves that Parliamentary Sovereignty meant government by Parliament as a committee.

The official formula is government by the Crown in Parliament, with the Prime Minister exercising the authority of the Crown.

A majority in Parliament refused to let the Crown legislate the decision of the referendum—arguing that the voters had been misled by certain things told to them by the advocates of Brexit, as if that was something novel in democratic conduct. That majority asserted the right to do the governing itself. But it was a mixum-gatherum majority, unable to agree on anything but a refusal to legislate for Brexit.

It refused to let the Government govern, or to appoint an alternative Government, or to let the Prime Minister call a General Election.

That situation lasted until the Scots Nationalists gave a majority to Boris Johnston to hold a General Election. And it was under these conditions that the Brexit terms had to be negotiated.

EU politicians might protest that the toils in which the British Parliament got itself knotted were none of its business. But they had, because of a refusal to understand the nature of the British State, admitted a Tartar to their ranks, and they have to bear the consequences.

The Scots Nationalists allowed the Government to put the Referendum result to the test of a General Election, which the purposeful Brexit element of the Tory Party won handsomely. But the Party had not engaged in a re-selection process of candidates and therefore a substantial Remainer element remained in the Parliamentary Party.

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Church & State

Editor: Pat Maloney

ISSN: 0332-3625

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26 Church Avenue, Roman Street, Cork City.
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The great increase in Tory representation was achieved at the expense of the Labour Party in traditional Labour strongholds which were Brexit in sentiment.

The Labour Party was led by Jeremy Corbyn, a traditional Left Socialist who was unconnected with either Trotskyist or Communist organisations. There had been many MPs of that kind, but as they retired or died off, they were not replaced.

Corbyn was elected Leader because the Blairites in a fit of hubris had given the general membership of the Party the decision of who should be Leader. Corbyn, an authentic Left Socialist of the old school, was elected because what he believed earnestly was still retained in the general rhetoric of the Party, and the members—presented with an ideal candidate—elected him.

The Parliamentary Party, which no longer believed a word that it said, was shocked by having a believer thrust on it as Leader, and it went on strike—refusing Front Bench positions in the Shadow Cabinet.

Corbyn was a Brexiteer by instinct and tradition. The Labour Left had seen British entry into Europe as a measure by which British Capitalism—under some pressure from Socialism at home—strengthened its hand in the class struggle. But Corbyn was persuaded to adopt an evasive policy on Brexit in the Election. And, at the end of the Party Conference, Sir Keir Starmer, who had accepted a Front Bench position, made a strong speech committing the Party to holding a second Referendum, in order to cancel out the result of the first Referendum.

Labour fought the 2019 Election with Sir Keir's policy, not Corbyn's, and the Tory Brexiteers broke through the Red Wall, capturing long-standing Labour strongholds. Corbyn resigned the leadership. Sir Keir, presenting himself as a Corbynite, was elected Leader. His first action was to expel Corbyn from the Parliamentary Party on the outlandish grounds that he was an anti-Semite. The Party Executive restored Corbyn to Party membership, but Sir Keir withheld the Party Whip from him in Parliament—creating the situation that a Party member in good standing could be elected to Parliament and be denied membership of the Party in Parliament by the Leader.

The Leader then instituted a purge of the Party membership which is being implemented by Israeli Intelligence. Party members who can be found not to have been unconditionally supportive

of the imposition of a Jewish State on the predominantly non-Jewish population of Palestine, and of its conquests and colonisations, can be expelled summarily.

The connection between the Labour Party and organised labour in the country, which had been wearing thin for twenty years and more, has been broken by Sir Keir. Political Labour no longer has a special relationship with working labour in the country. No relationship of any kind is now acknowledged, even though the Deputy Leader, Angela Rainer, is allowed to indulge in an old-fashioned rant against “scummy” Tory gentry.

Labour as a distinctive element in British life now exists only in the form of the Trade Unions. And the Trade Unions have taken the hint from Sir Keir and are beginning to treat the Party that calls itself *Labour* as just another middle class party, and are ending their financial connections with it.

The reason Boris Johnston has been removed from the Tory Party leadership seems to be that he was intent on consolidating the ground which he won from Labour in the election. He wants to cater to the new working-class constituency of the Tory Party.

But many Tory Brexiteers did not see that as the purpose of Brexit. They envisage Britain becoming once again a lean fighting animal in the world of international capitalism. Johnston was delivering the wrong kind of Brexit for them and so they made common ground with the Remainers to remove him from Office.

This development shows once again that the Tory Party is the national party of the state. It is where the major matters at issue in the state are fought out.

Harold Wilson said in the 1970s that Labour had become “*the natural Party of power*” in Britain. He tried his best to make it so. His successor, Jim Callaghan, tried to bend the course of events towards Socialism with his *Royal Commission on Workers' Control*. The Commission made realistic proposals, but the Labour movement refused to implement them. It said that management was the business of the managers, not of the Trade Unions—meaning that Capitalism was the business of the Capitalists and it would not be drawn into it. That opened the way for Thatcherism.

The socialist dimension of the Labour Party has been withering away ever since. It is unimaginable that major issues of State should be threshed out within Sir Keir's Party.

How the Tory Party reaches its decisions has always been a mystery. But, anyway, there is something mysterious in decision-making as such. All the pros and cons can be set out at length without ever reaching a decision.

In the end a decision is an act of will determined by something like instinct.

Tory leaders used not be elected. They somehow emerged out of “*the magic circle*”.

Kipling, the English national poet, put it this way:

“*The Puzzler*”

The Celt in all his variants from Balth to Ballyhoo,
His mental processes are plain one knows what he will do,
And can logically predicate his finish by his start;
But the English ah, the English! they are quite a race apart.
Their psychology is bovine, their outlook crude and raw.
They abandon vital matters to be tickled with a straw;
But the straw that they were tickled with,
The chaff that they were fed with,
They convert into a weaver's beam to break their foeman's head with.
For undemocratic reasons and for motives not of State,
They arrive at their conclusions largely inarticulate.
Being void of self-expression they confide their views to none;
But sometimes in a smoking-room, one learns why things were done.
Yes, sometimes in a smoking-room, through clouds of “Ers” an “Ums,”
Obliquely and by inference, illumination comes,
On some step that they have taken, or some action they approve
Embellished with the argot of the Upper Fourth Remove.
In telegraphic sentences half nodded to their friends,
They hint a matter's inwardness and there the matter ends.
And while the Celt is talking from Valencia to Kirkwall,
The English ah, the English! don't say anything at all.”

Johnston, in his good-humoured and rather disdainful retirement speech, said that the Tory herd was moved by instinct, and that there was no resisting the movement of the herd.

There was, of course, a sex angle—a homosexual sex angle—an up-to-date sex angle. A minor Tory Minister felt another Tory male's hotbottom. And Johnston was accused of lying about his knowledge of the matter.

*

At a moment when it seemed that Johnston would not resign, it was put to the Labour Party that it should propose a motion of *No Confidence* in him. It refused. Winning a motion of No Confidence would have precipitated an Election with Johnston still in place.

After Johnston resigned the Tory leadership but undertook, in the usual way, to remain as Prime Minister until the Election of a new leader, Labour threatened to propose a motion of No Confidence in order to prevent him from being caretaker Prime Minister. This was an empty threat. The Tory Party, having got its way over the Party leadership, was certain to defeat it.

*

The Irish Protocol is thrown back in the melting-pot, pending the election of a new Tory leader.

Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill cannot take up the position of First Minister of Her Majesty's Northern Ireland Government—a first for the nationalist community—until the DUP is satisfied that the Protocol has been subordinated to the guarantee of the integrity of the United Kingdom given by the *Good Friday Agreement*.

*

The German newspaper, *Der Spiegel*, is bewildered by the triviality of the incident that brought Johnston down. Lord Macaulay, the great Liberal ideologue who gave the bourgeois liberalism of the Victorian era its particular tone of voice, but could on occasion stand back and take a Johnstonite look at it, remarked: "*We know of no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality*".

In the 1970s he was active with the British and Irish Communist Organisation, which stood for the right of Northern Protestants to live in the state of their own choosing. He refused to identify with the territorial claims of his own ruling class.

A busworker, he served for a time on the Dublin District Council of the ITGWU. He was also involved in the campaign for democracy within the Union, which was promoted by the *New Liberty Group*. He was Editor of the "*Busworker*", an agitational magazine which had wide circulation amongst busworkers.

It was said of him that instinctively he was an anarchist but intellectually a Communist. It was the tension between the two which gave him his motivation. It was certainly reflected in his wide choice of friends of every persuasion, and none. It was also manifested in an uneasiness with the more materialistic side of life and with personal ambition in Union and political activists.

In recent years he suffered much distress and turmoil through marital problems. In typical fashion Dennis gave a political expression to his personal circumstances. He was a founder member of *ads Against Discrimination* ("DADS") and later the *Family Law Reform Group*. At the time of his death he had been awaiting judgement on his High Court case brought against the Minister for Social Welfare for refusal to pay an allowance to deserted husbands, the first case of its kind.

Pat Murphy

Dave Fennell has kindly passed on to us this
Tribute to Dennis Dennehy.

It was given by the late Pat Murphy at St. Mary's. Dublin.
The funeral was in 1984

Dennis Dennehy and Pat Murphy: A Historic Document

It is hard to believe. Dennis Dennehy is dead. It is especially hard for his young sons to be parted from him when he had lived little more than half his life. It is hard for Breda with whom he lived and with whom he was happy.

For his many friends and acquaintances his death came as a shock. Few knew he was seriously ill.

Since his return to Ireland in the mid-60s he has been continuously engaged in one campaign or agitation after another, seeking redress of grievances, and justice for ordinary people. Prior to that he participated in the CND marches in Britain in the

early 60s, and was involved in emigre politics with the Connolly Association and the Irish Communist Group.

But he is best remembered for his involvement in the Dublin Housing Action Committee. It was his idea to squat the homeless in habitable properties which were due to be redeveloped by speculators. He was one of the first to squat and, when he was put in Mountjoy for defying a High Court order to get out, he went on Hunger Strike. The subsequent campaign for his release, and in support of the DHAC's demands to house the homeless attracted mass support and national publicity.



(To Glasnevin Cemetery, Saturday 16th June [1984])

At the funeral, Pat Murphy's spoken tribute was followed by a rendition of "*Joe Hill*" by Eric Fleming, ITGWU Official and comrade of Dennis. The funeral was attended by his family, including sons Dennis and Desmond, and many friends and comrades from all sections of the Labour and Trade Union movement.

Pat Murphy, Social Republican

Tribute to his Life and Work,
1937-2009,
Edited by Philip O'Connor
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Cry Freedom, Hebridean Style

As observant readers of my recent articles may have noticed, I've become increasingly preoccupied with what I see as the problem of creeping cultural homogenisation, particularly the ironing out of awkward regional characteristics within national entities. I don't see why it shouldn't be possible for a robust national consciousness to co-exist with strikingly diverse regional variations, as in Switzerland. Let a hundred flowers bloom and all that. A whole host of factors has contributed to the contrary process: high levels of immigration, greater mobility as young people look for jobs, and above all the relentless march of the media moguls, determined to re-fashion the whole of society in a mould of their own making.

Synthetic Scottishness

That's why as a Scottophile I deplore just about everything to do with the Scottish National Party. Its leaders seem determined to demonstrate the truth of P.G. Wodehouse's remark that it's generally easy to distinguish between a ray of sunshine and a Scotsman with a grievance.

But, over and above that, their monochrome two-dimensional vision of Scotland is spectacularly unanchored in any comprehension of the nation's complex national story, or even any interest in it. The very word *Scotland* has become a slogan totally evacuated of meaning.

The great Walter Scott understood very well the competing animosities that eventually melded into the creative equilibrium of the world he was born into in 1771. His novelistic exploration of the period 1600 to 1800 became perhaps the most important lens through which his countrymen could develop a coherent national self-image.

Anyway, one thing which for some reason grates on me about the new regime has been the rebranding of the police as *Police Scotland*, an organisation which incidentally appears to have attained hitherto undreamt-of levels of incompetence, though I'm sure they were very good at enforcing the Lockdowns so beloved of the governing class.

I miss the Lothians and Borders police, Grampian police, Strathclyde police, and so on. I also grieve greatly over how the Highlands and Islands appear to have fallen for the dubious charms of these shouty Central Belt purveyors of the New World Order snake oil.

"The Celtic race is an inferior one. Emigration to America is the only available remedy for the miseries of the race, whether squatting listlessly in filth and rags in Ireland, or dreaming in idleness and poverty in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland".

That is from the *Fifeshire Journal* in 1851. It's not made clear how the air of America will revive the race.

One of my favourite crime and mystery novelists is Josephine Tey, real name Elizabeth MacKintosh (1896-1952), an upper-middle-class lady originally from Inverness who later achieved some success in the London literary and dramatic scene.

On the basis of her novel, *The Singing Sands*, published in 1952, one would judge that attitudes hadn't moved on in the intervening century, though she seems to have a soft spot for the Irish, and indeed one of her heroes is the dashing Kevin McDermott KC.

Much as one may take exception to her bitter tirades, I applaud her *chutzpah*, and her understanding that at least these people are different, or were. She's also a very fine novelist.

It's a sociological commonplace, or should be, that we can't understand humanity or human society in the abstract. All we can do is try to grasp the dynamic of what was happening in particular times and places. So, in the spirit of celebrating diversity, I'd like to take a sideways look at what was going on in the early 1880s (the dying years of the Munro oppression on Lewis) on the other large Hebridean island, Skye—in more recent times joined to the mainland by a bridge. It's just as well they have a bridge, as the Scottish Government has made a complete horlicks of updating the

Hebridean ferry service that's supposed to link all the other islands with one another and with the mainland.

Nothing seems to work in modern-day Scotland.

Just like Lewis, Skye is full of Macleods, Nicolsons and Macdonalds, and Free and Wee Free Churches. But it's also subtly different: in these present days less linguistically and culturally Gaelic, less self-absorbed perhaps; but at that time more aware of land reform currents in the wider world, especially in Ireland. In particular, Parnell was a familiar name on Skye by the late 1870s. By 1881, Parnell, addressing a public meeting in Glasgow, was adding his weight to the movement for Hebridean land reform.

Hands Across The Sea

At the start of the 1987 John Sayle movie, *Matewan* (possibly the greatest film of all time, based on a true story from about 1921), the Union Organiser from up north, Joe Kenehan, arrives in Logan County, West Virginia, on a mission to organise the miners into some form of effective action. Skye had its own version of Joe Kenehan, in the shape of Edward McHugh, as we read in Roger Hutchinson's *Glendale and the Revolution in Skye* (Birlinn, 2015). Hutchinson on a smaller scale has done for Skye what John Macleod has done for Lewis. Unlike Macleod, he's not a writer of genius, but he's a very competent writer nonetheless.

McHugh was born in 1853 into an Irish-speaking family of tenant farmers in Tyrone, but when he was eight his family relocated to Greenock, where his father found labouring work. Young McHugh moved on to Glasgow, qualifying as a compositor, and got involved in radical politics there, through a friendship with the widely-travelled John Murdoch, originally from Nairn but (like the young Barack Obama) a "*community organiser*", with experience of conditions in different parts of England and Ireland—where he was an exciseman and came across Michael Davitt—as well as in various parts of Scotland.

But his heart was in the Highlands. He was a member of the radical Inverness Gaelic Society and the Editor of *The Highlander*, until it was forced to cease publication in 1882. It was Murdoch who gave McHugh his entree into Skye society.

I haven't seen any portraits of Mc

Hugh, but Hutchinson prints one of Murdoch, in formal pose, looking like cross between a Highland chieftain and an Old Testament prophet.

As Hutchinson points out, the Highland crofters' ambitions were on a time lag. Most of them would have been happy with some version of the *Ulster Custom*: Fair Rents, Fixity of Tenure, Freedom to sell, and allowance for improvements. In the mid-century years this seemed a very distant prospect.

Around 1850 it could be said that the fortunes of the Hebridean Gaels, like that of the southern Irish peasantry, were at their nadir. It was the darkest of nights before the dawn, and in both places dawn came slowly.

The Inhuman Factor(s)

A major Skye landlord was John MacPherson MacLeod, who, as Hutchinson recounts, purchased the vast Glendale Estate from his clan chief and London neighbour, Norman, the 25th MacLeod of Macleod, with their seat at Dunvegan Castle. Hard times had forced the sale, as the preceding Norman (the 24th) had been financially embarrassed by the Famine. This may have been in part because of his sterling efforts to feed the starving peasantry at his own expense, but the history of the public relief schemes and their connection with private beneficence is so tangled, it's impossible to be sure.

Public relief tended to be administered by private landed interests. The succeeding Macleod, like Matheson in Lewis, had made his money in the East—possibly a bit more respectably than Matheson—as one of the Scottish nabobs in the old East India Company. This is how he was re-imagined by the poet, Alexander Smith, in *A Summer in Skye*, his fictionalised amalgam of many holiday months spent there:

“He knew the streets of Benares or Dehli better than he knew the streets of London; and when he first came home, Hindoostanee would occasionally jostle Gaelic on his tongue.”

By comparison with Matheson, the nabob on Lewis, MacLeod was both capable and intentional, dedicated to improving the lot of the tenants. Back in 1852, as the existing Lord of St. Kilda, he had been shocked to discover that about one third of the 110 inhabitants were on their way to Australia, via Glasgow. He hurried to meet them there, but not all his pleading and promises could lure them back. His promises weren't

worthless, and he went on to pay for the onward passage of several of them, but the problems were of such a structural endemic nature that even a decent landlord couldn't mitigate them by much.

Under MacLeod some of the leading tacksmen doubled up as factors on his estates. We have come across the tacksmen before. These were the gentleman farmers who were notionally tenants, and who could have provided, and in some cases did, stable focal points in the Gaelic cultural *milieu* of the hard-pressed crofters. In the course of the nineteenth century, many of the local tacksmen began drifting away, to be replaced by purely commercial sheep-farming interests from elsewhere in the country. But, quite apart from this, there was inherent in the whole phenomenon of tacksman-as-factor a tension between the demands of estate cash flow on the one hand and, on the other, the welfare of the tenants, whose labours became increasingly Sisyphean.

One such factor was Norman MacRaild, responsible for St. Kilda, where, among other outrages, he denied the islanders the use of their own Church building, they having left the Established Church at the Disruption of 1843. By the time MacLeod revoked this decision, the damage had been done.

In his own neighbourhood of Colbost on Skye in the late 1870s, MacRaild was a petty tyrant, as remembered by an Allan Campbell who lived till 1969. MacRaild took to patrolling the beach and kicking over the buckets of winkles that had been painstakingly gathered by the women and children for their daily bread.

A more ambiguous figure was Donald MacDonald, known as “Tormore” from his birthplace at Tormore Farm. By his mid-30s he was farming over ten thousand acres, in locations all over the south of Skye. MacLeod the proprietor chose this man, rather than MacRaild, to be factor of his Glendale estate. Unlike Donald Munro on Lewis, Tormore wasn't naturally a malicious man, and made some effort to connect with the tenantry, but, to mix my clichés, when the chips were down he knew which side his bread was buttered on. As Alexander Mackenzie of *The Celtic Magazine* put it:

“Tormore, the factor, and Tormore, the man are evidently two widely different persons. Tormore, as a man, was a very good fellow, and one is sorry to

find him placed in a position in which, by contact with a pernicious system, he not only becomes a changed man, but is, on occasion, driven to the commission of acts unworthy of a gentleman of his position and pretensions.”

Some of those acts, Mackenzie goes on, would hardly have been countenanced the proprietors had they been aware of them, but they turned a judicious blind eye.

Hard Times In Paradise

The Glendale Estate was at the far western extremity of Skye, an area of about twelve miles north to south and under three miles wide, and the district of Waterstein was at the far western extremity of Glendale. Around the eve of the Famine, Waterstein was leased to a Dr. Nicol Martin as a sheep farm, and from that time on was out of bounds to the local crofters, whose numbers were being swollen by incomers forced to relocate from other parts of the island.

Tormore dealt with this by reducing the number of permitted cows from six to three for each croft, and of sheep from sixteen to eight. As if this wasn't severe enough, he also imposed an interdict on the keeping of dogs, on the pretext that they might start to worry Dr. Martin's sheep. There were allegations that dogs were being poisoned on the orders of Tormore. Indeed one of Tormore's keepers was guilty of, and later convicted for, shooting dead a dog that was simply minding its own business, following its master's wife back to her cottage.

There was no safety at sea either, as the local fishermen were forbidden to tie up their boats on the sheltered south coast of Waterstein, on an island where safe anchorages were few and far between. Then, as Hutchinson puts it, “*there was the vexed question of the shops*”. The problem was, there were too many of them, and far too much wheeling and dealing, bartering foodstuffs for whisky, that kind of thing. So, Tormore decreed that any new shop would have to pay an additional rent of £2.00 per annum, and it's suggested that this surcharge was also applied to tenants who were bold enough to frequent these unauthorised shops.

The dictatorial, anti-human tendency is part and parcel of the mindset of the governing class in any age, as we've learned to our dismay in the period since the spring of 2020. Alexander Mackenzie comments:

“No one, however, appears to have been asked to pay [the extra rent], but the shops ceased to exist!”

Whatever way one looked at it, the Glendale estate was storing up trouble for itself.

At the far north of Skye was the Kilmuir Estate, which had been acquired by a William Fraser, an altogether nastier piece of work than John MacPherson Macleod. Fraser, acting through his factor Alexander MacDonald, adopted the tactic of rack-renting, ostensibly to encourage his tenants to realise that life is earnest, but really with a view to getting them out of the way altogether and making the area more attractive for sheep farming. One of his crofters, a Norman Stewart of Valtos, deciding that a 60 per cent increase in one year was too much to swallow, organised a rent strike. The same man, nicknamed "*Parnell*", had previously suffered some gaol time for having used unauthorised rushes and heather to thatch his croft house, so was battle-hardened, and the factor decided to go along with a face-saving compromise.

The Battle Of The Braes

We are now at 1882 and trouble was certainly brewing in Skye. The fatal line was crossed in the district of Braes, eight miles south of the capital Portree. Once again the grievance arose from the loss of what had been common grazing—this time an upland area called Ben Lee, which was let out as a sheep farm and so was forthwith out of bounds.

It was decided by the proprietor, acting through the same Alexander MacDonald, that eviction notices should be issued against ten of the more outspoken tenants, and a sheriff officer, one Angus Martin, was despatched with two assistants to serve them. Along the road they were met by an angry crowd, a fire was lit and the summonses burnt.

This was a direct challenge to the authorities and Sheriff William Ivory was swift to respond. The original affront had been delivered on 7th April, and on 19th April a company—what Hutchinson ironically terms "*a majestic procession*"—of forty Glaswegian policemen, assorted procurators-fiscals, Ivory himself, and a pack of journalists, set out on foot from Portree to the scene of the disturbances.

Whereas the earlier incident might have been described as an affray, this was a full-scale riot, which has gone down as *The Battle of the Braes*. The forces of the law got there and just about managed to apprehend the five ringleaders of the earlier act of defiance, but they were hard put to it to get back to base, battered and

bloodied, having been assailed by sticks and stones and set upon by hordes of women, like avenging Maenads. Once back in Portree they were hissed through the streets.

Hutchinson comments:

"This was 'more than a mere skirmish. It was a committed and extremely violent attempt by almost an entire civilian community to defy and defeat representatives of the law of the land in the legitimate prosecution of their duties. The absence of serious injury or even death at Braes on 19 April 1882 was purely fortuitous. The severity of the battle was greater than of any industrial dispute at the time. It came very close to being a Highland Peterloo. What was more, it was clear that the rebellious small community enjoyed widespread support in the rest of Skye, throughout the Highlands and Islands, and in substantial urban pockets of the United Kingdom."

The five offenders were duly convicted and sentenced, and their fines paid immediately by their supporters. It was around this time that the *National Land League of Great Britain* saw fit to send Murdoch and McHugh over to Skye. Their arrival on 26th April coincided with that of a pamphlet by Alexander Nicolson, a native of Glendale (and the man after whom the challenging Skye peak Sgurr Alasdair is named), but now a Sheriff-Substitute in far-off Kirkcubright. Nicolson's consternation at the presence of these two interlopers on his native soil is evident from his impassioned, not to say emotionally manipulative, prose, even in English translation:

"A Mhuinntir mo cridhe... People of my heart, what dreadful news is this that has come to us about you! Little did I think I should ever hear of the like coming from the island I love, particularly from Glendale, the country of my youth, and the Braes of Portree, the country of my ancestors, whose nature it was to be peaceable people. I am very sorrowful today. Small is my delight in thinking of the island that I have so often praised..."

"I was lately in Edinburgh giving a short account, with much satisfaction, of the Highlanders, and I said, 'though they have suffered much, and some of them suffer still, they are very different from the miserable Irish. As the old saying has it, O'Brien was very different from the Gael.'

"The Highlander is manly, spirited, but he is sensible, devout, quiet, honest, courteous. He will not give bad language in return for bad usage. He will not refuse to pay the rent, though

it is difficult for him... But now, alas, Skyemen are imitating the Irish, and making themselves objects of derision and dread... My heart is sore to think of it. I heard with disgust that I was mentioned myself in Skye as one of those who were stirring up the people to mischief, and telling them that the land belonged to themselves. I said nothing of the kind. I am not so ignorant or so mad as to use such language."

Of course Murdoch and McHugh had had nothing to do with the preceding disturbances, and most of the locals were in any event nothing abashed by Nicolson's attempt to shame them into submission. But the disparaging references to the conduct of the Irish were well-timed. Not only was McHugh Irish, but just a few days after he and Murdoch arrived on Skye, came the Phoenix Park murders, which stirred up the mainland press to a state of anti-Irish fury. To their credit the Skyemen weren't inclined to let their theological differences get in the way of practical co-operation with McHugh. Their objection was to the ideology of nationalisation. They were prepared to rise up against oppressive landlords but were not prepared to throw in their lot with the abolition of the landlord class altogether.

Nonetheless, they listened to what he had to say, and were careful to shield him from harm, though for years afterwards few would admit to having given accommodation to McHugh and Murdoch, such was their fear of the landlords and the factors. The dangers may not have been as great as for those who harboured Jesuit priests in Elizabethan England, but the fear was real enough. In the following year there was one man, John Campbell, who was prepared to admit to the Napier Commission that he—

"gave hospitality to two individuals who were going about among the people, and Tormore threatened that he would do for me because of that. I said to him that I never denied hospitality to any one so long as he would behave himself in my house. He told me I was only keeping a bad house, giving lodgement to Irishmen and to blackguards."

The Casus Belli In Glendale

Meanwhile back in Glendale discontent was mounting to fever pitch. John McPherson MacLeod had died in 1881, and was succeeded by his nephew, the 23-year-old Hugh Alexander MacPherson, ornithologist and future Church of Scotland Minister; and in the following

year it appears that Glendale had its own Land League.

The moving spirit was another MacPherson, John, one of a family of seven children who were reared in a two-room blackhouse in Milivaig, a district in the western extremity of Glendale (and thus of Skye). He grasped every opportunity at self-improvement and, along with his natural gifts, this made him into an exceptional organiser. An 1884 pen and ink sketch shows a man of commanding presence and penetrating gaze: someone not to be messed with!

MacPherson's local Land League was as disciplined as a model Soviet. In March 1882 they gave notice of a rent strike in Milivaig and surrounding districts, with a formal warning that—

“any one of the tenants at Skinidin who will pay the rent, not only that his House and Property will be destroyed, but his life will be taken away, or any one who will begin backsliding”.

The festering sore was the Waterstein land. In 1882 the lease was to expire and the outgoing tenant, Dr. Martin, had made it clear he had no intention of renewing. This might have been an opportune time for the estate to come to terms with the tenants, to try to work out some equitable way of organising common pasturage, and maybe permitting some of them to move back there permanently.

Indeed there were intimations from Tormore the factor, and from the trustees of the young heir, that right would be done by the crofters with regard to the previously leased Waterstein lands, so they started moving their own stock on.

But Tormore then went rogue, handing in his resignation as factor, driving off the crofters' sheep and cattle, and re-stocking it with his own sheep, with a view to adding it to his own extensive possessions. He seems to have reached some backstairs deal with the trustees. But the whole scheme misfired as the tenants obstructed the sheep movements to the extent that Tormore just walked away.

Inept decision-making by the new factor, the monoglot John Robertson made a bad situation worse, and in the end it was hard to tell whose sheep were whose; and many of those that were driven off Waterstein ended up in the crofters' own sparse pasture.

Westminster Antennae

By the Autumn of 1882 the London-based Lord Advocate for Scotland, John Blair Balfour, had been alerted to these alarming developments. This was by way of a long letter of complaint from Sheriff

William Ivory, begging for nothing less than a British military and naval expedition to quell the natives.

But this was an age when British Governments didn't over-react frenziedly to any crisis that came along. Balfour appears to have been a pretty phlegmatic sort, and he was having none of it. It was for the Inverness County authorities to provide such police cover as they deemed appropriate. This was of course easier said than done. The fairly somnolent Inverness police weren't going to be able or willing to transform themselves into paramilitary-type action men, and the Glasgow police had learned their lesson from last time. Lanarkshire offered to send a few men, but, says Hutchinson:

“they offered their men on the clear understanding that they were reluctant to perform the dirty work of Highland landowners—and if Inverness wished them to do so, Inverness would pay through the nose.”

Had they but known it, the arc of history was bending in the direction of the recalcitrant Skyemen. Gladstone's administration of 1880-85 was a great reforming government. The Irish *Land Act* of 1881 was to be followed by the *Third Reform Act* of 1884, which greatly expanded the rural franchise throughout the UK. The sympathies of the rank and file Liberal MPs and their constituents were with the crofters, and so were the best instincts of Gladstone himself. As James Hunter wrote, he was “*always inclined to suspect the worst of any aristocracy*”. He was a hundred per cent Scottish, at least genetically, and he had sensitive political antennae telling him that this was not a time for the intervention of the military state.

The killer argument was this: if the Government had seen fit to give relief to the Irish tenantry, wasn't it a great shame that the poor Hebrideans should still be subject to the whims and cruel exactions of their landlords? The Home Secretary, the famously irascible William Harcourt, once confidently tipped as Gladstone's successor, was kept fully briefed throughout.

McTavish In The Lions' Den

But a certain amount of temporising still went on while the political and legal powers waited to see how things would play out. And play out they did, more quickly than expected. Meanwhile McHugh and Murdoch were still on Skye, and, as was believed, were busy stoking the fires of rebellion. The Court

of Session in Edinburgh, having issued the order that five named crofters were to be brought to the bar of the court, declined to consent to the services of the Royal Mail being used to deliver the summonses. So the unlucky Donald McTavish, aged 55, who was at least a native Gaelic speaker, was selected as the messenger-at-arms, with his wand of peace, to travel from Glasgow to the lions' den of Glendale to serve the summonses personally, accompanied by a sheriff officer called Angus MacLeod, known as Aonghas Dubh, and these two were later joined by James MacRaid, son of the aforementioned Norman. This was on 17th January, 1883.

On the day before, an expeditionary force of six Inverness constables, who weren't on their way to apprehend anybody, had been despitely used and driven off from Glendale by the enraged crofters, which makes it all the more surprising that anybody believed it was wise to persist with the summonses. McTavish himself may have been buoyed up by the knowledge that he had previously ventured into this area with summonses, and while the summonses had been ignored, or consigned to the fire, the locals had shown him no ill-will.

However, to sum up briefly, on this occasion things didn't go well for Mr. McTavish and his companions. On the last lap of the road, from nearby Dunvegan to Milivaig, they were met by a crowd of sixty or seventy, a number that later swelled to over two hundred. We talk of Tadhg Furlong and others who “*make the hard yards*”, but McTavish's testimony gives the expression a whole new meaning:

“I had my blazon displayed on my breast and held my wand of peace in my hand, one of the crowd took hold of me and placed a short stick to my breast and with the assistance of other two or three gave me a push which shoved me back some four or five yards, saying ‘turn back now. You won't be allowed to go further towards Milivaig.’

“I said, ‘I am a messenger-at-arms from the Court of Session...’. I produced and began to read a certified copy of said orders to the crowd and all this time was being pushed back along the road to Dunvegan, assaulted with sticks, pelted with stones, clods, mud and dung off the road, and very frequently tripped, causing me to fall on my face in the road... and I was in this manner pushed before the crowd towards Fasach, Colbost and Skinidin townships, a distance of fully four miles.”

Folk memory has it that by the time they crossed back over the Brunigill bridge McTavish and MacRaidl were vomiting blood. MacLeod for some reason was unharmed. McTavish was later able to aver that two of the mob who assaulted him, Malcolm Matheson and John Morrison, were on the list of five. Glendale was now a no-go zone.

Deeds Of Renown

The events of the prior repulse of the constables on the day before the McTavish incident gave rise to a stirring poem by the local bard Donald MacLean, *Thainig Sgeulachd gu ar Baile*:

"Word came to our township
that the police were coming to catch us,
coming into the glen at full speed,
and that checked our high spirits.

The Great Horn was sounded,
the pipers began to tune their drones,
and I heard an old woman shouting,
'The Children of the Gaels, Oh, they
won't retreat!'

Although it was frightening, we had
to move
and to hold our ground with hard
courage;
there was one with a stick, one with
a flail,
and one with a club made from a sooty
rafter.

What a beautiful sight that was,
advancing up the brae of Fasach,
banners fluttering from high staffs
and waving gently in the wind.

Brave heroes came to our assistance,
all of one mind to accompany us -
the men of Skinidin and Colbost,
as fully armed as ourselves.

We drove them off as they deserved,
sending them over the boundary of
the estate;
when we reached the public house,
night had come upon us and we were
tired."

More Stick Than Carrot

The spotlight now shifts to Malcolm MacNeill. This interesting character was the son of the 5th MacNeill of Colonsay, he had himself been born on Jura, and, despite his years at Eton and Sandhurst and afterwards in New Zealand, he remained culturally and linguistically a Gael. By 1883 he was living as a gentleman in Edinburgh New Town and was occupying a number of public offices associated with the Poor Law, continuing thereafter on an upward trajectory. He was handpicked by Gladstone as someone with the moral authority to quell the malcontents without

unnecessarily antagonising them. There was no doubt that he was an all-round good egg, but he was also an Establishment figure.

So, in early February he was picked up at Rothesay by the glorified paddle steamer the Jackal, which then voyaged over the sea to Skye, anchoring in Loch Pooltiel, adjacent to Milivaig. Accompanied by the local Free Church Minister and a Captain Allan Macdonald, he proceeded to the Free Church at Glendale for a very well-attended meeting that afternoon. A prepared proclamation was read by him in English and simultaneously translated. It is worthwhile quoting him at length:

"Inhabitants of Glendale, I have come here to speak to you one last word on behalf of the Government. It may be that you are not aware how serious is the offence which you have committed in deforcing and maltreating an officer carrying out the orders of the Supreme Court. If so, it is my duty to tell you that it is an offence which will neither be forgotten nor forgiven till four offenders, viz. John Macpherson, Malcolm Matheson, Donald MacLeod and John Morrison have surrendered themselves to receive the punishment they deserve [the five miscreants now seemed to be down to four].

"But whatever may have been your mistake on this point, every one of you is aware that to seize grazings belonging to another, to drive off his stock and servants without any legal authority whatever, is a gross breach of the law, even if you have a moral right to those grazings, a fact which must be clearly proved before it is admitted...

"Some who call themselves your friends may tell you that you have only to resist to gain what you desire. It is my duty to warn you against such evil counsel. Your resistance to the law and your riotous proceedings, are turning against you those who most earnestly desire to see your just claims satisfied. They begin to fear that your claims may turn out to be as bad as your behaviour has been.

"You will, perhaps, allow me to give you a word of advice. Let the men named... surrender themselves on board the Jackal. Let the stock be instantly removed in my presence from Waterstein. Let an intimation, signed for you by your [church] elders, be sent to the tenant [Tormore presumably] promising security for his stock and servants. I shall now leave you to discuss this matter among yourselves, and I shall be here again [tomorrow] to receive your answer, at ten o'clock.

Meanwhile I should like to visit you in your own houses, and to hear from

your own mouth the grievances of which you complain. I trust you may arrive at a reasonable decision. If you persevere in your present attitude, though I shall regret what may befall you, I shall be obliged to admit that you have none to blame but yourselves."

Captain Macdonald couldn't resist adding his pennyworth, according to the *Glasgow Herald*:

"[He] accused the crofters of attending to the advice of Irish Roman Catholics and disregarding that of their own clergymen and their own countrymen."

So the blame was heaped on these "*Irish agitators*"!

The Rejection

MacPherson was having none of this. He gave an extempore response from the front of the crowd, disclaiming all suggestions of influence from McHugh and rebutting vehemently the charge of lawlessness, by reference to the long years during which the crofters had been cheated out of their legitimate expectations by the chicanery of Tormore. When the lease was up, the tenants were willing to make a communal bid and pay the existing rent, but what had happened was that Tormore had come in and snaffled the land from under their noses. Besides, when it came to straying of stock, there were sheep continually straying from Waterstein land over the crofters' pasturage, due to the lack of any or adequate fencing, so what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander.

Peter MacKinnon, postmaster, shopkeeper and Crimean War veteran, as reported in *The Celtic Magazine*, was if anything even more forthright in his denunciation of the regime as represented by Tormore. He was particularly aggrieved by Tormore's refusal to permit him to buy fish from the fishermen to sell on from his shop. Presumably Tormore exercised a monopoly buying power himself.

"During the time of his factorship Tormore never allowed any case in dispute to go before the Sheriff at Portree, but he decided them in his own way. The people would be evicted if they went against his decision. What the people now wanted to do was to break the tyranny of factors and proprietors, and not to break the law.

"For twenty years there had been no law in Glendale, but the law of the factor....The present factor [Robertson] was as bad as the other. Solomon [Tormore] beat them with swords but Rehoboam [Robertson] tormented them with scorpions".

(The reference is to I Kings 8:11 in the Old Testament, where the boastful young Rehoboam, Solomon's son, declares to the elders, "*my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions*".)

McTavish's Revenge

The upshot was that the accused men agreed, and it was confirmed unanimously by the assembly, that they would attend voluntarily, and under their own steam, at the Court of Session, but none of MacNeill's other conditions would be complied with, thus forcing the latter into a bit of face-saving backtracking. By this time the number was down to three, as Matheson happened to be away on Lewis, on a training exercise with the Royal Naval Reserve.

There was yet another twist when the men arrived in Glasgow. Very respectfully they arranged to have a letter sent off to the court in Edinburgh advising of their safe arrival on the mainland and requesting to be notified of the date when they were due to appear. The letter unbelievably ended up in the hands of Donald McTavish, who no doubt was still smarting from the rough usage he had been subjected to a few weeks previously. Literally taking the law into his own hands, he turned up at their hotel before dawn on Friday 16th February, arrested the three men, forbidding them to take their breakfast, and put them on a train to Edinburgh under guard. Once arrived there, the Governor of Calton Prison refused to admit them due to the irregularity of the proceedings, and so they had to be housed in an hotel at the public purse for the next few days.

This incident itself led to questions in the House of Commons from sympathetic Members. But the stage was now set for the trial. Bail of £100.00 had been fixed, and paid by wealthy Edinburgh Highlanders. The trial got under way before Lord Shand (Alexander Burns Shand) an Aberdonian who however had been long resident in Glasgow, and Gaelic interpreters were provided.

I was intending to get back to Lewis to tie up the loose ends from there, and maybe fit in a little excursion to the Isle of Raasay, to inspect Calum's Road, all in the course of this article, but I was increasingly gripped by the story of Skye, as I hope my readers have been. We will have to leave MacPherson and his friends at the Bar of the Court of Session for the time being, facing the great crisis of their lives. I trust we will all be able to bear the suspense.

Dave Alvey

A Musical Evening at the 2022 Roger Casement Summer School

This years *Roger Casement Summer School* opened with a Musical Evening devoted to the songs of Thomas Moore, Thomas Davis and Percy French. The songs were performed by Paul Linehan, a tenor with an international reputation who is not as well known in Ireland as he deserves to be.

Linehan was accompanied on piano and violin by Anne Cullen who played a number of impressive solo pieces. I contributed two readings about Thomas Moore which are reproduced below. Host for the evening was Mary Delany.

Whereas the original idea had been to devote the entire evening to songs by Moore, his output having been favoured by Roger Casement, under advice from Paul Linehan this was changed to include a more varied selection. Songs by Davis and French and *The Ballad of Roger Casement* were added with an eye to making the performance as accessible as possible for the audience.

It should be said that in these days it is rare to hear songs by figures like Moore and Davis performed in a concert setting, a prevailing opinion in media-land being that artistic expressions associated with '*toxic nationalism*' should be quietly dropped from the repertoire. Such thinking is ill-informed and a pernicious form of cultural manipulation. The songs of Moore and Davis show how political yearnings have often found expression in poetry and music, in that way contributing to popular culture.

As has been the case with the attempted downgrading of history, the efforts of powerful opinion-formers to eradicate nationalist songs have met stubborn resistance. The popularity of *The Fields of Athenry* cannot be disputed.

One of the songs performed by Linehan, Davis's *The West's Awake*, was sung, memorably, by Galway hurler Joe McDonagh at the 1980 all-Ireland hurling final as part of Galway's victory celebrations. McDonagh, who died in 2016, went on to become GAA President; his memory will be forever associated with the song. In any case its place in the national repertoire was

copper-fastened in 2011 when an exquisite version was recorded by Damien Dempsey and the duo, Lumiere (Pauline Scanlon and Eilis Kennedy).

Moore's songs have likewise proved surprisingly durable. They were given a modern treatment by singer/song writer Eleanor McEvoy in an album called '*The Thomas Moore Project*' in 2017. Not only are songs like *Oft in the Stilly Night* and *The Last Rose of Summer* perennial favourites in Ireland, they have also been in the international repertoire since they first appeared—the *Last Rose* was incorporated into the 19th century German opera, *Marta*, by Friedrich von Flotow, and *The Minstrel Boy* crops up in a number of English operas—and had an extra verse tacked on to it by a participant in the American Civil War!

Notwithstanding all of that, it is hard to see how Moore's historically important songs with a national theme will survive without some form of official support. Culture requires cultivation. Moore's life story deserves to be better known than it is. *Reading 1* below has the aim of showing one little known aspect of his legacy: the United Irish influences behind his nationalist songs.

From a political perspective the inclusion of Percy French songs in the programme might be seen as a departure from the national theme. In his day French was not popular with sections of nationalist opinion for being 'stage Irish' and having associations with the Royal Irish Constabulary. But good songs are worth preserving regardless of political associations. French brought a liveliness and humour to his art that has kept the songs popular for over a hundred years. In the Irish tradition, as far as I am aware, songs have never been excluded for political reasons.

The Performance

Paul Linehan has a commanding stage presence. His introductions to the songs were an entertainment in themselves. The pieces from the first half that stood out for me were: *The West's Awake*, Carolan's *Planxty Irwin*, and *Fanny Power* played by Anne on violin, *The Minstrel Boy*, *Let Erin*

Remember and *The Mountains of Mourne*.

In the second half Paul gave a beautiful rendering of *The Ballad of Roger Casement*—he sang the full version that includes a reference to the re-interment in 1965. The key phrase in the chorus, “*by lonely Banna Strand*” has a similar lingering resonance to the words “*my own dear Galway Bay*” in the song of that name.

We got an instrumental version of *Off in the Stilly Night* from Anne which I would very much like to hear again. Of the two Moore songs from Paul in the second half, *The Last Rose of Summer* allowed him to show his full range, and *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms* was greatly added to by his words of introduction.

Whereas in Reading 2, I give an account of Moore's marriage to Bessie Dyke, I was not aware, as Paul informed the audience, that Bessie experienced a bout of smallpox that destroyed her good looks and caused her to want to hide away from society. Moore wrote the song to tell her that “*the heart that truly loved never forgets*” and if “*her loveliness fade as it will*” it makes no difference—“*time will make thee more dear*”.

The song that left the strongest impression on me was not on the programme: *Eileen Óg* by Percy French tells the story of a local beauty described in the song as “*the pride Petravore*”. Explaining the placename, Paul said it was a crossroads in Cavan that once had a pub called *Peadar an Bhothar* (Peter of the Road) that was corrupted into English as *Petravore*. He sang it in a lively operatic fashion that clearly resonated with the audience.

I later found that various versions of the song have been recorded over the years. Cathy Jordan of the Sligo band, Dervish, has a cover of it with Eleanor McEvoy on YouTube in which they render it as a traditional ballad. The two female vocalists sing it full of smiles without an ounce of sympathy for the song's poor narrator, who bemoans throughout that the said Eileen is out of his league! At the finish of the performance, I was reminded that singing, when done right, appeals to a part of the mind different to the logical/rational part where political matters are cogitated on. Something to be thankful for, I think.

Reading 1

The words of some of the songs being performed this evening—*The Last Rose of Summer*, *The Minstrel Boy*, *Silent, Oh Moyle*, *Let Erin Remember the Days of Old*, and *Believe Me If All those Endearing Young Charms*—were composed by

Thomas Moore, once known as *Ireland's national poet*. Roger Casement had a fondness for Moore's songs and liked to sing them at social gatherings, but a liking for songs was not the only interest that Casement shared with the poet.

Moore was a close friend of Robert Emmet when they both attended Trinity College in the 1790s. At the young age of eighteen he contributed articles to a United Irish publication, and, managing to avoid imprisonment at that time, he remained true to the tenets of the United Irish movement all his life, eventually writing a biography of Lord Edward Fitzgerald in addition to a well-regarded four volume history of Ireland.

Moore didn't allow his many friendships with members of the British aristocracy to dilute his principles. On the contrary he was admired for the principled nature of his commitment to the Irish cause. His book, *Memoirs of Captain Rock*, was a defence of Whiteboyism in Ireland, essentially agrarian terrorism, which went through five editions in Britain.

In line with that background, Moore came to detest the religious orientation of the nationalist movement that emerged under the leadership of Daniel O'Connell. It is not known whether Casement was aware of this political side of Moore's life but, given that Casement himself identified with the United Irish tradition, it is very likely it would have increased his admiration for Moore.

The account given here of Moore's politics is taken from a book published in 1984, *The Life and Poems of Thomas Moore*, by Brendan Clifford. In drawing from that book, the intention is not to propound that Moore was right and O'Connell wrong—that is a matter of opinion—rather it is to show that Moore represents a link to a strand of Irish culture not much understood these days; knowing something of that background may add to the appeal of the songs.

When Moore moved from Dublin to London after the suppression of the United Irish rebellion, his poetry attracted immediate attention. On the publication of his *Odes of Anacreon* in 1800 he became an overnight success. In 1807 the first two tranches of his *Irish Melodies* were published and, by the time he had completed the series in 1834, 110 melodies had appeared.

One of the melodies that covered a political theme celebrated Robert Emmet, and had the title, *Oh! Breathe not his name*.

“Oh! Breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,

Where cold and unhonour'd his relics are laid
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,
As the night-dew that falls on the grass o'er his head!

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps,
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.”

Composing those lines within four years of Emmet's execution must have been difficult for Moore. A related song, *She is far from the land*, is about Emmet's sweetheart, Sarah Curran, the daughter of the United Irish lawyer, Richard Philpot Curran. The song envisions how Sarah will be forever faithful to her hero's memory. Most people knew that she actually married in 1805 but that inconvenient detail was not allowed to ruin a good poem!

Moore, a pamphleteer, essayist, historian and biographer, as well as a poetic song writer, exerted real influence on opinion inside the emerging Catholic middle class in Dublin in the critical period between 1800 and 1830. In his autobiography he explains how the light and tolerant Catholicism that he subscribed to, was shaped by the political atmosphere of his parents' home. Referring to the United Irish newspaper, *The Press*, he says:

“... from the experience of my own home I can answer for the avidity with which every line of this daring journal was devoured.”

Regarding his parents he says:

“My mother was a sincere and warm Catholic, and even gave in to some of the old superstitions connected with that faith, in a manner remarkable for a person of her natural strength of mind. The less sanguine nature and quiet humour of my father led him to view such matters with rather less reverent eyes; and, though my mother could seldom help laughing at his sly sallies against the priests, she made a point of always reproving him for them . . .” (Clifford, p. 12)

In the end, the course of Irish history ran counter to the direction Moore had wanted. In time his political standing was obliterated to the point where he was remembered only as the author of the *Melodies*. It is nonetheless important in these days that the full memory of what he

represented should be kept alive, and that his songs should continue to be sung.

Reading 2

Thomas Moore wrote poetry and songs in accordance with a distinct artistic vision. He wanted to capture the irreverence, playfulness and pagan amorality of two poets of ancient Greece: Anacreon, some of whose works may have been written by followers, and Sappho, the famous female poet from the island of Lesbos.

Here is an extract from one of his translations of an ode by Anacreon:

"Away, away, you men of rules!
What have I to do with schools?
They'd make me learn, they'd make
me think,
But would they make me love and drink?
Teach me this, and let me swim
My soul upon the goblet's brim;
Teach me this, and let me twine
My arms around the nymph divine!"
(Clifford, p. 46)

Here is another:

"Like some wanton filly sporting,
Maid of Thrace! Thou fly'st my courting.
Wanton filly! Tell my why
Thou tripp'st away with scornful eye,
And seem'st to think my doting heart
Is novice in the bridling art?"
(ibid., p. 47)

In his own work Moore didn't always emulate Anacreon's style, but a mischievous spirit did find its way into some of the Melodies, *The Young May Moon* being a prime example ("And the best of all ways/To lengthen our days/Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!"). And so on and so forth.

Flouting many of the conventions of his time, Moore was denounced as a writer of erotic verse and a dangerous influence, although such charges never seemed to dim his popularity. In the Introduction to *Odes of Anacreon*, he defended the Greek poet and set out his view on the function of love poetry.

"Love in that period was rather an unrefined emotion, and the intercourse of the sexes was animated more by passion than sentiment. They knew not these little tendernesses which form the spiritual part of affection; their expression of feeling was therefore rude and unvaried, and the poetry of love deprived of its most captivating graces."
(Clifford, p. 44)

He praises Anacreon for being, as he put it, "sportive without being wanton, ardent without being licentious" (ibid., p. 45).

Moore, of course, was not alone among European writers drawing inspiration from Anacreon. The classic poet was popular with German poets—a poem by Goethe, *Anakreon's Grave*, was made into a memorable song by Hugo Wolf—and Lord Byron also translated odes by Anacreon. What we encounter in Moore, however, is more than an interest in antiquarianism, but a distilled manifestation of the Gaelic spirit. We can speculate that he was enthralled when he read *Anacreon* because the poems struck a chord with some element of his Kerry inheritance.

Moore sometimes acted in the Kilkenney Theatre. In 1809 he appeared in *Peeping Tom of Coventry*, playing the role of Peeping Tom. The part of Lady Godiva was played by a fourteen-year-old Protestant professional actress, Bessy Dyke. Moore returned for the 1810 season to court her, and, in 1811, married her when she had just turned seventeen.

Among his many aristocratic friends, news of the marriage was greeted with astonishment, not because of Bessy's age, but because she was a working girl. Yet Tom and Bessy made a successful marriage and had three daughters and two sons, all of whom were raised in the Protestant faith. Something of Moore's affection for his wife is caught in the lines of a Melody called, *Come Send Around the Wine*:

"From the heretic girl of my soul shall
I fly
To seek somewhere else a more orthodox kiss?"
(Clifford, p. 29)

Through love poems and songs Moore gave expression to a distinct artistic vision. In so far as anyone's personal life can be judged through biographical information, we may say that he also lived by that vision.

Donal Kennedy

Statesmen!

In early June Mary O'Rourke suggested in the *Irish Times* that Dublin Airport be named after Sean Lemass whose many services to Ireland included the establishment of Aer Lingus.

I'd warmly support the idea. But it should be called "*Lemass Airport*", which is more in keeping with the man's style, short and to the point.

This week has witnessed the first mid-air refuelling of a manned aircraft from an unmanned drone.

Some of the first re-fuellings, if not the very first, were over the Shannon in the 1930s: and some of Mr Lemass's colleagues, including his Chief, were physically and hair-raisingly involved. I quote—

"The British were also experimenting with refuelling in the air, Sir Alan Cobham had been a pioneer of this novel but dangerous experiment. I was present with my father to see such an operation carried out. A land plane based at Rineanna, a 'Harrow bomber', was converted into a tanker. 'Canopus', one of the Short flying boats, was due to be refuelled in the air, and then set out on its transatlantic flight...

We were driven to Rineanna to see the Harrow made ready. As we stood around in a group, one of the British officials thought it would be a good idea if my father and his party were to view the operation from the air.

My father was very reticent. He thought we were going up in the Harrow, or the aircraft being refuelled and he knew well the risks and great dangers of the operation. Sean Lydon... quickly reassured him neither he or his party would be aboard either of the planes in the operation. Lydon was a trusted and indispensable help and friend to Sean Lemass...

We made our way back to Foynes and took a motor launch to the Short flying boat *Maia*, which had been stripped of all its seats and internal fittings, and sat on the bare hull. There were no safety straps."

To summarise: the *Maia* was captained by a senior officer of Imperial Airways and an Australian Colleague who became an Air Vice Marshal in the British Airforce. The narrator was Terry, the teenage son of Eamon de Valera, and the passengers were Frank Aiken, Oscar Traynor with his young son Colm, and Sean Lydon.

The *Maia* banked to observe the mid-air fuelling, almost collided with the tanker, and half the Irish Cabinet, two of their teenage sons, and a senior Civil servant were thrown about on top of each other.

Sean Lemass was part of a team and not the only one with a close interest in the development of air transport. Perhaps Shannon Airport should be named *Shannon De Valera Airport*.

And Knock Airport, one of the many successful projects which was supported by Charles Haughey should be named after him.

Forget the Begrudgers and commemorate De Valera and Haughey, who, like Lemass, were driving forces in the modernisation of Ireland.

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V O X	<p style="text-align: center;">Executioner Executed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Latin American Catholics!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Brits In Europe!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vatican State</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Penny Catechism</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Population</p>	P A T
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Executioner Executed

On Thursday, 6th September, 1770, a man was hanged for murder at Philips-town, in what is now County Offaly. The execution—attended by a huge crowd—was unusually quiet but, when it was over, the onlookers stoned the hangman to death and left his body hanging under the gallows for a number of days.

The hangman, believed to be a man named Darby Brahan, had officiated at the execution of Catholic priest Father Nicholas Sheehy four years earlier in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary on 15th March 1766.

(Ireland 366, Frank Hopkins,
New Island, 2013)

Latin American Catholics!

“Alejandra Lemonnier joined the convent of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus when she was 20. She came from a religious family, attended a Roman Catholic school and lived in a conservative part of Buenos Aires. Her four younger siblings were all, to varying degrees, Catholic—at least officially. Today Sister Lemonnier, who is now 31, is the only devout member of her family. Her oldest brother became a New Age spiritualist.

“One of her sisters came out as a lesbian and became an apostate, formally renouncing her Catholic faith. Another sister is ‘indifferent’. For the youngest brother, who is 18, religion is ‘just not part of his universe’...

“Latin America holds more than a third of the world’s Catholics, but their numbers are shrinking. In 1995 80% of people in the region identified as Catholic. Today just 56% do. Many have become evangelical Christians instead. Since 1995 evangelicals’ share of the regional population rose from 3.5% to 19%...

“Yet an even more striking trend is the rise of those who do not profess adherence to any religion, known as *ningunas* (or ‘nones’). Their share of Latin America’s population has quadrupled to 16%, and is particularly high among young people...

“In Uruguay a whopping 40% are ‘nones’, while another 10% are agnostic or atheist.” (The Economist, London, 16.4.2022)

Brits In Europe!

BRUSSELS (Associated Press):

The European Union’s top court ruled Thursday that British citizens living long-term in the 27 EU member countries have no right to vote or stand for office in the bloc unless they have obtained a European nationality.

The ruling came in what was seen as a test case for the rights of U.K citizens who continue to live in the EU despite Britain’s exit from the bloc two years ago. More than one million Britons were living in Europe. Many opposed Brexit in January 2020 and had their lives upended.

The case was first launched in France by a British woman who has lived there for more than three decades, but who was struck off the electoral roll after Brexit and couldn’t vote in local elections in March 2020. She had declined to apply for French nationality.

The woman, identified only by her initials E.P. in line with court practice, argues that she was deprived of her right to vote in the EU, but also in the U.K. owing to a rule there that prevents people from voting if they’ve lived abroad for more than 15 years. (*The Echo*, Cork-10.6.2022)

Vatican State

The US Embassy to the Holy See has again flown a Pride Flag, as President Joe Biden reiterated his commitment to sup-

porting LGBT advocacy and, apparently, transgender-affirming health care for children.

The Embassy raised a Pride flag Wednesday to commemorate the beginning of Pride month.

The official social media accounts for the US Embassy to the Holy See boasted of their celebration of Pride month on Wednesday, posting a photo of the rainbow banner adorning their historic office building in Rome.

Raising the Pride banner is a notable decision due to the Catholic Church’s historic disapproval of homosexual practices (*Irish Catholic*, 9.6.2022)

“Today, June 1 to June 30 is “Pride Month”. The United States respects and promotes the equality and human dignity of all people including the LGBTQ-IA+ community”, the embassy said.

According to the moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, same-sex attraction itself is not a sin, and that all human beings are deserving of dignity regardless of race, creed, gender or sexual orientation.

The Penny Catechism

The first Capital Sin or Vice was Pride ! —They are called capital sins because they are the sources from which all other sins take their rise!

Population

Live Births 2019:

There were 59,294 live births in 2019 comprising of 30,271 males and 29,023 females.

The corresponding total for 2018 was 61,022.

The rate of irth in 2019 was 12.0 per 1,000 population, 0.6 lower than the corresponding birth rate in 2018, which was 12.6 per 1,000 of the population.

Average age of mothers: The average age of mothers at maternity in Ireland in 2019 was 33.1 years. Thirty years earlier, in 1989, the average age was 29.6 years. While in 1969, 50 years earlier, the average age at maternity was 29.9 years. At 33.1 years, this is the highest average age of mothers at maternity, since the age of mother at birth was first recorded in 1955. (C.S.O. figures, June 2002)

The latest figures reveal 41.5% of births in the fourth quarter of 2021 were outside marriage.

Martin Tyrrell

Máirín Mitchell—a rather conventional republican
Part 3

Atlantic Battle

Máirín Mitchell travelled in mainland Europe some 15-20 years after the Versailles Treaties had created new states out of the former German, Russian, Turkish and Austro-Hungarian Empires: the last two in particular. Officially, these newcomers were homogeneous nation-states, or near enough, underpinned by the principle of nationality, which had been one of the high concepts of the Versailles peacemakers as they went about their business of catastrophic regime change. Officially, too, they so obviously reflected popular opinion that there was no pressing need to test it.

In contrast to these new, peace-making creations, Mitchell's own adopted nation-state, Ireland, was ignored at Versailles. It was ignored on the grounds that national independence was intended only for nationalities living in the empires that had lost the war. It was understood that minority nationalities in the democracies did not need independence—even if they had voted for it.

Mitchell wrote two accounts of her pre-War travels—the fictionalised memoir, *Traveller in Time* (1935), and the actual memoir, *Back to England* (1941). These two books draw on essentially the same material, the first dating from when Mitchell was, as she described herself, a "rather conventional [Irish] republican", the second finding her a little less certain either about what she was, or the type of Ireland she aspired to.

In *Back to England*, reflecting on her travels in the 1930s, she comments, fancifully, that her starting point had been "the brown bogs, the shining rivers, the brooding hills of Ireland" (p10). In fact, Mitchell was born in England, went to school and university there, and invariably started her travels from there. Elsewhere in the same book, she describes the British museum as "my English birthright" and recalls how, in the Summer of 1938 on the Swiss-Italian border, her "British passport was enough to raise anti-British feeling" (p150).

In her two pre-War books—*Traveller in Time* (1935) and *Storm Over Spain*

(1937)—Mitchell's Ireland is a European nation with longstanding ties to France and Spain especially, but in the Wartime books—*Back to England* (1941) and *Atlantic Battle and the Future of Ireland* (1942)—her aim is that the latter should re-join the Anglosphere. Pre-War, she is no admirer of the Versailles settlement, but in the war years, she justifies it.

In *Traveller in Time*, for instance, an Irishman, the fictional Colm McColgan, looks back from an imagined 1942 on his recent experiences in what would have then been considered the new Europe. (For no obvious reason, *Traveller in Time* is written in the third person and as a kind of science fiction. McColgan, the point-of-view character, has invented *Tempevision*, which somehow enables him to project the recent past onto a cinema screen as a kind of fly on the wall documentary. The book is meant to be the replay of his 1930s travels. It is a silly trope that slips frequently and which ultimately detracts, at least a little, from what is, at base, an interesting narrative.

Colm is Mitchell, his travels are hers, what affects him in the fiction affected her in real life. It is a relatively apolitical work, though not entirely so. Writing about the new Europe, Mitchell cannot stop thinking about the old Europe and about Ireland's connections to it. This, for example:

"...he [Colm McColgan] is on his way now to Lwow, once called Lemberg, that great city in the plain between two ridges of the Carpathians. Traveling there by night, he wakes early in the morning, looks out of the window, rubs his eyes, and thinks he is back in Ireland. For mist is rising over the bog, and lime-white thatched cottages dot the brown expanse of earth. At eight he is in the battle-scarred city, stormed in a score of fights... In many quarters of the city Colm asks about a tattered flag he has once seen in the Ecole Militaire Museum, Paris, which bore the motto *Le Drapeau du Régiment Clan Carty*, Lemberg 1696. But no-one can show him in Lwow flags of the Old Brigade

of those brave times" (p246-247).

Lemberg/Lwow is now Lviv in Ukraine. The *Régiment Clan Carty* was the regiment of Justin McCarthy, a younger son of the Earl of Clancarty, and one of the 'wild geese', the many Irish commanders who, following the demise of the Jacobite cause in Ireland, went to fight for it in France in the army of Louis XIV—Jacobitism and the Penal Laws that followed its defeat being the principal reason for many of the Irish connections to continental Europe that Mitchell mentions.

Justin McCarthy died in 1694 and his regiment was eventually merged with several other Irish emigré units to form the *Irish Brigade*, which would remain part of the French army until around the Revolution. I am not sure what an Irish regiment in the French army was doing in Lemberg in 1696. Lemberg was at the time part of the Congress Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, but as far as I know there was no war between France and the Congress Kingdom. Lemberg became Austrian following one of the partitions of Poland and appears to have become a successful multi-cultural society. It might have continued that way had the Austro-Hungarian Empire gone on evolving instead of being involuntarily dismantled at Versailles.

In *Traveller in Time*, Mitchell/Colm is dismissive of the Versailles settlement, commenting that its architects were insensitive and manipulative in the decisions they took. The outcome is described as a "sorry state of things" that has disrupted the previous, pre-War Europe of vast, transnational states where nationality could be usefully vague, and animosity diluted. The new states established by the Treaties are not quite as national as the principle of nationality might have wanted them. It was not, in practice, possible to draw borders so that only particular national communities were enclosed by them, and still end up with states that were viable.

In making new nation-states, Versailles has made new national minorities, some of them alienated from the outset, and some of them in the process of being alienated—the Sudeten Germans, Poles and Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, for example.

"I have been in Polish Ukraine", Mitchell would write to her friend Desmond Ryan in 1939, when the Versailles settlement was in meltdown, adding—

"You will have seen that the Daily Worker has said, more than once...

that the Ukrainian language was prohibited in Poland (before Russian entry). That is a lie. Ukrainian, as you know, is very similar to Russian, so much alike that Russian is understood by peasant Ukrainians. I don't know Polish, but I do know Russian, and when I was in Polish Ukraine I spoke Russian everywhere, and was answered openly, by peasants and townspeople, in Ukrainian... And peasant children wrote to me in Ukrainian using Russian characters'.

In *Traveller*, she has Colm meet a Hungarian who bemoans the loss, to Czechoslovakia, of Pozsony, now Bratislava, the former Hungarian coronation city, not to mention Transylvania, the Tatra Mountains, the Carpathians, and Croatia—in all, some three million of its people.

A Slovak journalist, in September 1934, advises Colm to go to Ruthenia. "*Like Ruritania*", the Slovak tells him. He hears that the Hungarians are encouraging the Slovaks to separate from Bohemia and that, as well, the Ruthenians have an independence movement based on the Ukrainian population.

On the diplomatic front, there is an *Austro-Hungarian Consultative Pact* and a Hungary/Italy political agreement, while the Czechoslovak state wishes to expand its little *entente* to include Austria and Hungary.

In Austria, McColgan has a portent of war when he hears a folk-song and is unsettled by it.

"It is the music of battles and of the agony of war, the lust of the conquering riders and the sullen fury of the trampled foe. And it is of the conquered that Colm thinks the most, for he can hear their murmuring, and how they gather together in hidden places and kindle the fires of hate. They whisper in different parts of the land and gather courage, the murmurings grow and are now heard as mighty shouts. And the oppressors mock the cry for vengeance that goes up from the people. But the hour of the people has come... and the traveller knows that it is the Year of Revolution the musician is playing, and recalls the words of the Irish poetess Speranza, who wrote that year:

Lift up your pale sad faces, ye
children of sorrow!

The night passes on to glorious
tomorrow.

That is what he hears—fifteen years after the makers of Versailles" (p219; Speranza was Jane Wilde, mother of Oscar Wilde. She contributed to the Young Ireland paper, *The Nation*).

Colm proceeds to visit Uzhhorod/Ungvar, now in Slovakia, then in Czechoslovakia, which at the time was predominantly Hungarian/Magyar with fewer than a tenth of its 20,000 population Slovak. In a café, he remarks that the clientele includes Hungarians, Carpathian Russians, Rumanians, Slovaks and Poles. It makes him think of Bowman's *Problems in Political Geography* and, in particular, the line, "*Race may be a powerful factor in political affairs, and is still more powerful in the field of economic development*". Mitchell writes:

"A pity, thinks the young man, that this text had not been hung in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles."

Isaiah Bowman was an American academic, a human geographer. It might be that, when he writes 'race', he simply intends it as a synonym for '*national community*', but I think it more likely that he meant it in the Social Darwinist sense. When, in the 1920s, minority groups—people who were not WASPs—began passing the entrance exams for American elite universities in significant numbers, Bowman became concerned that the WASP share of the student population would be diminished or even marginalised. And, if that happened, he reckoned that in time the WASP share of the American elite itself would also decline.

It particularly concerned him that many of these able new students were Jews. His solution was to press, successfully, for quotas and affirmative action to ensure that the privileged remained privileged and the disadvantaged did not get too far above themselves.

There would have been no need to put Bowman's words on a placard at the Paris Conference as he was there in person and could have delivered them in person. He was there as an advisor to Woodrow Wilson, of whom he was a great admirer: so much so, that he transcribed the President's extemporised speeches lest his words be lost to history.

The book of Bowman's that Mitchell cites, *The New World: Problems in Political Geography*, was published in 1921. It outlines and assesses the territorial settlement which Bowman, as a human geographer who advised the President, would himself have influenced.

In her later, non-fictionalised, memoir, *Back to England*, Mitchell is no longer so sure that Versailles was a bad thing. The problem of Europe, she now

thinks, predates Versailles. It is Germany. Germany is inherently problematic. "What is wrong with Germany", A.J.P. Taylor once commented,

"is there is too much of it. There are too many Germans, and Germany is too strong, too well-organised, too well-equipped with industrial resources. The greater Germany is a very recent appearance, created overnight by Bismarck and completed only by Hitler."

That is how Mitchell, too, sees it. The only solution she can see is that Germany be dismantled. She mentions, approvingly, a Frenchman she met who bemoaned the fact that Germany was not, at Versailles, returned to its nineteenth century components. In 1939, she herself thought that Germany might improve from having a part of it permanently annexed by Russia.

Germany, she tells Ryan, is intent on world domination. If there are Germans who opposed Hitler, she says, then they are the minority. Most Germans did not oppose him and *plus ça change*. In Mitchell's view, every time Germany has produced an aggressive, war-worshipping a 'blood and iron' leader (she names Frederick the Great, Bismarck, Wilhelm II, and now Hitler), millions of Germans have been supportive. The Nazis are simply the latest and worst in this infamous line.

Where other nations have gone forward, she suggests, Germany has regressed: "*The Nazis, far from being a master race... are a reversion to Neanderthal man*". They are, in her opinion, a "*lupine*" type, against whom we must be perpetually on our guard. "*Look at the Quislings in Norway*", she advises,

"the Germans who went there as children, refugees of the last war, protected and brought up by kindly Norwegians, and then when 'the call comes' what do they do but betray the country that gave refuge to them and their parents."

It is as if being German is a kind of mental disorder that comes and goes, this new war being nothing more than a fresh outbreak of what Mitchell calls the "*Teutonic plague*", "*a concern for the biologist rather than the historian*".

"*It will take decades*", she thinks, "*before the German people cease to be Nazis at heart*".

The Versailles settlement was not perfect, she concedes in *Back to England*, and the Allies, in victory, might have been more generous to what she

calls "*the progressive pacific Republic of Weimar*". But this is a view she had rejected by the time the second, *Right Book Club* edition had appeared less than a year later. That second edition includes the following footnote to her comment on Weimar:

"That the Allies were justified in their suspicions about Weimar has been made clear recently, and the matter is dealt with by this writer in a later book".

The book in question, *We Can Keep the Peace* (1945), alleges that the Weimar Republic hoodwinked the Allies by asserting its democratic character while at the same time secretly re-arming with Russian support. "*Under Gustav Stresemann*", she writes, "*the aims of the Republic differed little from those of the Reich of Adolf Hitler*".

And she writes to Ryan in October 1941:

"I don't agree with you that there was much "uplift" among the Neanderthal tribe after the 1914-1918 war. You must know—I'm sure you do—something of the inner history of the Weimar Republic. On paper it was about the best thing the Germans ever did, and at the time, I shared the opinions of those British and French people who regretted that their own governments didn't give it active support. But, alas, many of its own supporters were embryo Nazis."

Mitchell adds that she was in Germany—

"soon after the last war and saw the "Young Germany" on which pious British Labour (and Tory alike) hopes were based. The whole spirit of the youth, so far as an outsider could tell, was militaristic even among the pacifists! And I said at the time it only needs an unscrupulous leader to come along and capture all these roaming bands of "German Brotherhood" and there will be a first rate army which will march all over Europe. And sure enough it came."

And yet, in *Traveller in Time*, which is based on a visit to the Weimar Republic around a decade after it had been established, she gave no indication that Weimar Germany and its people unsettled her. What pessimism there is in that book is down to Versailles. The Germany she sees is described positively, as a pleasant and fascinating place to visit.

The only mention of the War comes briefly and in the context of an anecdote concerning Roger Casement. Read-

ing the pre-War *Traveller* and then the wartime writings, is clear that her view of Germany changed sometime around 1939, and that she had gone from having no particular issue with it to regarding it as a kind of malignancy that the world would need to deal with for decades (at least) to come.

The fact that Casement, and Irish Republicanism in general, was in alliance with Germany is a cognitive dissonance she largely passes over.

In the final chapter of *Back to England*, Mitchell writes of being at Euston Station to see off some friends who are going back to Ireland to avoid getting caught up in the War. She argues with them when they say that this War is like any previous war, waged for political, Imperial and economic dominance. She disagrees, saying that this is like nothing there has ever been. This time, it is truly a war for civilisation against a Germany whose destructiveness is beyond dispute.

Back to England is the title of the book, but 'back to England' also describes her preferred approach—a restoration of British international hegemony with Ireland an integral and contented part of it. This is a theme she developed in the subsequent *Atlantic Battle and the Future of Ireland*.

In the latter, Mitchell argues that British naval supremacy is a desirable thing. It is what in the past ensured the freedom of the seas, a freedom that benefits all nations. The day of the sovereign state may be over, she writes, but Britain must remain the dominant sea-power and police the seas. "*Indeed, one might even suggest that the only desirable dictatorship would be one of British Bluejackets*" (p211). The problem with the Germans, apart from what she regards as their innate aggression and territorial ambitions, is that they have never understood that British sea-power benefits them just as it benefits all nations. "*If the Germans were a cooperative rather than an aggressive people*", she writes in *Atlantic Battle*—

"they would support the sea-supremacy of Britain... in the interests of general security" (p51).

She then goes on to quote Paul Cohen Portheim's *England: the unknown isle* (1930). Portheim was Austrian by birth, born in the then Austro-Hungarian Empire. Like Mitchell, he spoke several languages, travelled widely and had a genuine interest in the countries he visited and the people he met. He

happened to be in England at the start of the First World War and was interned as an enemy alien, first on the Isle of Man but later, when it was discovered that he was a gentleman (he had packed a dinner jacket when he was interned, thinking internment near the sea would be a bit like being on a holiday), he was transferred to Yorkshire. There, he was confined with the other gentleman aliens in a relatively relaxed institution. Relaxed though it was, Portheim disliked the lack of privacy and found that, over time, the other internees grated on him with their monotonous predictability and annoying ways.

But the whole experience did him no personal harm, he reckoned, and might even have done him some good. He had gone in a visual artist and come out a writer, and writing served him better than painting since, when he got out, he was able to make a name for himself at it. In his writings, he favoured international cooperation through bodies like the League of Nations and, like Mitchell in the early 1930s, he felt some anxiety regarding the new nation states of Eastern Europe ('Half Asia' as he called it). These were nationalist, he said, only because they were too uncivilised to broaden their horizons beyond the nation

England: the unknown isle was originally written in German to explain Britain to Germans—to explain the state that won the war to the people that lost it—and was only later translated into English. Mitchell quotes a couple of passages in which Portheim says, more or less, that all the talk his readers might have heard about '*perfidious Albion*' is pretty much on the money.

"Since the day when the destruction of the Armada laid the foundation of her command of the sea, the maintenance of that command, on which the existence of her Empire depends, has been at the bottom of every one of her political moves: everything else is secondary and derivative from that object, which alone determines her attitude to other powers. Anyone who threatens England's command of the sea, and therefore any great European power which would possibly set on foot a coalition against her, any independent power holding the Flanders coast, is her enemy" (quoted in *Back to England*, p18-19).

Also, Portheim writes, England "*does not allow herself to be deflected from her straight course by any principles. Her system is No Principles*" (p209).

Mitchell takes no issue with this. It

is, she says, British *realpolitik*. It is odd, then, that she is elsewhere critical of aspects of pre-War British foreign policy, such as naval disarmament, loans to Germany and the *Anglo-German Naval Agreement* (which released Germany from the limitations on the size and composition of its fleet that had been imposed by the Treaty of Versailles):

"There must be no more of such naval agreements, secret or otherwise, made with Germany when this war has "ended". No more showing of distinguished German visitors round our naval dockyards (or round our aircraft factories). There must be no handing over to international control of our fleet" (*Atlantic Battle*, p53).

"*The biggest mistake the English have made*", a French journalist tells her—

"was to encourage Germany after 1920, when the English began to fear French hegemony in Europe. Without the British loan, Germany could not have rearmmed to become a military menace to all of Europe. Britain has often indulged in the curious practice of arming her obvious enemies. You remain, indeed, the most illogical people on Earth."

But preserving the balance of power, by ensuring that Germany was empowered, was entirely in keeping with the "*system of no principles*", described by Porthelm. Without a viable German State, France would have become the dominant force in Western Europe, as it had been under Napoleon and Louis XIV, and there would have been no Balance of Power to preserve!

Mitchell's prescription for lasting world peace is the creation of an alliance, the '*Associated States*', based on British maritime supremacy:

"...the best safeguard against a repetition of these hydra-headed Hitlers is the formation of a maritime bloc so strong that no-one will dare attack it. Formed of civilised societies, it is unlikely to attack others. And we repeat, the nucleus of that bloc must consist of the British Commonwealth, America and all Ireland..." (*Atlantic Battle*, p57).

(That sudden third person singular, in what is otherwise a first person narrative, makes me wonder if others might have had a hand in the writing, and who they might have been.)

Britain, Mitchell writes, is not what it was at the time of the Irish War of

Independence or the 1916 Rising. It is now largely post-Imperial, evolving its Empire into a Commonwealth, which she sees as a kind of federation.

To her, the war this almost federation is waging against Germany is being waged selflessly, for the greater good. It is unlikely, she says, that many Irish people would, in this current war, support or sympathise with Germany, though she regrets that aspects of British policy hark back to the bad old days—its relationship with India, for instance, and Northern Ireland. ("*Neither the British people, broad and large*", she writes, "*nor their premier Churchill, stood for the despotism of the Stormont Junta*"). There is no case for Northern Ireland, she alleges, no justification for what she calls "*the tyranny in the six counties partitioned from Ireland*". It is this partition that is, in part, what is keeping Ireland out of the War, Mitchell argues, and it is partition that will help keep it out of any post-War Anglosphere alliance. That is one reason, she says, why it is desirable that partition ends.

Irish neutrality was, aside from anything else, an act of independence. Both Churchill and Anthony Eden said that Irish neutrality was conceptually impossible. Their reasoning was that Ireland, as a dominion, was under the Crown and, since the Crown was indivisible, it could not be at war in one of its dominions and neutral in another. If it was at war, it was at war across the board and Ireland could no more be neutral than Pimlico. Indeed, it was Churchill's view that Ireland had no business being independent, let alone neutral. It was, as he put it, "*at war but skulking*".

Ireland—the former Free State, soon to be Republic—was a modest strategic asset because of the Treaty Ports. As a neutral strategic asset, it ran the risk it might be invaded by either side. A German invasion was unlikely but not out of the question. Germany lacked the necessary naval and aerial supremacy to move sufficient troops to Ireland to pose a threat to Britain. To have diverted that number of troops, with all of their vehicles and equipment, to Ireland would have been a massive undertaking that almost certainly would have failed, and adversely affected military action elsewhere, in places of far greater strategic importance.

The British government was, or affected to be, exercised by the likelihood of this unlikely invasion of its neighbouring island. De Valera proposed that, in

the event of a German invasion, he would immediately request British assistance. Churchill, in contrast, wanted to be invited in well in advance of any invasion.

An anticipatory British military presence in Ireland would almost certainly have involved Ireland in the War. The former British naval bases at Lough Swilly and elsewhere—the 'Treaty Ports'—which were Churchill's primary goal, would have been re-occupied by the Royal Navy and put to use against Germany. And, in that eventuality, they would have been targeted. Ireland would thereby have found itself in the War but with no actual role, or significant say, in the fighting of it. Aside from anything else, that would surely have meant a reduction in sovereignty.

In the First World War, Northern European neutral states like Denmark and the Netherlands, were gradually drawn into the Allied war effort. Their significance was not military: their strategic value was that they could help to intensify the blockade.

To make them to operate the blockade, some of their sovereignty was removed from them for the duration of the war. They were told what they could import and what amount of it, and what amount, if any, of their domestic produce they could sell, and who they could sell it to. They complied on the understanding that, if they did not help operate the blockade as instructed, they would be subject to it.

Several times in the Second World War, Churchill floated the ending of partition as an inducement to De Valera to make Irish territory available to him, but to no avail. De Valera (and, to be fair, Mitchell) considered partition to be one thing and entering the war to be another and did not see that the former should be a trade for the latter. And, at any rate, what was on offer from Churchill was never quite an end to partition. There would be cross-Border meetings and Conferences and suchlike once the War was safely won and the aim of these would be to nudge the two sides closer together. But, if and when the War was safely won, there would be no longer be any incentive for London to do more than nudge, if even that.

The other Churchillian option was an invasion of Ireland by Britain. Mitchell, in *Atlantic Battle*, mentions Sebastian Haffner's *Offensive Against Germany*, which had been published in early 1941 as part of the Searchlight series, edited by George Orwell and Tosco Fyvel.

Haffner was an anti-Nazi German and his book argues that Britain should try to work with anti-Nazi Germans to bring about regime change in Germany. He also argues that Britain needs to be more aggressive if it wants to be taken seriously. In this context, he writes:

"Whether it is true or untrue that the German U-boats... refuel in Irish harbours, it is indisputable that Ireland excludes British destroyers from these ports and thereby renders valuable help to the German submarines. That is sufficient reason for taking control of their harbours."

That is as much of Haffner as Mitchell quotes in her own book, but Haffner goes on to say, "*If the Irish should resist, so much the worse for them. What is England waiting for? Perhaps an invitation from de Valera? Or a German landing as in Norway?*" (p90).

There is an entry in Orwell's wartime diary dated 14th March 1941 in which he writes:

"in his book which we have just published, Haffner explains that it is folly on our part to let the Irish withhold vitally important bases and that we should simply take these bases without more ado. He says that the spectacle of our allowing a sham-independent country like Ireland to defy us simply makes all Europe laugh at us".

Orwell is not as sure as Haffner that an invasion would succeed. He has no doubt it would, on paper, succeed militarily, but thinks that the British people, and the American Government, would object to it and that it would therefore prove self-defeating in the long run.

Churchill certainly considered invading Ireland to seize the ports but was supposedly concerned as to how the United States and India might react. I am not sure that either of these would have mattered much. India not at all. War had been declared for India in 1939 and against the wishes of the Indian National Congress. Congress had wanted India to be granted independence immediately so that it could use its independence to keep out of the war, which at that stage was primarily a European war. But Britain was willing to grant only dominion status, and to grant it only once the war was over (a post-dated cheque on a failing bank, as Gandhi scornfully put it).

Sir Stafford Cripps, who in the thirties had been so far to the left of the Labour Party as to have been thought a fellow-traveller of Soviet Communism,

and who had advocated a negotiated settlement with Hitler in 1939-40, was dispatched to India to see if he could persuade the Indians to settle for war now followed by post-War Dominion Status. When he failed, he was sent to Moscow as British Ambassador and the Congress leaders with whom he had been negotiating were sent to prison. And India stayed in the War, a part of it fighting for Britain and a part of it for the Japanese.

George Orwell also thought India should be offered dominion status. In *The Lion and the Unicorn*, the first book in the Searchlight series, he calls for immediate Dominion Status for India, rather than the post-War Dominion Status the British Government was prepared to grant. But Orwell considered Dominion Status to be less than independence, and the 'Dominion Status' he proposed was less than Dominion Status. He reckoned India was no more capable of being truly independent than a domestic pet has of fending for itself in the wild. It could be independent when the world was free of predators, which was no time soon.

He did not think a neutral India had a cat in Hell's chance of surviving. Ireland, he thought, had been lucky. The British had not invaded because of fears of public opinion, and the Germans had not invaded because Ireland, though neutral, was under implicit British protection. This latter, he said, was a fact so destructive of Irish nationalism that no Irish nationalist could accept it, "*even in his secret thoughts*".

The other neutral Orwell considered was Spain. Spain was neutral when it might have been expected to join the Axis. An Axis Spain would have shifted the balance of power in the Mediterranean. But Franco could not be persuaded out of neutrality.

Orwell, in his wartime diary, hopes that the Allies might attack Spain, with ex-Republicans like Juan Negrín as their alternative Government. However, if the British had seriously wanted Spain on their side, they would have negotiated with Franco, offering him the bribe of Gibraltar. Gibraltar would have been far more easily delivered to Franco than Northern Ireland to de Valera. The Rock's entire civilian population, which was small, had been evacuated and could easily not have been allowed to go back.

There are several British newsreels about Ireland that were made during the war years. One of the first of these, if not the first, depicts the country as a plucky neutral getting ready to defend itself. It

is a given in the newsreel that Ireland will shortly have to defend itself, and against Nazi Germany, of course. It features suitably inspiring imagery—a troop of Irish soldiers purposefully takes to the field with some kind of portable artillery; some Irish airmen, with leather helmets and goggles like Biggles, earnestly contemplate a map; a Gloucester Gladiator with tricolour rondels circles the Irish coast on the lookout for passing Dorniers, and so forth.

Only towards the end is there some chiding (in a suitably Alexandra Palace accent) along the lines that this is all very well, Ireland, but you cannot defend yourself alone. One thing that is not mentioned, even though it is about the first thing you notice, is that these plucky Irish soldiers look like Germans. They are wearing those coal scuttle hats the German army wore. But best not dwell!

In a subsequent and better known (if not notorious) newsreel, those same helmets are about the first thing that is mentioned. In that later—but not much later—newsreel, the voiceover (more Alexandra Palace) remarks on the German-style helmets and says that they are an affectation, adopted for no reason other than to express difference. And the Irish Army itself, which was previously up for a fight, is now "*the gallant seven thousand*", or whatever. We see them marching, after a fashion, with some kind of armoured car alongside and a rickety biplane overhead.

Then the scene shifts to somewhere rural, a cottage and some rural Irish people. I vaguely recall there are pigs in the parlour, or maybe just the one pig—there is a pig in it anyway and it is strategically placed in the narrative, which ends by reminding cinema-goers that there is a second Irish polity—the newsreel calls it Ulster—that is in the war and is a hive of industry with the ever so subtle suggestion, in the manner of William Bowman, that this reflects a fundamental difference in the human material, north and south.

Atlantic Battle was published somewhere between these two newsreels, closer in time and sentiment to the first than the second. It is a curious book. I am not sure who it was written for, but I think more for a British than an Irish readership, to build a case against partition as a basis for Anglo-Irish cooperation and, on the Irish side, to push for an end to Irish neutrality, if not in this war, then in the next one. Because there will be a next one. There always is.



Oxford vs Aubane—Yet Again

The *Irish Academic Press* has just published a book called, *Kilmichael: The Life And Afterlife Of An Ambush*. The author is Eve Morrison of Oxford University. The Bibliography lists six other publications by her, all of which seem to be about the War of Independence that followed the election of the Sinn Féin Party in the British General Election of 1918 with a mandate to establish an independent Government in Ireland. One of these publications has the title, *Hauntings Of The Irish Revolution*.

It became customary in academic writings forty or fifty years ago to call the War of Independence a “*revolution*”. This practice is adopted by Eve Morrison:

“Engaging with historical memory is unavoidable when researching and writing about the Irish revolution. This chapter addresses evidential and methodological issues that arise when employing individual testimony and oral history accounts as evidence. The maxim that Ireland’s revolutionary generation rarely spoke about their experiences is often repeated, but true only to an extent. A significant cohort of them talked about it all the time...”

These are the opening sentences of Chapter 5, *Issues And Participants*. But the only issue discussed in the Chapter is whether a particular incident occurred in the course of an ambush attack by a group of Republican Volunteers on a company of British ‘Auxiliaries’ during the War of Independence. The engagement lasted about fifteen minutes. All of the Auxiliaries were killed, bar one, and the Volunteers suffered a number of casualties.

The methodology consists of an attempt to establish where every Volunteer was at the start, what he could see from where he stood, and how he moved in the course of the engagement: and to correlate what the various participants in the ambush say about what they saw and did.

The point seems to be to establish beyond doubt whether some Auxiliaries

at one moment resorted to the tactic of *pretending to surrender* in order to take the ambushers off guard—as the Commander of the ambush said—or whether the Auxiliaries had, so to speak, “*fought clean*”, as a Canadian academic—Peter Hart—said about 80 years later.

It is hard to see how the methodological display could have provided an answer to that question. And Eve Morrison concedes, after much beating-about-the-bush that it didn’t provide an answer: “*It is impossible to know exactly what happened at Kilmichael*” (p129).

Such a lame outcome from the expenditure of so much time, effort and money, including “*a three-year stint as Canon Murray Fellow of Irish History at the University of Oxford*”, the consultation of numerous archives across the Atlantic, and interviews with numerous individuals!

Context

Eve Morrison makes frequent reference to context, but takes account of it only in the most miniature framework of time and space: a quarter of an hour on a bend of the road at Kilmichael, where a group of poorly-armed part-time soldiers without battle experience set out to destroy a group of well-armed regular soldiers with battle experience—and succeeded.

She says that—

“The circumstances in which the Auxiliaries died were a magnet for controversy from the start. The British alleged that the IRA (dressed in khaki and steal helmets) had tricked them and then massacred wounded men... The report characterised Kilmichael as an outrage committed by murderers, not a legitimate act of war carried out by recognised combatants” (p26-7).

The Ambush was, of course, an outrage in the context of British law and administration.

The controversy is about the foundations of British law, in the era of democracy announced by the formation of the League of Nations, in a country that had voted to reject British Government and

Law and had pledged itself to form its own Government and obey it.

Unrecognised Existence

Eve Morrison acknowledges a debt to Joost Augusteijn and cites him a few times. Augusteijn, about thirty years ago, sought, on general grounds, to establish that the Irish Government of 1919-21 was not a legitimate Government because it was not recognised by anybody but itself.

De Valera had made the point, in August 1921, of telling the Dail that its Government was not recognised by any other Government, and that there was little hope that it would be recognised by any other Government that did not have war with Britain in mind. Britain had the sphere of world diplomacy sewn up, and would treat recognition of the Irish Government as a hostile act. The elected Irish Government would not establish its existence in the world of nation-states by being recognised by others, but only by asserting its existence regardless of recognition.

Augusteijn did not address De Valera’s argument. He just ignored it, as he ignored the condition of world diplomacy in the aftermath of the Great War, during the years when Britain was asserting itself as the Supreme Power.

By ignoring it, he established the implicit position that no state could be legitimate without being recognised by Britain, and reduced the principle of national self-determination—which Britain had used as a slogan in the Great War—to meaninglessness.

An Elected Insurgency

For Eve Morrison, the legitimate authority in Ireland in November 1920 was the unelected Government—which was present only because of its superior military power:

“The War of Independence was ended by the Anglo-Irish Truce on 11 July 1921. There had been thousands of raids, arrests, internment and curfew orders. Five hundred and twenty-three policemen, 418 soldiers, 491 Irish insurgents and 919 civilians had died by the end of December 1921... In the South, those who had fought or supported efforts against the insurgents (or were accused of doing so) either left or, if they stayed, remained silent, at least publicly...” (p50).

“*Insurgents*” are rebels against established authority. She sees the active supporters of the elected authority as *insurgents* and she describes the supporters of

the Power which had no electoral base in terms applicable to legitimate authority.

Partition became a virtual certainty in 1916, when the Ulster Unionists reduced their demand to 6 Counties. Carson took it to be an accomplished fact in his 1918 Election campaign. He demanded that the Six Counties should henceforth be treated as an integral part of Britain both economically and politically. It was part of the British industrial economy and, freed from the considerations that applied to the rural character of the rest of Ireland, it required no special treatment.

The only British electoral connections with Ireland after 1918 were with the Six Counties—which, against Ulster Unionist advice, the British Government insisted on forming into a pseudo-state—and Trinity College, Dublin.

The 1918 Election deprived Britain of its electoral fig-leaf of the Home Rule Party which went to Westminster and swore allegiance.

Its governing of the 26 Counties from December 1918 until 1921 was founded on nothing but military power. But Eve Morrison sees that military government as legitimate and opposition to it by an elected authority as insurgency.

Acquiescence

She concedes that:

“There was a significant measure of popular support for the insurgents, underpinned by widespread public acquiescence” (p15).

The widespread acquiescence is beside the point. It is normal in any reasonably stable society for there to be a widespread measure of public acquiescence with regard to the politically-active elements. The question is whether the “*significant measure of popular support for the insurgents*” was countered by a significant measure of popular support for some other political force. Who stood against the ‘insurgents’ in elections? The Home Rule Party did so half-heartedly in 1918. Nobody it so in 1921. Even the staunch Trinity College Loyalists did not venture outside the walls of their University constituency.

Eve Morrison’s Index lists references to the Dail on pages 12,13,14, and 17. But neither on those pages, nor anywhere else, is there an explanation of how the Dail came to be there, except that Sinn Fein “*routed*” the Home Rule party and set up a counter-government. The Election, as a Constitutional event, remains off-stage.

After The Armistice

A chapter, entitled *Kilmichael In Context*, begins:

“The radical nationalist revolt against British rule in Ireland, which commenced during the Great War and burgeoned into a full-blown insurgency after the Armistice, was rooted in a pre-war home rule crisis...” (p10).

The thing that happened after the Armistice—the month after—was the unmentioned Election, which deprived British rule in Ireland of its Home Rule fig-leaf. The “*full-blown insurgency*” can only be a reference to the Election.

Policing As Politics

The RIC, accurately described as “*an armed gendarmerie*” and “*the most visible and reliable arm of central government at local level*”, is said to have established “*generally good*” relations with the general population. But—

“This changed once the RIC was accorded primary responsibility for countering the radical nationalist threat after the Rising. In September 1919, the Irish authorities declared Dail Eireann illegal. Two months later, other radical nationalist organisations were banned.

“...The Dail and IRA GHQ both sanctioned attacks on police in January 1920...” (p13).

What exactly was “*the radical nationalist threat after the Rising*”? The formation of an effective Republican political party?

The RIC was a State police force, conducted by the Secretary of State. It was not in any sense a socially-representative body, as the County Constabularies were in England—though it became so, with disastrous consequences when made over into the Royal Ulster Constabulary in 1921.

The function of the RIC was to act as a source of information for the London Government about developments in the various localities, particularly national developments, so that the State might curb them.

About twenty years ago, Tom Bowden of Manchester University published a book on this subject, in which the case was made that a cut in the funding of the RIC resulted in lax supervision of what the populace was thinking and the consequent growth of a strong nationalist movement. This was a frank acceptance that the policing of political thought was a necessary and acceptable element in

the maintenance of good social order—at least as far as British government in Ireland was concerned.

I knew from Burke’s *Regicide Peace* and the movement which it inspired that political policing held an honourable place in British public life, but I was surprised to see it stated so frankly in a Manchester publication. I had a soft spot for Manchester from having listened to John Barbarolli concerts, broadcast from the Free Trade Hall in the 1950s, Tom Bowden cured it!

Eve Morrison says that: “*In April 1919, de Valera publicly denounced the RIC as “spies in our midst”...*”. Of course he did. That is what they were. That was their job. But they had fallen down on the job of “*countering the radical nationalist threat after the Rising*”. A political party with the aim of establishing an independent Irish Government was formed; it contested the Election; it won the Election and set up a Government in accordance with its mandate.

If the RIC had been a representative force, it would have become an Irish police force through the electoral process. Since it was the police force of a State that had become a foreign state, it had to be dealt with as an enemy—as an insurgency against the elected Government?

Context: Political And Social

The political context of the Kilmichael action was the formation of an elected Irish Government which the British Government was trying to destroy. That elected Irish Government had no Army in the first instance; and under intensive British military occupation it could not set about organising one. But, without an Army, it would be helpless.

Therefore the electorate which had mandated the formation of an independent Government, undertook the formation, by local initiative, of Volunteer companies to defend their elected Government. If it had not done so, its votes would have been without effect.

The social context might be described as post-revolutionary. The social revolution that had been on the cards since the mid-19th century—since Gavan Duffy, following the suppression of Young Ireland, published Fintan Lalor’s Manifesto and formed the Independent Party on a tenant-right policy—was accomplished in substance in the years after 1903. The aristocratic stratum of colonial landlordism, which had been in place for two centuries, was abolished. The slogan of the Russian Revolution of 1917, *Land To*

The Peasants!, had been put into effect in Ireland in 1904/5/6. The great landed estates were broken up, and their place was taken by a great multitude of working farmers, each of which was absolute owner of the land he worked, and was a businessman on his own behalf.

The social structure of nationalist Ireland did not change appreciably when an elected Irish Government replaced the British administration, even though Britain made it necessary for the Irish to fight a war against it in order to get what it had voted for.

Nationalist Ireland, with its social revolution behind it, asserted its political independence electorally. Its only demand on Britain was that Britain should stop trying to govern it against its will. It had no ulterior motive in wanting to govern itself. It was a society that was remarkably at ease with itself except on that one point. It had hollowed out the British administration in Ireland in the course of the four generations after the removal of the Ascendancy Parliament. It had accomplished its social revolution in complicity with the Unionist Party a generation earlier, and now it just wanted to govern itself.

If it had wanted independence for the purpose of launching a social revolution in which the world would be turned upside down, the British response would be understandable in the context of British ideology. It was pretended—or at least asserted—that Bolshevism was at work in Irish Republicanism. But the British Government knew very well—or the Unionist majority in it knew very well—that it had made Ireland immune to Bolshevism. The peasants had bought out the land from the Colonial landlord class—facilitated by subsidies and guarantees from the British Exchequer—and the only concentrated body of industrial workers in Ireland was bound to the Union by both sentiment and material interest.

The dominant social body in Ireland was the land-based property-owning democracy. What gave force to the conflict with Britain was the strong national sentiment of a society whose class issues with England had been resolved by the land revolution.

Class antagonism was an internal British phenomenon with little Irish engagement, except in Unionist Belfast. The climax came on 'Black Friday' in 1921, when the Triple Alliance of Trade Unionists confronted the Government

with demands which it could not meet. The Prime Minister met the Trade Union leaders and told them they were the strongest power in the state. He could command no power equal to theirs. He could not defeat them, but neither could he grant what they demanded. If they did not back down, and let him run the country as best he could, it was up to them to apply their power to taking over the running of the country.

Since using their immense power to take over the governing of the country was something they could not imagine themselves doing, the leaders of the Triple Alliance went home and reconsidered their position, implicitly accepting that Capitalism was a system within which they might bargain but which they could not replace.

This demoralising event in British Socialism was scarcely noticed in nationalist Ireland. In Belfast the industrial proletariat engaged in a long strike, and that too was beyond the sphere of Irish concerns.

A Very Irish Revolution

The (British) Unionist ideal of a property-owning democracy was conceived for England but could be put into effect only in Ireland. The Unionist Government at Westminster of 1895-1905 met with a complementary ideal in William O'Brien's land agitation, and after it proved impossible to suppress the ideal, it was put into effect, behind the back of Redmond's Home Rule Party, as far as the influence of William O'Brien and Canon Sheehan could reach. (The Home Rule professionals feared that the removal of the grievance of landlordism would weaken national sentiment, while Michael Davitt wanted landlordism replaced by land nationalisation on socialist grounds—but O'Brien insisted on individual ownership of small landholdings.)

The Ireland that asserted its independence electorally in 1918, and that fought for it when Britain chose an anti-democratic course, was a socially satisfied property-owning democracy. All that remained at issue between it and Britain was Britain's insistence on governing it against its will.

Lord Balfour, being interviewed for a biography in the mid-1920s, was asked about the loss of Ireland. His reply was, in effect, that he had created the Ireland that had now been lost.

There was a large measure of truth in that. The individuals most centrally

active in bringing about the stabilising social revolution in Ireland were Balfour, O'Brien, Canon Sheehan, and D.D. Sheehan. Balfour as Irish Secretary had imprisoned O'Brien for land agitation. O'Brien, through effective agitation which made estate ownership problematic for landlords, struck a deal with Balfour as Prime Minister which created a large class of owners of small property.

That class, as the vital force of the nation, asserted national independence. Balfour tried to suppress it, but was philosophical about failing to do so after he failed.

I appreciate that the actuality of the social revolution in Ireland which preceded the declaration of independence is out of keeping with the world view of the Socialist Workers' Party, but this is more or less how it was. Rebel Ireland was profoundly settled in its ways, and Rebel Cork most of all.

It was in Cork that landlordism was most thoroughly uprooted. And then Cork, free of landlordism, had rejected the Home Rule Party in 1910, on the ground that it had resisted the land reform lest it undermine national sentiment, had got its Liberal allies to cut back on the funding for it when they returned to Office in 1906, and had woven a Catholic Secret Society into its party structure and was driving the situation towards Partition.

O'Brien's *All For Ireland* Party took eight of the nine Cork seats from Redmond's Party in the first 1910 Election and held them in the second 1910 Election—the last election before 1918.

Peter Hart On Cork

Eve Morrison's book is an act of devotion to the memory of Peter Hart, a Canadian who became an academic historian of Cork in the War of Independence, seeing it through the prism of Trinity—the College set up by Elizabeth the First for the conversion of the Irish. It is a book of minute apologetics, difficult to read without continually looking up convoluted Internet references, superficially academic in the sense of maintaining a veneer of detachment, but larded with barely disguised personal antagonisms.

Another difficulty about the reading of this book, and of Hart's *The IRA And Its Enemies*, is how much the references given can be relied upon to bear out the statement which they support.

In the case of Hart, I concluded that they were not to be trusted at all.

In a general survey of Cork he wrote:

“...the Gaelic heartland, *Sliabh Luacra*, was home to the largest concentration of Irish speakers in the country and, as a result, had a particularly rich oral and verse culture...” (p41).

It certainly has a rich verse culture—or had when I grew up in it. But it is entirely in English. I never came across a word of Irish being written in it—or recited either.

Hart gave a reference for his statement. That reference was me.

Eve Morrison suggests that I shift wildly from one opinion to another, capriciously or opportunistically. So could it be that, though knowing very well that this was the case, I said somewhere that Slieve Luacra was the most Irish speaking region of the country?

I looked up the reference... *A North Cork Miscellany*. I find that this is what I wrote in the Introduction:

“Due to a wilful linguistic shift from Gaelic to English by Sliabh Luacra in the early 19th century there was a considerable carry-over of Gaelic culture into English form. In other parts of the country, communities remained Gaelic-speaking into the late 19th century, and became increasingly demoralised in the face of erosion by the external forces. Then, at a certain point, the old cultural attachments snapped and the new generation panicked and fled from the sudden onset of claustrophobia.”

O Bruadair and Eoghan Ruadh [O Suilibheán] are in the *North Cork Anthology*, but only in English.

“To understand how the Cork of 1913 became the Cork of 1922, we must examine the lives of its revolutionaries. Part III of this book explores how and why men became Volunteers and guerillas. The following chapters will examine the kind of men who joined the IRA and the social structures and attitudes of the armies they created...” (Hart, p133).

Hart would have done something very useful if he had described Cork as it was in 1913, and how the cookie crumbled thereafter. He did not even try to do that.

The Cork of 1913 had undergone a sea-change since 1903. The ground for sectarian conflict over land had been removed. The Protestant colonial aristocracy had lost their estates to the peasants, and the peasant landowners had formed a political party which appealed to the former aristocracy to join them in

an enlightened national movement, now that they had nothing more to lose.

The colonial aristocracy had been losing power, authority and possessions ever since 1800, when their Mother Country had taken their independent Parliament away from them, judging them to have made a mess of the country they had been given to govern. In 1903 the British Exchequer had bought out their estates and transferred ownership to the tenants on hire purchase terms. There was no longer any reason for shooting Protestants as landlords—and I don't know that they had ever been shot at for being Protestant.

Canon Sheehan's *Manifesto* for the new party appealed to the former landlords to settle down with the people as Protestant country gentlemen. It acknowledged that Redmond's party, with its Catholic secret society component, was not a party that they could reasonably be asked to join. They made a point of that in the 1910 Elections, and took the County away from the Redmondites. In the second of those 1910 Elections, the Redmondites did not even contest the North Cork constituency.

But in 1913 the Redmondites seemed to be certain of Home Rule. They were only waiting for the third passage of the Bill through Parliament to make it an Act. They held the balance-of-power in Parliament. The Liberal Party could not remain in government without finalising the *Home Rule Bill*.

But the All-For-Irelanders did not believe it! O'Brien understood the realities of the British Constitution as a system of absolute party-conflict which, in the end, the marginal Irish Party—which refused to take part in a British Government—could not manipulate in its own interests. They knew that there was substance to the Unionist Party—which the repartee of the Liberal Party, as transmitted to Redmond's Party, did not acknowledge. And O'Brien knew from experience in the Tenant Right movement that there was substance to Ulster Unionists (who were fellow land campaigners).

The Home Rule Bill was given its Third Reading in its third Parliament, but the O'Brienites were still certain that it would not happen. And they did not take part in Eoin MacNeill's Home Rule Volunteer movement, set up to do battle with the Ulster Volunteer Force.

That was Cork in 1913. The County was divided. Its divisions had been threshed out in two General Elections which the Redmondites lost. And

he O'Brien position was expressed daily against the Redmondite *Freeman's Journal*.

It was not a dispute between marginal ideologies but a party-political dispute in society at large. And it established the medium in which subsequent developments happened.

None of this appears in Hart's picture of Cork in 1913. He has a dismissive comment about “*the mysteries of Conciliation and Home Rule*”. It was all just a matter of personalities:

“Cork was uniquely divided between competing nationalist parties, and the battle between O'Brienites and Redmondites—between ‘All For’ and ‘Mollies’—often followed the twists and turns of neighbourhood and faction” (p43).

And a paragraph from a Frank O'Connor story mentioning it is the only reference that is given for this.

A book of mine about that development is listed in Hart's Bibliography, *The Cork Free Press*. I wonder why? It could have had nothing to do with his idea of Cork in 1913.

Violence

Eve Morrison follows Hart in describing Cork as the “*most disturbed county*”, and in not tracing the source of its disturbances to the developments that had been going on it in for twenty years—the land revolution and the political life based on that revolution. The Cork populace had acted independently of Redmond's Party—and against Redmond's Party—on the land issue, and it had broken the power of Redmond's Party on the issue of the Catholic secret society, the *Ancient Order Of Hibernians*. It was therefore more affronted than others by the decision of the British Parliament to ignore the result of the 1918 Election and to beat the electorate back into submission.

Hart wrote about “*violence*”, as if it was an independent force in the world looking for disciples—and found them in Cork because it had traditions of meaningless faction-fighting.

Violence is an attribute of States—a necessary attribute. Every modern State has a specialised organ of violence. Monopolisation of the means of conducting violence comes close to being the definition of the European liberal-democratic State of recent times.

When the Irish electorate decided in 1918 to have its own Government, and

when the British Government in Ireland (which was little more than organised violence) decided to prevent it by force, the Irish Government had to acquire a capacity for counter-violence or perish: organised, systematic violence, different in kind from the occasional shooting of an extortionist landlord or the assassination of a Government Minister in the Phoenix Park. And it should not be a matter for surprise that it was in Cork, the “Conciliationist” County of 1913, that that requirement was best supplied.

The Dail Government quickly took over the institutions of government established by Britain, insofar as these institutions were accessible to democratic takeover. Beyond that it established “illegal Dail courts”, as Eve Morrison puts it, and similarly illegal Judges, an illegal Army, and an illegal Secret Service.

Britain become indisputably an Occupying Power in nationalist Ireland when, in December 1918, it lost the ‘Irish Party’ that took the Oath of Allegiance to the Crown.

Morrison, in describing the situation, leaves out of account the electoral aspect of things. When the Manchester Regiment arrived in Macroom in April 1920: “The civilian population were nervous, rarely welcoming and often hostile”—as would have been the case in April 1917, and it was all a continuation from 1916.

In 1916 there had been uniformed armies and a stand-up battle, but no elected Government. In 1920 there was only an Army of Occupation on one side and civilians on the other, and no battle at all for another six months.

The “insurgency” was the electorate, which had voted itself out of the British state—perhaps half-believing in the British war propaganda about national self-determination. And now it found itself put into the keeping of the Manchester Regiment and some other guardians. And it was nervous. But the quality of its nervousness was different from what it was before it elected Sinn Fein to govern it. (In a pedantic sense it had not voted—but had returned a Sinn Fein MP by acclamation. The Irish Party had not contested the seat. Did that lessen the commitment?)

The Irish Bulletin

The Occupying Power, under the *Defence Of The Realm Act*, subjected the entire commercial press to censorship. The Dail Government responded by issuing its own publication: the *Irish Bulletin*. Eve Morrison says:

“The *Bulletin* was neither neutral

nor always accurate, but it offered a much-needed counterpoint to blatant and persistent false accounting by Greenwood and Dublin Castle” (p13).

The reference given for this assertion that the *Bulletin* was not always accurate is not a list of inaccuracies she found in it, but an article about it: “Ian Kennealy, ‘A Tainted Source?’ *The Irish Bulletin*” (p203).

Who suggested that it was “‘A Tainted Source’?” Not Ian Kennealy. When you get around to finding Kennealy’s article, in a book about *Periodicals And Journalism*, you discover that it was the Chief Secretary (the ‘Prime Minister’ in Britain’s unelected ‘Irish Government’), Hamar Greenwood, who said it, in Parliament on 24th November 1920.

Greenwood, who had subjected the press as a whole to censorship, condemned the *Irish Bulletin* as—

“an organ prohibited by law, which is used as the basis of propaganda and newspaper reports, and in which His Majesty’s Government is condemned out of the mouths of those responsible for the murder campaign in Ireland is not a document or propaganda that ought not to be tolerated here. I say it is a tainted source...”

Greenwood described is as tainted because of its source in the Irish Democracy—Eve Morrison’s “insurgency”—which was a criminal enterprise.

Eve Morrison is, of course, right when she says it was not neutral. It was a publication of the elected Irish Government in its War with the British Government, which was trying to suppress it by force.

Ian Kennealy says that it was scrupulously accurate in its reporting of facts, and restrained in the style of its comment.

The *Aubane Historical Society* with the *Belfast Historical Society* have now collected and published five volumes of the *Irish Bulletin*, with the sixth in preparation. The first was published in 2012, ten years ago, and it was much disapproved of, but hostile critics have so far discovered only one inaccuracy in it. That inaccuracy appeared in my Introduction to the first volume. It happened because of one detail, in which I was so incautious that I relied on the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, produced by Cambridge University and the Royal Irish Academy.

The “Imperial Collaborators Organisation”

Eve Morrison has an indexed comment on Aubane. She says that its criticism of Peter Hart—

“comes in for one particularly biting commentary. In July 2007, ‘Starkadder’ observed that Aubanites ‘would have been cheering Hart on till their throats were sore’ twenty or thirty years ago” (p171).

Her reference for this is: “*Comment by ‘Starkadder, 21 July 2007. See also 12 May 2007... It is a pity Starkadder uses a pseudonym*” (p257; I take this to be a hint that she knows who he is). She gives an Internet reference code for ‘Starkadder’, which seems to consist of about fifty digits. Within it I recognised the words, *Cedar Lounge*. Ten or fifteen years ago somebody sent me print-outs from Cedar Lounge [an Internet Blog, Ed.], which consisted of fantasies by somebody who hated my guts—as I suppose many people have reason to.

Eve Morrison also has a paragraph about BICO:

“Some of Peter Hart’s most vociferous critics in recent decades were scarcely recognisable in the 1970s. Members of the British & Irish Communist Organisation promoted the Two Nations Theory recognising the ‘democratic legitimacy’ of Ulster Protestants. They argued that the IRA had no right to force them into a “state run by gombeen men and priests”. Some of them described the Belfast IRA (in the 1920s and 1930s) as a ‘Roman Catholic sectarian militia’. Then in 1985, BICO members Brendan Clifford and Jack Lane founded the Aubane Historical Society in Cork, reincarnating themselves as traditional nationalists” (p138).

Her reference for the “gombeen men and priests” quotation is Brian Hanley (Research Fellow in Irish History at the University of Edinburgh), *The impact of the Troubles on the Republic of Ireland*, p48.

Hanley gives it in a sub-section about BICO, under the heading, “‘British Imperial Collaborators Organisation’”. His reference for that title is “*People’s Democracy* internal document, 1972. Sean O’Mahony Papers”, with a Manuscript number.

The People’s Democracy was a rebel students’ movement, which shook up the Northern Ireland situation around 1969, without having a realisable purpose to sustain it in the long run. By 1972 it had dissolved (in Belfast), part of it gravitating towards the BICO and another part towards Provisional Sinn Fein. When Sinn Fein made a settlement in 1998, it was in accordance with the view of the situation put by the “*Imperial Collaborators Organisation*” in 1969, and that settlement led to the formation of dissenting

Republican groups who condemned Adams as an Imperial Collaborator.

Hanley's choice of this sub-title indicates he still has a long way to go before he achieves academic detachment.

I looked up half a dozen reference which he gives for what seemed to be quotations from BICO publications. Three of them are comments about BICO from the *Irish Times*, one from the *Irish Press*, and one from *Fortnight*: all of which were hostile to the B&ICO. The sixth was: A. Madden, *Fear & Loathing*, of which I know nothing.

So Eve Morrison gets them all at third hand—as filtered by the *Irish Times*; by the (defunct) *Irish Press*; by the magazine of what became the Alliance Party; and from the historian of the Official IRA.

The gist of Eve Morrison's paragraph is that BICO "*promoted the Two Nations Theory*" in 1970, but then in 1985 remade itself on traditional nationalist lines, without acknowledging the change.

In fact, it remained as "*Two Nation-ist*" after 1985, as it ever was in 1970. It hailed the *Good Friday Agreement* as a 'Two Nations' settlement—having held ever since 1969 that a settlement based on the assumption that the Ulster Protestant community was part of a general Irish nation was an impossibility.

If she means by "*traditional nationalism*" the view that the Ulster Protestant community was not a separate development but was part of a general Irish national development, let her find where BICO has ever said that since 1985!

What has all but destroyed traditional nationalism is not the 'Two Nations' view, but the notion that the Ulster Protestant community was part of a general Irish national body in the 18th century but was alienated from it in the 19th century by antagonistic developments that somehow erupted in the rest of the nation, and that the way of restoring unity was to write off the whole national political development since 1801. It is a profoundly incoherent idea, having no basis in historical fact.

BICO attempted to write the history of the two peoples as distinct entities, allowing each to be what it was: and this had some effect.

The attempt to write of the two as one leads to mindlessness.

I have no idea what Eve Morrison means by "*the 'democratic legitimacy' of Ulster Protestants*".

Her quotations about BICO by way of the *Irish Times* and Professor Hanley must be left to a later date for untangling.

The History Decommissioner

Eve Morrison's final chapter has the title, *Decommissioning Irish History*—which means abolishing it.

She says:

"The binaries promoted by the 'revisionist/anti-revisionist' debate are more than just unhelpful".

Of course they are, from the viewpoint of the Decommissioner! If history is debated, it is not being forgotten. That's the problem.

Professor Roy Foster was frank about it. The paradoxical object of Irish history-writing must be to cause it to be forgotten. He wanted a statue raised to *Amnesia*. He reported back to Oxford University that the matter was well in hand. But it wasn't. In this age of unbelief, history is all there is to live by. There is now no transcendental dimension to replace it with.

An Ambusher Who Didn't Shoot

Eve Morrison's book ends:

"Is there a Kilmichael around which all sides can rally and remember? At present, it does not seem so. What stands out for this historian are those few moments when two men surrounded on all sides by death, looked each other in the eye and decided not to fire:

"He could have shot me and I could have shot him but I thought it was the bravest thing I could do, maybe, at the time..." (p176).

If they were there facing each other with guns which they did not want to fire, why hadn't they just stayed at home? As Pascal said, *if we all stayed quietly at home there would be much less trouble in the world!*

The quotation is from Ned Young, under questioning by Fr. John Chisolm, who apparently wrote Liam Deasy's second book. I read his first book, about the 'Civil War', but my mind resisted his second book—even though I did not know it had not been written for him.

I am not familiar with all the intricacies of the tape recordings made by Fr. Chisolm of interviews with participants in Kilmichael when writing Deasy's second book: recordings which were made available to Peter Hart but denied access to by others; and are now in the possession of Eve Morrison. But the long extracts she gives from them tell us something about Chisolm:

"Young: ...I saw one Tan under the lorry and I said to him come out and put up his arms. I fired at him first and he humped and he turned back and he could have shot me as well as I could have shot him. But he jumped, and he came out from under the lorry when I asked.

Chisolm: With his rifle?

Young: With his rifle.

Chisolm: He didn't drop his rifle?

Young: He did. He put his hands [sic]

Chisolm: And put up his hands?

Young: And put up his hands. He asked me 'What would he do?' and I said go down the road and they'll tell you (Chisolm: yes). When he went down about five or six yards, or ten yards, or something to that effect, I saw him falling on the road.

Chisolm: And he was shot?

Young: He was shot.

Chisolm: Did he go down with his hands up?

Young: With his hands up.

Chisolm: And they shot him?

Young: They shot him." (p122).

Young is then questioned by Chisolm about another surrendered Auxiliary whom he had seen being hit.

Young's words with which Eve Morrison ends the book are, I assume, from the same interview, but they are given later:

"Young was adamant that he had not killed any wounded Auxiliaries. One possible reading is that he refused to do so. This might be the real story underpinning another folkloric account, that Young ended the ambush with the same number of bullets with which he began. Young himself was clear that not shooting the Auxiliary he disarmed was the right thing to do: 'He could have shot me and I could have shot him, but I thought it was the bravest thing I could do, maybe, at the time'..." (p129).

Young's own account of the Ambush, says—

"The driver of this lorry reversed about 20 yards out of the position. Two members of the enemy then jumped from the lorry and made a dash up the road towards Macroom. I then left my position south of the road and followed his party. One of them went across the bog at Kelly's house. I followed and fired at him until I saw him fall into a boghole. As I thought this this 'Auxie' was 'finished', I set about looking for the second one. I found him underneath the lorry on the road where he was shooting at my comrades who were in position on the rock north of the road. I immediately opened fire on this man

and firing ceased from his position." (Witness Statement 1402.)

Manslaughter

An ambush is rather like when two lines of infantry meet. It is an intimate slaughterhouse. Basic training for it in the British Army is charging a row of humanoid targets, screaming and shouting obscenities, plunging the bayonet in, twisting it and pulling the guts out. I assume that, with sufficient training, the real thing could be done almost automatically, but I never got that far.

The Volunteers at Kilmichael knew nothing of battle, beyond what the British ex-serviceman who trained them managed to transmit to them. It is a remarkable thing that they succeeded, under Tom Barry's influence, of disposing of two lorry-loads of Auxiliaries hardened by fighting in the Great War. And my understanding is that his orders were that they were engaged in a fight to a finish—the taking of prisoners being out of the question. (After all, he knew, as a British soldier, what real war involved.)

The reference given for the Chisolm interview is "*Young/JC (1969)*."

Why was a priest ghost-writing a book about Kilmichael in 1969 and dwelling on this manslaughter aspect of it? I assume it had some connection with what was beginning to happen in the North.

There was a fixed idea on all sides that the Ulster Unionist community was nothing in itself. It was a creation of British Tory policy and its instrument. And the 'Trouble' in the North was largely caused by nationalists living in a fantasy aftermath of the War of Independence—"*Pearsean ghosts*" was how Conor Cruise O'Brien put it. Therefore it was a contribution to peace in the North to de-bunk the aura of gallantry cast around the War of Independence.

(I saw the mass base of what became Provisional Republicanism forming in West Belfast during the year after August 1969, and most of the people actively involved in it had been dismissive of anti-Partitionism before August 1969. They were not Pearseans looking for an excuse.)

Eve Morrison refers to Republicans who began to explode Republican myths:

"Cork republican Jim Lane, in 1972, described the April 1922 attacks on Protestants in West Cork as a 'pogrom

every bit as vicious as any one in Belfast'" (p141).

In July 1970 Jim Lane watched the Twelfth Procession pass along the Lisburn Road. I put it to him that, if the Protestants were part of the Irish nation, this was part of Irish culture because there was nothing as deeply based as it on the nationalist side. But you need to move only a few hundred yards off the Lisburn Road to see that there was an antagonism of cultures, grown from different roots, with no mutual appreciation, and that each was real. If Jim went on to disparage nationalist history, that had nothing to do with "*two nations theory*".

The comparison of a dozen targeted assassinations in Dunmanway during the Truce in 1922 with the random assaults on Catholics in response to the Treatyite invasion of the North by Michael Collins in 1922 (if that is what is referred to) is simply absurd: both were regarded to scale, mode of action, and cultural environment.

Eve Morrison continues:

"In 1985, Sinn Féin's Publicity Department produced *The Good Old IRA*. Its précis of brutal 'Tan War' operations (including Kilmichael) was intended to confront 'those hypocritical revisionists who winsomely refer to the 'Old IRA' whilst deriding their more effective and, arguably, less bloody successors [the Provisionals]'. The War of Independence had no clear democratic mandate, it said, and 'no struggle involves a clean fight'..." (p141).

Belfast nationalists tended to call the Irish Republic the *Free State*, and to regard it with a fair degree of scepticism—even though always voting for unity with it, while knowing very well that the election was certain to maintain the Union. The Free State Government condemned the Provos for acting without lawful authority, but it did not itself recognise the authority of the state the Provos were making war on. The Free State, according to its Constitution, was the lawful authority in the Six Counties, but it did not even exert that authority to condemn the IRA for disobeying it. Argument between the Provos and the Dublin Establishment could consist of nothing but debating points.

Of course the War of Independence did have a democratic mandate in the form of an elected Government. But that is not a matter on which Eve Morrison would take issue with Sinn Féin.

Also, 1985 was in the period when Sinn Féin was re-orientating itself and feeling its way towards establishing a realisable 'two nations' purpose for the War.
*

War has hitherto proved to be an indispensable activity in human affairs. Britain made it so in Irish affairs in 1919.

States usually write about their wars in euphemistic language, the language of gallantry.

Peter Hart, under the direction of David Fitzpatrick, an Australian in command of the Department of History in Trinity College, decided to deconstruct the bland language in which the Irish state described the War that helped to bring it into being, and to replace it with the language of the slaughterhouse. His effort was applauded by the History Department of Cork University. The life of the Cork City middle class has always been a mystery to me. In my experience, Cork City was not the urban counterpart of Cork County—at least not the North-West of the County. We were familiar with London and with Boston, but Cork City was beyond our ken. No doubt the University imagined that it was contributing to peace in the North by acclaiming Hart's treatment of Kilmichael.

But Kilmichael was a remarkable event. It was the kind of thing that the British Government assumed the Irish were incapable of undertaking. It disturbed their thinking about the Irish so much that Lionel Curtis went to survey the situation. And his report of it included the *false surrender* by some of the Auxiliaries—a stratagem intended to flush out the ambushers in order to destroy them.

Barry, as far as I recall, did not moralise about the false surrender. He blamed himself for not warning the Volunteers strongly enough about it as a trick of the trade.

Eve Morrison, helped by Fr. Chisolm's tapes, has now brought the slaughter house aspect of war—but only of the Irish side of that War—to the fore, without the excuse that Hart might have had twenty years ago.

The Provos have won their War, made their peace more competently than Collins did, and, at least, in the North, have restored the language of gallantry.



Wilson John Haire

Edited by Alex Strick Van Linschoten & Felix Kueh

Preface by Faisal Devji

240 pp, Hurst & Company, London £14.99, 2012

(These poems gave been translated by

Mirwais Rahmany and Abdul Hamid Stanikzai)

This article first appeared in *Church & State* in 2012, Third Quarter

Poetry Of The Taliban

Food For Thought

Right in the middle of the book a short and simple poem by Khepulwaak seems to say it all. The American occupiers are celebrating Christmas at Bagram Air Base, which is flooded by light while the Afghan people celebrate the Festival of Eid in which lamps are extinguished. One line says:

"Suddenly at midnight your bombs bring the light..."

Many of the poems are written in the discipline of the *Glazal* (love lyric) which was the form used throughout the Ottoman Empire and is still in use throughout the Middle East today.

Poetry is very much part of everyday life in Afghanistan and still exists in the oral fashion. In this method of conveying poetry, poets incorporate their names in many of their poems so they are not anonymous. With the advent of the mobile phone, people use Mp3s in exchanging poetry.

Poetry is also published in book-form and on videos. The Taliban website is also a good source for the work of the communist poet, Suleyman Laiq of the PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, said to be now defunct or underground).

In his introduction Paisal Devji says:

"Indeed it is this eclectic spread that brings out the aesthetic and political continuity with the wider parts of Afghanistan."

He goes on to show that Taliban poetry is also allowed to express the fear of some of its *mujahed* (someone engaged in Jihad/resistance fighting) that he is losing his humanity. In a poem by Samiullah Khalid Sabak entitled, *Humanity*, it says:

Everything has gone from the world,
The world has become empty again.
Human animal
Humanity animality
Everything has gone from the world
I don't see anything now.

All I can see is
My imagination."

This must be the fear of so many guerrilla fighters who have been forced into action against their nature. I can think of those who joined Tom Barry in the fight for Irish Independence and how Barry says in his *Guerrilla Days in Ireland* that he had to train men who wouldn't normally break the law or do injury to anyone. In that book he mentions diplomatically the few who died cleaning their guns. Some members of the recent Provisional IRA also took on health problems after the guns fell silent. Later the poet says:

"We are not animals
I say this with certainty,
But,

Humanity has been forgotten by us
And I don't know when it will come back.
May Allah give it to us,
And decorate us with this jewellery,
The jewellery of humanity,
For now it's only in our imagination.'

Many of the poems feature NATO air attacks on wedding parties, burning villages, terrified women and children and the fraud and underhand methods of the NGOs.

The US military in early 2011 hatched the idea of counter-poetry as a way of fighting a cultural war. But what can you do again the Taliban Cultural Committee of the Islamic Emirate who do not censor poetry coming into their website.

So diverse is the circulation of this poetry that even those heading the Karzai puppet Government make no secret of being fond of reading it and quoting it.

This book of poetry has a good glossary, an interesting Preface and a very informative introduction and an excellent Bibliography. The publishers are to be congratulated on their courage in giving the public access to these 235 poems, despite the tutts of some senior members of the British Army.

20th May, 2012.

The Constitution Of Eire/Ireland

Part Three of Extracts from *The Constitution Of Eire/Ireland*
by Angela Clifford (Athol Books, 1987)

Dail Debate Continued

[NOTE: This instalment resumes reporting of the Dail Debate on the Draft 1937 Constitution. Square brackets denote material added for this reprinting.

In the Debate, the term '*President*' refers to the head of the Government under the old Treaty Constitution, i.e. Eamon De Valera. The 1937 Constitution was to change the title of this position to *Taoiseach*.

It has recently come to my attention that Frank MacDermott, a TD who is quoted in the extracts below, worked for British Intelligence and played a sinister role in blackening Roger Casement's name.]

Divorce

Article 41.3.2, "No law shall be enacted for the grant of a dissolution of marriage", went unamended and undiscussed through the Dail. It was not even opposed by the last of the Mohicans, the representative of the people which had been described by Yeats ten years earlier

as "no petty people". Professor Rowlette stayed silent while his birthright from John Milton was abolished.

De Valera introduced Article 41 thus: "in our view the fundamental group of the State—in a sense the most important group of the State—is the family. We

pledge the State to protect the family, to protect it in its constitution and in its rights generally. This is not merely a question of religious teaching; even from the purely social side, apart from that, I would propose here that we should not sanction divorce. Therefore no law can be passed providing for divorce" (11.5.37, Col 63).

This statement of de Valera's secular motive for outlawing divorce legislation appears to have disarmed the heir of John Milton. But the Professor observed that the discussion on foreign divorces was entirely conducted with reference to Catholic marriage law.

John A. Costello raised a point with regard to 41.3.3 (foreign divorces) which was one of the very few Opposition points which de Valera took seriously. And it was serious because it focussed on the fact that the marriage law of the State was not being made identical with the marriage law of Rome and indicated difficulties that might arise from that fact.

"Mr. Costello: At the risk of being told that it is foolish and trifling, I wish to draw attention to a difficulty arising out of the clauses dealing with the dissolution of marriage. Clause 2 provides:-

No law shall be enacted providing for the grant of a dissolution of marriage.

I think that clause is too wide.

Clause 3 provides:-

No person whose marriage has been dissolved under the civil law of any other State shall be capable of contracting in Eire a valid marriage during the lifetime of the other party to the marriage so dissolved.

"In my view, that is also entirely too wide. It is well known that the Catholic Church does not recognise marriage in a registry office or other than through the method and form laid down by the Catholic Church. A case came under my personal experience where an Irish girl, a Catholic, married a Scotchman of a different religion in a registry office. Of course, that marriage was not in accordance with the views of the Catholic Church, was invalid and no marriage at all. It was a marriage merely under the civil law of Great Britain. In fact, the marriage was never consummated, because the parties separated at the door of the registry office and never saw each other again. The girl came back to Ireland and desired to marry. According to the view of the Catholic Church she was entitled to marry. The case was

submitted to me when I was Attorney-General with a view to prosecution for bigamy. I need hardly say that I did not prosecute.

"Sub-clause 3^o of clause 3 provides that no person whose marriage has been dissolved in another State should be capable of contracting marriage here. If a Catholic is married in a registry office in England to a Protestant, or even to a Catholic, that is an invalid marriage according to the law of the Catholic Church, and according to the civil law here and the civil law in England it is valid. That marriage is dissolved. Then it is no marriage in Great Britain and is not a marriage according to the Catholic Church. But, according to this clause, either of these persons cannot be married here afterwards. Will the President say if that is a foolish interjection or is it of some assistance to him?" (4.6.37, Col 1882).

De Valera received Costello's remarks very sympathetically, though he initially had some problem with the niceties of canon law:

"The President [ie, de Valera]: The Deputy can always be sure that when he addresses himself to matters in the way he has now, nobody is going to accuse him of anything foolish... Anyone can see that there are genuine difficulties to be dealt with there. I am not a lawyer, but I think there is a difference between dissolution and a declaration of nullity.

"Mr. Costello: I am dealing with the case of a marriage which has been dissolved by the English law—the case of divorce in the accepted sense in England.

"The President: I thought the Deputy said it was declared invalid.

"Mr. Costello: Dissolved.

"The President: I am only a layman, but I understood there was a difference—

"Mr. Costello: There is a difference between nullity of a marriage, which is no marriage, which never was a marriage, and a marriage which was a marriage in law and which is dissolved. The case I am putting is the concrete instance where a marriage is perfectly valid in accordance with English law, and possibly consummated, a marriage celebrated, if you can use that expression, in a registry office. Subsequently, by the law of divorce in England, it is dissolved, and one of the parties comes over here and wants to get married. It is no marriage, according to the Catholic Church. It is not a marriage, according to the law, because it has been dissolved in England, and this Article prevents either of the parties getting married here.

"The President: I thought the Deputy said it would be declared invalid and that it had been no marriage at all. If it is dissolved, of course it is clearly coming under this, and there is a difficulty which will have to be met. I can only promise to look into the matter. The matter has been raised already, and I do not see that there is any definite solution for it. The main thing we want to see is that there shall not be granted a dissolution of a valid marriage in our own State. We have the old difficulty, that if you try to make room for all the possible exceptions that may occur, then you may get away altogether from the fundamental purpose.

"Mr. MacDermott: Could not subsection 3^o be left out altogether?

"The President: I do not think it could; not if we want to permit a person who has been validly married in another country and whose marriage has been dissolved by the civil law of another country to come here and get married here. I promise to have the matter examined to see if we can possibly dealt with it. But, as I have said, the matter has come up and I have come to the conclusion that it would be almost impossible to deal with it without opening the door in such a way as to cause undesirable results in another direction" (4.6.37, Cols 1882-4).

At this point Professor Rowlette found the courage to intervene, seeing that the deputies were, despite de Valera's secular introduction, taking it for granted that Catholic Canon Law was the real law of the land. But there is no vigour in his delicately phrased remarks. He knew that they would be ignored and so almost apologises for making them. His attitude typified the cowering response of Southern Protestants to the self-confident Catholic approach of their rulers. They were incapable of doing the one thing which was within their power — blowing aside the flimsy liberal facade of the Catholic State, and telling the world that it was a Catholic State:

"Dr. Rowlette: There is, I think, a harder case than that mentioned by Deputy Costello. There may be a case where a seeming marriage has been annulled by the authorities of the Catholic Church, but the parties might not be able to get an annulment in civil law in another country, and in order to make the separation effective they might have to proceed through the ordinary law of divorce. It might happen that the marriage was annulled at Rome on grounds which would not carry under the law in England and, in order to make the separation effective,

these parties might have to proceed by the ordinary law of divorce in England. Having had the marriage dissolved, let us say, in England, if they came over here they could not contract a valid marriage, although in the opinion of the majority of the people in this country there never had been a marriage. I think that is a case which is worthy of consideration, and that it can occur.

"I should like to make one or two observations on this Article in general. I have been told — and I am not sure whether it is so or not — that when the President was speaking on the Second Reading he stated that this section was not put in as based on any theological convictions held by the majority of the people of this country, but that it was put in from social considerations. That would leave the matter, of course, much easier to discuss. It would be impertinent in both senses of the word for me to discuss the discipline of the Church to which the majority of the people in this country willingly submit themselves, or to suggest that they shall not consider themselves bound by the discipline of that Church. But it is another matter if they think it is their duty to enforce the discipline of one Church on the consciences of people who do not submit themselves to such discipline. Therefore, I think that, if the section were based on such a ground, there would be reasonable ground for complaint on the part of, admittedly, a small number of people in this country.

"However, I am assuming that the President did make the statement which I am told he made — that he was not affected by the theological opinions of himself or others in bringing in the section, or some phrase to that effect. The question then comes back to the pure question of social considerations, as to the advantage or disadvantage of permitting divorce in any circumstances in the country, and providing against it in the Constitution. It seems to me that it might be discussed here at a considerable length without readily arriving at a conclusion. I am not going to discuss it at any length. But I should like to say this, that while I do not think anybody in the country wishes to have divorce made easy, or that marriage and the dissolution of marriage should be made such light things that they could be undertaken without responsibility, undoubtedly anyone of experience in the world knows that there are many cases in which marriages have been quite definitely a failure, in which through faults of one sort or another, there is no hope that the continuance of such a marriage will be of use to society, and that giving freedom to these people, restoring them to the status they had before marriage, would conceivably give an opportunity for establishing a happy home which would be useful to society.

"I am not going to proceed further along that line... But one meets these cases. Anyone with experience of the world, any clergyman, any doctor, will meet many such cases in which he cannot but believe that divorce would have led to a happier life and a more moral life on the part of those concerned. I will make no further observations on the Article, but I wish to draw the President's attention to the particular case I mentioned when I got up" (4.6.39, Col 1884-6). [Dr. Rowlette was elected for the Dublin University Constituency (TCD) in 1933.]

A convoluted statement of this kind could have no effect whatsoever. With it, Trinity College disappeared from Irish political life, not with a bang, not even a whimper, but in a fog of academic pedantry. De Valera said: "With regard to the question of divorce in general, there is no doubt that sometimes there are unhappy marriages, but from the social point of view, the obvious evil would be so great... that I do not think any person would have difficulty... in making a choice on this matter. I do not think any useful purpose could be served by such a discussion as the Deputy has indicated" (Col 1886). De Valera then proceeded to deal with the serious question raised by Costello.

The matter was finalised on 9th June, after de Valera had taken advice on international law and *Catholic Canon Law*, when he moved an amendment. (The lack of a quorum after de Valera's speech was not an isolated instance: the Constitution Debates were punctuated by pauses while a quorum was gathered):

De Valera: "The purpose of this amendment is to see that the mere fact that a marriage was dissolved in another State would not of itself, by itself, prevent a person from being married in his country. I think everybody will agree that if the marriage is, according to the laws of this country, a subsisting valid marriage, one of the partners to that marriage—even if it were dissolved by the civil law of another State—should not come here and get married.

Notice taken that a quorum was not present. House counted and 20 members being present—

"**Mr. Costello:** Has the President considered or got considered the whole question of the effect of this clause in the Constitution dealing with divorce? We have laid down here in this country long ago the principle that we have no legislation with reference to divorce. Now we are putting into the Constitution a certain clause. The President has been careful, when proposals were put up from this side, to say that he would not accept them because he did not understand the implications of them. Does

the President understand the implications of this clause dealing with divorce, from the point of view of international law in the first place and from the point of view of the canons of the Catholic Church in the second place?

"**The President:** Both these points of view have been discussed with me, and I am satisfied that this is satisfactory.

"**Mr. Costello:** And, I suppose, because the President is satisfied, it is satisfactory?

"**Mr. McGilligan:** Is that *ex-cathedra*?

"**The President:** The Deputy raised a point and gave me an example on the last day. The only point raised was whether the phrase as it stood would mean that the mere dissolution of a marriage — whether, according to our law, it was a valid marriage or not; whether it was valid *ab initio*, or was a valid marriage according to our law — would, of itself prevent one of the persons involved from marrying here. That was pointed out by the Deputy, and I think it has been met by this amendment. No other point of that sort has been raised. Naturally, a matter of this importance was one which did receive very careful consideration, and if Deputies raise any particular points about it we will be able to meet them.

"Amendment agreed to." (9.6.37, Col 224-6).

And so ended the only purposeful and businesslike discussion within the Constitution debate. The amended Paragraph is as follows, (the clause added in amendment is placed within curly brackets):

"No person whose marriage has been dissolved under the civil law of any other State {but is a subsisting valid marriage under the law for the time being in force within the jurisdiction of the Government and Parliament established by this Constitution} shall be capable of contracting a valid marriage within that jurisdiction during the lifetime of the other party to the marriage so dissolved."

The effect of the change appears to be to leave it open to the Dail to define what is a "valid marriage".

The problem remained that marriages which were annulled by Rome could not be dissolved in Eire without either opening up the floodgates to secular dissolution of marriage or spoiling the liberal façade by making Canon Law the law of the State. But this state of affairs did not indicate a conflict of Church and State. It was the arrangement chosen by the Church when annulments were few and held to by the Church even in the seventies when annulments were granted so liberally, and on such far-fetched grounds, that they were, on a common-sense view, religious divorces.

The problem was a novel one for Rome. In the middle ages marriage was a Church matter. In modern times the power of the Church in Catholic countries was usually dependent on the power of monarchies or fascist States, and these things were governed by Concordat by which the State usually undertook to give legal effect to Canon Law annulments. But in Ireland a democratic State put itself at the disposal of the Church, to make what it would of. The Church operated without a Concordat, which would have diminished its real power while focussing attention on it, and decided to operate a purely secular marriage law because formal provision for the operation of Canon Law would have been imprudent in view of the unfinished business with Britain in Ireland. So it opted for a blanket ban on divorce and relied on its sheer social influence to ensure that its annulments would be effective regardless of the law, and that Catholic remarriage after annulment would not be prosecuted for bigamy.

James Dillon (Donegal, John Dillon's son) raised another point. He said that Article 41 "At first glance... would seem to reflect accurately the almost universal view of our people". However:

"I think the President should concern himself to find out whether that declaration... can be reconciled with the Pauline privilege* in respect of marriages. Can it be reconciled with certain circumstances that can arise in which a marriage, which in the eyes of the civil law of certain States is valid, but which in the eyes of the Church in this country is invalid, can be regulated? I suggest that a situation may arise in which there would be an obligation on a Catholic priest to administer the sacrament of matrimony to persons who in the light of that document, would be indissolubly married according to the civil law" (12.5.37, Cols 251-2).

* Pauline Privilege: "the right to dissolve the marriage bond, contracted between two unbaptized persons, after the baptism of one of the spouses and the refusal of the other spouse to cohabit peacefully... The term is based on the supposition that St. Paul grants this privilege in 1 Cor. 7, 12015, but it is rather a privilege granted by the Church through a broader interpretation of the Pauline text than this in itself allows". (New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 1967, Vol 11.) Apparently Paul's permission for separation in these cases has been interpreted by the Church to allow a remarriage for the Catholic partner. The Petrine Privilege (or "Favour of the Faith Cases") is a further development of the Pauline Privilege for re-

marriage and "refers to the granting by the pope of a dissolution of a natural or nonsacramental bond of marriage, when certain conditions are fulfilled. In this case the pope actually dissolves a marriage, even a consummated one, which up to the time of the dissolution was valid." It is "concerned with the marriage contracted between a validly baptized person (or one who is doubtfully baptized) and one who is not baptized". "The Pauline privilege envisions the personal spiritual advantage of the convert, whereas the privilege of the faith can be granted in favor of the faith..." (Vol 9, p289).

It appears that the Dail was familiar with the Pauline privilege since nobody expressed puzzlement. But this point was left to be sorted out in practice on the assumption that the society was treating Canon Law as the effective law. The striking feature of the Dail discussion on

divorce was that the legislators were indulging in the favourite Catholic practice of discussing the esoteric points of Church law, rather than examining the real social results that would follow from the Constitutional provisions. This was taken to its ultimate absurdity by James Dillon (a barrister, farmer and merchant who had studied business organisation in London, New York and Chicago and remained morally infantile) with his fear that the Constitution might render it impossible for converted pagans (of which there were, of course, such a large number in the country!) to remarry. The problem for the Dail was that it simply had no say in large areas of social life: those decisions were made elsewhere.

To Be Continued

Donal Kennedy

Lemass Airport?

In June 2021 Fianna Fail's Mary O'Rourke suggested that Dublin Airport be named after *Sean Lemass* whose many services to Ireland included the establishment of Aer Lingus.

I'd warmly support the idea. But "*Lemass Airport*" would be more in keeping with the man's style, short and to the point.

Last year we witnessed the first mid-air refuelling of a manned aircraft from an unmanned drone.

Some of the first re-fuelling, if not the very first were over the Shannon in the 1930s and some of Mr Lemass's colleagues, including his Chief were physically and hair-raisingly involved.

I quote -

"The British were also experimenting with refuelling in the air, Sir Alan Cobham had been a pioneer of this novel but dangerous experiment. I was present with my father to see such an operation carried out. A land plane based at Rineanna, a 'Harrow bomber' was converted into a tanker. 'Canopus' one of the Short flying boats, was due to be refuelled in the air, and then set out on its transatlantic flight...

We were driven to Rineanna to see the Harrow made ready. As we stood around in a group one of the British officials thought it would be a good idea if my father and his party were to view the operation from the air.

My father was very reticent. He thought we were going up in the Harrow, or the aircraft being refuelled and he knew well the risks and great dangers of the operation. Sean Lydon...

quickly reassured him neither he or his party would be aboard either of the planes in the operation. Lydon was a trusted and indispensable help and friend to Sean Lemass...

We made our way back to Foynes and took a motor launch to the Short flying boat *Maia* which had been stripped of all its seats and internal fittings and sat on the bare hull. There were no safety straps."

To summarise the *Maia* was captained by a senior officer of Imperial Airways and an Australian Colleague who became an Air Vice Marshal in the British Airforce. The narrator here was Terry, the teenage son of Eamon de Valera, and the other passengers were Frank Aiken, Oscar Traynor with his young son Colm, and Sean Lydon.

The *Maia*, banked to observe the mid air fuelling, and almost collided with the tanker: half the Irish Cabinet, two of their teenage sons, and a senior Civil Servant were thrown about on top of each other.

Sean Lemass was part of a team and not the only one with a close interest in the development of air transport. Perhaps Shannon Airport should be named Shannon De Valera Airport.

And Knock Airport, one of the many successful projects which was supported by Charles Haughey should be named after him.

Forget the Begrudgers and commemorate De Valera and Haughey, who, like Lemass, were driving forces in the modernisation of Ireland.

Peter Brooke

Solzhenitsyn's Two Centuries Together.

Part 20: *Who Are The Ukrainians* continued

From the Polish partitions to 1860 (Emancipation of the Serfs in Russia and reform of the Habsburg monarch

Ruthenians In Austria

Prior to the partitions of Poland which began in 1772 the people who were to become 'Ukrainians' mainly held in common their refusal to exchange the Eastern rite in Church Slavonic for the Western, Latin rite that the Polish/Lithuanian government wished to impose on them. They were divided between the Orthodox and the 'Uniates' - those who, keeping the Eastern rite together with a married clergy, nonetheless were willing to accept the authority of the Pope and the distinctive doctrines of the Catholic Church. The Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiev, however, had, in 1679, placed himself under the Patriarchate of Moscow, a decision ratified by Constantinople in 1686, so that even the west bank Orthodox, still under Polish rule, were, ecclesiastically, subject first to the Patriarch of Moscow then to the 'Holy Synod' established by Peter I. Pospelovsky, whom I used as a main source of my previous article, gives the impression that the Orthodox were in a strong position since they were guaranteed protection by Peter the Great after he had saved the Polish Commonwealth, submerged by a Swedish invasion, at the Battle of Poltava. But according to the account of Barbara Skinner, Associate Professor of History, Indiana State University:

"...by 1710, continued conversions of other Orthodox bishops in the Commonwealth to the Uniate faith left only one Orthodox hierarchy, the Bishop of Mohylew [Mogilev] in Belarus, in the entire Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ... Becoming in 1685 subordinate to the Russian patriarch (rather than to Constantinople), the Kievan Metropolitan's attention was now focused eastward, on Kiev's new role as the Orthodox cultural and educational center in the Muscovite state, not to the impoverished parishes across the Polish border. The Orthodox population there had no sense of belonging to a diocese at all, and their religious life was in shambles. Most commonly, vagrant priests and monks ordained in Moldavia came into the right-bank parishes. They were poorly educated and barely capable of administering parishes.'

Pospelovsky, himself Orthodox and very hostile to the Uniates, argues that the situation of the Uniates, lacking Russian protection, was even worse than that of the Orthodox and that it was further worsened by its reorganisation in the Synod of Zamosc, which approved the essentially hostile policy of the Polish government, thus provoking a massive turn towards Orthodoxy. Skinner, however (and I'm inclined to believe her) argues the opposite:

'Meanwhile, the Uniate Church in the Commonwealth began a process of self-strengthening, particularly following its Council of Zamosc in 1720 that prescribed more regulated parish and diocesan administration and better training for priests reminiscent of the Catholic Church's Council of Trent ... In the face of ineffective Orthodox Church organization in the eastern palatinates at this time, Polish landlords resettling the area for the most part installed Uniate priests brought from adjacent Uniate dioceses and built Uniate churches, resulting in the gradual conversion of the peasantry in right-bank Ukraine to the Uniate faith. In just a few decades, then, the Uniate Church made dramatic progress in expanding its jurisdiction eastward until the eastern border of the Uniate faith essentially coincided with the new Dnepr River border between the Commonwealth and the Russian Empire. Official church registers reveal that the number of Uniate parishes in right-bank Ukraine increased from about 150 in 1730 to nearly 1900 by 1764, while at the same time the number of Orthodox parishes shrank to several dozen.'

Pospelovsky has it that 'By 1795, over 2,000 Orthodox Parishes of the Right-Bank [West bank - PB] Ukraine had returned to Orthodoxy.' He presents this as a continuous process prompted by the Latinising policies of the Polish government and the Synod of Zamosc. But he neglects to mention the Koliivshchyna rebellion which broke out in 1768. According to Skinner it took the form of a large scale Orthodox massacre of the

Uniates, as well as of Poles, Catholics and Jews, resulting eventually in the partitions, which greatly facilitated the conversion of Uniates to Orthodoxy in the territories taken by Russia.

In Galicia, by contrast, once it came under Austrian rule in the partition of 1772, the situation of the Uniates was greatly improved. Though in a stronger position than the Orthodox under Polish rule, they were still regarded as very much second class Catholics without the same political rights as Roman Catholics (in this context the terms 'Roman' Catholic refers to those using the Latin rite). But once under Austrian rule, according to the Canadian-Ukrainian historian, John-Paul Himka: 'Perhaps in no process of nation-building did the institution of the church play as great a role as in that of the Ukrainians of Austrian Galicia.'

He continues (pp.428-430):

'In June 1774 [the Austrian Empress - PB] Maria Theresa announced her intention "to do away with everything that might make the Uniate people believe they are regarded as worse than the Roman Catholics." In the next month she decreed that henceforth the term Uniate was to be banished from private as well as public usage and replaced by the term Greek Catholic. Joseph II [Maria Theresa's son and successor - PB] curbed the Basilian order by claiming as the imperial prerogative the right to appoint bishops from either the black or white clergy and by subordinating the Basilian monks to the Greek Catholic hierarchy. He also took measures to improve the economic status of the parish clergy. Crucial educational institutions were established by the Habsburgs: the seminary for Greek Catholics attached to St. Barbara's Church in Vienna (the so-called Barbareum), founded in 1774 and replaced by a general seminary in Lviv in 1783, and the imperial seminary residence (Convict) for Greek Catholics, founded in Vienna in 1803. The culmination of the Austrian reforms was the reestablishment, in 1808, of the Galician metropolitan see ...

'The Habsburgs, especially Joseph II, saw the role of the clergy as promoters of secular enlightenment; that conception struck deep roots in the newly reborn (and grateful) Greek Catholic church. The enlightened monarchs had not only established the institutions that revitalized the Greek Catholic Church, but had implanted an ideal code of behavior in Greek Catholic clergymen that admitted no contradiction, or even strong distinction, between the propagation of the faith and of secular knowledge, between the nurture of good Christians and of good citizens.'

The immediate effect in the early nineteenth century was the emergence of an educated clergy able to mix in high (meaning at the time, Polish) society and therefore that much further removed from the normally illiterate and uneducated Ruthenian peasantry, but by mid-century, the clergy had begun to engage in a work of popular education. Himka again (p.431): 'Characteristic of the mentality of Greek Catholic episcopal enlighteners was a regulation [the Uniate Metropolitan - PB] Levyts'kyi issued for his seminarians in 1831: it made attendance at agronomy classes compulsory, because pastors would be expected to introduce their parishioners to better farming techniques.'

The Greek Catholic Church, rather than using the vernacular spoken by the Ruthenian peasantry, had developed a language of its own - 'a curious hotch-potch known as *yasychie*, a compound of Church Slavonic and Ukrainian with some admixture of Polish and Russian.' The 1830s, though, saw the emergence of the 'Ruthenian triad', making the first effort in Galicia to develop a sense of the distinctiveness of Ruthenian culture not based on religion and using the native language:

'Their programme was exclusively cultural. It called for recognition of the cultural unity of all the Ukrainian lands and of the folk language as the basis of a new national literature, and it asserted the separate identity of this language and literature within the Slavonic family. It stressed the historical link between the present and the glorious past as exemplified in *Kievan Rus'* and the Cossacks, and it pointed to the peasantry as the most valuable element in the contemporary national community.' (Brock: Vahylevych, p.156).

It was all on a very small scale, though, and though the 'triad' - Markiiian Shashkevych, Iakiv Holovats'kyi, and Ivan Vahylevych - were all trainee priests based in Lviv, their efforts were strongly discouraged by the church authorities, more for linguistic than cultural or political reasons. The church stood by its own language, based on Church Slavonic and remote from the vernacular spoken by the peasantry, as an appropriate vehicle for a Ruthenian literary culture. Nor were the triad at the time particularly political-minded. Indeed they never showed an interest in national separation:

'Shashkevych was to die unexpectedly early in the next decade, while Holovats'kyi and Vahylevych set out on divergent paths, which would lead in Holovats'kyi's case to the exchange

of Ukrainian identity for Russian nationality and in Vahylevych's case to close identification with the cause of Polish political nationalism.' (Brock: Vahylevych, p.158)

UKRAINIANS IN RUSSIA

The territory taken by Austria in 1772 had been a relatively stable part of Poland. It still had a Polish majority with substantial Jewish and Ruthenian minorities. Ruthenian peasant discontent had taken the form of an exodus eastward to join the tumultuous Cossacks in the area West of the Dnieper, which was to be taken by Russia in the 1790s. Insofar as it was organised - meaning insofar as it was organised by the Greek Catholic Church - the Ruthenian society left in Galicia was strongly pro-Austrian. It was only after 1848 that other possibilities - Polish integration, Russian integration, or independent statehood - began to develop on a large scale.

The area taken by Russia in the 1790s, by contrast, was extremely unstable. It had been devastated by the 'haidamaky' uprisings which began in 1734 and culminated in the Koliivshchyna rebellion of 1768. This had been provoked by the Polish nobility's formation of the 'Confederation of Bar' in opposition to the influence Russia was exercising on the last King of Poland, Stanislaw II August. Barbara Skinner argues also that, in addition to the Polish Catholic/Cossack Orthodox conflict there was also a raw conflict between Orthodox and Uniate, that is between two groups who could be called 'Ukrainian', prompted by Orthodox efforts at conversion in the area West of the Dnieper and a Uniate pushback. The Orthodox Cossacks believed they had Russian support - there was a forged ukaz from Catherine II, the 'Golden Decree', calling on the Cossack leader Zalizniak and his followers "to enter the lands of Poland ... and slay, with the aid of God, all the Polish and Jewish blasphemers of our holy religion" (Skinner: *Borderlands*, p.109). But in the event it was the Russian army, in alliance with the Royal Polish army that eventually suppressed them. The Bar Confederation regrouped with Ottoman support and thus the Polish confrontation overlaps with the Russo-Turkish confrontation that finally gave Russia Crimea and access to the Black Sea.

Thus the Russians were faced with a huge task of repopulating areas that had been devastated by conflict, and managing new populations - Poles, Jews, 'Little Russians' (the Orthodox peasants

previously under Polish domination) and Tatars, all of whom disliked each other intensely.

Nikolai Gogol, in his novel *Taras Bulba*, refers to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as 'those turbulent troubled times when the struggles and battles for the union of Russia and Ukraine were beginning' and that of course was the official Russian view of the matter, continuing well into the Soviet era, when, in the celebrations marking its 300th anniversary, the Khmelnytsky rising was represented as a struggle to achieve the reunion of the Russian peoples. Gogol wrote in Russian but his *Evenings on a farm near Dikanka* (1831-2) and *Taras Bulba* (1835) were nonetheless presenting the cultural peculiarities of his own 'Little Russian' people as something which, however attractive they might be, were nonetheless exotic and foreign to his 'Great Russian' readers. An Irish equivalent might be William Carleton. Pavel Svin'in, who published his first story, *Bisavriuk or the Eve of St. John the Baptist* in 1830, introduced him saying: 'Malorossiiane [Little Russians] more than Velikorossiiane [Great Russians] resemble the magnificent Asian people. They look like Asians..., but do not have such an ungovernable character...; their phlegmatic carelessness protects them from blustering emotions, and often the fiery and audacious European intellect sparkles from their bushy eyebrows; ardent love of the Motherland... fills their breasts.' Travelogues and literary texts of the 1810s-1830s generally represented Ukraine as a 'violent and often degenerate place that constitutes the limits of civilisation and the boundary with Asia - a zone of dangerous cultural confrontation and mingling.'

Modern literature in the Ukrainian language begins with a joke - Ivan Kotliarevsky's burlesque version of Virgil's *Aeneid*, written in the peasant language of Poltava, an oblast on the east bank of the Dnieper. The first three parts were published in 1798. A fourth part appeared in 1809 but the whole work in six parts was only published in 1840, after his death in 1838. Poltava had been part of the 'hetmanate' founded by Bogdan Khmelnytsky and had therefore been under an increasingly tight Russian suzerainty since the Treaty of Andrusovo, signed in 1667. Ukraine - like Russia, but unlike, say, England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France - had very little vernacular written culture other than for religious purposes prior to the eighteenth century, but it did have a rich oral tradition - stories of heroic deeds of the Cossacks recited by a 'kobzar'

(travelling singer) accompanied by a multistringed lute-like instrument, the 'bandura', or 'kobza'.

This was material that was very much sought after in the days following James Macpherson's *Ossian*, Bishop Percy's *Reliques*, together with the work of the Brothers Grimm in Germany and Vuk Karadzic in Serbia. In 1813, the great Polish collector, Z.D.Chodakowski began his four years wandering among the Slav peasantry, starting in the ethnically Ruthenian/Ukrainian Podolia, Volhynia and the Russian Ukraine, only moving into indigenous Polish territory in 1817. He collected several thousand songs. He died almost unknown in 1825 at the age of forty-one, but his essay *On prechristian Slavdom*, first published in Warsaw in 1818, became after his death a manifesto for the revival of interest in the Slav peasantry as bearers of a Pan-Slav culture older than Christianity.

The first published collection of Ukrainian folk songs was Mykhailo Maksymovich's *Little Russian Songs*, published in Moscow in 1827, followed in 1834 by *Ukrainian Folk Songs* and a collection of Ukrainian songs, published in Kiev in 1849. Maksymovich also engaged in an intensive philological research into different Slav languages, developing a distinctive system of Ukrainian orthography which was to be particularly influential in the Austrian territories, though it is no longer used.

Neither Kotliarevsky's comic writing nor Maksymovich's folk songs were seen as threatening the predominance of Russian as the language of culture. Kotliarevsky was artistic director of the Poltava Free theatre which mounted his operetta *Natalka from Poltava* and the vaudeville *The Muscovite Sorcerer*. The *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* praises his 'racy, colourful, colloquial Ukrainian', and Taras Shevchenko, whom we shall be encountering shortly, wrote a poem in his honour. According to the Australian Ukrainian writer Marko Pavlyshyn: 'Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi's play, *Natalka Poltavka* (*Natalka from Poltava*, 1819), a sentimental comedy in the spirit of the Enlightenment, had made the point that the natural wisdom of ordinary people, expressed in their own clear and coherent language, was superior to confused thought expressed in the jargon of affected learning.' Nonetheless, comparing him to the later Nikolai Kostomarov whose writing in Ukrainian was seen - more by literary critics of the time than by the government - as dangerous, he says: 'the difference separating

Kostomarov's use of such 'colourful' language and the burlesque language use of Kotliarevs'kyi's imitators ... was fundamental. Unlike his predecessors, Kostomarov was not holding up the Ukrainian language itself to be observed by its audience; he was showing them the action, character and ideas of his play through the Ukrainian language, arguing thereby that it was a normal, legitimate literary language, a vehicle for the high-culture business of tragedy ... It was as appropriate in [Kostomarov's play] *Sava Chalyi for the Pole* Konets'pol's'kyi to speak Ukrainian as it was for Schiller's *Joan of Arc* to speak German.'

Maksymovich was sufficiently well respected to be appointed professor of Russian Folk Literature, and first rector of the University of Kiev which was founded in 1834 on the recommendation of Count Sergei Uvarov. Uvarov is best known as having formulated the doctrine of 'official nationalism' under the insecure disciplinarian Nicholas I - 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality.' According to an account by James T. Flynn, Maksymovich 'believed deeply in the promise of the Russian empire and meant to foster the principles of "Official Nationality" not as repression but as the path to a happier future for all inhabitants of the empire ... As rector, Maksimovich worked very hard, trying to foster in his students the love for the Russian language and literature which he felt himself.'

LANGUAGES OF CULTURE

It should be said, however, that the claim of Russian to be a language of culture was at the time not much stronger than the claim of Ukrainian. After all, Pushkin, the first writer in the Russian language to excite any great interest outside Russia, only died in 1837. Prior to the eighteenth century both among Russians and Ukrainians, there was little idea of the possibility of culture outside the church. From the seventeenth century onwards the most advanced centre of church culture was the Kiev Academy founded by Peter Mogyla. In the Kiev Academy the languages of culture were Latin and Polish but the academy had been established by the Cossacks in imitation of what had already long been established in Catholic Poland. The Cossacks spoke Ukrainian and Ukrainian was the language used when texts were translated for their benefit. Peter I, much concerned with the low level of culture among the Russian clergy, turned to the relatively sophisticated and westernised

Kiev Academy. The reorganisation of the Russian Church - the suppression of the Moscow patriarchate and creation of the 'Holy Synod' - was planned by Theophan Propokovich, formerly Prefect, then Rector of the Kiev-Mogila Academy. As well as theology and philosophy Propokovich taught 'poetics', basing his teaching on Polish models. The Orthodox theologian George Florovsky regarded Peter Moghila as promoting within Orthodox an essentially Catholic theology, and Propokovich an essentially Protestant one ('Theophan wasn't close to the Protestant theology of the eighteenth century, he was an integral part of it'). Nickolai Lossky in his *History of Russian philosophy* says:

'The centuries of Tatar domination and then the isolationism of the Moscow state prevented the Russian people from becoming acquainted with Western European philosophy. Not until Peter the Great had "cut a window into Europe" was Russian culture introduced to the western culture on a wide scale.'

But the Ruthenians in Galicia and the Ukrainians in 'Little Russia' had been under Polish domination for at least three hundred years. They already had their 'window into Europe.'

Florovsky admits, albeit regretting it, the domination of Ukrainian culture in the early eighteenth century:

'In the history of the Russian school, the Petrine reform literally amounted to a Ukrainisation. For its Great Russian pupils this school [the Academy of the Saviour, established in 1700/01 on the model of the Kiev Academy in the Monastery of the Icon of the Saviour in Moscow] seemed doubly foreign: Latin and Ukrainian. Znamensky in his remarkable work on religious schools in the eighteenth century says that "For the students, all these teachers were really foreigners, coming from a different country with their own customs, their own way of thinking, their knowledge, their way of talking which was bizarre and barely comprehensible to the ear of a Great Russian. Not only did they not wish to secure the sympathy of the young people entrusted to them, but they despised the Russians, whom they considered to be savages, ridiculing everything which was different from Little Russian whose superiority they asserted constantly." We know that many of these immigrants never spoke Russian well and continued to use Ukrainian. It was only under Catherine that the situation changed ...'

It isn't however clear what is meant by the 'Ukrainian' language. There were,

it appears, three languages in question. One was the Ukrainian version of Church Slavonic which gave way to the Russian version of Church Slavonic. The second was the version of 'Ruthenian', apparently heavily inflected with Church Slavonic used by the Cossacks as an administrative language. We might guess that this bore some resemblance to *yasychie* - the language favoured by the Greek Catholic Church in Galicia. It seems fairly obvious that the very fact that the Little Russians were so instrumental in the administration both of church and state under Peter I would lead to the languages of both church and administration giving way to the languages used in the Russian state as a whole and this is what is said - I think almost reluctantly - by two writers who obviously regret it from Ukrainian nationalist point of view:

'Having succeeded in the 'Ruthenization' of Muscovy by the late seventeenth century, the Ukrainians as a result of a subsequent russification of their Church and Cossack administration together with the educational system in the eighteenth century, lost impetus to break new ground in their own cultural tradition. Since they still felt themselves to be co-creators of the common Russian literary language which was, ultimately, imposed on them by decrees, bans, and career opportunities, they reluctantly accepted Great Russian as a kind of substitution for a missing member in the former bilingual opposition between Ukrainian Church Slavonic and Ruthenian (*prostaja mova* - 'plain language').

There is, however, little reason to believe that these civil and ecclesiastical administrators had any notion of breaking new ground in their own cultural tradition or that they were at all reluctant to accept the use of Great Russian to pursue what they would probably have thought of as a civilising mission. 'Church Slavonic' was the language, apparently closest to Bulgarian, used by SS Cyril and Methodius to translate the Greek liturgical texts for the use of the Slavs. It had no particular Ukrainian association. The Ruthenian language would probably have seemed to them little more than a means of communicating with their Cossack overlords, who were themselves becoming incorporated into the Russian system. The languages of culture would still be Polish and German. Indeed, it seems that at the end of the eighteenth century, the Kiev Academy itself played a role in the formalisation of the Russian language as a language of culture.

TARAS SHEVCHENKO

What was left as distinctively Ukrainian was the language of the peasantry and of the oral folk tradition. Danylenko and Naienko call it the 'new literary Ukrainian', pioneered as such by Kotliarevsky. This was the language that was to be seen later in the century as dangerous, at first by literary critics, notably the best known literary critic of the 1840s, Vissarion Belinsky. A key figure in this development was the 'Ukrainian national poet', Taras Shevchenko.

Shevchenko was born in 1814 as a serf. He became personal valet to his master who recognised and tried to develop his talents as a painter, taking him first to Warsaw then, after the Polish rebellion of 1830, to St Petersburg. There his talent was recognised by the Russian poet, Vasily Andreyevich Zhukovsky, tutor to the Empress, Alexandra Feodorovna, wife of Nicholas I, and to the heir apparent, the future Alexander II. On the initiative of the Empress, a raffle was held to buy him out of serfdom, enabling him to become a pupil of the painter Karl Briulov whose painting *The Last Day of Pompeii* had created a sensation, widely regarded as the first Russian masterpiece, in 1834 (Gogol wrote an essay in praise of it). In 1840, while still in St Petersburg, Shevchenko published his first collection of poems - *Kobzar*. Written in the native language it was hugely successful in Ukraine where he made 'an almost triumphal return of one who had left his native village in the corduroy of a page boy.'

He obtained a post in the Archaeological Commission in Kiev. 'Here he found himself surrounded by the younger generation which had already, certainly under the influence of his poetry, formed a secret society under the name of the "Brotherhood of St Cyril and Methodius" with the clearly expressed aim of educating the people and abolishing serfdom.' (Franko, p.113)

The most important of Shevchenko's poems from the point of view of Ukrainian nationalism was probably *Haidamaky*, his celebration of the last of the great risings against the Poles, the *Koliivshchyna* rebellion of 1768. According to George Grabowicz, President of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in the US: 'Discussions and polemics around the poem, especially by Polish and in time more so by Ukrainian critics, continued well into the 20th century and ultimately marked

out the canonic Ukrainian perspective on Shevchenko; in effect *Haidamaky* became his best known, most often cited and defining work, that which made Shevchenko Shevchenko.'

It's hardly surprising that Polish critics should have taken an interest in it since the *Koliivshchyna* rebellion was after all a massacre of Poles. The poem comes in fourteen parts and I've only been able to read six of them in translation so this account will be very incomplete but the main theme, here as in many other of Shevchenko's poems, is nostalgia for a past when Cossacks were free and self-governing and there was no serfdom, together with regret that this past glory is forgotten by a weak and servile generation.

And yet the glory in question is the glory of massacring Polish Catholics, described with great verve but also occasional notes of regret:

In Cossack graves our granddads lie,
Their grave mounds dot the plain.
What of it that the mounds are high?
Nobody knows they're there,
Or whose the bones that 'neath them lie,
Nobody sheds a tear.
As it blows through, the wind alone
A gentle greeting says,
The dew alone at break of dawn
With tender teardrops laves.
The sun then turns its rays on them,
It dries and makes them warm;
Their grandsons? Oh, they're not concerned -
For lords they're growing com!
They're numerous, but ask if one
Knows where is Gonta's grave -
Where did the tortured martyr's bones
His faithful comrades lay?
Where's Zaliznyak, that splendid soul,
Where sleeps that manly heart?
It's hard to bear! The hangman rules,
While they forgotten are.
A long, long time the clamour dread
Resounded through Ukraine,
A long, long time the blood ran red
In streams across the plains.
O'er all the earth it cast a pall;
This horror day and night
Was ghastly, yet when we recall
Those deeds, the heart is light.

The climax of the poem comes when Gonta, the Cossack leader, finds himself obliged to kill his young sons because they admit to being Catholic:

From Kiev to Uman the dead
In heaping piles were laid.
The *Haidamaki* on Uman
Like heavy clouds converge
At midnight. Ere the night is done
The whole town is submerged.
The *Haidamaki* take the town
With shouts: "The Poles shall pay!"
Dragoons are downed,
Their bodies roll
Around the marketplace;
The ill, the cripples, children

too, All die, no one is spared. Wild cries and screams. 'Mid streams of blood- Stands Gonta on the square With Zal- iznyak together, they Urge on the rebel band: "Good work, stout lads! There, that's the way To punish them, the damned!" And then the rebels brought to him A Jesuit, a monk, With two young boys. "Look, Gonta, look! These youngsters are your sons! They're Catholics: since you kill all, Can you leave them alone? Why are you wait- ing? Kill them now, Before your sons are grown, For if you don't, when they grow up They'll find you and they'll kill...." "Cut the cur's throat! As for the pups, I'll finish them myself. Let the as- sembly be convened. Confess — you're Catholics!" "We're Catholics.... Our mother made...." "Be silent! Close your lips! Oh God! I know!" The Cossacks stood Assembled in the square. "My sons are Catholics.... I vowed No Catholic to spare. Esteemed assem- bly!... That there should Be no doubt anywhere, No talk that I don't keep my word, Or that I spare my own.... My sons, my sons! Why are you small? My sons, why aren't you grown? Why aren't you with us killing Poles?" "We will, we'll kill them, dad!" "You never will! You never will! Your mother's soul be damned, That thrice-accursed Catholic, The bitch that gave you birth! She should have drowned you ere you saw The light of day on earth! As Catholics you'd not have died — The sin would smaller be; Such woe, my sons, today is mine As cannot be conceived! My children, kiss me, for not I Am killing you today — It is my oath!" He flashed his knife And the two lads were slain. They fell to earth, still bubbling words: "O dad! We are not Poles! We ... we...." And then they spoke no more, Their bodies growing cold. "Perhaps they should be buried, what?" "No need! They're Catholic ..."

Gonta does in fact, secretly and sorrowfully, bury his sons, still cursing their mother.

If Haidamaky does occasionally ex- press regret that Slavs should be killing each other ("The heart is sore when you reflect/That sons of Slavs like beasts/Got drunk with blood. Who was to blame?/ The Jesuits, the priests!") there is no such regret in another, much shorter poem, The Night of Taras:

Before the dawn a slaughtered host U- pon the meadow lies. "Like a red, twist- ing serpent, The Alta bears the news, To bid the ravens of the fields A feast of Poles to use. Black ravens to that noble meal Came flying, ranks on ranks; While

the assembled Cossack troops Gave the Almighty thanks. The ravens screamed, and plucked and ate The corpses' eyeballs bright, While the bold Cossacks raised a song To celebrate that night, That sombre night that dripped with blood In bring- ing glory deep To Taras and his Cossack troop, While Poles were lulled to sleep.

AND TARAS BULBA

In this case the subject is a rising that occurred in the 1630s which I think is probably the inspiration behind Gogol's Taras Bulba. In Shevchenko's poem the rising is prompted because the Orthodox are deprived by Catholic (Polish and Polonised Ukrainian) landlords of access to their churches which are often held by landlord's agents who are often Jews:

Unbaptised up to manhood grow The children of our race, For out of wedlock men must live; Without a priest they die; Our faith to Jewry has been sold And locked our churches lie! Like blackbirds covering a field, The Poles and Uni- ates Come swooping down.

Similarly, after Taras Bulba has stirred the Cossacks to action against the Tatars simply through love of warfare, despite a peace that has been agreed with them, they hear the fate of Ukrainians West of the Dnieper at the hands of Poles and Jews:

"Such times have come that now even the holy churches are not ours."

"How do you mean, not ours?"

"Nowadays they are leased out to the Jews. If you don't pay a Jew before- hand, you cannot serve mass."

"What are you talking about?"

"And if a Jewish dog does not put a stamp with his unbaptised hand on the Holy Easter Cake, one cannot con- secrate the cake."

"He is lying, comrades; it cannot be that an unbaptised Jew puts a stamp on the Holy Easter Cake."

"Listen! I've more to tell you: and the Catholic priests are driving now all over Ukraine in their two-wheeled cars. And the trouble is not that they ride in their carriages, but that the Orthodox Christians and not horses pull them. Listen! There's more to tell: they say the Jewesses are making themselves petticoats out of the priests' vestments. These are the things that are going on in the Ukraine, comrades!" (pp.52-3)

The position of the Jews is ambigu- ous since there are Jewish tradesmen attached to the camp, largely selling alcohol. The story of what is happening in the West prompts a pogrom:

"Hang all the Jews!" was heard from the crowd. "Don't let them make

priests' vestments into petticoats for the Jewesses! Don't let them put stamps on the Holy Easter Cakes! Drown them all, the heathens, in the Dnieper!" These words uttered by someone in the crowd flashed like lightning through the heads of all and the crowd rushed to the outer village, intending to cut the throats of all the Jews.

'The poor sons of Israel, losing what little courage they had, hid in empty vodka barrels, in ovens, and even crept under the skirts of their wives; but the Cossacks found them everywhere. [...]

'They seized the Jews by their arms and began flinging them into the water. Pitiful cries rang out on all sides, but the hardhearted Cossacks only laughed at the sight of the Jews' legs in slip- pers and stockings kicking in the air.' (pp.53-4)

Later in the story, Taras Bulba has need of the services of one of the Jews who had been in the camp:

'This Jew was our friend Yankel. By now he had rented a bit of land and kept a little tavern; he had by degrees got all the gentry and nobility of the neigh- bourhood into his hands, had gradually extracted almost all their money, and the presence of this Jew was having a profound influence in the district. For three miles in every direction there was not a single hut left in decent condition; they were all tumbling down and fall- ing into ruins; everything was being squandered in drink, and nothing was left but poverty and rags; the whole countryside was laid bare as though by fire and pestilence. And if Yankel had stayed there another ten years, he would certainly have laid bare the whole province.' (p.113)

Gogol describes the punishment of the Poles with much the same relish as Shevchenko:

'they laid out their comrades' bodies with respect and scattered fresh earth upon them that the crows and fierce eagles should not peck their eyes. But the bodies of the Poles they bound by dozens to the tails of wild horses and set them loose to race over the plain, and for a long way pursued them, lash- ing them all the time. The frantic horses galloped over ridges and hillocks, across the hollows and watercourses, and the dead bodies of the Poles were battered on the earth and covered with blood and dust.' (p.89)

TO BE CONTINUED

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Pelosi
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Pelosi:

More Catholic Than The Pope?!

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi can no longer take Communion because she supports abortion rights and also publicly invokes her Catholic faith, the Archbishop of San Francisco said in a letter released on Friday (IrishTimes, 20.5.2022)

Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone said in an open letter addressed to Ms Pelosi, and in another directed toward the faithful, that *"Pelosi's position on abortion has become only more extreme over the years, especially in the last few months"*.

Archbishop Cordileone said Ms Pelosi had not responded to his requests to meet.

The Archbishop said he sent Ms Pelosi a private letter in April, warning that he would bar her from Communion unless she publicly repudiated her support for abortion rights *or stopped referring to her Catholic faith in public*.

Archbishop Cordileone highlighted comments Ms Pelosi made to the *Seattle Times* editorial board this month, citing her Catholic faith and support for abortion rights, then said:

"They say to me, 'Nancy Pelosi thinks she knows more about having babies than the Pope.' Yes I do. Are you stupid?"

When in Rome . . .

"To no one's real surprise, U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi received Communion during a papal Mass yesterday marking the traditional feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. Pelosi, her husband Paul, and other family members happened to be in Rome on vacation and decided to attend the Mass. (Irish Catholic-07.07.2022)

Prior to Mass, the House Speaker met Pope Francis in private, however, Pelosi did not receive the Holy Communion from the Pontiff.

Population!

Ireland's population now stands at just over five million people.

The population has risen above five million for the first time since 1851, according to new figures.

Data published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) shows that the Republic of Ireland's population now stands at around 5.01 million.

The 1851 Census came amid the impact of the Great Famine, which devastated Ireland for several years in the middle of the 19th century.

The total population on the island of Ireland in 1851 was 6.6 million, many scholars question the accuracy of this estimate, believing it was much higher.

The country's population has been steadily rising since a low point in 1961.

The population in 2021 was around 2.2 million higher than 60 years earlier.

The new figures show that the Republic's population increased by 34,000 between April 2020 and April 2021.

More than 65,000 people immigrated to Ireland in that 12-month period, with nearly half of those estimated to be returning Irish nationals.

The CSO believes that it is the highest number of returnees since 2007.

Dublin saw its population grow only slightly in the last year : adding only 8,000 people to the capital to bring the total to 1.43 million.

That represents 28.5% of the total population.

James Hegarty, a CSO statistician, said that some of the data will reflect *"the demographic and social impacts of Covid-19"*.

The latest figures show that the over-65 population increased by 22,000 in the

12 months prior to April 2021.

A total of 742,000 people in Ireland are aged above 65 – a rise of nearly 20% since 2016.

Carson

"It has been said over and over again, 'You want to oppress the Catholic minority; you want to get a Protestant ascendancy there'. We have never asked to govern any Catholic. We are perfectly satisfied that all of them, Protestant and Catholic, should be governed from this Parliament . . ." (Edward Carson, House of Commons, May 18, 1920).

Ukrainians

Community Development Manager at Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Margaret Larkin said:

"In places like Bundoran 22 or 23 per cent of the population is now Ukrainian. There isn't enough services, it is too over populated. That is something we are trying to link back to IPAS (International Protection Accommodation Services) in Dublin about and ask that they take that into consideration.

"If there are so many people in the one area every service is exhausted between medical and GPs, schools, even the local community centre" (Donegal News-May 22, 2022).

Ukraine Orthodox Church

A Bill banning the Russian Orthodox Church has been submitted to Ukraine's Parliament, the country's media reported.

The Bill is not yet on the voting schedule, but is likely to be voted on by a large majority. It envisions that all property of Church authorities and the administration of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the country be nationalised within 48 hours of the law's adoption. (May 7, 2022)

"On Tuesday, the Vatican's embassy in Ukraine voiced indirect opposition to a bill banning the activities of the Moscow Patriarchate in the country, which, among other things, stipulates that all property belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church be nationalized" (CRUX; *Taking the Catholic Pulse*, 13.4.2022)
