

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

August 2017

Vol.32, No.8 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.31 No.8 ISSN 954-5891

The DUP/Tory Pact In Context

Ulster Unionism has come to the attention of the mainland. It is maintaining in Office, by support from the backbenches, a Tory Party that failed to win a General Election. It is feeling important because it is playing a part in the political life of the state, instead of sitting on the Westminster backbenches as spectators. But, if it has any sensibility at all, it must now be realising that mainland British politics, having been obliged by an electoral accident to take notice of it, regards it as essentially bizarre and alien. That is how it is seen, even by the Tory Party which it keeps in Office.

British political life is conducted within the familiar routines of a long-established party system, and its familiar party banter. It was shaped over hundreds of years as a system of two parties, with a third trying to break in. (The third party before the Great War of 1914-19 was the Labour Party. The Liberal Party, which launched that War, broke apart under the stress of it. Labour took its place as the second party of the state and Liberals have ever since been vainly trying to get back to where they were in 1914.)

In an attempt to include Ulster Unionism in the family, it has been said that the Tory Party used to be called the *Conservative and Unionist Party*, and that Ulster Unionism was part of it. But that story doesn't sell—firstly because it is a tall story.

Go back a hundred years, and there was no Tory Party. From 1893 until 1922 what existed was the Unionist Party. The Unionist Party was a merger of the Tory Party and the social reform wing of the Liberal Party based in Birmingham and led by Joseph Chamberlain. The Liberal Party, Gladstone's Liberal Party, was a *laissez faire* capitalist party, a free trade party. Social reform began in earnest in the 1890s under the merger of Tories and social reform Liberals in the Unionist Party after a Liberal split. Ulster Unionism was taken under the wing of that British Unionist Party but was never a leading influence in it.

To page 2

July Developments Show Brexit Still On Course

Brexit developments in July included: the defeat of a motion on special status for the North at the European Parliament; a further and more public distancing by key Establishment elements from the pro-British position of Ray Basset; a telling Irish pessimism about British intentions at the MacGill Summer School; an equally telling intervention by Roy Foster published in the *Times Literary Supplement*, recognising that Ireland is strongly pro-EU; and the second round of negotiations in Brussels. The drift of developments set in motion by the June election in the UK continued but the ripples are eddying in ways not fully picked up in mainstream media. A discussion with Alastair Campbell (Tony Blair's collaborator) on the Marian Finucane show (July 23) captured some of the challenges facing the anti-Brexit camp.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTE

On July 5th a motion that would have allowed Northern Ireland to remain under

To page 2

Part 2

Further Aspects of the Balfour Declaration

In November 1914, four days after England had declared War on the Ottomans, Prime Minister Asquith announced at the Guildhall in London that it was Britain's intention to dismantle the Ottoman Empire, not only in Europe but in Asia. This was a fundamental departure in British Policy and it interested *The Jewish Chronicle*. It noted in its editorial of 13th

November that the Gladstonian "*bag and baggage*" policy had been extended into Asia Minor to the benefit of Zionism.

Baron Rothschild, the leader of English Jewry, had collaborated in Balfour's *Alien's Act* by joining the Parliamentary Commission set up to organise the control of Jewish emigration to England. He did this to counter Theodor Herzl's Zionism, which

he took to be working hand in glove with Anti-Semitism against the Jewish community's interests. However, Britain's War on the Ottomans and Asquith's Declaration of Intent against the Ottomans changed everything and Rothschild found himself the focus of the thing he had previously seen as a great threat to his community.

In November 1914 Albert Hyamson, a Jewish Civil Servant, penned an important article for *The New Statesman* entitled *The Future of Palestine*. It noted that Palestine was now in the melting pot as a

To page 9

The DUP/Tory Pact In Context. Editorial	1
July Developments Show Brexit Still On Course. Dave Alvey	1
Further Aspects of the Balfour Declaration. Pat Walsh (Part 2)	1
Readers' Letters: Never The Order Of The British Empire For Art Malik? Manus O'Riordan	3
SF Abstention & The Government Majority: the figures!	6
Abstention From Westminster: A Proven Winner. Donal Kennedy	6
Poems: Of Tills And Pills. Did You Pack This Bomber Yourself . Wilson John Haire	6,22
The First West Cork History Festival. Jack Lane	10
The Elephant in the Room!. Aubane Historical Society Leaflet	10
Independence: Place And Politics. John Morgan (Lt.Col. retd) (Review of Philip O'Connor's <i>Road To Independence</i>)	12
Revisionist Jamboree at Kilkenny Castle. Tim O'Sullivan (Part 2)	13
'Papers Of Record' On Swanzy's First Cork Murder. Manus O'Riordan	15
Blasts Of Hot Air: Mansergh v. Harris. Brendan Clifford	19
Irish Notables In Wartime France. Wilson John Haire (<i>Review of</i> <i>No Way Out—The Irish in Wartime France 1939-1945</i> by Isadore Ryan)	21
A Defence Of Gaelic Christianity. John Minahane (Review)	23
Biteback: Grenfell Tower. Michael Robinson	
The Labour Party – power and principle. Raymond Deane	
Trump and the Russian connection. Philip O'Connor	
Irish Times Silences Query On Where It Stands On	
The Right To Trial By Jury. Manus O'Riordan	26,28
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Brexit)	27
Harpers Proclaimed! Jack Lane	28

Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney:**
P.S. O'Hegarty Writes On The Fenians (back page)

The major reforms carried out in Ireland during the entire period of British rule were done by the Unionist Government of 1895-1905. Ulster Unionist resistance to some of these reforms were easily brushed aside by the Party.

From 1915 to 1922 there was Coalition Government in Britain. In 1915-16 it was a Coalition of the Liberal Party and the Unionist Party with some representation of the Labour Party. In 1916 the Liberal Party split again. The Prime Minister, Asquith, was thrown out and Lloyd George, left with a Liberal rump, became the figurehead Prime Minister of what was essentially a Unionist Government.

In 1918 this War Coalition, minus the Labour Party, fought the General Election as a unit. It won by a landslide, but it soon ran into trouble in its attempts to consolidate the expansion of the Empire gained by the defeat of Germany and Turkey. In the face of an effective defiance by the Turks in 1922 there was a revolt on the Unionist back-benches. The Coalition was brought down. Party politics resumed. From this point onwards the Unionist Party began to be called *the Conservative Party*, or, occasionally the *Conservative and Unionist Party*. But Ulster Unionism ceased to be part of it.

A new *Government of Ireland Bill* was

published in 1920. It provided not only for Partition but for the setting up of a Home Rule Government in the Six Counties that were to remain within the British state (with a similar provision for Southern Ireland which remained a dead letter).

Up to this moment it was taken for granted that the part of Ireland that remained within the United Kingdom would be governed on the same basis as the rest of the state. The Ulster Unionist leader protested against the change. He said they had no wish to govern Catholics, but wanted all to be governed impartially within the political system of the state. The Unionist Government in Whitehall paid no heed. *Northern Ireland* was set up in 1921 and the Ulster Unionists undertook to govern it, no longer as a region of the Unionist Party, but a separate Party. It was put to them that this would facilitate the anti-republican campaign in the rest of Ireland, and they agreed to it as a "*supreme sacrifice*" in the cause of Empire.

From that moment onwards Ulster Unionist Northern Ireland was a strange creature on the fringe of British politics, shunned by the re-born Tory Party and by the newly-born Labour Party.

The Tory Party acted as its protector at first, while keeping it at arm's length. However, there has never been any connec-

tion between the populist Democratic Unionist Party and the Tories. The connection was with the Ulster Unionist Party.

The Labour Party said it supported a United Ireland, and that was its excuse for boycotting Northern Ireland (refusing to accept members), but in Office the Labour Party promptly forgot its *United Ireland* policy,

The Ulster Unionist Party governed the strange Northern Ireland constitutional construct in the only way that such an inherently bad system could be governed. It was an undemocratic system in the basic sense that the election in it could play no part in the election of a party to govern the sovereign state. And it was profoundly aggravating and provocative towards the very large Catholic minority which was daily humiliated by a Protestant communal sub-government with the Orange Order at its core. (The Protestant community had no alternative but to operate this system if it wanted to maintain "*the British connection*"—so it was decreed by Britain.)

Eventually, under extreme provocation in August 1969, the minority rebelled, and there was a war. The war, latent in the system for half a century, was precipitated by Ulster Unionist action, but it was fought between the nationalist community and the Government of the state, despite attempts made by that Government to reduce it to a local Catholic/Protestant war.

This journal, during the 1970s and 1980s, took part in an attempt to bring the Six Counties within the operations of the British system of democratic party politics. It was opposed by the Ulster Unionist Party which had become accustomed to—addicted to—the role of local communal dominance organised by religion. It was also lobbied against at Whitehall by Dublin Governments, which opposed Partition but supported the local system of Six County Protestant dominance in preference to the British system of party government in which all in the Six Counties might play a part. (But Whitehall needed no persuasion from Dublin to maintain the system which it had established for its own purposes.)

We read in the London *Times* of June 28th that—

"David Trimble was a man of vision and courage who sacrificed himself and his Ulster Unionist Party to bring about the Good Friday Agreement... It was Trimble's dream that mainland political parties would stand for election in

Northern Ireland and give voters a real alternative to sectarianism, but though the Conservatives did, the Labour Party to this day refuses on the spurious grounds that the nationalist SDLP is the sister party..."

The writer of this article is Ruth Dudley Edwards, who was a nationalist historian forty or fifty years ago, and an admirer of Patrick Pearse, who is now generally regarded in British/Irish circles as a fascist. Edwards went on to become an Establishment figure on the British political scene, through political affinity combined with marriage. She is now best described as a British political commentator of Irish origin.

Trimble played no part whatever in the campaign to bring the Six Counties within the sphere of British party-politics. He began his political career as a *Vanguard* militant. *Vanguard* was a kind of fascist movement developed by William Craig, the Home Office Minister in the old Unionist regime, who came down heavily on the Civil Rights protesters in 1968. Craig asserted that the Northern Ireland system had, through custom, acquired a sovereign status of its own, independent of Westminster. In this he was supported by a group of senior Unionist barristers. When Britain decided that the subordinate governing system it had established in the Six Counties had become too much of a nuisance to tolerate any longer, it paid no heed to Craig's argumentation. A Tory Government abolished the Stormont Government with the stroke of a pen in 1972. (If it had followed this up by taking the Six Counties back into the system of politics by which Britain was governed, the Republican war-effort would very probably have gone into decline.)

Craig responded to the abolition of the Stormont Government in 1972 with his Ulster Nationalist *Vanguard* movement, which was of a kind with the nationalist movement of the white colony in Rhodesia which had unilaterally declared its independence of Britain a few years earlier when Britain showed signs of negotiating with the black majority.

Trimble was the most prominent of the *Vanguard* militants.

Vanguard, after a great rally in Ormeau Park, went into decline when James Molyneux and the Rev. Martin Smyth threw the weight of the Orange Order against it.

Trimble then became active in the Unionist Party. He next came to political prominence when he danced a jig with Ian Paisley after some little victory won in the great siege of Drumcree Church.

Never The Order Of The British Empire For Art Malik?

"Malik seems driven by a very measured sort of passion. As beautifully spoken as you'd expect a Guildhall man to be, he can do five minutes on rising intolerance without taking a breath. He is happy about the swing towards Corbyn in the UK elections. He loves England, but he can't shake off anger at the imperial legacy. Gentle, reasoned anger is never too far away. *'It would be a very simple decision if they were to offer me anything in the Queen's birthday honours or the New Year's Honours'*, he says, forestalling any queries about his lack of an OBE. *'E stands for Empire. Why would I want an award that says that is what makes you fantastic. I know what that means. I grew up aware of 250 years of imperial rule. Why would I want...'*"—as quoted in the *Irish Times*, June 30th.

Art Malik stars in the recently released Irish film *Halal Daddy*, set in Co. Sligo. Malik was born in Pakistan in 1952, but settled with his family in London at the age of three. Wikipedia writes of his earlier starring roles:

"In 1982, five years after leaving the Guildhall, Malik was cast as the doomed young Indian Hari Kumar in the Granada Television production of *The Jewel in the Crown*, based on Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet*. During filming, David Lean cast him in his film production of *A Passage to India*; the two high profile and successful productions assuring his professional future."

How refreshing is Malik's attitude, compared to the Shoneenism of "our own bold Dublin Fusiliers", those UK Knights, Bono and Sir Bob Geldof!

Manus O'Riordan

When he replaced Molyneux as leader of the UUP this journal, which rarely predicts, predicted that the consequences for the party would be bad.

Trimble did not, in any meaningful sense, *"bring about"* the Good Friday Agreement. He submitted to it under duress applied to him by Prime Minister Tony Blair, and then, as a party to it, he prevented it from becoming operative. He might have gained advantage either from supporting and implementing it, or from opposing it outright and defying Blair. By submitting to it formally, in order to obstruct it from within, he got the worst of both courses and none of the benefits. His party was shredded by Paisley who opposed the Agreement, and who then made the Agreement operative when he had undermined the Unionist Party.

We don't know whether Edwards made up the story about Trimble supporting the introduction of British politics to the Six Counties, or whether Lord Trimble, in his long retirement in the prime of life, has been dreaming of what might have been and spun her a yarn. But Trimble did not support British party organisation, and support of it was grounds for expulsion from the UUP.

It is also not the case that the Tory Party now functions in Northern Ireland. In the mid-1980s a group of Tories took the point that Northern Ireland was

undemocratically governed because it was excluded from the party system of the state. The Party leadership let them understand that they would have no career future in the Party if they persisted in this view, but it offered them the face-saving gesture of admitting Northern Ireland residents to individual party membership. In real political terms this was an empty gesture.

More recently the Party has allowed its Northern Ireland members to contest elections, but the whole thing is treated as the empty charade that it is by the electorate. (Northern Ireland Conservatives felt particularly betrayed when Cameron established an electoral alliance with the UUP for an election some years ago.)

The Democratic Unionist Party began as a party organised around a Church—Dr. Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church. In any other part of the UK this would have been an absurdity. And it would not have happened. It happened in Northern Ireland, and it flourished, because the region was excluded from the political life of the state.

The purpose of Ulster Unionism was to be part of the UK. But it already was part of the UK. There is not much political mileage in the aim of being what you already are, to the extent that you already are it. It might have taken on the purpose of dissolving itself into the party system of the state and making Protestant Ulster

once again what it had been when the Home Rule crisis began in 1886. But the Unionist Party wouldn't hear of that.

Dr. Paisley did briefly take up that position in the seventies. But he dropped it. We assume that his reason for dropping it was that Whitehall persuaded him that this was something it would never allow to happen.

Sinn Fein had two substantial purposes that gave it political momentum. What fuelled the campaign was the profoundly undemocratic and provocative arrangements under which the Catholic community was compelled to live. On this ground it demanded an end to majority rule under the devolved system, and it won a fundamental restructuring of the devolved system after its military wing had fought a long war. And now it has the purpose of using its base in Northern Ireland to make progress towards the political unification of Ireland.

The reformed Northern Ireland cannot settle down. It is inherently unstable. It is different in kind from Scottish devolution. Whitehall interferes with it in ways that it would not attempt to interfere in the Scottish system. It is incapable of internal evolution. Sinn Fein has a political purpose beyond it. But Ulster Unionists have locked themselves into it, and all they can do is try to delay the erosion of their position.

Ruth Dudley Edwards, who supported the demand for political normalisation of the North as little as Lord Trimble did, raged against new Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney in her *Sunday Independent* column (July 23) for supporting an *Irish Language Act* in the North. She added to her unreasoned animosity against Sinn Fein the argument that it would be bad for the Irish language to have State support. She takes this to be demonstrated by the decline of Irish in the Republic. She maintains that enthusiasm for it was killed "by turning it into a political weapon"—or so her mother thought. And the language revival was already subverted in 1915 by "infiltration from the IRB".

The headline on her column some years ago was "*Brave Israel Has Every Right To Bomb Hamas*". How did *Brave Israel* come to be in a position to destroy Palestinian "*cockroaches*" (as they were described by a Government Minister) with an attrition rate of 100 to 1. By being given, a hundred years ago, the title deeds to a Palestine which the Jews had vacated two thousand years before, by the British

Empire—which was extending itself into the Middle East—and by enforcing a Hebrew language policy. Insofar as there was a spoken Jewish language in 1917 it was a variety of German called Yiddish. Yiddish was suppressed and was replaced by a dead language in the Jewish nationalist colonial conquest of Palestine.

Irish is an official language of the EU, but it seems that there is an under-supply of applicants for well-paid translator's jobs. But "*when post-Brexit English ceases to be an official EU language, the Irish will have to speak Irish*", says Ms Edwards. Well, if that happens, the Irish will be authentic European again for the first time since the 18th century.

With regard to Irish in the North: Edwards tells us that Lord Trimble now wishes that it had the normal political life of the state, but she doesn't seem to have ever given a moment's thought to the reality of living as a national minority outside the normal political life of a democratic state, in the era of universal nationalism and democracy, in a region of the state that was turned into a kind of Reservation, with no political life of its own, under the policing supervision of your sworn enemy. Or does she think that is an exaggerated description of what Britain made of the Six Counties in 1921?

There was nothing British for the Irish to be. The British dimension in public life was waving the Union Jack, loving the Crown, and standing for the National Anthem at the end of cinema performances long after the English had stopped doing it. So the Irish concentrated on being Irish. They will not now undo the development that was forced on them.

Edwards' Official IRA colleague on the *Sunday Independent*, Eoghan Harris, also comes out strong against Minister Coveney on July 23rd. And he sings the praises of a forgotten man:

"Conor Cruise O'Brien was a prophet without honour in his own country... He correctly preached that John Hume's pan-nationalist policy of using Dublin and London to pressurise unionists would end with the Sinn Fein/IRA wolf rampant inside the Irish Republic fold.

"Telling the truth has never been welcome in nationalist Ireland."

James Connolly said that the only true prophet was the one who carved the future he announced. But O'Brien's prophecy was one of doom and his obligation was to do something to avert it. What did he do? And when did he make the prophecy?

Only late in the day, after he had helped the course of events along the line which he came to see as the path to doom.

After O'Brien became a prophet of doom we were described as O'Brienites in certain quarters. But he never agreed with us. He never had any contact with us. And he particularly rejected the proposal we made in 1969 that the Ulster Protestants should be regarded as a distinct nationality rather than as a sulking part of nationalist Ireland.

In the 1960s he was a professional anti-Partitionist. He was a specialist in French literature and saw the Ulster Protestants as *colons*, like the French in Algeria who declared UDI, and who might be repatriated. He gradually came to terms with the reality that the Ulster Protestants were here to stay, but it was a grudging concession, and was not accompanied by any realistic policy for dealing with the Northern situation.

He became a TD and, almost immediately, a Labour Minister in Coalition with Fine Gael and Government spokesman on the North. In 1974 the Faulkner Unionist/SDLP Power-Sharing Government was set up under the Sunningdale Agreement. The Unionists participated on the understanding that the Dublin sovereignty claim over the North had been withdrawn. Boland brought his legal action against the Agreement as being in breach of the Constitutional claim on the North. The Government pleaded that the Constitutional claim stood because there was no recognition in the Agreement of the legitimacy of Northern Ireland. But it emerged that there were two different forms of the Agreement.

The Power-Sharing Government at Stormont had been functioning for a couple of months at this pint, and it was not challenged. But an accompanying Council of Ireland body was due to be established three months later, in June. A group of Protestant shop-stewards responded to the Dublin Court action by demanding that the setting-up of the Council of Ireland should be delayed pending clarification of the sovereignty issue, or until the Agreement was ratified by a fresh election in the light of the Dublin Court action. And it gave two months' notice that, unless one of these things was done, it would call a General Strike in mid-May against the Council of Ireland.

No heed was taken of the demand. The SDLP Ministers in the North met with the Dublin Cabinet for a photo-shoot. And a leading member of the SDLP said that the

Unionists would be *trundled* into the Republic by means of the Council of Ireland.

The General Strike happened in May. There was a crisis that might have been resolved by deferring the Council. But Minister O'Brien came out against this. He said that too many concessions had already been made to the Unionists.

The SDLP too stood firm for the Council.

Support for Faulkner's Unionist Party collapsed, and Power-Sharing with it.

The War continued and intensified. A quarter of a century later another Agreement was made. But this was not for Power-Sharing under a system of weighted majority in which Ministers were members of a Government headed by a Prime Minister and responsible to Parliament. It was for a system of division of Government Departments which were allocated to parties by a mathematical system proportional to their vote, and Ministers were not under the authority of a Prime Minister or responsible to Parliament: and Parliament was in effect two Parliaments in a kind of federal arrangement.

Helping to bring down Power-Sharing in 1974 was one of O'Brien's major political actions on the North.

The other was banning nationalist culture on RTE in order to dry up support for the Provos. It was a remarkable exercise in totalitarian fantasy. Its predictable effect was to make Irish nationalist culture Provisional IRA culture.

After 1974 O'Brien quickly became little more than a British propagandist of the backwoods kind—a futile prophet of doom, whose only remedy was a total security clampdown on the Northern Catholic community that was obviously supporting the War.

He was idolised by a certain stratum in the Republic for about a decade, but when he joined a fringe Ulster Unionist Party, and was jeered at by rival Unionists as *a cuckoo in the nest*, they went off him.

But it is understandable that Harris, his identical twin in many respects, should remember him fondly.

*

The importance of the DUP in British politics is that it is enabling the Tory Party to continue in Office after failing to win an Election. Redmond's Irish Party did that with the Liberals from 1906 to 1915.

Redmond got the illusion of a Home Rule Act in return. The Government was

unable to implement the Act, and didn't really want to, but the affair had profound consequences. The expectation of Home Rule enlivened nationalist feeling. The failure to implement the Act after it was passed, and the Army recruiting by Redmond for the wars on Germany and Turkey, in the hope that the Act might be implemented after the War, fuelled the Irish Insurrection of 1916.

It is unlikely that the DUP alliance with the Tories will change the course of events in the North as Redmond's alliance with the Liberals changed the course of events in Ireland. It is a trivial alliance. Redmond's Home Rule Party was closely involved with the Liberals in internal British party battles for two years before the Home Rule Bill was brought in in 1912, and during the next two years it became virtually a part of the Liberal Party.

The relationship of the DUP with the Tories is a piece of superficial opportunism. The DUP is not a continuation of the old Unionist Party, whose leadership continued to be Tory in sentiment after organic connections were broken in the 1920s. It is a product of the Paisleyism that destroyed the Unionist Party.

When the UUP collapsed under the leadership of Lord Trimble and his Official IRA advisers, many of its leading figures jumped across to the DUP which they had previously held in disdain. Much of the present DUP leadership comes from those UUP defectors and they have been busily trying to remake the DUP into what the UUP was.

The UUP might be described as imitation British in its attitudes. The DUP was forged entirely out of Northern Ireland materials. The UUP did its best to put a gloss of pretentious sophistication over the system of religious domination that Britain required it to operate. The DUP began as an uncompromising assertion of religious Protestantism, and it grew steadily from that source. Dr. Paisley did his own thinking on his own ground and dealt realistically with the surrounding reality. And, after he broke the UUP he made the 1998 Agreement functional by dealing with Sinn Fein as the other real element in the situation.

This was resented within his own party but he had the prestige to carry it through. The resentment was encouraged and supported by UUP defectors. Paisley retired in the face of growing opposition, but devolution based on a functional division of power was established as the normality of the system.

DUP intransigence over the Irish Language Act is in the UUP spirit. But the Paisleyite residue in the DUP, in the form of Edwin Poots, has begun to express itself on the issue. Poots says that "*anyone who speaks and loves the Irish language is as much a part of Northern Ireland life as a collarette-wearing Orangeman*".

In the DUP relationship with the Tory Government there is nothing comparable to the Home Rule demand that the Redmondite/Liberal alliance was based on. The DUP has no constitutional demand which the Tory Party might satisfy—or the Labour Party for that matter. It might wish for some reassuring Guarantee, but it has no demand which might be legislated, as Redmond had. The UUP agreed in 1921 to be excluded from the political life of the British state, and to dominate a large nationalist minority in a makeshift Northern Ireland, in order to help Whitehall against the elected Republican Government in Dublin. It made "*the supreme sacrifice*" of itself to the Imperial interest. Self-sacrifice is not a political virtue in the democratic era.

There is no going back: that must be the message that Dr. Paisley got from Whitehall in the early 1970s when he proposed reintegration of the Six Counties into British political life. He never explained why he dropped the proposal. But very soon after, in the mid-1970s, he called a meeting of leading Loyalist militants and told them that evolution towards a united Ireland was now inevitable. It might be delayed, and certain developments might be brought about in the process, but there must be no attempt at a repeat of the 1912 stand: no armed resistance. That was our information from a reliable source at the time, and it was confirmed by Paisley's subsequent conduct.

We were involved at the time in an attempt to bring the Six Counties within the sphere of British party-politics. A fair amount of headway was made for about fifteen years by the CLR and CEC in exerting pressure within both the Labour and Tory Parties. It was strongly opposed by the UUP, Dublin Governments, and the Official IRA, and was brought to nothing by elements who joined the movement for the purpose of changing it into a mere Ulster Unionist ploy. The main work of destruction was done by Labour MP Kate Hoey and her assistant, Jeffrey Dudgeon OBE, now a UUP Councillor.

A shadow of that moment still persists, maintained as a hobby by some of those who broke the CLR. Individual membership of the Labour Party for Northern Ireland residents was brought in as a meaningless concession to CLR pressure. The movement has been boosted by the Corbyn enthusiasm which is reinvigorating the Labour Party. Last month one of those individual members, knowing nothing about all of this, went on hunger-strike in support of a demand that the Labour Party should establish a proper party presence in the North. The event was ignored as a piece of eccentricity. Not even the CLR past is recoverable.

*

Seamus Mallon, a voice from the past, has accused Sinn Fein of failing to deliver on the 1998 Agreement. He says Sinn Fein doesn't understand that its purpose was to bring about a reconciliation of

Nationalists and Unionists.

We reported on the GFA in 1998, and analysed it closely. What we saw was a carefully arranged system of division and separation. The pretence that there was "*a Northern Ireland community*" was discarded, and arrangements were made for the reality of two communities, each of which was to have the status of a separate body politic. What it provided for was polite separation.

But Mallon, who took over the leadership of the SDLP from John Hume, did act in a spirit of reconciliation. He had opposed Hume's hard-nosed negotiation of an Agreement in which Sinn Fein might function. He "*reconciled*" with David Trimble, and was led by the nose by him for a couple of years as Trimble prevented the Agreement becoming operative, and both their Parties went into decline.

Abstention From Westminster:

A Proven Winner

In the June 2017 United Kingdom General Election both the SDLP and Sinn Fein contested all eighteen constituencies in the North of Ireland. The electorate had a clear appreciation of the records of both parties and of their intentions. The SDLP promised that their candidates would, if elected, sit on the Commons benches and Sinn Fein promised that their candidates, if elected, would not sit on them. In the event, none of the SDLP candidates were chosen by the voters, whilst seven Sinn Fein candidates were chosen by the voters to represent their wishes by not sitting on the Commons benches.

One hundred years back, in July 1917, the voters of East Clare had the choice of candidates, one of whom, Patrick Lynch, King's Counsel, stood for John Redmond's Irish Party. Lynch intended, if elected, to sit in the Commons. Against him stood a candidate, just released from gaol where he had spent sixteen months following his fighting in the Easter Rising. This candidate wore the uniform of the Irish Volunteer Insurgents, and promised, if elected, not to take his seat in the Commons. His name was Eamon de Valera, and he won by a large margin.

The defeated Patrick Lynch, on 14th July 1917, wrote to Britain's Irish Secretary, Edward Duke, that "*the country was passing through a period of excitement which will not last*".

That same day, Ivor Churchill, Lord Wimbourne, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

wrote to the British Cabinet—

"The Sinn Fein victory in East Clare is a fact of cardinal significance... it marks the definite failure of the policy to rehabilitate constitutional nationalism or disarm Sinn Fein defiance to English rule. After making all deductions for local influence and the general revolt against the Redmondite party machine, the fact remains that in a remarkably well conducted political contest sustained by excellent candidates on both sides, the electors on a singularly frank issue of self-government within the Empire versus an independent Irish Republic have pronounced for the latter."

Both letters are State Papers released in 1967, a full fifty years after they were written. Clare elected de Valera in every election from July 1917 to March 1957 and he led ten Irish Cabinets, two as leader of Sinn Fein, and eight as leader of Fianna Fáil. Leaving the Cabinet in 1959, de Valera was immediately elected President, and was in the second year of his second seven year term as President, when the Lord Lieutenant's report was dis-embargoed. Ivor Churchill, Lord Wimbourne was long forgotten by 1967. Patrick Lynch, KC, the vanquished East Clare candidate, was appointed, by Eamon de Valera, as Ireland's Attorney General during the 1930s.

Fianna Fail's current leader Micheal Martin urges Sinn Fein to take seats in Westminster in the teeth of their mandate. Could it be possible that he has never heard of Eamon de Valera, or Sinn Fein's

SF Abstention & The Government Majority: *the figures!*

The Conservatives won 316 seats in the June General Election. All the other parties combined got 326 seats. However, after the Tory/DUP Pact, which commits the DUP to vote with the Tories on all Confidence motions and all money motions, Mrs. May's Government can rely on 326 votes. (The Speaker, a Tory, is excluded from calculations.)

Labour won 262 seats. If it and the smaller parties and the 2 Independents vote together, they can muster 316 seats.

In addition there are 7 Sinn Fein seats, which are out of the picture. If Sinn Fein was to take its seats and vote in opposition to the Tory/DUP combination, opponents of the Government could muster 323 seats: four seats short of unseating the Government.

There has been a concerted attempt, initiated by those in England who are determined to prevent Brexit by any means whatever, with Tony Blair as active organiser, to pressurise SF to take their seats and interfere in British politics in this way. They are supported by Anglo-ophile Redmondites such as Sean Donlon. However, SF is not for abandoning the independent Irish stance that British politics is for the British. And, even if it did so, it would not have sufficient votes to overturn the Tory/DUP combination.

founder, Arthur Griffith? Former Ambassador Sean Donlon, whom nobody would imagine is ignorant, also calls for Sinn Fein to dishonour its promises. Does he expect the party to ritually disembowel itself for his amusement?

Donal Kennedy

From **Jude Collins** Blog, 27 July 27

DID YOU PACK THIS BOMBER YOURSELF

He restricts Muslims from half a dozen nations
from entering the USA
but it's damnation
to passports
for his aerial bombers
sent to flay
those whom he purports
will slay.

Wilson John Haire

6 July 2017

July Developments Show Brexit Still On Course

continued

EU jurisdiction, sponsored by the European United Left—Nordic Green Left, a grouping of French communists and leftist Greens that includes Sinn Fein, was defeated by 374 votes to 66. The text of the motion, which took the form of an amendment to the Parliament's priorities for 2018, read:

"Insists that the Good Friday Agreement and subsequent agreements be fully upheld in the withdrawal agreement; calls for the North of Ireland to be designated with a special status within the EU which ensures it maintains access to EU membership, the Customs Union, the Single Market and the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice; calls, furthermore, for the freedom of movement of goods, people and services on the island of Ireland".

While SF MEP Matt Carty conceded that the vote was disappointing, he also pointed out that the motion was not tabled by Sinn Fein. Sam McBride, writing in the *Belfast Newsletter* (July 5th), quoted a parliamentary official, who was originally from Warrenpoint, County Down, Chris Mackin, to the effect that the vote could not have been otherwise since the matters covered were the subject of the current negotiations. Mackin said that the vote "simply implies that the parliament does not want to take a position on this at this stage". It is notable that Fine Gael MEPs voted against the motion.

Sinn Fein's advocacy of special status for the North set the running in the Irish Brexit debate and, whatever about self-satisfied commentary from anti-Sinn Fein elements in the Dublin media concerning the vote, the underlying reality is that the presence of the EU as a player in the debate about the constitutional future of the North remains a definite asset from a nationalist perspective.

IRISH ANTI-EU ARGUMENT REFUTED BY DAN O'BRIEN

In previous issues of *Irish Political Review* I have described the anti-EU/pro-British position of former diplomat Ray Bassett, not because of any insights provided in his analysis but because of the widespread sympathetic attention he has received from pro-British elements in the Irish media, especially from journalists in the *Sunday Business Post* like David Mc

Williams, Tom McGurk and Ian Kehoe, and from the Marian Finucane Show on RTE radio. On July 3rd a 42-page article by Bassett was published in London by the right-wing think tank, *Policy Exchange*. An article in the following week's *Sunday Independent* (July 9th) from economist Dan O'Brien refuted Bassett's case with commendable clarity.

O'Brien showed that leaving the EU and aligning with the UK would be unlikely to secure the position of Irish farmers and agri-food producers currently dependent on the British market. The Brexiters want Britain to cut import taxes on cheaper agricultural produce from non-EU countries like Australia and Argentina. This would cause the British market to disappear for Irish farmers. Having left the EU, Irish farmers would lose their CAP payments on top of losing their traditional market in Britain—not a rational strategy.

Likewise, as O'Brien explained, by leaving the EU Ireland would lose trade with Continental Europe, currently both our largest source and destination market. Irish trade with the US, Ireland's second most important trade partner, would similarly decline—this arises from the high number of US firms that have located in Ireland—these firms are here primarily because of the access it gives them to the EU market—the low rate of Corporation Tax is very much a secondary reason. O'Brien argued that, by disregarding all of this and identifying future changes to the EU's Corporation Tax regime as the greatest threat facing foreign investment in Ireland, Bassett was basing his case on a "failure of logic".

Regarding Irish membership of the Eurozone O'Brien quoted from the Bassett document as follows: "*Hopefully a re-launched Irish currency I would hold its value, especially in the longer term, to ensure that the country's large foreign debt (a relic of the EU Bailout and its consequences) would not rise unduly.*" The two concluding paragraphs of O'Brien's article answer the point:

"For somebody to advocate a course of action which could destroy people's lives and businesses on the basis of a hope is extraordinary. As extraordinary is the claim that Ireland Inc's foreign debts are all down to the bailout. Not only is that false in relation to the Government's debts, it suggests a complete ignorance of the debts of companies and banks based in Ireland, which owe foreign creditors a scarcely conceivable 4.7 trillion euro."

"With each passing day Brexit is proving to be a bad idea for Britain. Ireland is

much more dependent on European markets for jobs and prosperity than our neighbour. It is also a small country that does not have the clout a nuclear armed, permanent member the UN security [Council] has. Irexit would be a catastrophe for Ireland. If anything Bassett's report last week simply underscores that."

VARADKAR AND OTHERS ON BASSETT

On the day following the publication of Bassett's piece for *Policy Exchange*, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar explicitly rejected the former diplomat's advice. He said the EU "is a common European home that we helped to build and we're going to stay where we belong, at the heart of it" (4 July, *Irish Times*). In the same article senior diplomat Noel Dorr was quoted to the effect that, through being part of the EU-27, Ireland's position was better defended than if we were negotiating alone. Ruairi Quinn, as Chairman of the *Institute for International and European Affairs*, was also quoted saying that Brexit reflected an "English problem".

Not for the first time Ray Bassett has helped to push Irish opinion away from sympathy for our nearest neighbour towards a more solid identification as an EU member state.

BREXIT GLOOM AT MACGILL

In his capacity as a regular attendee of the MacGill Summer School in Glenties in Donegal, *Irish Times* journalist Pat Leahy wrote in defence of its role in the Irish body politic (22 July) The Summer School he said was—

"really more than just insiders wind-bagging with insiders; it's the leading forum for discussion on what our country should be doing, how, where and when, conducted by people who are either involved in these decisions or who have been in the recent past."

Leahy opined that, regarding Brexit, one of two subjects that dominated this year's discussions (the other was economic choices needing to be made in the next Budget), the consensus was one of pessimism and distrust of Theresa May's Government which is seen as bumbling towards a cliff edge.

Contributors to the Brexit debates listed by Leahy included Brendan Halligan of the Institute of European Affairs, Pat Cox, former diplomat Seán Donlon, Prof. Brigid Laffan of the European University Institute in Florence, and the former Irish Ambassador in London, Dáithí Ó Ceallaigh.

Before the Brexit referendum the decision-makers of Irish politics, using Leahy's terminology, were content to sideline their own heritage in the cause of a

one-sided reconciliation with Britain. Effectively that meant following the UK's lead inside the EU, a departure from traditional policy.

Since the referendum disenchantment has set in but its focus is on the Tory Brexiteers rather than Britain *per se*. Anglophilia still reigns among the Irish elite. It is early days in the premiership of Leo Varadkar but the new Fine Gael leader seems less insular and less passive in his pronouncements regarding Europe than the political class that he heads. There is a chance that he will spearhead a return to a more historical orientation inside the Irish state; time will tell. In any case there was at least one speaker at MacGill not affected by the prevailing gloom over Britain's exit from the EU: Sinn Fein's Pearse Doherty concluded his talk by asserting that as a result of Brexit the argument for Irish unity has taken on a "*never seen before*" impetus.

ROY FOSTER ON IRISH RESPONSE TO BREXIT

Speaking of Irish Anglophilia, one of its main architects, Roy Foster, recently stepped into the breach (Times Literary Supplement, 11 July) to give an Irish slant to the case against the Brexiteers, who have been weakened following the British General Election. In dipping into the Irish debate for the purpose of influencing British politics, Foster was careful to avoid making the mistakes of Ray Basset, David Mc Williams *et al*; recognising that the EU seems to be getting its act together he took a pro-EU stance, but he still tried to muddy the waters by asserting that Britain "*could have taken part in*" the reforms currently under discussion between France and Germany. As anyone who has followed EU developments since the crash will know, the UK has worked assiduously to prevent cooperation between France and Germany especially in the matter of the achieving further integration of the Eurozone.

It is worth noting some of Foster's comments on the Irish response to Brexit. On the positive side he referred to Ireland's strongly European identity "*which involves—as any Irish member of the Department of Foreign Affairs will tell you—an enhanced sense of sovereignty*". He also recognised that under its new leader who is "*not yet forty years old*" Ireland will play a role in the "*renewal and reform*" of the EU. But he couldn't resist taking a pot shot by alluding to "*the EU's importance in combating various toxins endemic to nationalism*".

The strength of the EU derives from its resting on twin pillars: specifically European institutions and respect, expressed in institutional arrangements, for the national

identities of the member states. In the way that EU leaders have occasionally indulged in anti-nationalist or secularist tirades they have only succeeded in stoking up popular opposition to the EU. At one point Foster dropped a clanger that was picked up by a letter writer to the *Times Literary Supplement*. He spoke of the "*seismic financial crisis of twenty years ago*" when he should have said eight years ago. How revealing is that of the Irish Anglophile mentality? He clearly has difficulty in admitting to himself that the Irish political Establishment has been able to sort out the financial mess in a relatively short period of time.

SECOND ROUND OF THE BREXIT TALKS

In the second round of talks and the first week of substantive negotiations which began on July 17th the main topics were the divorce bill, rights for EU citizens in Britain and UK citizens in Europe, and the Common Travel Area (CTA) between Ireland and the UK and the Good Friday Agreement. Legal matters such as the right of EU citizens in the UK to appeal to the European Court of Justice, the rights of future family members and the export of social benefits are in contention and the British side has been asked for clarification regarding arrangements for the CTA. There is not enough in these details to provide interesting media copy so the spin being run across countless outlets is that Barnier holds all the cards and that the British are in disarray.

The spin may be distorting what is a complex process, however. Oliver Robbins, the Permanent Secretary of the UK's Brexit Department, who heads up the officials on the British side, is known to have a staff of 500 working under him, and a similar number of staff may be assumed to be working on the EU side. If a report by Aarti Shankar of *Open Europe* published in the British *Telegraph* (July 19th) is to be believed, the talks have been widened to include "*wider separation issues*" such as Euratom, police and security cooperation, and trade in goods. If that is the case, the UK team have already secured parallel discussions on withdrawal issues alongside future trade matters; and even if the story is untrue the media barrage about the incompetence of the British negotiators may give them cover for a surprise move in the negotiations. It would be a mistake to write off the team that David Davis leads at this early stage in the process.

ALASTAIR CAMPBELL ON THE MARIAN FINUCANE SHOW

When Theresa May was being describ-

ed by George Osborne as "*dead woman walking*" in the immediate aftermath of the General Election, the implication was that her days at Number 10 were numbered. It now appears that she is likely to remain as Prime Minister until at least the completion of the Brexit negotiations in March 2019. The disruption to the Tory Government seems to be less than expected.

Likewise the advantage passing to the anti-Brexit camp appears to be smaller than many commentators predicted. This was demonstrated, arguably, on a recent edition of the Marian Finucane radio show (RTE radio, 23 July). A guest, Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's former PR manager and current collaborator in anti-Brexit campaigning, made a convincing case that public opinion in Britain will turn against Brexit as the economic consequences start to bite, yet as the discussion developed his argument became increasingly threadbare.

One female panellist, who had recently canvassed opinion among political contacts in Britain, considered that soft Brexit was the most that could be hoped for, and that Jeremy Corbyn was more committed to the Leave side than was generally understood. Questioned by Finucane about the unsuitability of Tony Blair to lead an anti-Brexit crusade given his identification with the Iraq War, Campbell could only cite the political acumen of his old master and Blair's influence over people like Macron and Schäuble whom he claimed wished the EU door to remain open, should the Brexit vote be reversed.

One of the panellists, Danny McCoy of IBEC, was adamant that Ireland needed to help Britain out of its Brexit quagmire but, when Campbell became insistent that Irish representatives needed to actively intervene in the British debate, the panellists other than McCoy sounded less than convinced. At one stage Campbell asserted that Michel Barnier seemed very sophisticated but was really quite volatile and not to be trusted. This sounded strangely inappropriate from someone recently appointed editor of a British magazine called, *The New European*.

Theresa May's weakened position is certainly providing succour to the many politicians and commentators in Britain and Ireland who desperately wish to see the Brexit process overturned but for the moment the evidence suggests that it remains steady on its course. Here's hoping it stays that way.

Dave Alvey

Balfour Declaration

continued

result of Britain's intention to liquidate the Ottoman Empire. He reasoned that the Jews were one of *"the small nationalities"* for which the War was being fought. However, any project of building a Jewish entity in Palestine required a protecting Power while it grew into a nation. The Jews under the Ottomans were a secure and stable community but, if England was going to undermine this security and stability it was its duty to use its great power to organise the effective transition to a Jewish nation built in Palestine. He also observed: *"Christendom owes a debt to Jewry for the persecutions of the past nine hundred years. It would seem that she now has the opportunity of commencing to pay for it"* (21.11.14).

Hyamson neglected to mention the inhabitants of Palestine, who were overwhelmingly Arab rather than Jew. It was supposed they did not matter in the Anglo-Zionist power alliance that would do what it wished to the world. But what if Britain were to incite the Arabs on the same basis as the Jews, in waging its War on the Ottomans? What then?

In fact, that was just what Britain was about to do.

At the beginning of the Great War on the Ottomans Britain had no time for notions of self-determination being applied to the Arab world. In 1911, through Captain Shakespeare, Britain had tentatively sought to raise a revolt against the Ottomans using the Wahhabs in Arabia. There was some local discontent amongst Arabs at the centralising of the Young Turk government in the region. However, the Arabs had never been real nationalists prior to British attempts to make them rebel against the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the only Arab that can be accurately described as a nationalist, Said Talib of Basra, who offered his services to England, was immediately deported by Britain to India as a troublemaker by Sir Percy Cox upon the British invasion of Mesopotamia.

At this point the British viewed alliances with nationalist groups as unnecessary and a complicating factor in any conquests that were going to be made in the region. From October 1914 to July 1915 there were no significant moves on Britain's part to create an alliance with anyone. England hoped that the Gallipoli expedition would drive on to Constantinople,

Mesopotamia would be taken by the British Indian Army, and that would be that. But by mid 1915 the Gallipoli force had been confined to the beachhead and Britain began to seek out the Arabs.

Sir Henry McMahon, Britain's High Commissioner in Egypt later stated that the Arab Revolt was originally intended to draw Arab support away from the Ottoman Empire in order to create a new destructive nationalism in the region. However, far from utilising a nationalism that existed in any substantial form against a supposed oppressor, the Arab Revolt was worked up to divert the active support that ordinary Arabs were providing the Ottoman State in resisting Imperialist aggression

Some British Imperialists began to entertain and encourage the ridiculous idea of making Sharif of Mecca Hussein a new Caliph in order to control the Moslem world. Hussein, in return for his services, asked the British for an Arab State which would be independent and would comprise all the Arab-speaking areas south-west of Asia, except Aden. He was initially fended off but by October 1915, when it had become clear that the Gallipoli expedition had failed, McMahon contacted the Sharif to give him the news that his demands for an independent Arab State had been accepted, save for Syria, West of Damascus. This encouraged the Arabs into the belief that, when the Ottoman Empire was destroyed, through the joint efforts of England and an Arab revolt, Britain would recognise the Middle East as a great Arab State.

Hussein was flattered by the British and in 1915 the Arab Revolt began after he was promised an independent Arab state, stretching right up to and including Syria, in return for his help in destabilising the Ottoman Empire.

So what was promised to the Jews in 1917 had been already promised to the Arabs two years earlier in return for an Arab revolt against the Ottomans. The Jews, however, did not have to go into insurrection against the Ottomans—and did not—to get what they got. Aaron Aaronsohn and a small group of Zionists assisted British Intelligence from Palestine and there was the Zionist Mule Corps. But the Arabs did the fighting for the British, not the Zionists.

The Ottoman Empire had been very good to the Jews and very good for the Jews. The 5th Herbert Samuel Lecture noted how *"the expelled Sephardim of Spain... went to the hospitable, tolerant Turkish empire, that land of promise as it*

seemed in the sixteenth century, it is odd how few of them went to Palestine, which was after all an easily accessible and under-populated part of that empire."

The Jews, fleeing Christian intolerance and taken in by the great Islamic Empire and its peoples went to Istanbul, Baghdad or Salonika instead. They chose not to settle in *"the silent wilderness of Palestine"*—their historic homeland. They had centuries of free movement to do so. Only around 1900, when Zionism threatened a Jewish colony that would disturb the peace, did the Ottomans restrict Jewish migration to the territory.

The Jews of the Ottoman Empire sent out declarations to the persecuted Jews of Europe praising the Islamic Ottomans for what they had provided to them—a state in which they practised their religion unmolested and thrived and prospered socially and commercially among Moslems and Christian minorities. When Salonika fell to the Christians during the Balkan Wars it was seen as a great disaster for the Jews and many evacuated the great Jewish city. Around 100,000 left with the Moslems as the Christian armies advanced in the Balkans. There were 80,000 Jews living in Baghdad in 1917 at the time of the Balfour Declaration and they reacted with incredulity at the announcement that Jews were going to colonise Palestine, a poor place without opportunity.

Palestine had lived for centuries in relative peace and stability under the Ottomans before Britain decided to put the region into the melting pot.

The Ottomans had been very good for the Jews. The Turks had resisted the Zionist pressures that threatened a destabilisation of the territory through a colonising project that would produce an ethnic cleansing. The Ottomans kept the balance in population that matched Arab numbers with Jewish assertiveness. They had ruled a vast area of mixed nationalities and ethnicities for over 4 centuries and knew that any alteration in the balance spelt big trouble in the region.

In making war on the Ottoman Empire, and in pursuing the Zionist objective, the British Empire not only destroyed the prosperous and content Jewish communities across the Ottoman possessions but also sowed the seeds for generations of conflict with the local inhabitants of Palestine who would find themselves the chief victims of the great act of conquest and ethnic cleansing that came from the Balfour Declaration.

The Arabs found themselves the victims of a great British triple-cross. They were

encouraged to rise against the Turks, by Colonel Lawrence, with the promise of a great independent Arab state after the War. And then they found this state had been secretly divided between the British and French, and Palestine declared to be a

Jewish homeland, irrespective of the wishes of the actual inhabitants, in the War fought on the principle of "*self-determination*".

Pat Walsh

To Be Continued

The First West Cork History Festival

This weekend of events (28-30 July) was a revisionist-fest for the cream of that school of history in academia and the media.

It was organised, with no expense spared, by Simon Kingston, whose CV includes being a head hunter "*with the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the Gates Foundation and the Global Fund.*"

He chaired the opening session with the obligatory address being by the doyen of revisionism, Roy Foster. The ambiance was somewhat strained by the fact that most of the audience were reading their free copies of a contribution to the festival by the Aubane Historical Society (AHS) in the form of a pamphlet, "*Embers of Revisionism*". Mr. Kingston commented on its fake history. We look forward to his considered refutation of the contents. He was pleased, by contrast, to be able to introduce a "*real historian*" in Foster. In the mutual congratulations that followed Foster noted that, if you wanted a job in Oxford or Cambridge, Simon was the go-to man. Ambitious readers, please note.

The "*real historian*" proceeded to make his usual sneering and sniggering contribution, with a collection of quotations from various authors about "*the Irish*". Irish history was a matter of love and hate and a coalescing of the two by Pearse. Context and narrative are alien to Foster so you are left to ponder these subjectivities and the listener is as wise after as before as to what actually occurred.

He went on to show who was practising 'fake history' that evening when he referred to Charles Haughey as the "**ex-Provo gun runner**". Is this ignorance of the facts or indifference to facts or the arrogance of defying basic facts?

In the questions that followed, Pat Maloney of the Aubane Historical Society expressed his disappointment that the Professor had to be corrected on the basic fact of the Arms Trial, ie, Haughey was acquitted by a jury of his peers. Foster mumbled about maybe having "*over-reached*" himself about that "*very strange trial*".

Not an auspicious start to the Festival by its Emeritus Professor.

Emeritus does not, of course, imply any merit—it just means that you were not fired from your job.

Fianna Fail leader Michael Martin felt obliged to make a contribution that included the startling assertion that "*no side wanted the civil war*". Why then did it happen? He is the first Fianna Fail leader that does not seem to know! If nobody wanted the civil war then nobody wanted FF to be founded and nobody wanted the Free State to be set up! One was again left to ponder what exactly was the context and narrative of this event that nobody wanted. One obvious conclusion must be that both sides were stark raving mad.

Andy Bielenberg put in a defence of Peter Hart by claiming that his contention about sectarianism in the War of Independence was all wrong because he and others "*had gathered a wider range of information than was available to Dr Hart and therefore had a more rounded picture*". This is a pathetic defence because Hart's conclusions and assertions had nothing whatever to do with the quantity of information available. The issue was the unscrupulous way he used the information available to make his now discredited case—and of which Mr Bielenberg was then a very vociferous supporter.

Eve Morrison's theme was that the revisionist versus ant-revisionist argument had gone to extremes and people should cool down. But she clutches at straws to keep the Hart assertions alive—without mentioning him. It's as if discussing the War of Independence in West Cork today can be a separate subject to discussing Peter Hart's work on the War. It's a case of 'please look here' but 'don't look there'. But he and his mentor and past supporters have ensured that the two issues cannot yet be separated as they set the parameters of the debate. They should take credit for his and their achievement. A poisoned well takes a while to clean up.

Professor Fitzpatrick's theme was that there were no Republicans in Ireland before, during or after, the War of Independence. It was all a PR stunt for American consumption. Again one was left to ponder what then it was all about.

Kevin Myers was in no doubt what it was all about—it was to create a Catholic state. Bielenberg had said that Peter Hart was wrong about sectarianism but, if the object was to create a Catholic state, surely the deadly sectarianism alleged by Hart should be blindingly and comprehensively obvious for decades. Moreover, how come the cutting edge of the new state, the Republicans, were excommunicated by the Church? So much to ponder!

The AHS members who distributed their pamphlet and leaflets were considered a nuisance by Mr. Kingston and were very politely told so by him around mid-day on Saturday and being obliging people they felt it was clearly best that they leave the Festival to those who seemed happy with it and not spoil it for them. So further reports on other aspects of the Festival will have to wait.

Jack Lane

The following leaflet was distributed at the West Cork Festival

The Elephant in the Room!

The advertising blurb for this First West Cork History Festival tells us that it "*will span a diverse set of places, historical subjects and periods, from the local to the international, ranging from the Knights Templar to the events of the Irish revolutionary period in West Cork. Leading historians will be joined by journalists and senior diplomats, and while much of their focus will be on Irish themes, the perspective will be international. The festival will be informal, participatory and with a menu for the intellectually omnivorous.*"

This is all very welcome but it is a pity that it does not mention or include a single session on the work of the late Professor Peter Hart who created the current interest in West Cork's history some twenty years ago. Everybody knows this. This Festival should be indebted to him for this interest.

On the basis of his writings he made himself and West Cork history very well-known, was lauded to the skies by his peers in academia and the media and he reached the top of his profession on the strength of these writings.

No prize or praise was too high for him.

But it was all based on a fraud—the breaking of the basic rules of historical scholarship. He blatantly distorted, censored and misrepresented historical sources; he used anonymous interviews—one with a dead participant in the Kil-michael Ambush; by innuendo and insinuation he alleged sectarianism and ethnic cleansing as the driving force in the War of Independence in West Cork.

These were just some of the methods

used and the result caused problems for historical scholarship that still needs clarification and this Festival is an obvious opportunity for doing so because his mentor, Professor David Fitzpatrick and his previous cheerleaders are participating in the Festival.

But it seems that a silence has descended regarding Professor Hart, who has become a non-person, in fact almost unmentionable, by his previous admirers. It seems

this silence will continue at the Festival.

Why?

To help solve the mystery we are publishing a contribution to the Festival, "The Embers of Revisionism," that deals in some detail with Peter Hart's legacy and traces the origin and the story of this inglorious episode and it may therefore be of interest to the speakers and all participants.

Aubane Historical Society
July 2017

THE EMBERS OF REVISIONISM

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST WEST CORK HISTORY FESTIVAL

The blurb for the West Cork History Festival tells us that it,

'... will span a diverse set of places, historical subjects and periods, from the local to the international, ranging from the Knights Templar to the events of the Irish revolutionary period in West Cork. Leading historians will be joined by journalists and senior diplomats, and while much of their focus will be on Irish themes, the perspective will be international. The festival will be informal, participatory and with a menu for the intellectually omnivorous.'

This is all very welcome. But the festival does not include a session on the work of the late Professor Peter Hart who created the current interest in West Cork history twenty years ago. In 1996 he asserted that the IRA were guilty of 'what might be termed' ethnic cleansing of Protestants. In 1998 he stated that IRA victims were killed, 'because they were Protestant'.

On the basis of these writings Hart made

Southern Star 29 April 1922

PROGRAM DENOUNCED

At a largely attended meeting of the Protestants of various denominations in the parish of Schull the following resolution was unanimously adopted and arrangements made for its insertion in the public press:—

"That we members of different Protestant Churches in the parish of Schull condemn the atrocious crimes recently committed in the North of Ireland. We dissociate ourselves from the acts of violence committed against our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen. Living as a small minority in the South, we wish to place on record the fact that we have lived in harmony with the Roman Catholic majority and that we have never been subjected to any oppression or injustice as a result of different religious beliefs."

Rev G H Fairbrother, who presided, paid a warm tribute to the courtesy and consideration which he, in an experience of nearly 40 years, had always received from his R O fellow countrymen.

Others speakers who testified to the absence of sectarian strife, and who spoke in favour of the resolution, were Mrs J Attridge, Messrs J A Sheppard, A. J. Cocks, G H Pattison, and S J Whitley.

himself and West Cork well known. He was lauded by his academic peers and in the media. As a result, he reached the top of his profession.

No prize or praise was too high.

Hart's findings were first deployed in 1996, by Paul Bew against Neil Jordan's popular film on West Cork's Michael Collins. Ten years later they formed part of a sustained attack on Ken Loach's award winning and equally popular, *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, that was set in West Cork.

Hart's research became the standard against which academic historians, journalists, historian-journalists and journalist-historians, measured political thought and popular culture, as applied to the War of Independence period.

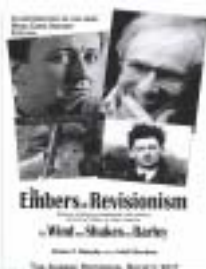
Many of Peter Hart's mentors and cheerleaders are participating in the West Cork History Festival, but a silence has descended on Peter Hart and his legacy.

Why? We doubt if this Festival would have come into existence without his contribution.

To help resolve this question, these pages contain essays by the authors of *Troubled History* (2008), Dr. Brian Murphy of Glenstal Abbey and Dr. Niall Meehan of Griffith College, on the origin of the research, both popular and academic, which prompted and promoted Peter Hart's histories.



THE AUBANE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2017
ISBN 978-1-8-903497-86-0



The Embers Of Revisionism

40 pp A4

Price €10, £8 postfree in Ireland and Britain

From:

athol-st@atholbooks.org



Independence: Place And Politics

Sometimes, one may pick up a book and somehow sense it is to your liking. This is such a book. The author, Philip O'Connor, is multi-talented. He is a Dubliner and is married, residing with his family in Howth. He writes extensively. This handsome book is a unique one, covering a much ignored historic areas and era, with unequalled detail. He leaves no stone unturned. He is a scholar and linguist, his microscope unlike that of any other. This is an examination conducted in detail.

The author's eye is fresh. His gaze is unerring. He is generous with his observations and a charitable outlook, which in turn is the outcome of knowledge and learning. This book will surely decorate many shelves in houses of Fingal. People will now look upon their place and their fellow "Northsiders" with a deeper examination and conclusions coloured by more incisive penetration. This book, too, will surely adorn many shelves further afield.

In Dublin North County, the denizens sometimes speak in archaic words. In this they resemble the more remote rural Wexfordmen down the same east coast. "*The road forinst you*", the Fingallian will say when explaining to you the way ahead. They will speak of Rusk, Lusk, The Ward. The place names are, it seems, mostly Old English. This is, and it appears, always was, the city's backyard. Here Irish, we are told was not spoken. Instead, an English archaic language pervaded. This can still be perceived in place-names and, indeed, in surnames. There are surnames which abound hereabouts, but do not occur elsewhere. However, Howth, proudly, is referred to as Beann Éadair.

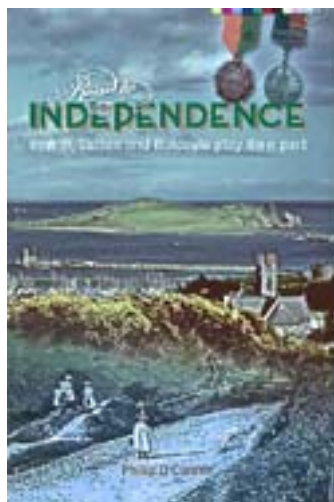
The Hill of Howth is the favourite in the Dubliners' lexicon. The *Last Tram to Howth* was an all-time great. Young blades brought their "*young wans*" to the Hill of Howth. There is a magic there. It was the place to go. Looking out. Hands shading eyes. Trying to discern Snowdon in the distance.

Gaelic football thrives hereabouts. Perversely, cricket is extensively played, as *LBW* is loudly called, and "*Caught!*" rings out across the sward. The contradictions befuddle. The willow bat scarcely complements the pig's bladder. Seldom is a *sliothar* seen. More often is the football's thud heard and boundaries breached.

Hereabouts, you never throw stones. Too much glass. Everywhere are glass-houses. This is market-gardening country. And, all the while, Dublin Bay yawns and yawls criss-cross. Crews call out to crews. The Bay is like a mouth agape. At the southern tip is Dún Laoghaire. Howth is at the Northern tip. Off Howth is Ireland's Eye, like a discarded tooth, breaking the symmetry of an otherwise regularity destined for many a 'selfie' or 'thyselfie'. Ships' hooters break the silence. Sailors scramble on docked trawlers. They are their lifeblood. The Bay is filled by shoals of fish of many descriptions.

If not market-gardeners, then fishermen make up the work-force. They were the men who built the Road to Inchigeela, or their predecessors who'd endured. Howth, Sutton, Baldoyle were witness to much. Much that occurred and much that might not have occurred. There were divisions. These occurred everywhere. They always do. But in the end came a finality. Eventually things would settle

The book brings the readers through the agonies of wars. The author displays great mental discipline as he, chapter by chapter, analyses events, putting things in sequence and squaring off the political with the more military. Cause and effect are put in an orderly fashion. What once might have been inexplicable becomes the subject of reason. Positions are placed in acceptable stances. The influences of place and time become understandable. Philip O'Connor shows an open mind. In doing so, he accomplishes the same for the reader. The individual's stance becomes the norm of



the collective.

The motivation of each is advanced. The author stays central. His own views do not bear any influence. Witnesses are permitted to speak for themselves. There is no indication anywhere of duress. A blank space is, at the outset, presented. Speak or stay silent. Each may be his own witness. Friendships form. Respect flourishes. Understanding sharpens. Policy is the resultant outcome.

The thinking is sequential. Background is analysed and debated. The Great War Is a milestone of course, including local participants. Their sacrifices figure large. The Easter Rising is central. The people's revolt too against Empire. Their struggle for freedom. The rise of Sinn Fein. The War of Independence. The depredations of those exercising power. The IRA. Eventually, "The Truce". The agreements that ensued. The debate and its effects. The Civil War. Brother opposing Brother. The agony. The emergence of the Free State. The aftermath and the slow and tortured evolution of the new—though divided—Republic. The ups and downs; the merits and demerits. And, all the while, is discussed the part played by the people of Fingal—Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle. Their pain and their sacrifices.

This is a book which is difficult to put down. It is a 'page-turner'. You will want to pursue a point at issue. The author has captured his audience. *Viva Republic!*

Further books by the author are awaited with interest. Perhaps another canvas. Interest is now kindled. He has done some service to his neighbour. This appreciation is certain to spread. The author expresses things with ease and facility. His book reaches new horizons. The result will surely broaden outlooks. The mists have cleared. That which was opaque is now clarified. To be continued, it is hoped. And extended. That there will be disagreement is inevitable. This adds to the lustre. The bland, thus, is not an issue. Nor is it any great part of the content here. Read on. And prepare for more.

John Morgan (Lt.Col. retd)

THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE
Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle play their part.
by Philip O'Connor

Published by Howth Free Press
310 pages

Numerous Illustrations

15 Euros.

Available from: **Books Upstairs, D'Olier Street, Dublin; Connolly Books Temple Bar, Dublin; and local shops**

Revisionist Jamboree at Kilkenny Castle

“He is at an angle to all sorts of universes” explained Prof. Roy Foster, in answer to Fintan O’Toole’s question to him about Casement’s relationship to Irish nationalism. His image was interesting in terms of the “*kind of people who become nationalists, radical nationalists in the early 20th century in Ireland*”. The voice was clear, the tone assured and keenly modulated. The accent reflected professional south Dublin and Trinity College rather than Oxbridge.

What Foster appears to mean is that we are dealing with a wholly maverick figure, someone who defies categorisation or explanation, someone contradictory, veering towards the absurd. Indeed, if we accept that Casement sided with Germany in the Great War for no obvious reason before changing his mind; that he penned personal diaries which, if discovered by his enemies, could have been disastrous for the humanitarian campaigns he was involved in; that he was subject to enormous whims: all this can have a basis.

DEEPLY DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY

He was at pains to emphasise that Casement was of what would have been called a modest social background; he was not “*a gentleman*”. However, in Ireland, where there was a lot of deference, “*everybody called him Sir Roger*”. The Gaelic League loved to have a “*Sir Roger turning up at their do’s*”. By way of elaboration he mentioned that, commencing his working life: “*he goes off become a shipping clerk*”. Casement came from “*a deeply dysfunctional family*”. His mother, having left the family, died alone in a boarding house from “*cirrhosis of the liver*”. The father “*is a ne’er-do-well and a businessman*”.

This was an impressive mouthful to disgorge before any audience. How much of it stands up to scrutiny? For a start, biographers never describe Casement’s father as “*a businessman*”.

The RIC dossier on Casement, opened in 1914, described his family as “*a leading county one*”. His Casement first cousins, of the Big House at Magherintemple, County Antrim, had provided a number of naval and army officers for the war effort in 1914-18.

Relatives had made distinguished careers in colonial service. Major-General

Sir William Casement KCB, (1778-1844) was a member of the Supreme Council of India. There had been a Rear-Admiral John Casement of Cushendall (1854-1910).

The family had been landowners and local officials and had held respected positions in the military, navy and Imperial administration. His grandfather, Hugh Casement, had been a grain importer and ship owner based in Belfast. When this business got into difficulties he moved to Melbourne, Australia, and developed interests there. Eventually he died in Melbourne. There was to be ongoing legal wrangling over his estate which was to last until after the death of Casement’s father, also named Roger.

Hugh had arranged a commission for his son Roger in the Third Light Dragoons in India. After a number of years of soldiering in India, during which he was promoted, he sold his commission in 1848. He travelled to Europe and offered his services to the struggle for Hungarian independence. In 1849 he smuggled a letter from Kossuth in Hungary to Lord Palmerston in England requesting assistance. The mission proved a success.

In 1855 Roger senior took up a commission as a Captain in the North Antrim militia and that same year married. Three years later he resigned due to ill health. What was to follow was an unsettled life of movement from address to address in England, the Channel Islands, France, Italy and Ireland. It was a life characterised by financial insecurity and dependence on the support of relatives and occasional disbursements from his father’s not properly finalised estate. There were 11 children of which 4 survived. It was not an easy situation for children to grow up in, characterised, as it was, by poverty and financial insecurity. The father, as was the nature of Victorian fathers, was strict. He temper was made harsher by the stresses he lived under and his own poor health.

In 1876 his sons Tom (13) and Roger (11) appeared before a magistrate in London for stealing boys’ books from a newsagent. The boys admitted they planned to sell the books to make money as they had none. It is the only known record of the boys getting into trouble with the law.

Two years later Roger senior died in a hotel in Co. Antrim, the result, apparently, of his ongoing ill health. On his death certificate he was described simply as “*a gentleman*”.

Casement was known to report repeatedly the affection he had held for his mother. She had died aged 41 when he was only nine years old. She had come from Dublin and been baptised a Protestant. Her maiden name was Jephson or Jepson. Some years after her marriage, she converted to Catholicism. Her family must have been, for the times, a middle class one of progressive outlook. Her mother had run a so called Ladies Seminary, a school for the education of girls.

Some writers have come up with the suggestion she had been an alcoholic, resulting in death from cirrhosis of the liver. For good measure Foster told the audience this happened after she had left the family. Thus the nuance was presented she had abandoned her children and husband before succumbing to the worst effects of alcohol dependency.

However, there is no serious corroborating evidence for her indulging in alcohol. This is a letter extant where her husband objects to somebody having criticised her. But this could have been a reflection of affection and respect as much as of there being any foundation to whatever had been allegedly said. We do not even know for sure that she used alcohol. Many women in those times were total abstainers.

Her death certificate does cite “*cirrhosis*” as the main cause of death. Asthma is also mentioned. When, in the year 1873, she died in the County of Sussex, England, there was no legal obligation that the cause of death on a death certificate be entered by a qualified physician. Furthermore, medical technology and knowledge were at a rudimentary level as compared to today. Diagnosis, even by experienced medical practitioners, was a hit and miss affair. Genealogists, familiar with this historical period, advise great caution in this matter. Official “*cause of death*” on death certificates for this era can not be taken at face value.

Scirrhus or *scirrhous* is a now archaic term, used in the 19th century to refer to a cancerous tumour occurring on various parts of the anatomy as for example the stomach or breast. It is easily confused with *cirrhosis*. Indeed, in *Medical Meanings: A Glossary of Word Origins* by William S. Haubrich (2003) in the entry for *cirrhosis*, the author comments: “*Unfortunately ‘cirrhosis’ is often confused with words of similar sound, such as*

'sclerosis' or 'scirrhus', which are quite unrelated." So, it is quite possible the woman died of cancer but due to a common confusion over terminology an unqualified person wrote "cirrhosis" into the death certificate.

It could even have been she did die from liver cirrhosis but as a complication of some other disease state or as a consequence of some nutritional deficiency. The reality is that, given all the circumstances, no firm conclusion can be drawn as to what she died from.

However, if she had been an alcoholic, she would have left a trail of destruction in a family already in such straightened circumstances. Yet there are no archival references, no family traditions, nothing whatsoever indicating this.

Her absence from the family home when she died is not itself a cause for suspicion. It is not impossible that she was sent away to be cared for during her last illness in the hope a quieter atmosphere away from children might ease her suffering and assist whatever chance she had of recovery. After all, most people today die away from the family home, in some care facility, and we find it unremarkable.

The Casement family led a life which was financially insecure and overshadowed by illness and poverty. But that does not rule out the children experiencing nurturing and affection. Foster's assertion that the family was "deeply dysfunctional" is not soundly based.

ANALYSIS OF IMPERIALISM EXTRAORDINARILY NEW

Casement was in many ways a displaced person, Foster told the gathering, who found a home for himself in the field of Irish nationalist activism. As late as the closing years of the 19th century, however, he was supportive of the British Imperial project. He even wrote maudlin, sentimental verse occasioned by the death of Queen Victoria. It was in the opening years of the next decade that his allegiance changed.

The conversion process is "quite obscure". It had in part to do with the development of his analysis of Imperialism. Others, such as his friend Bulmer Hobson, or Lenin, for example, analysed it in terms of economics. Casement analysed it in terms of human rights. This was "extraordinarily new". He and E.D. Morel, his great ally in the campaign against exploitation in the Congo, were absolute pioneers in this. Because of his critique of Imperialism he began to see the Irish as being in a similar situation to the exploited peoples of the Congo and South America, both historically and, more questionably, in contemporary terms.

Foster failed to mention that Casement had been subject to Irish nationalist influences much earlier on; that his father had held pro-Fenian sympathies, and that Casement had been known for his enthusiastic nationalism as a teenager. These facts make his change of political predisposition, following on from his Congo investigation and report, less incongruous and inexplicable.

CONTRADICTORY, HISTRIONIC, MERCURIAL!

In referring to Casement's personality, Foster described somebody "conflicted, contradictory and slightly histrionic". This was something noted by a range of people, he said. Though true, would Foster resist the temptation to use these realities to launch into caricature?

A little later in his remarks he described him as "very mercurial". Could there have been a touch of exaggeration here?

Some of Casement's correspondence, according to Foster, in the period 1910-11-12 "is rabidly anti-Catholic". Writing to fellow Protestant revolutionary Bulmer Hobson he says "that the Irish Catholic is a crawling contemptible cur, in fear of his priest..." But, could the truth be more complex?

The actual words referred to can be found, ironically enough, in Foster's own recent offering dealing with the revolutionary generation, *Vivid Faces* (2014). Writing to Hobson on September 7th 1909, Casement says:

"The Irish Catholic, man for man, is a poor crawling coward as a rule—Afraid of his miserable soul, and fearing the Priest like the devil. No country was ever freed by men afraid of bogies. Freedom of Ireland can only come through Protestants because they are not afraid of any Bogey" (NLI MS 13,158).

There is no mention of "a contemptible cur" here. Casement's words represented something more complex than rabid anti-Catholicism.

Such views had implicit echoes in literary works from the era penned by Catholics, such as *The Untilled Field* by George Moore and *Dubliners* by James Joyce. It is also noteworthy that the year before, the Vatican document *Ne Temere* had come into force and was passively acceded to by prominent Catholics in Ireland. This Papal Decree asserted that with a mixed marriage the Protestant partner was required to give a promise that any resulting children would be brought up as Catholics. This situation sparked dismay and furious resentment among Protestants.

According to Foster, Casement had swung radically when in Berlin from "this adoration of Germany and the Kaiser" to finding the Germans "contemptible and bogus and ridiculous..." This was another of Casement's "swings", Foster claimed.

This does not do justice to Casement's views on Germany.

When in Berlin, he was appalled that the planned rising with German support would cause a disastrous bloodbath in Ireland which would only serve the German military interest. He believed he and the other rebels were being cynically used by the German General Staff for their own ends. However, he never lost his sympathy for the German cause during the War, as opposed to his disgruntlement with the military leadership. In an emotionally heightened letter, on the eve of his execution, to his cousins Gertrude and Elizabeth Bannister, he wrote: "I pray for the success of the just cause of the German people—the defence of their country, homes and labour." (NLI MS 49,154).

TERRIFIC PSYCHOLOGICAL SOURCEBOOK

The diaries are "a terrific sourcebook", Foster assured his audience, as they "reflect these mood swings as well as other areas of private life", which we rarely get access to in a historical figure. "He is a saint. He has become a secular saint." As with many saints, he led a life "of extraordinary inner turmoil and drama" to which the diaries give us access.

Which diaries of Casement was Foster referring to?

There is a prose Journal of his experiences in the Putumayo region of Peru in 1910 in which he gives a detailed account of his experiences and reactions. There are the Berlin Diaries of some years later which provide a personal memoir of his mission to Germany. There are also the controversial Diaries of 1903, 1910 and 1911 which everybody has heard about. Was Foster referring to them all or just the controversial ones?

He did not make it explicitly clear.

However, as he made no distinction between different diary writings of Casement, and most of the general public know of no other Casement diaries but the controversial documents, it is clear his remarks embraced these. But, can these diaries be said to be a "terrific psychological sourcebook"?

They are essentially meagre travel logs. Basic data is noted down on a day by day basis with little elaboration or qualification. They answer the very basic

questions: m what, when, where, who and how. They not properly a narrative. Complete sentences appear only occasionally. As accounts they are merely skeletal.

Let us look at Casement's first meeting with his fellow Congo human rights activist E.D. Morel. For 9th December 1903 the entry reads: "*Up early & hard at work on Report—Hope finish it this week. Working till late Dined Royal academy Club with Goscomb John, In train & home from Underground*"

For 10th December 1903 the entry reads:

"Very busy but tired. Getting near end of report thank goodness Grattan Guinness called on me in afternoon &

then E.D.M (Morel) first time I met him. The man is as honest as day. Dined at Comedy together late & then to chat till 2 a.m. M. sleeping in study"

Casement's reaction to his initial meeting with E.D. Morel is not recorded beyond a single sentence; "*The man is as honest as day.*" They obviously had a lot to talk about since they chatted till 2 a.m. Yet, how the meeting personally touched Casement is not described. But, it is not in the nature of such a diary to do so.

That such a document could possibly be "*a terrific psychological sourcebook*" is incredible.

Tim O'Sullivan

To Be Continued.

'Papers Of Record' On Swanzy's First Cork Murder

This past June 26th I posted on my Facebook page an item from that day's Ireland edition of the *Times* (UK), re-running its coverage, one hundred year's previously, of Republican riots in Cork against Britain's Imperialist War. As part of its series "*On This Day: The "Times" History of the 1914-1918 First World War*", and under the heading of "*Sinn Fein and the Convention*", it reproduced the following report from the *Times* of Tuesday, 26th June 1917:

"The prospects of the National Convention are not improved by the serious rioting which took place in Cork. It follows upon the return to Cork on Saturday of a number of the released prisoners. On that night windows were smashed and Republican flags were hoisted. Yesterday morning a crowd of Sinn Feiners marched to the county gaol and smashed the windows with stones. They were cheered by the prisoners. The attack was renewed in the afternoon until all the windows were broken, and then the crowd seized the Sinn Fein drill-hall, which had been closed by the military authorities, and planted the Republican flag on the roof. Further rioting took place in the streets, and then the crowd attacked the recruiting office and the Union Jack was thrown into the river. Up to this point the police had hardly interfered at all, but now they were stoned by the crowd and were compelled to charge. For some time the fighting was confused and general. Finally, after the mob began to use revolvers and several policemen had been injured, the military were called out. They mounted machine-guns in Patrick Street and the police made further charges in which they were forced to use their bayonets. In the course of the fighting a man named Abraham

Allen was killed by a bayonet wound in the thigh, and about 30 persons are now in hospital suffering from bayonet and bullet wounds."

"These riots, following upon the recent disorders in Dublin, provoke alarm among Irish Unionists and disappointment among moderate Nationalists. It must be admitted that up to the present the release of the rebellion prisoners has created an atmosphere of distrust rather than of reconciliation. The part which is now being taken in the East Clare election by Mr John MacNeill and Mr De Valera discourages any hope that the Sinn Fein leaders will be induced to take part in the Convention. While a motor-car party were proceeding from Limerick to Tomgraney, Co Clare, to support Mr De Valera's candidature, they found the road obstructed with large stones. While engaged in clearing the thoroughfare shots were fired from an adjacent grove. None of the party was injured, but the motor-car was struck, also a bag, and the petrol tank was pierced."

The first thing that struck me about this report was that the RIC District Inspector in Cork at the time remained unnamed. As a teenage reader of the *Irish Times* from the early 1960s, I began to notice an annual entry under the heading of *In Memoriam / Roll of Honour*. In the 1916 Rising 50th anniversary year, the Roll of Honour notice in the *Irish Times* on 22nd August 1966, read:

"To the splendid memory of my brother, Oswald Ross Swanzy, D. I., Royal Irish Constabulary, killed in Lisburn, Sunday, August 22, 1920, and of all of his gallant comrades, officers and men, of the ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY, killed in the faithful performance of their duty, 1919-1922".

The one variant in such notices—inserted annually by Swanzy's sister—was in the accompanying verse. For his 25th anniversary in 1945 the verse read: "*But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten. Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth forever more. The people will tell of their wisdom... and show forth their praise.*" The verse for the final notice inserted in 1977 read: "*Strong towers decay, But a great name shall never pass away.*" The verse for Swanzy's 50th anniversary that appeared in the *Irish Times* on 22nd August 1970, had been particularly elaborate:

"We're the men who paid the blood price,
Shall the grave be all our gain?
You owe us. Long and heavy is the score.
Then cheer us for our glory now,
And cheer us for our pain,
And cheer us as you never cheered before."

In my post this June 26th, I commented as follows on the London *Times* report of the June 1917 Cork riots:

"It was both inaccurate and misleading in a number of respects. It was a bullet wound that had caused the death of Abraham Allen; and it was another man, by the name of Ahern, who suffered a fatal bayonet wound. Moreover, no revolver shots had been fired by any of the rioters, until after RIC District Inspector Oswald Ross Swanzy had ordered his policemen to open fire first. (In the final paragraph of the *Times* report, note also that shots were **fired at**—but not by—de Valera's election workers.) On March 20, 1920, RIC District Inspector Swanzy would go on to lead a police raid and murder the Sinn Fein Lord Mayor of Cork, Tomás Mac Curtain. It was for this reason that Michael Collins ordered the assassination of Swanzy on August 20, 1920."

But I, in turn, had been inaccurate in my first correction, misled by one of the *Irish Times* reports on the riots. Abraham Allen had, in fact, been bayoneted to death, and not shot, and although the *Irish Times* had expected a Mr. Ahern to also die from a bayonet wound, he would appear to have survived. It is worth, therefore, examining some of the contradictory reporting by Dublin's own "*paper of record*" on what happened in Cork over those few days, beginning with the two reports carried in the *Irish Times* of Monday, 25th June 1917. Under the heading of "ARRIVAL OF RELEASED MEN IN CORK. SCENES ON SATURDAY NIGHT", the first set of events was reported as follows:

"Amidst scenes unique in the history of Cork, the released Sinn Fein prisoners were welcomed home on Saturday night.

All the men belonged to the City and County of Cork, and they were met at Glanmire terminus they were met by their sympathisers who formed a procession of enormous dimensions. The streets were lined with people, and Sinn Fein flags were to be seen everywhere. The prisoners entered a brake, and were escorted to the National Monument on the Grand Parade, where speeches were delivered from a platform. In the procession were several bands, including Irish pipers, garbed in ancient Irish costume, and the display of Sinn Fein colours was upon a lavish scale. At the demonstration, and during its passage, there was much commotion, flag-waving, and cries of 'Up Dublin' and 'Up the rebels'. As the demonstrators passed the Soldiers' Home in Lower Glanmire Road a serious fracas occurred. Outside the building there were collected about thirty soldiers and a number of women who have relatives serving at the front, and these women showed much hostility to the camogie contingent. A scuffle took place, and the procession had to stop for a few minutes until order was restored. District Inspector Swanzy came on the scene, and upon his advice the soldiers, who had collected upon the pavement, retired into the Home. At this time someone fired two revolver shots from, it is said, one of the windows of the Soldiers' Home, and this improper act intensified the excitement. Nobody in the street was hit, and it is more than probable that blank cartridges were used. The members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who during the evening had patrolled the streets in small groups, were withdrawn to their barracks soon after eight o'clock, and the Sinn Feiners had everything their own way. During the night the large plate-glass front of the head recruiting office at No. 2 Patrick Street was smashed, and the glass in the window of Messrs. Heynes's fishing tackle establishment in the same thoroughfare was also shattered. During the progress of the meeting at the monument two men climbed to the balcony of the City Club and hoisted a Sinn Fein flag on the mast. A Sinn Fein flag was also placed on the courthouse."

Under the heading of "*Reception for the Released Prisoners*" John Borgonovo's 2013 book, *The Dynamics of War and Revolution: Cork City 1916-1918*, put the number welcoming the prisoners at Glanmire railway station at 10,000, while as many as 2,000 processed with the prisoners towards the city centre:

"However, trouble broke out in front of the Soldiers' Home ... when about thirty soldiers and their relations jeered the procession. Separation women attacked camogie players, and shots rang out from an upstairs window. Fortunately no one was hit by the gunfire." (p 63). (

See <https://m.youtube.com/watch?>

v=MH4k_yPF_Ew for Jimmy Crowley's rendition of "*Salonika*"—that wonderful Cork city ballad about the mutual insults hurled between the "*separas*"—women in receipt of separation payments from the British Government while their husbands fought its Imperialist War—and those anti-War Corkonians whom the "*separas*" labelled "slackers", but who had the better of the argument:

"Oh me husband's in Salonika and I wonder if he's dead,
And I wonder if he knows he has a kid with a foxy head,
So right away Salonika, right away me soldier boy.
When the war is over what will the slackers do,
They'll be all around the soldiers for the loan of a bob or two.
And when the war is over what will the soldiers do,
They'll be walking around with a leg and a half,
And the slackers they'll have two.
And they taxed the pound of butter and the taxed the ha'penny bun,
And still with all their taxin' they can't bate the bloody Huns.
Never marry a soldier, a sailor, or a marine,
But keep your eye on that Sinn Fein boy with his yellow, white and green,
So right away Salonika, right away me soldier boy."

The *Irish Times* of 25th June 1917—under headings of "SINN FEIN RIOTS IN CORK. JAIL WRECKED. RECRUITING OFFICES ATTACKED. MILITARY CALLED OUT. MAN KILLED BY GUNSHOT WOUND. MANY PERSONS INJURED"—also reported on how the disturbances had escalated on the Sunday:

"Our Cork Correspondent says that there was a serious outbreak of disturbances in Cork yesterday in connection with the arrival of the Cork rebellion prisoners. At an early hour the Sinn Feiners marched to the county jail and smashed the windows with stones, and in the afternoon a crowd, which was returning from a hurling match, with bands, and carrying Republican flags, renewed the attack upon the jail. The cheering of the attackers was answered from within the walls by prisoners. The crowd next went towards the city. Some soldiers' families resented their conduct, and stone-throwing was indulged in, after which the Sinn Feiners marched to Sheares Street, and retook possession of their drill hall, which was closed and barricaded recently by the military. When an entrance was gained, young men got on to the roof of the building, on which they planted a Sinn Fein flag, another being hung from one of the windows. Later in the evening, a number of women and girls, carrying

the Union Jack, came into collision with the Republicans in Patrick Street, and a fight followed. The Union Jack was captured, and the crowd, excited by the occurrence, turned their attention to the recruiting office. Amidst much cheering, two boys climbed up to where the flags of the Allies floated, and threw them down. One green flag was not interfered with. About the same time a man climbed the pole in front of the recruiting office, on top of which, since the outbreak of the war, a Union Jack has floated. He cut down the flag, which was then thrown into the river. Then the lower portion of the office was wrecked, and the wood-work was carried as trophies. Stones were thrown at the police, who were ordered to charge the rioters. This they did, some of them producing revolvers, but no sooner had they ceased charging than the mob re-commenced stone-throwing. The police again charged, and a number of shots were fired. Up to a late hour charges on the part of the police continued, with wild stampedes of rioters, and men, women, and children, who thronged the streets. The mobs used revolvers, and when the rioting became desperate and a number of policemen were injured, including the officer in charge, District Inspector Swanzy, the military were requisitioned. On their arrival, they mounted a machine gun in Patrick Street, while the Constabulary, in a succession of charges, fired their rifles and used their bayonets."

"At the time of writing 30 persons had been received at the North Infirmary, suffering from bayonet wounds and bullet wounds. One of the injured, Abraham Allen, North Mall, a married man, with two children, died immediately after admission from hemorrhage. Other cases included wounds in the head, a bayonet wound in the leg, a wound in the right arm from a bullet, which passed through Allen's body, and serious scalp wounds. Soon after midnight order was restored, and the military returned to barracks, not being obliged to intervene."

Under the heading of "*The Battle of Patrick Street*", John Borgonovo wrote of the numbers involved that Sunday:

"A republican 'monster meeting' (was held) on the Grand Parade of 5,000 to denounce the upcoming Irish Convention. Following its conclusion, spectators milled about the city centre until events took a violent turn. At 9 pm a counter-demonstration by separation women sparked trouble. After republicans insulted some of these women on the street, they responded by throwing stones. Summoning reinforcements, fifty defiant separation women soon paraded along Patrick Street behind a Union Jack. According to a (Cork Examiner) newspaper reporter, the vocal women 'incensed the Sinn Feiners by attacking them and trying to remove favours they wore'.

Brawls drew a crowd that eventually reached 5,000. 'The Union Jack was captured', wrote the reporter, 'and the crowd, excited by the occurrence, turned their attention to the Recruiting Office'..." (pp 64-65).

On Tuesday, June 26th—under the heading of "SOLDIERS IN POSSESSION OF THE STREETS"—the *Irish Times* reported:

"Our Cork Correspondent, telegraphing at a late hour last night said: This evening a force of about four hundred military took over the duty from the Constabulary of preserving order in Cork in view of the terrible riots of Sunday night. They were stationed at various points in the city, and awaited orders with rifles, fixed bayonets, and machine guns. Rain fell heavily during the early portion of the night, which restricted the numbers in the streets, but still large crowds collected and passively watched the military... The following order was also issued: 'Owing to disorders in the city last night, the undermentioned, on behalf of the Irish Volunteers, Sinn Fein, and other national organisations, order their members and sympathisers to keep off the streets tonight, and prevent a recurrence of the disturbances, which are being fomented to discredit the national organisations.—Tomas MacCurtain, Terence J. MacSwiney, J.J. Walsh, Sean Murphy'."

In its editorial for the day—entitled "*The Government and Ireland*"—the *Irish Times* blamed the British Government for having released the 1916 Republican prisoners:

"In the hope of creating an 'atmosphere' for the National Convention the Government decided to release all the rebellion prisoners 'without reservation'. We expressed the gravest doubt about the amnesty and our fears have been justified very speedily. It is probable that the prisoners themselves regarded this astonishing clemency as a sign of weakness; it is certain that no other view was taken by the disorderly and seditious elements in Ireland. The released men were received in Dublin with demonstrations of disloyal enthusiasm... For two nights a dangerous rabble remained in possession of the principal streets of Dublin... It is not surprising, in these circumstances, that Cork has been quick to follow Dublin's example. The report which reached us in the early hours of yesterday morning read like an incident of the first days of the Russian Revolution. An angry crowd attacked the jail, stormed the recruiting station, tore down and insulted the flags of the Allies, and assailed the police furiously with stones. The riot did not end till the military had brought out machine guns, and till the police had been compelled to charge the mob with rifles and bayonets. In this fighting a man was killed and many others were wounded... What is the effect of the

release of the rebellion prisoners, and the later incidents in Dublin, Cork, and elsewhere, on ... Sinn Feiners and the Ulster Unionists? The former believe now that the Government is afraid to keep Sinn Feiners in jail when they have been punished for rebellion, or to put them in jail when they have ravaged public and private property and trampled on the King's flag... An official Nationalist Party appears to be afraid to defend officially, against a returned rebel (de Valera—MO'R), the seat made vacant by the gallant death of its own leader's brother (Major Willie Redmond—MO'R)... We call upon the Government to give its own Convention a chance by recognising the facts of the Irish situation. Like the child in Hans Andersen's tale who dared to tell the Emperor that he had no clothes, we ask the Government to awake from its complacent dreaming, and we tell it that it has failed dismally to create an 'atmosphere of settlement' in Ireland. On the contrary, it has done in the last week a vast amount of mischief in Ireland, some of which is perhaps, irreparable..."

Not content with just its own editorial, that June 26th issue of the *Irish Times* carried a "*Special Extra*", the full reproduction of an English *Daily Mail* editorial, entitled "*Ireland On Trial*", which began:

"There are people who have only a partial understanding of all that recent events in Ireland imply. They read of riots in Dublin and Cork, of the possibility of a Sinn Feiner being returned for East Clare ... of much wild talk of an independent Irish Republic. They read of these things, and they ask themselves how it can possibly be consistent with Imperial safety to confer Home Rule on a land where such incidents occur amid every sign of public tolerance and even approval..."

In the same issue of June 26th—under the headings of "RIOTING IN CORK. WORST IN FORTY YEARS. EXCITEMENT SUBSIDING. MUCH DAMAGE TO PROPERTY"—the *Irish Times* also ran with an outright lie, accusing Republicans themselves of having shot one of the rioters, Abraham Allen, from the opposite side of the river Lee (possibly fired by my father, from the safety of his mother's womb in their home on Pope's Quay!):

"While the police with fixed bayonets were dispersing their assailants on Sunday night in face of a hail of macadam, men opened fire upon them with revolvers from the upper windows of some houses, and some policemen had miraculous escapes. Abraham Allen, who received his death wound on Lavitt's Quay, is believed to have been shot by the rioters while they were firing from the opposite side of the river at the police who were

drawn up in front of the wrecked recruiting depot. It is reported that the crowd were making preparations to set fire to the building when the police arrived and dispersed them. General Doran, Commanding the Southern District, visited the wrecked depot today, and inquired into the circumstances of the attack. In which no less than 5,000 people participated. It is believed that drastic measures will be taken by the authorities to put an end to the lawlessness with which the city is seething at present... The inquest on Abraham Allen will be opened at three o'clock tomorrow by the City Coroner, Mr. J.J. McCabe. About ten persons were treated at the South Infirmary for injuries from bayonet and baton wounds, and a man named Ahern, residing in Glasheen, suffering from a very serious bayonet thrust through his thigh. Doubts are entertained as to his recovery."

But the Allen inquest was to give the lie to the *Irish Times* / Swanzy 'spin' that it was Republicans who had shot him. Next day, June 27th, it was required to provide a verbatim report of that inquest:

"In the North Infirmary, Cork, the Divisional Coroner ... opened an inquest on the body of Abraham Allen, 30 years, a labourer, residing at 2 Rock Cottages, North Mall, who was killed on Sunday night during the riots in the city. District Inspector Swanzy and Head Constable McGuinness appeared on behalf of the Constabulary, and Mr. W.F. O'Connor, solicitor, City High Sheriff, represented the next-of-kin. At the opening of this inquiry... Mr. O'Connor said he was instructed that there were several members of the jury who were ex-policemen. He was instructed to protest against that. The Coroner said... Mr. O'Connor had no power to challenge the jury. Hannah Allen said that the deceased man was her husband. He was the sole support of herself and her child."

"Mrs. Ellen McCarthy, 2 Rearden's Court, said, in reply to Mr. Swanzy, that at 10 o'clock last Sunday night the deceased man came staggering up to the door and said, 'Have mercy on me, I am dying.' He lay down inside the door, and she saw blood flow out under the door. She went to look for a priest, and when she returned the man had been taken to the infirmary. Mrs. Anne Diamond, 4 Rearden's Court, said that at 10 o'clock on Sunday night she was at the corner of Kyril Street. There were great crowds on both sides of the river, and she heard six or seven shots fired. She did not see any stones going. The deceased man and other men ran into the Court for protection. She did not see any police on either side of the deceased man when the shots were fired."

"Dr. Daniel F. Hegarty, assistant surgeon of the infirmary, stated he saw Allen about ten minutes to eleven on Sunday. He was unconscious and died within a few minutes. He performed a

post mortem examination upon him that morning, assisted by Dr. Higgins. He had an incised wound about an inch and a quarter in extent upon the upper part of his left thigh, and another in the back of the same thigh of the same size; the two wounds were communicating. He opened up the thigh and traced the track of the wounds, and found in the wound the femoral completely divided. Death was due to hemorrhage. There was no other injury upon the body. The aperture in the deceased's trousers corresponded to the wounds in the deceased's thigh. Mr. O'Connor—How, in your opinion, doctor, were these wounds caused? They must have been caused by some sharp instrument. Would a bayonet be likely to cause it? It could be caused by it. Dr. J. Higgins, house surgeon, said he assisted Dr. Hegarty in the post mortem. He agreed with Dr. Hegarty's evidence. Mr. Swanzy—There is a suggestion that the wounds might be caused by a bullet? My opinion is that the wounds were caused by a sharp instrument, to the exclusion of their being caused by a bullet."

"Mr. John Murphy, resident student, stated the coat (produced) was worn by the deceased man when he came into the institution. Two stones (produced) were in the pockets... Mrs. Allen, recalled, identified the coat as one worn by her husband on the night that he was killed. Acting Sergeant a Collins said that he saw on the door of the house where Allen was wounded seven marks of bullets, and blood splashes on the wall. To Mr. O'Connor—The police of his party did not fire their rifles, but used their bayonets. The first charge was ordered by Head Constable McGuinness, when the police were being stoned. The crowd fired revolvers, and two policemen were struck. He could not say who ordered the charges, but they were necessary, as the police were getting struck, and were complaining. Michael O'Connell, labourer, said that the place was quiet on Kyril's Quay, when he and Allen were overtaken by people who were running. A policeman ran past him, and a moment later he heard the deceased cry, 'I'm killed'. The witness was at the same time knocked down by the blow of a rifle. He submitted that the policeman who bayoneted Allen did so without justification."

This was the penultimate paragraph of the *Irish Times* report. And the Swanzy-inspired *Irish Times* line that Allen had been shot by Republicans came a cropper at that inquest. There was evidence that, with stones in his pocket, Allen was about to throw them, if he hadn't already thrown some already. It was a medical student, and not any police evidence, that drew attention to the stones. But Swanzy did not pursue that line, because Cork public opinion was indignant that Allen should have been cut down and his life taken,

even if he had thrown a few stones. Instead, Swanzy's approach was to embrace Allen as a victim, but pretend that he had been a victim of Republican gunfire. The police evidence of bullet marks materialising at the location of Allen's mortal wounding was far too "convenient" for Swanzy. And the evidence from the two Rearden's Court witnesses should be read in the reverse order in which they had been questioned in, to correspond with the actual sequence in the timeline of events.

Gunfire, from whatever source, had ceased before Allen entered Rearden's Court seeking safety. Moreover, he was not, at that immediate juncture, either wounded or accompanied by any police, who were supposedly being targeted by Republican gunmen from across the river, as the previous day's *Irish Times* report had maintained. Allen had entered the Court, fleeing but unwounded, and when the police caught up with him, he was mortally bayoneted by one of them. Despite Swanzy's attempts to browbeat Dr. Hegarty and Dr. Higgins into at least allowing for the possibility that Abraham Allen had been killed by a bullet, they adamantly stuck to their conclusion that the medical evidence proved the contrary, *"that the wounds were caused by a sharp instrument, to the exclusion of their being caused by a bullet"*.

John Borbonovo recorded how, during the Allen inquest, High Sheriff O'Connor had referred to *"drunk"* separation women *"insulting people"*. He further related:

"Public officials criticised police conduct, especially the killing of Abraham Allen. His funeral was widely attended and a fund was raised for his widow. High Sheriff Willie O'Connor, an Irish Party partisan, challenged the RIC version of Allen's death, while the Cork Poor Law Guardians sent their condolences to Allen's widow and denounced the police for 'the cruel manner they treated the helpless children of our city'. The RIC county inspector complained of Cork's feckless civic leaders, 'I may point out that neither the Lord Mayor nor any members of the Corporation gave us any assistance during the week, nor are they likely to give us any in the future'. No policeman was charged in the case. Sinn Fein leader Liam de Róiste wrote bitterly: 'To the ordinary mind it was murder or at the very least manslaughter—whether under provocation or not is another question. But, of course, no policeman was tried for it, no action taken. Where is the law, where order, where justice?'" (p 68).

The only eyewitness to the fatal wounding of Abraham Allen who was

called to account before the coroner's court—his companion and fellow labourer Michael O'Connell—stated in his testimony that *"the policeman who bayoneted Allen did so without justification"*. True, the jury did not bring in a verdict of unlawful killing, which might subsequently have provided for a criminal prosecution of the policeman who had bayoneted Allen to death. But, in defiance of Swanzy's "guidance", this jury—which included a number of ex-policemen on it—did conclude that a policeman, and only a policeman, under Swanzy's command, could have killed Allen. As the final sentence of the *Irish Times* inquest report had to record: *"The jury found that death 'was due to hemorrhage, the result of a bayonet wound'."*

Just short of three years later, there was a more infamous Swanzy murder to come. On 20th March 1920, Swanzy led an RIC raid on the Mac Curtain family home, and murdered the Cork Lord Mayor, on his thirty-sixth birthday, in front of his four year old son and namesake. On 17th April 1920, another, more emboldened, coroner's jury was to conclude:

"We find that the late Alderman Tomás Mac Curtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, died from shock and haemorrhage caused by bullet wounds and that he was wilfully murdered under the most callous brutality and that the murder was organised and carried out by the Royal Irish Constabulary, officially directed, by the British Government and we return a verdict of wilful murder against David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of England, Lord French, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Ian MacPherson, late Chief Secretary of Ireland, Acting Inspector General Smith of the Royal Irish Constabulary, Divisional Inspector Clayton of the Royal Irish Constabulary, District Inspector Swanzy and some unknown members of the Royal Irish Constabulary."

Lord Mayor MacCurtain was indeed the most famous murder victim of Swanzy's reign in Cork. But the general labourer Abraham Allen—returned in the 1911 census as being able to read but not write—had been his first victim, notwithstanding the *Irish Times* attempt to muddy the waters on that score.

Manus O'Riordan

**Look Up the
Athol Books
archive on the Internet
www.atholbooks.org**

Blasts Of Hot Air: Mansergh v. Harris

A fierce storm in a teacup has blown up on the pages of the *Sunday Independent* between English-born and educated Fianna Fail politician Martin Mansergh (not currently in the Dail) and Eoghan Harris of the Official IRA, who began his career by hounding Poppy-sellers in Cork but progressed to become a groupie of Ulster Unionism at its narrowest. Their disagreement has to do with Northern Ireland, but it seems to be in large part a disagreement without a difference—which is not an unusual thing in politics.

Neither has ever tried to describe what Northern Ireland is, and so their dispute concerning it cannot be enlightening.

What it is, is not difficult to discover. It is an undemocratically-governed region of the British state, entirely under British sovereignty, but excluded from the multi-national system of party-politics by which the British state is governed, and run by a subordinate system of government conducted by local Six County parties which, whether Unionist or Nationalist, are regarded as alien by the political parties of the state.

For about three-quarters of a century a pretence was upheld in British 'mainland' politics that Northern Ireland was a little democracy on its own, with its own political life. What it actually was was a system of Protestant communal dominance funded by the British Exchequer under which the Catholic community was routinely humiliated. After half a century, the functioning of this system led to a war between the Catholic community and the State.

The State in the mid 1970s tried to "*Ulsterise*" the War—that is, to make it a local war between the Protestant and Catholic communities. It failed. After a further 20 years of war, the State made an agreement with the Catholic community under which the pretence that the dominance of the majority community was democratic was dropped and which established in its place a bi-communal devolved system under which the majority community does not dominate.

It would be unreasonable to expect an anti-Republican Cork City tribalist, whose purpose in life is to be in the news, to see what Northern Ireland is. But an Englishman born and bred should be able to see it on the instant. And yet Mansergh appears to be as obtuse as Harris.

On July 2nd Harris in his *Sunday Independent* gospel declared that "*Sinn Fein is thrilled to be dealing with a Peter Barry-style pan-nationalist like Simon Coveney rather than a pluralist like Charlie Flanagan*" (Coveney has replaced Flanagan as Minister for Foreign Affairs.)

Mansergh responded with a letter on July 9th:

"Barry, who was a widely respected Foreign Minister in the second FitzGerald administration from 1982 to 1987... was dealing only with other constitutional nationalists in the SDLP north of the Border and had no relationship with Sinn Fein, which was excluded from the political arena at the time by the ongoing IRA campaign."

A comment by Harris was appended to Mansergh's letter:

"His point about Peter Barry makes no sense as you don't need to negotiate with Sinn Fein to be a pan-nationalist."

Of course you don't! And formal posturing rarely coincided with the substance of things in the North. Barry's intervention was striking, and can only have been deliberate stimulus to the general nationalist morale. I was editing a weekly publication in Belfast at the time and I remember it well. There was a lull in the Republican war effort caused by the systematic pressure applied by Labour Secretary of State Roy Mason. That was when Barry made his "*Nightmare*" speech about what Northern Catholics had to endure.

But what's all this about "*pan-nationalism*", which both Mansergh and Harris seem to regard as a bad thing. What exists in the North is two very stable communities, one of which had always wanted to be part of the Irish state and the other looking on that as a fate worse than death. They live in the British state but they play no part in governing it.

Why the British State threw them together in a little Limbo of their own is something it has never explained. Their difference with one another has nothing to do with the policy of government. They are not consulted at elections by the parties that govern the state. The Government of the state decides the policy of the state in all matters, domestic and foreign. The politics of government therefore do not exert a divisive influence within each of the two great communal blocks. Northern Ireland therefore has no *politics*, properly speaking.

Communal unity in support of national allegiance is therefore the natural condition of its electoral life. And that is how things were in the first 50 years—and how they are again in the MPs sent to Westminster as spectators. (The DUP now supports a minority Tory Government from the back benches, as the SDLP supported a Labour Government in the late 1970s—over a generation ago—but these things are regarded as bizarre accidents.)

Pan-nationalism and pan-Unionism (which Harris never attacks) are the normality of the apolitical electoral life of Northern Ireland.

The "*Unionist monolith*", as it used to be called, was broken up as a consequence of Sean Lemass's intentionally disturbing approaches to Captain O'Neill. That disturbance led to the pogrom of August 1969, which precipitated the War that was always latent in the Northern Ireland system. The War fragmented Unionism electorally. For a while there were three Unionist Parties of roughly equal size, but with no real differences between them, once William Craig's attempt at a Vanguard "*Ulster nationalist*" fascism shot its bold. The three have now in substance become one again.

On the nationalist side the Mallon/Durkan leadership of the SDLP took the "*constitutionalism*" of its "*constitutional nationalism*" too much in earnest, and the party has gone into radical decline. Its function, as was well understood by its only competent leader, John Hume, was to facilitate for the Government the changes that the effectiveness of the IRA campaign would oblige it to make. Hume did that superbly. But his successors lost themselves in "*constitutional*" posturing in what is a profoundly unconstitutional region of the British state.

The well-understood division of labour between physical force and the constitutional force which it energised ceased to function and the IRA was obliged to tend to the constitutional side of the general nationalist movement for itself.

Neither Harris nor Mansergh acknowledges that Provisional Republicanism fought a war that was made necessary/possible by the systematically undemocratic form of government that the British State imposed on its Northern Ireland region and brought it to an orderly conclusion with considerable advantage to its community.

I suppose Mansergh cannot acknow-

ledge this indisputable fact because he cannot admit that Britain wantonly imposed undemocratic government on the Six Counties and is therefore responsible for what resulted from it.

Harris cannot acknowledge it because his Official Republican war, which he had going in rivalry with the Provo war at the outset, came to a murderous nothingness. (But a friend of mine, Noel Jenkinson, was drawn to the margin of it by its spurious social revolutionism and died in jail because of it.)

I opposed both wars at the time and proposed an alternative course of action, for which Harris denounced me as an Orange/Imperialist stooge or agent.

So I know that the Republicanism generated by an undemocratic system of Six County government fought a War and brought it to a successful conclusion with regard to its cause, if not, or not yet, with regard to its formal aim at the start.

Mansergh replies to Harris on this score:

"Eoghan Harris is correct in stating... that the Good Friday Agreement (unlike, say, the 1921 Treaty) was never signed, but that a number of copies of the last text circulated were autographed by participants in the negotiations for souvenir purposes..."

The 1921 Treaty was signed under threat of immediate and terrible war, and that seems to be close enough to democracy for the present Fianna Fail leadership. Trimble was personally intimidated by Tony Blair, who made dire threats of what he would do to Ulster Unionism if Trimble did not fall into line. Actual signing was of no consequence. It was just a piece of Jesuitry that was surprising in an Ulster Protestant.

The great difference between the 1921 and 1998 Treaties was that Whitehall was unable to use the 1998 Treaty to break up the Republican organisation that forced it to make considerable concessions.

Mansergh tosses in the fact that Harris was Trimble's Adviser in 1998. So was Official IRA man, Lord Bew. So was Professor Henry Patterson, who was at least in Official Sinn Fein.

The leader of Ulster Unionism took the Official IRA into his confidence and sought its advice. That fact should have been enough to deter Mansergh from making the absurd suggestion that I was Trimble's adviser.

If I had been—which was never even a remote possibility—I would have told Trimble what he needed to hear, rather

than what he wanted to hear, and he might have had a longer innings.

Mansergh says he was "*primarily responsible for the political content of the constitutional accommodation*", while "*Sinn Fein... was excluded from the political arena at the time of the ongoing IRA campaign*". It might be that the wording was his, but the principle of the "*accommodation*" was Republican, and it was in substance an "*accommodation*" between the IRA and the British Government.

It was clear long before 1998 that the immediate Republican purpose in the War was to compel the British Government to make an interim re-arrangement of things in its Northern Ireland region, a settlement which would enable the nationalist momentum built up by the War to be transferred to politics without war. For the achievement of this purpose it was necessary to keep up the War, and at critical moments to intensify it, until definite undertakings were got from the other side. And the other side was always Whitehall, never Ulster Unionism. That is why it was of no consequence that Trimble didn't sign, but only complied in practice with a personal ultimatum from the Prime Minister—and then dragged his heels on implementation, encouraged by his Stickie advisers.

After the deal was done, the IRA gave Dublin permission to hold a referendum to repeal its Constitutional assertion of sovereignty over the North.

Ever since May 1970, when the Lynch Government revoked its *de facto* Northern policy of August 1969, and prosecuted for treasonable conspiracy those who had implemented it, the sovereignty claim was a dead letter for Dublin Governments of all kinds, except Haughey's, but no Government dared to hold a referendum to repeal it. If they had done so, they might have been able to establish a diplomatic relationship with Stormont, but none had the courage to try. But the Courts then took notice of it and judgments in extradition cases began to take account of it. Because of that it was of value to the Republican cause.

When the Northern settlement was made in 1998 an attempt was made to spin it as an Anglo-Irish settlement. If it was an Anglo-Irish settlement, then the War was an Anglo-Irish War. But, if so, Dublin Governments were passengers in the War.

If 1998 was an Anglo-Irish settlement one would have expected Dublin to act positively as guarantor of the Agreement

on behalf of the Six County nationalist community. It did no such thing.

1998 was a two-nations agreement. Mansergh was obliged to make a back-handed admission of that in dispute with Northern Dissidents, but his party never acknowledged it. His leader persistently condemned Sinn Fein in the North for its "*sectarianism*", meaning its actions on behalf of its constituency in accordance with the terms of the 1998 constitution which treats the Northern population of consisting of two distinct body politics between which the principle of majority rule does not apply.

This is a nationality arrangement, on the lines of what was evolving in Austria-Hungary until it was destroyed by Britain in 1919. It is what enabled the War to be ended. But Fianna Fail, though it repealed Articles 2 and 3, hangs onto the destructive notion that Protestant Ulster is an integral part of an all-Ireland nation alienated superficially by "*sectarianism*", so that in Southern politics the party can condemn Sinn Fein in the North as sectarian.

In a bygone era it was customary, when wars were settled, to cover actions done in the war with *Acts of Oblivion*. Britain did this to some extent with the Northern Ireland War. Dublin did not do it at all, but tries to carry on treating it as a massive outbreak of criminality, and not a war at all. That is understandable since the War was not in any real sense an Anglo-Irish War, but a war between a community in the undemocratically-governed region of the UK state and the Government of the state. But at the same time Dublin wants to filch some credit for the peace.

*

Harris is greatly concerned that the Sinn Fein demand for an Irish Language Act might be conceded without an equivalent Act for something called *Ulster Scots*.

I never came across Ulster Scots in Belfast or in Co. Antrim. I could never hear any Scottish in the North Antrim accent, even though I was assured that it was there. I could not find a trace of Scottish jurisprudence when Mary Mac Aleese obliged me to come to close quarters with the Belfast law system by bringing a frivolous libel action against me and, on the income of an unskilled labourer, I had to conduct my own defence. And when the Scottish Orange bands came over for July 12th they played with a wildness that contrasted strongly with the sedate local bands. And, as I figured out the history of the Plantation, I could see that the Ulster Scots became something

quite distinct in the course of the 18th century, something that I could not recognise as Scottish, even though their middle class continued to be educated at Glasgow College in that era.

On the other hand, one of the first things I encountered in Belfast was the Irish language movement. In 1970 I worked (as hod carrier) on a Gaelic housing estate that was being built. There were Clubs where only Irish was spoken. And the Irish language movement was far from being identical with Sinn Fein. It seemed to me that many in it kept Sinn Fein at a distance.

Now there are many Irish-medium schools in the North, and the sector is expanding (insofar as it is allowed to).

The large Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, rigorously excluded from the democratic politics of the state which held

them, and daily antagonised by the exclusively Protestant, and exhibitionalistically Royalist and Imperialist, system that was deputed to control them, turned in large numbers to something beyond or beneath politics and applied themselves to it with an earnestness not evident in the South.

There is going to be an *Irish Language Act*, and not as a "*Sinn Fein cudgel*" either—whether or not accompanied by a face-saving "*Lallans*" Act.

The only Unionist purpose is to be British. The Unionists in 1921 agreed to make the "*supreme sacrifice*" of being British outside the political life of the British state. They are now addicted to being semi-detached British. Their regional dominance has gone. They have forgone normal politics. So they have become eccentric, even with relation to themselves.

Brendan Clifford

Review: No Way Out—The Irish in Wartime France 1939-1945

by **Isadore Ryan**, Mercier Press, Cork

Irish Notables In Wartime France

The back cover says:

"After the Germans invaded in 1940, at least 2000 Irish people found themselves trapped in France for over four years with no way out. As work, food and money became increasing scarce, the Irish struggled. Intent on staying alive, most kept their heads down, but some became involved to varying degrees in the war going on around them."

This book breaks the silence on the Irish in wartime Europe. Most of them had British passports and were caught in a dilemma—claim an Irish passport from the Irish Legation in Paris and avoid internment but miss out on funds sent for their welfare by the British Government through the then neutral America. Or, claim an Irish passport and go through the rigorous checks set up by the Irish Department of External Affairs. The stringent funds would then only come from Ireland after relatives were contacted, and if they could come up with the money.

Many Irish were interned until their neutrality could be proven. Gerald O'Kelly de Gallagher headed the Irish Legation in Paris. He had lost his diplomatic job in 1935 through his support of the Treaty, it is claimed. The De Valera Government was putting in place its own people. Count O'Kelly belonged more to mainland

Europe through his upper class lifestyle and hobnobbing with Europe's elite.

He had a wine company in Paris called *Verndôme Wines*. There is a blurb somewhere about O'Kelly selling quantities of his wine to Hermann Göring and the German officer class in Paris. Neutrals don't usually differentiate between the warring sides. Sweden, for example, sold iron ore to Germany during WW2. O'Kelly would have sold his wines to Churchill and his officer class.

The tone of the book sometimes leans to the Allied side in the War, with tales of Irish neutrals assisting downed RAF, and eventually US, airmen to hide and escape. They were taking part in British machinations in France. Mere pin-pricks that could see people arrested, tortured, imprisoned in the concentration camp and maybe killed.

But you don't see much of this German reaction in the book. Suspects are watched, arrested, questioned and mostly released without even the threat of torture. There was no British B-film wartime propaganda in the atmosphere. The French public generally didn't want any of this Marquis heroism which might see their homes raided and their relatives taken away.

A BBC war correspondent Robert Barr said in November 1944:

"He had come to the conclusion that the Germans had been unobtrusive and well-behaved during the Occupation and that many Parisians hardly ever saw them and complained of the Resistance movement causing unnecessary trouble."

The French communists, in one incident, were the most militant in gunning down three high-ranking German army officers resulting in a retaliation in which 100 people were executed.

The Germans asked for volunteers to watch the railway lines for saboteurs and people did react. By their presence, without informing, they kept the wreckers away in some districts.

The French were not collaborating but sitting out the war. German victory was not being guaranteed, especially on the Eastern Front and in the Middle East desert war.

There was hope there for the French. They were in a better situation than the Catholics of Northern Ireland stuck in a deliberately made dysfunctional piece of British territory without hope of outside aid, and collaborating with the Unionist enemy, as some did, but without benefit to the Catholic community, then: in the end having to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.

There are many names given of the Irish in Paris and where they came from originally in Ireland. There was Samuel Beckett who said he preferred wartime France to peacetime Ireland. He tried to join the French Army on the outbreak of hostilities but heard nothing from the authorities. His *resistance* to German occupation was to shuffle a lot of paper about and retype what might have been information for Britain's benefit.

But it didn't seem very important after all. Still, he could have faced arrest and prison.

When German Intelligence began to take an interest in him he fled with his wife, crossing Zone Libre into Vichy France without permission. There the Vichy authorities took a close interest in him. He put this down to being called Samuel, a Jewish name in his opinion. Not a very good explanation for his pro-British attitude. He gets more and more annoyed as they probe him with questions. The Vichy Government was obviously suspicious about what he was up to in occupied Paris. In the end they left him alone.

German Intelligence did ask people to spy on others of course. But when they refused they were left alone. Unlike the RUC during the Long War when refusals

to tout were met with penalties like false imprisonment and threats of death.

In October 1944 Beckett returned to a liberated Paris to his old flat and found nothing much had been disturbed except for some books and a few papers missing after the Gestapo raid. The French Government gave him the Croix de Guerre. On his way to visit his mother in Dublin he made a stopover in London to visit the British War Office and be questioned about the Gloria SMH Resistance Network he worked for in 1941 and 1942.

James Joyce was also in wartime Paris. Forever the meerkat, he moved his family to various burrows fourteen times. He wanted an Irish passport for his wife, son and sick daughter but he didn't want one for himself. There is mention of his publisher correcting drafts of his *Finnegan's Wake*. I'm still wondering how it was possible

to make any sense of it! In writing to the Irish Legation in Paris his letters are always written in green ink and some of them are illegible.

The Joyce family manage to get to Switzerland. He dies there in his usual state of debt. After the War his widow wants his body disinterred and carried to Ireland in the manner that Yeats's body was conveyed from Gibraltar. The Irish Government refuses her request.

Frank Ryan then turns up in wartime Paris. He was brought to the Hotel Lutetia on the Boulevard Raspail where the Joyce family had been living for a few months before but where the Abwehr had since set up its Paris headquarters. The author says:

"There exists a photo of Ryan from that time stretched out on the grass in a Paris park, perhaps the nearby Jardin du Luxembourg, reading the international press."

"On the day of his arrival the Abwehr brought Ryan for dinner to La Tour d'Argent, overlooking the Seine, at that time considered one of the finest restaurants in Paris..."

Kurt Haller, section leader of Abwehr (II) Amt I West, responsible for espionage operations in Britain and Ireland said Ryan was completely flabbergasted by his treatment after his deprivation years in Spain.

Ryan didn't spend all his time in Paris but was accommodated at a country house requisitioned by the Brandenburgers (an elite Wehrmacht unit).

"On 20 July Helmut Clissmann, an Abwehr operator, who had lived in Ireland before the war and had been instrumental

in Ryan's release (in Spain, WJH) met the Irishman in Paris. But the initial German attempts to convince Ryan to embark on a sabotage mission to England came to naught."

And so the names roll out with Francis Stuart, who had worked for *Irland-Redaktion* in Berlin, arriving in Paris out of bombed-out Berlin in 1944, having travelled by various routes with his girlfriend Gertrud Meissner (known as Madeleine).

An ex-lover of his in Berlin Róisín Ni Mheara had preceded him. She had been born Rosaline James in London in July 1918. She claimed her parents were Irish but that she was adopted when still a baby by General Sir Ian Hamilton and his wife. In Paris she played a cat-and-mouse game with the British authorities who wanted to interview her about her pro-German/Hitlerian attitude. She was interrogated by the British in Paris and she tells Stuart that his name came up.

Stuart with forged papers, supposedly issued by the Irish Legation in Paris, makes his way back to Ireland after detention in various prisons. Róisín has ambitions to be an actress. The author doesn't say what happened to her in the end.

There were Irish girls and Irishmen in Berlin working in factories, people who had gone out of Ireland to look for work. A few of the women worked for *Irland-Radaktion*, the Berlin radio station aimed at Ireland and dealing with Irish affairs to the German population. Plenty of propaganda of course but then Irish personnel worked for the wartime BBC. Neutrals, in my opinion had a choice. One Irish girl living in Paris, and with an Irish passport, can't find work in Paris, so, after getting permission from the German authorities, she boards a train for Berlin, finds a job in a factory and ends up marrying a German.

Then there is the painful business of foreign-born Jews in Vichy France and of their deportation to concentration camps. Out of 76,000 only 2000 returned to France after the war. Marshall Philippe Pétain had disagreements with the German authorities over this matter. Pierre Laval, even more a villain of the piece by the look-back-in-anger elements in exile with De Gaulle, was forced to include foreign Jewish children under the age of sixteen in the deportation quota demanded by the Germans in order to save having to include French Jews to make up the numbers required. (French-born Jews were excluded from deportation, at Vichy insistence, as Cathy Winch has demonstrated in several articles in *Church &*

State.) The Germans had decided previously to deport from France foreign-born Jews over the age of sixteen only.

At least the subject of the Jews is dealt with in this book. It doesn't say how many French Jews were in the country. But the book does mention the severe restrictions put on their community.

One Jewish woman dying in the concentration camp is mentioned as having Irish citizenship. Though later another woman is mentioned as also being an Irish citizen and also dying in the camps.

I could go on for quite a few more pages in reviewing this book, for it is stocked with information about the Irish in France, mostly Paris, their dilemma in terms of shortage of funds, clothes, food and accommodation, and their fight and will to survive.

The Irish Legation worked under very difficult conditions in Paris and in convincing Dublin what life was like in wartime Paris. It was later ordered by the Germans, like all other legations, to move to Vichy. After the War the new French Government wanted those Irish staff who had worked in Vichy to be returned to Ireland. The Irish Government refused that request. The French had already started the scapegoat and blame-game.

Emmanuel Macron, the new French President, with his deliberate misinterpretation of the Holocaust that affected France, is continuing to bury French wartime history. He talks of the collaborators whilst enthusing for one of the biggest collaborations that France has ever had—with the USA.

Wilson John Haire
17 July 2017

OF TILLS AND PILLS

The Titanic sank on the 14th of April
1912
to the Atlantic Ocean floor
the Ulster Covenant made a call
to rebel
on the 28th of September
1912
against the Third Home Rule Bill
signed by loyalists galore
the shivering wreck has put money
in the till
while the Covenant has put Loyalty
on the Pill

Wilson John Haire
6 July 2017

A Defence Of Gaelic Christianity

Is it possible that the way academics write Irish history might be changing? Two books published in the past few months take a combative attitude and try to give Gaelic Ireland some of its due. And this is unusual, because not giving Gaelic Ireland its due has been the settled policy of the mainstream of the history-writing establishment in recent times. For such people Ireland is most significant as *Hibernia Anglicana*, "English Ireland".

Richard Cox wrote a history of Ireland with that title for the emerging Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, a pioneering work which was published while the Williamite War was still in progress (1689-90). In his introduction he said that the history of the other Ireland had been written by Geoffrey Keating, and it was only a mass of silly fables.

And a modern work written in the same tradition and in the same spirit? It's easy to find one, but *The Geraldines and medieval Ireland: the making of a myth*, edited by Seán Duffy and Peter Crooks (Four Courts Press, 2016), will do as an example. Actually, the Geraldines brought their "origin myth" with them to Ireland, as one gathers from Gerald of Wales: the idea that they were of Trojan descent. This might be an interesting theme to explore, but the authors and editors ignore it. So far as the title theme is concerned, they are only interested in finding myths put round by Irishmen and sneering at them.

Otherwise there is some interesting information about castle-building, etc., but the focus is firmly on English Ireland. The rich relationship and dialogue of the Gaels with the Geraldines is virtually blanked out. A key aspect of that dialogue is the poetry written in Irish to, and by, Geraldine aristocrats. It is treated in the most condescending and perfunctory way by the token expert on what the Gaels had to say, Katharine Simms.

The Geraldines and Medieval Ireland is listed as No. 1 in the Trinity Medieval Ireland Series. To a large extent Trinity has dominated the history of what is called medieval Ireland. There was a time when promising ideas were developing there. Edmund Curtis, who began his working life as a factory labourer, had a broad historical awareness that couldn't be bounded by Trinity's big wall. He started to explore the Gael-Gall relationship, and particularly the Gael-Geraldine relation-

ship, with fresh eyes and a sense of the possibilities. But his student Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven killed off that line of thinking and turned back to *Hibernia Anglicana*, and that is where Trinity has been ever since. (The *Geraldines* volume has a sniffy put-down of Curtis, by Robin Frame: "*a mixture of the insightful and the misguided*".)

So then, Trinity Medieval Ireland Series No. 2 comes as rather a shock: *The Irish Church, its Reform, and the English Invasion* by Donnchadh Ó Corráin. This is a robust defence of the Gaelic Church in the period leading up to the invasion, when a variety of interested parties alleged that it was decadent, un-Christian, pagan and barbaric. Ó Corráin says it was no such thing. Gaelic Christianity was continuing to develop as it had done for centuries, and it had a rich popular vigour expressed in the cults of the saints.

And yet St. Bernard of Clairvaux called the Gaels "*Christians in name, in fact pagans*"; Pope Alexander III referred to "*that people of Ireland who, ignoring the fear of God, in unbridled fashion wander at random through the depths of vice*"; Gerald of Wales said the Irish were "*a filthy people*", and so on. What was all that about?

SEX, MARRIAGE AND THE GAELS

Mainly it was about sex and marriage. In Europe the Church was promoting an incredibly wide restriction of kinship degrees in marriage, to the seventh degree: "*one could not marry one's sixth cousin or closer—and this absurd rule was expressly formulated in a canon of Pope Alexander II in 1076*" (p. 50), though a century and half later this was reduced to the fourth degree. To the Gaels, either seventh degree or fourth degree was way beyond the bounds of reality. Traditional Irish kinship structures were such that families needed to keep open the option of marriage between closely related partners, down to and including first cousins (so as to safeguard status and eligibility, etc.)

This was clearly understood, and Irish lawyers found examples in the Bible to justify Gaelic custom: "*the chosen people of God did this, so we can do it too!*". Someone put this argument to the great Anglo-Norman propagandist Gerald of Wales, and he was suitably scandalised.

Apart from that, the Church was press-

ing hard to establish the principle that marriage was monogamous and indissoluble (except by Church annulment). By the twelfth century no one in Europe was challenging the principle. Practice, though, was another matter. Actually, the differences between what Gaelic Christians did and what European Christians did weren't all that great.

"The Merovingians had been genuinely polygynous. The Carolingians were less so: they mostly practised serial monogamy, which was enabled by easy divorce and remarriage, and they mated polygynously, though in Carolingian times the sons of concubines did not tend to succeed. Elsewhere in Europe, in Norway for example, polygyny continued and the children of concubines were not excluded from succession. What happened in Western Europe generally in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was that upper-class men (women had less freedom) married monogamously and mated polygynously, that is to say, they had one lawful wife, more-or-less in accord with the rules of the church, and relative ease of annulment made new licit wives possible. Besides they had what were, in the eyes of the church, seriously sinful illicit relationships with other women—many were concubines within the lordly household, many more were casual contacts outside it. In the eyes of the church these were sinful acts, not marriage partnerships" (p. 53).

So what was it that made the Gaels so awful? They were awful because they gave all or nearly all of those other women and their offspring rights. Gaelic law permitted divorce (some of the accepted grounds were also grounds for church annulment). Therefore the serial monogamy practised by Gaelic lords was legally marriage with a succession of wives, but without the Church's sanction. Furthermore, alongside the principal, respectable wife (*cétmuintir*) recognition was given to a secondary, disrespectable wife (*an t-adaltrach*, the adulteress) and possibly others besides.

As for the rule of clerical celibacy, it was flouted as much in Europe as in Ireland. But only in Ireland was there a major institution of hereditary clerical management: the office of *erenachs* or *coarbs*. These were the people who ran the individual churches. They had the main responsibility for the given church's activities, including patronage of poetry and art. Usually they had taken the initial clerical orders, but often they weren't priests. But in any case they handed down their Office from father to son. They were a major target of the 12th century reformers: "*an evil and adulterous generation*"

Bernard of Clairvaux calls the *coarbs* of Armagh. (In fact, they seemed to confine themselves to one wife and they did many constructive things, especially peace-making.)

What about the non-noble population?

"Though the objects (at least in Ireland) of well-developed pastoral care, the lower orders did much as they pleased: illicit relationships with women were repeatedly denounced, and the repetition alone shows that the denunciations had little effect, in Ireland or anywhere else. In Ireland, as in England, there was nothing unusual about a well-to-do commoner having a wife and a concubine—and this may be a long-established North European practice. The Irish, then, were not more debauched than their continental peers nor more vicious in their social mores; they were just differently organised, confident in their own institutions, and reluctant to change them" (p. 55).

THE PHASES OF REFORM

But a militant, highly political European Christianity, which was developing in association with the Normans, was determined that Ireland would change. The reform movement, and the lurid abuse of Gaelic Christianity that went with it, came in three phases. It began shortly after the Norman conquest of England. Lanfranc, William the Conqueror's Archbishop of Canterbury, was a very ambitious man. He was thinking in terms of primacy not just over York but over the whole of Britain and Ireland as well.

Soon he had an understanding with the clergy in the Viking towns of Dublin and Waterford, and Canterbury began to consecrate their bishops. But Lanfranc also seems to have had support and encouragement from Toirdhealbhach Ó Briain, King of Ireland. The O'Briens were still innovative and they hadn't stopped trying to develop an effective all-Ireland monarchy. Any centralising movement in the culture, even if it had its source on the neighbouring island, must have been attractive to them.

But then, from the very beginning of the 12th century, Canterbury was outflanked by an indigenous Irish reform movement. (And the contemporary O'Brien, Muirheartach, King of Ireland with opposition, switched his support to the locals.) The famous Malachy, with other very ambitious and energetic people, joined the reformers. Within fifty years they had made considerable headway, and there are two clear proofs of this.

Firstly, a structure of Bishops and Archbishops was set up which has lasted to the present day. And secondly, foreign

monastic orders with a reforming mentality and without Gaelic influences were imported into Ireland and established in many places—principally the Cistercians and the Arrouaisians, both launched by Malachy. What the reforming Bishops and the new monastic orders both sought to do was to take over the lands, properties, tithes etc. of the Gaelic monasteries. But they were not able, or not even willing, to provide the religious and cultural services that the old monasteries had provided. The term Ó Corráin uses for this is "*asset-stripping*" (p. 118).

But next, with the Irish reform movement at its height, there was a strange complication. Was it Canterbury trying to get revenge for being sidelined? Or was it just English churchmen loyally serving the ambitions of King Henry II? At any rate, within four years of the Synod of Kells (1152), where the structure of four Irish Archbishops was established by a specially-sent Papal Legate, there were various English churchmen in Rome asking Pope Adrian IV to approve an invasion of Ireland by King Henry II. The invasion was required in the interests of Christianity—nothing else would do, the barbarous and vicious Gaels were out of control. The Pope took his time and waited to be asked more than once or twice, but he didn't wait too long. He approved the proposed invasion in his Bull *Laudabiliter*:

"You may enter that island and do there what has to do with the honour of God and the salvation of the land. And may the people of that land receive you with honour and revere you as their lord, and that the rights of the churches remain whole and unimpaired."

(Ó Corráin for some reason finds this passage "*deeply ambiguous: the decision to accept Henry II remains with the Irish. But a quick reading might lead to other conclusions*" (p. 100). If so, I imagine he's the only one from Adrian's day to this who has read it slowly enough. The clear implication in the Pope's language, especially where he approves the King's desire "*to enter the island of Ireland to subject its people to the laws and to root out from it the weeds of vice*", is that the Irish need decisions imposed on them. And the Pope would have known better than to play "maybes" with Henry II.)

IRISH BISHOPS AND ENGLISH INVASION

But King Henry was diverted for a few years, he didn't carry out his plan, and the Irish reformers on the other hand carried on their reforming . . . And then Dermot McMurrough took his fateful initiative, the invasion happened, and in 1172 King

Henry came over to keep the invaders in order. And also (even though he was then under Papal interdict for the murder of Archbishop Thomas à Becket) to put the Irish Church in order. He didn't meet the Bishops personally, but "*his programme managers, Ralph archdeacon of Llandaff and Nicholas his chaplain*" met them in Council in Cashel early in 1172.

"We know nothing of any discussions that preceded their consent to assemble, whether there was any dissent, whether any doubted the propriety of the proceeding, whether any objected to the unseemly haste, whether any considered a king under personal interdict for the killing of an archbishop unfit to summon a national council of the Irish church (or any other church), whether any weighed the political consequences of their actions. The bishops will certainly have known about the privilege of Adrian IV—and they may have read it more closely than some modern historians. However, as papal loyalists, they will have accepted that Henry's activity in Ireland had some limited, if inexplicit and somewhat dated, papal approval" (pp. 104-5).

In any event, it seems that the Bishops of Ireland, led by the permanent Papal Legate (a Cistercian protégé of Malachy) and three of the four Archbishops, said "yes sir, no sir" as required. They let themselves be overwhelmed, reducing themselves to pawns on King Henry's chessboard. If Gerald of Wales is telling the truth, they agreed that the Irish Church would conform to the usages of the English Church from then on. They are said to have sworn an oath of loyalty to Henry II and confirmed this in the form of a Charter with their seals attached, recognising him and his successors as Kings of Ireland forever. And they also denounced the supposedly shocking moral state of the Gaels in letters to the current Pope, Alexander III, lending themselves to Henry's propaganda. (Alexander, recalling what they had said, declared he was glad that King Henry was taking "that most undisciplined and untamed nation" in hand and commanded them to help him.)

And yet just a few months later we find one of those Archbishops taking part in what an annalist describes as "*a synod of Ireland held by the province of Connacht, laity and clergy*" (*Senudh Érenn la Cóioid Connacht, laechaib cleirchib*) in the presence of Ruaidhrí Ó Conchubhair, King of Ireland. Obviously, Ó Corráin says, this was Ó Conchubhair's competitive response to Henry II's Council of Cashel, "*but it was too little too late*" (p. 110). Is that the right way to see it? Or was Archbishop Cadla Ó Dubthaig doing his

best towards finding some *modus vivendi* in Ireland after the invasion?

Anyhow, to return to the Council of Cashel—what did those Bishops think they were doing? Ó Corráin can hardly find words to express his contempt.

"Perhaps they let themselves be led on by the papal legate Ó Con Airge, an uncritical and over-zealous reformer who may have seen Henry II as a source of political stability as well as improvement in the church; perhaps they felt threatened, even bullied, by Henry's reputation and menacing presence; perhaps some of them felt that his intervention and the English attack would come to nothing, and they could temporise until the storm had blown over; perhaps some, or more likely the many, using reform as a flag of convenience, desired to be powerful and rich feudal bishops with a role in royal government, as ministers, chancellors, diplomats and royal judges, like their contemporaries elsewhere in England and continental Europe, and seized their opportunity with alacrity when they thought it had come. If so, they were fatuous beyond measure...

"They cannot have been quite unaware how thoroughly William I (the Conqueror) uprooted the native English aristocracy nor could they have expected less from Henry II and his heirs. If this is true, they were prepared to envisage a social revolution that entailed the overthrow of their own ruling cadre and the rise of a foreign land-holding class loyal (at least in theory) to an absent king—all in the interest of an international mother church and an unrealistic programme of perceived moral betterment" (pp. 114, 116).

Certainly, it's a puzzle—how the Bishops read that situation, and what in fact they said. (Someone should write a novel on the Council of Cashel.) It's hard to make a case for the poor devils, since no Irish source gives them a word to say for themselves. But let me try to be their advocate. There is one account from those times which presents an Irish Bishop as having some power of independent thought and judgment. It's a report of a conversation from the early or mid-1180s.

Gerald of Wales, in the presence of some Irish clerics, was orating on his favourite theme of how the Irish were inferior Christians, and he said it was proved by the fact that there were no Irish martyrs. The Archbishop of Cashel made a deft response to this, which Gerald couldn't resist quoting.

"It is true", he said, 'that although our people are very barbarous, uncivilised and savage, nevertheless they have always paid great honour and reverence to churchmen, and they have never put out their hands against the saints of God. But now a people has come to the kingdom which knows how, and is accustomed, to make martyrs. From now on Ireland will

have martyrs, just as other countries'..." (*The History and Topography of Ireland* tr. John J. O'Meara, sec. 107).

That's not the comment of a man in the grip of illusions.

Now, a Bishop who thought like that (supposing there was a Bishop who thought like that in 1172)—what would he have hoped for in the early days of the invasion? Certainly not that the Normans would manage to do in Ireland what they had done in England. But he might well have wanted to temporise. And indeed by the late 1180s Gerald is complaining that the natives have been given time enough to adapt:

"Because of the half-hearted dragging out of the conquest over a long period... by usage and experience the natives gradually became skilled and versed in handling arrows and other arms" (*Expugnatio Hiberniae* tr. Scott and Martin, Bk. 2 sec. 34).

There were, of course, great Anglo-Norman heroes of arms such as John de Courcy, who was delighted to find that his deeds had been predicted by a renowned Irish prophet, Columcille. "*John himself keeps a book of prophecies, which is written in Irish, by him as a kind of mirror of his own deeds*" (*Expugnatio*, Bk. 2 sec. 18). Unfortunately, what the prophets had to say was in some respects disappointing.

"The Irish have four prophets, Moling, Berchan, Patrick and Columcille, whose books, written in Irish, still circulate among the people. They speak of this conquest... But they hold out no hope of a complete English victory, with the whole island subdued from shore to shore and fortified with castles, much before judgment day" (Bk. 2 sec. 34).

To give King Henry enough to satisfy him, so that he could take himself back to England; to get the Normans listening to Irish prophecies, and buying Irish praise-poems and so on; and as soon as possible to plant the thought in their heads that to conquer the whole island would take them till the Day of Judgment, they would have to live with complication—were there Gaelic churchmen who saw this as their best course? (And yet it's hard to respect them for allowing the Papal Legate, on behalf of them all, to traduce the Gaels in an official document, which presumably was sent to the Pope.)

THE RESULTS OF REFORM/INVASION

Anyhow, for a variety of reasons but mainly because of the great conservative and assimilative power of Irish culture, the very worst didn't happen. "*The indigenous monastic forms came under great*

pressure and seemed to disappear, or at least fall below the horizon" (Ó Corráin, p. 119), but this was a development of the reform, which was in progress before the invasion. Over time, though, the Arrouaisians/Augustinians who took over many of the old houses to a large extent went native, like the Franciscans later on.

The *erenachs* weren't easy to dislodge, and even when they lost their ecclesiastical status they continued to be landholders and men of hospitality and culture. And in time the reform movement ran out of energy, and the unreformed could breathe again.

"The Gregorian reform imposed a relatively shallow superstructure on the pre-reform church, and beneath the carapace much of the early medieval indigenous church survived" (p. 120).

Ó Corráin doesn't think the reform brought any improvement in pastoral care for the laity ("*the reverse is more likely*", p. 121), or that it made the clergy more moral ("*concubines took the place of clerical wives who, however, reappeared after some time*", p. 122). The foreign monastic orders didn't produce any saints and they never equalled the cultural achievements of the older houses. But the Irish Church now had the formal structures of "*the contemporary European model*", and "*the business of souls (and the properties attached to it) was put on a better business footing*" (p. 122), and many were satisfied with that. Overall, though, the effects of reform-plus-invasion were negative:

"The English invasion brought the evil of racism to Ireland and the Irish church, and divided the population into those who had the benefit of English law (the colonists and those who could pretend to be such) and those who did not (the Irish, unless granted English law by royal charter). The impact on the Irish church was disastrous.

"One suspects that the lower clergy, in Gaelic Ireland and far outside it, lived their lives and went about their business much as they did before the reform, but with the necessary nod to the new order. And the laity kept their saints, sites, cults and devotional practices as they had been long before Hildebrand" (p. 122).

THE GAELS AND THE CULT OF PROGRESS

All in all, this is an energetic and long overdue defence of the good name of Gaelic Christianity. Or a renewed defence, to be exact. What Ó Corráin has to say is largely a restatement and expansion of arguments made by Geoffrey Keating at the end of his history of Ireland. The UCC Professor neglects to acknowledge this, but he does at least have the good grace to

throw in a reference to Keating's "great history of Ireland, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*" (p. 72).

ÓCorráin revels in describing the concrete material interests and power ambitions of Popes, Bishops and reforming monks. But what about all those historians who accepted their charges against Gaelic Christians and repeated them, and elaborated on them, down through the ages to the present? The UCC Professor thinks they were either pious or naive, most probably the latter! (p. 2). He too must be a naive historian if he thinks that's sufficient. The historians don't live apart from material interest and ambition and structures of power.

It was not for nothing that Geoffrey Keating called Gerald of Wales "the bull of the herd" of all those who had vilified the Irish. His descriptions gave a long perspective and depth to the idea of the Irish as barbarous, or unmodern, or inadequately progressive. I can't help feeling that Gerald's writings may have been tampered with in Elizabethan times, though everyone seems to accept them as fully authentic. The following passage from the *Topography* has a suspicious ring. It sounds a lot more like, say, John Davies than somebody writing four centuries before his time. O'Meara, the translator, says it's from a 12th century manuscript—is he entirely sure?

"(The Irish) have not progressed at all from the primitive habits of pastoral living.

While man usually progresses from the woods to the fields, and from the fields to the settlements and communities of citizens, this people despises work on the land, has little use for the money-making of towns, contemns the rights and privileges of citizenship, and desires neither to abandon, nor lose respect for, the life which it has been accustomed to lead in the woods and countryside...

"Even gold, of which they are very desirous—just like the Spaniards—and which they would like to have in abundance, is brought here by traders that seek the ocean for gain...

"They think that the greatest pleasure is not to work, and the greatest wealth is to enjoy liberty.

"This people is, then, a barbarous people, literally barbarous. Judged according to modern ideas, they are uncultivated... Their natural qualities are excellent. But almost everything acquired is deplorable" (*History and Topography* sec. 93).

Descriptions like that, whether or not they are doctored, were substantially accepted and re-elaborated by historians in the 16th and 17th and 18th and 19th

continued on page 28, column 2

Grenfell Tower

In his treatise, *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, Adam Smith, the political economist, offered a critique of the-then laissez-faire, free-market liberal state, noting: "Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property, against those who have none at all".

Tragically, the same observation could be made of the government of today, characterised, as it is, by a similar imbalance of power and a failure of public duty to defend the poor from rapacious landlords and their desire for the lightest possible regulation of their activities.

The failures that gave rise to the horrific death toll at Grenfell Tower can be understood as representing the collapse of modern conservatism into this debased form of neo-liberalism.

Michael Robinson
Belfast Telegraph, 29.6.17

The Labour Party – power and principle

Senator Aodhán Ó Ríordáin (June 16th) claims that I took issue in my letter of June 15th with his "assertion that extremism on the left does poor service to principles". I had in fact noted his assertion that the Irish Labour Party "gave up a long time ago on absolute extremist adherence to principles", not at all the same thing. Let me remind Senator Ó Ríordáin that his former colleague Pat Rabbitte "warned that the British Labour Party will be making a 'big mistake' if it elects Jeremy Corbyn as leader" because his "views would not have a very wide audience in Britain outside of a section of Labour Party members".

More recently, party leader Brendan Howlin dismissed Mr Corbyn for having a "set of principles, and an unaltered set of views going back over three decades" that put him in the same box as "the Irish far-left parties" who "operate as commentators on working people's problems, not delivering compromises and solutions".

Mr Corbyn came close to toppling Theresa May's government precisely because he enunciated principles of social and political justice long-discarded by Blairites and their Irish Labour Party acolytes, and now once again striking a chord with British voters. To cite his "ambition to govern" as in some way a vindication of Irish Labour's lack of principles is the height of cynicism.

Raymond Deane
Irish Times, 17.6.17

Trump and the Russian connection

The former leading Irish diplomat, Pádraig Murphy, in a letter in your newspaper today (13 July), makes the point: "Is it at all unusual for one country to try to influence the outcome of an election in another? The US engages in this routinely." Indeed did not the Irish government itself do so during last year's British referendum when it not alone stated that a vote to "Remain" was vital to the Irish national interest, but actively "interfered" in the campaign to try help achieve it?

During the US Presidential campaign *The Irish Times*, as many European liberal newspapers, clearly expressed a preference for a victory by Hilary Clinton. The Irish Taoiseach, the German Chancellor and other European leaders also made clear their belief that a Trump victory was undesirable. Does this, not to mention the active involvement of many European groups in the campaign, not constitute "interference" in the election designed to "influence its outcome"?

That the Russian government should prefer a victory by the candidate proposing cooperation with it over the one proposing hostility and confrontation, is surely, at the very least, hardly surprising.

Current events in the US are all too reminiscent of the distasteful activities of the 1950s "House Un-American Activities Committee".

Philip O'Connor
Irish Times 13.7.16

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

BREXIT

Incredibly the British are going ahead to cut themselves off from continental Europe and the resulting disarray is not a pretty sight. The UK Cabinet is leaking like a sieve. The London bankers are gliding as unobtrusively as possible towards the exit and setting up 'head-quarters' in Frankfurt, Paris and Dublin. The UK public service seems not to know what is going on and it took one citizen Gina Miller to go to Court over the issue of Brexit and she went right up to the Royal Court of Appeal which finally ruled that the UK Parliament is the decision-maker on Brexit. (i.e. UK is a Parliamentary Dictatorship and the people, as such, have no power in the matter other than being merely advisory).

The Parliament is behaving like a flock of sheep with a wolf in it. The sheep are scattering, but they can't get out of the sheepfold unless there is another General Election. There are huge reverberations beneath the political and economic surface as the various vested interests struggle to fight for their own interests. The Welsh and Scots Farmers are well aware that their lamb exports to the EU will be almost wiped out.

Irish sheep farmers are very pleased at this development—one of the few Irish sectors which may profit from Brexit. Another Irish sector which may profit might be the Banking sector but this is problematical due to the shortage of suitably luxurious housing around Dublin. Bankers do not normally reside in semi-detached houses nor in terraced houses unless such houses are overlooking the sea in Killiney or Dalkey and of these, there are a very limited supply. Perhaps the London Banks may relocate some of their non-banking businesses, such as wealth and asset management to Dublin but their core banking business will almost certainly relocate to Frankfurt where they will be near the ECB (European Central Bank). Ever since the Libor rate-fixing scandal broke, the bankers are wary of email and phone-recording and much of the more dubious banking business is now done face to face in noisy cafés. So Frankfurt seems to be the best option after Brexit.

There is some fluffy talk going around in London that Brexit will not happen—that it must not happen (cf. Tony Blair's mad interventions) but Parliament can hardly go into reverse on this issue lest the North of England might break out in Civil War. England knows about Civil War—the English have been fighting among themselves over power and money ever since the earliest history and some of it was very very destructive—the war between King Stephen and Queen Matilda 1135-1154 ruined England for twenty years, and there was the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 against a Poll Tax during which as many as 100,000 people converged on London and destroyed tax records.

For thirty years 1455-1485 there were the Wars of the Roses during which the country was devastated.

Again in 1536, the people rose up against Henry VIII, led by powerful noble families. This was called *'The Pilgrimage of Grace'* and was a protest by Catholics against the dissolution of the monasteries. The monasteries were at that time the nearest thing England had to Social Services. The people lost, as usual. One result was the passing of the Poor Law by Parliament in 1598.

Then in 1629, King Charles gave cause for serious unrest when he took to himself the *'Divine Right of Kings'* and he dissolved the Parliament—and it stayed dissolved until he was forced to convene a Parliament in 1640 to raise money to fight the rebellious Scots.

Charles did not get the money he wanted. He raised an army to fight the Scots. The Scots won. This time parliament refused to lie down and the big-wigs got together in the *'Long Parliament'* which fought the King for the next fifteen years. Both sides raised armies and it is said that in the years 1642-1646 during *'The First Civil War'* (so called) proportionately more people were killed than in any other war involving Britain with the possible exception of the First World War. And, during it, in 1644, the New Model Army was formed by Parliament. Oliver Cromwell was second in command.

After defeat at the Battle of Naseby, King Charles fled to the Scots but they sold him to the English Parliament. He was held by the New Model Army but he escaped and persuaded the Scots to march south in England to join the Royalists.

The *'Second Civil War'* was now on. Cromwell and the Parliamentary Army defeated Charles I at Preston. As a result of all this destruction and the attacks on

established authority, English society was turned upside down. Groups emerged such as *'The Levellers'* (who wanted to level out social distinctions), *The Society of Friends* (Quakers, who wanted nothing to do with politics), *the Diggers* (who were an early form of communism and believed property should be held in common).

When the Levellers in his army mutinied, Cromwell put them down. Cromwell valued his own place in society. The Diggers were attacked and put out of their commune on St. George's Hill in Surrey and in 1649 a select group of Parliament put Charles 1st to death. They did this by preventing over one hundred members of Parliament from attending proceedings. They were supported by Cromwell and 'The New Model Army' and the 'Rump Parliament' purported to abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords and declared England to be a Free State which they called the Commonwealth—which was in effect, a Republic.

In 1653, Cromwell abolished Parliament and made himself a dictator. He bestowed the title *'Lord Protector'* on himself. He controlled the Army. He abolished Christmas and closed theatres and sporting events. After he died in 1658, there was a period of chaos until Scotsman General Monk subdued London and brought back a Parliament and the Monarchy—Charles II.

Then in 1685 Charles died and was succeeded by his Catholic brother James II who was in turn ejected in 1688 by the London merchants who brought in his daughter and her husband William of Orange—both Protestants. It was in effect an invasion as William brought with him an army of 15,000 Dutch soldiers to secure his position. The English celebrate this as the *Glorious Revolution* and their historians say it was bloodless. The blood was generously spilled in Scotland and in Ireland as a result. But in England the killing had almost stopped. Instead of killings, bribery was resorted to in passing *The Act of Union with Scotland* in 1707 and *The Act of Union with Ireland* in 1801. There were the bloody Battles of Prestonpans and Falkirk in 1745 and Culloden in 1746. In 1791, Thomas Paine's *'The Rights of Man'* was published and in 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft's *'Vindications of the Rights of Women'*.

In 1819, social and economic grievances were being aired at a meeting attended by over 50,000 people at St. Peter's Fields in Manchester when the ruling elite sent in the cavalry and many were ruthlessly cut

down. The cavalry wounded hundreds and killed eleven people. The cavalry were mounted volunteer yeomanry—tenant farmers—who provided their own horses. It was a class clash. It was thought that a revolution might follow but the British Army "remained loyal" and was well-garrisoned throughout the country.

Then in 1834, *The Tolpuddle Martyrs'* who dared to form an illegal Trade Union were sentenced to transportation to Australia. The Establishment was very shaken by the possibility of the poor people uniting together.

And so to The First World War when, despite a desperate demand by British Generals for more troops in France, two regiments were maintained in England specifically to counter any social unrest at home. The Generals wanted to authorise the use of live ammunition against any civilians daring to go on strike in 1921 but wiser counsels prevailed.

The British Establishment must be today very well aware of the possibility of a Civil War arising in the Midland cities if Parliament dared to vote against the Brexit supporters of David Cameron's ill-advised referendum. Any future Civil War will not be a bloody affair. There will be no need for person to person violence. Widespread civil unrest will be in the form of computer hacking. The uncontrolled connectivity of computer systems is very subject to hacking as was experienced by British Airways last year when thousands of flights were grounded. Believe it or not, the very latest British Warship due to be launched, costing £6 billion, is designed to operate on Windows XP—a 17 year old computer system that is one of the most hackable in the world. And the potential weapon now available to most civilians is not pikes, axes, hatchets or guns, but the ordinary online computer.

Regrettably and unfortunately for Britain it looks as if Brexit is bound to happen and Little England may become a reality.

Michael Stack ©

On-line sales of books, pamphlets and magazines:

[https://
www.atholbooks-
sales.org](https://www.atholbooks-sales.org)

Gaelic Celtic Christianity

continued

centuries. Their writings helped to justify a destruction of Irish society and culture far more extreme than anything the Normans ever dreamed of. Maybe some of the historians were naive. Did none of them have *interests*?

In the September issue of *Irish Political Review* I will review the latest book by Vincent Morley, *The Popular Mind in Eighteenth Century Ireland*. Morley argues that the poetry composed in Irish in the 18th and 19th centuries is not irrelevant to Irish history, in fact Irish history cannot be understood without it. Academic trends that say or imply otherwise are treated with justified contempt: *Irish Historical Studies*, the "new British history", and Jurgen Habermas's "public space" theory, to name three. And yet, although he strains against prejudices that have grown and mutated in English and Irish schools from the time of Gerald of Wales, Morley himself is confined by academic blinkers—as regards the academics he is much more naive, I fear, than Ó Corráin. But more about this next month.

John Minahane

Harpers Proclaimed!

Irish Minstrels and Musicians by Captain Francis O'Neill (published in 1913 and republished several times, including 2015) writes of neither musicians nor their instruments being spared. "A proclamation issued on January 28, 1603, by the Lord President of Munster [sic], in which the marshal of the province was charged to exterminate by martial law all manner of bards, harpers, etc., was followed by Queen Elizabeth's orders to Lord Barrymore, "to hang the harpers, wherever found, and destroy their instruments" As their race became extinct so went their distinctive musical feats which could summon deep murmur causing sleep, merriment causing laughter and plaintiveness that would bring tears. Harps were made of a single piece of wood. The sound box hollowed out of elm so that the harp could support the tension of gold, silver and copper strings to deliver bell-like tones.

Contributed by Jack Lane

• Biteback • Biteback • Biteback •

Irish Times Silences Query On Where It Stands On The Right To Trial By Jury

I can justifiably be accused of having a predilection for being long-winded in commentary. That is why, on June 30, in submitting a letter for publication to the *Irish Times* concerning an editorial in that day's edition, I restricted myself to the following two sentences:

"Sir, The Special Criminal Court might be described as 'an Irish solution to an Irish problem'—a juryless criminal court which tries terrorism and serious organised crime cases. I trust that the tone of your editorial, entitled 'Jobstown acquittals: Jury trials under strain', was not suggesting that the Jobstown defendants should more appropriately have been hauled before the Special Criminal Court."

This short letter was denied publication by our home-based "paper of record". In that rival "paper of record", the Ireland edition of the *Sunday Times* (UK), its editorial on July 2—entitled "Jobstown Seven's outspoken mob mocks our justice system"—found the Jobstown defendants no less distasteful than had the *Irish Times*, but it was relatively straightforward, by comparison, in ultimately coming down in favour of maintaining the right to be tried by a jury of one's peers:

"In some jurisdictions, a jury would not have been entrusted with such a sensitive case, which had deep roots in one community and in one political movement. One can imagine the uproar if the Jobstown case had been sent to the juryless Special Criminal Court, which would have been a mistake. Every citizen has the right to trial by a jury of their peers, and the system has served this jurisdiction well. All the more reason why juries should not be pressured."

It was the determination of the 'liberal' *Irish Times* editorial to be opaque on this key civil liberties issue that had prompted my two-sentence query, and the refusal by the Editor to publish that most brief of letters is instructive.

Manus O'Riordan

=====

SEAN O'HEGARTY, O/C First Cork Brigade, Irish Republican Army by Kevin Girvin. Index. 248 pp. €20.

P.S. O'Hegarty was a brother of Sean O'Hegarty. In London, P.S. O'Hegarty swore Michael Collins into the I.R.B. He later supported the Treaty and found himself growing closer to Griffith because of the latter's non-violent outlook.

=====

Fenians continued

pulled the trigger Dillon struck up the rifle and let the officer and his escort pass. Michael Davitt has given it as his opinion that had Stephens been ten years older in '46 the grain and the cattle of Ireland would never have left its shores during the famine years. But Stephens was only a boy, and though he did not believe in rose-water revolutionaries he nevertheless obeyed orders, and after many adventures, which are recounted by Michael Doheny, his companion on the road, he reached France.

Michael Doheny's narrative, which was written in 1849, gives curious glimpses of young Stephens, as he called him:

"His imperturbable equanimity and ever-daring hope had sustained me in moments of perplexity and alarm when no other source could have availed. During the whole time which we spent, as it were, in the shadow of the gibbet, his courage never faltered and his temper was never once ruffled."

That equanimity and courage and steadfast hope were characteristic of Stephens all his life through. Whoever doubted Ireland's fitness to free herself, that did not he. But his experiences of the '48 men, whom he afterwards referred to as "*rhetorical revolutionaries*", gave him a complete mistrust of the dependence to be placed on the Nationalists of the middle and upper classes, and all his plans for Ireland's freedom were based on his faith in the unshaken Nationalism of the common people.

When all else despaired of Ireland, Stephens did not, and when her fortunes and her power seemed at their lowest ebb, then he commenced organising the people for another struggle. And his faith was justified, for out of his labours and those of his co-workers sprang the Fenian Movement. To many Irishmen, Fenianism was another debacle, a rank failure, a movement of public-houses and informers; but it gave the British Government the greatest fright it got since '98, and even today it has not emancipated itself from the shadow of it. England feared Fenianism, and some sections of the British people fear its ashes to-day, not because of what it did, though that, too, was momentous, but because of what it means, of the things it almost did, of the narrow shave by which the destruction of the British Government in Ireland was averted.

Fenianism is remarkable in Irish history as being the first movement which was openly and avowedly separatist from its inception, and which never pretended that it had any other object. The United Irish Society was at first a purely constitutional body, its objects being Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation; the Repeal Movement was loyal in name, and, in fact, all the days of its life; and the Young Ireland Party, though its tone was, as Chancellor Plunket put it, the tone of Wolfe Tone, was not avowedly separatist until the year '48, when Mitchel and the French Revolution pulled it out of '82ism.

But Stephens' object from the beginning was an Irish Republic and his means revolution. He had no delusions as to the value of constitutional agitation; he neither expected nor looked for justice or redress or consideration from England; he looked to Ireland herself to recover her own liberties by the strong arm. . . .

The origin, and indeed, the whole history, of the home organisation is bound up with the history of the Irish Revolutionary Organisations in America, which in the end were the weaker links of the chain. Immediately after '48 the Irish in New York organised themselves into military associations with the object of an early descent on Ireland, and one of the chief of these was the "*Emmet Monument Association*", in which Michael Doheny was the leading spirit. I need not dwell on the significance of the title. This first of the American organisations seems to have evoked more enthusiasm and patriotism than any of the subsequent ones, perhaps because its members were nearly all fresh from the famine horrors, and because the time had not yet come when Irish-American organisation would be used for American political purposes.

A scheme for the financing of the movement by some wealthy Irish-Americans was propounded, and early in 1855 they sent an emissary to Ireland, in the person of Joseph Denieffe, to spy out the land there. There was then no organisation in Ireland. After some months of organising here, and conferences with Stephens, Denieffe sent on his report to America, but the men there did not move till 1857, when Michael Doheny and John O'Mahony sent over Owen Considine with a message to Stephens asking whether he considered the country fit for organisation, and, if so, whether he would undertake to organise. Stephens' answer was characteristic. The country, said he, was never in a

better state for organisation, and guaranteed to organise 10,000 men in three months if he were given £100 a month and unlimited control. He sent Joseph Denieffe back with this answer, and in due course Denieffe came over again with Doheny's and O'Mahony's acceptance of the offer and with £80 to go on with. From the very beginning it will be seen that the function of the American men was to supply funds for the home organising, and it was Stephens' determination to keep the American organisation to this its primary and chief purpose that led to the breach between himself and O'Mahony, and incidentally contributed powerfully to the failure of the organisation in its primary object.

On the 17th March, 1858, the organisation was established, Luby framing the oath and administering it to Stephens, who in turn administered it to Luby, Peter Langan, Garret O'Shaughnessy, and Denieffe. The organisation, although it came to be variously designated "Fenianism", "Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood", "Irish Republican Brotherhood", was not given any name officially, the oath being merely an oath of allegiance to the Irish Republic, but as it will probably live in history as Fenianism, it is more convenient to refer to it as such from the beginning. And now commenced the best and most fruitful years of Stephens' work. With the funds received from Denieffe he and Luby started South and sowed the seed in Kilkenny, Tipperary, Clare and Cork. The organisation took root everywhere and more particularly in Cork city and county, so that in four or five months there was a thin network of men over almost the whole of Munster.—*Irish Freedom*.

(From: *Ireland: From The Great Famine to The Treaty (1851-1921)* A documentary record compiled and edited by James Carty, Published by C. J. Fallon Limited Dublin-1951)

"*Irish Freedom*" was the monthly organ of the Irish Republican Brotherhood from 1910 to 1914. The leading article in No. 1 announces a policy of "*complete and total separation from England*". The contributors and editors included men, little known at the time, who afterwards took a prominent part in the active stage of the Irish Revolution—Thomas J. Clarke, Sean MacDermot, Bulmer Hobson, Terence MacSwiney, P.H. Pearse, Ernest Blythe, Dr. Patrick McCartan. P. S. O'Hegarty, whose knowledge of the inner history of the Irish Revolutionary movement before 1916 is probably unrivalled, then a member of the Supreme Council of the IRB, contributed many of the articles, including the above, under the pen-name "*Lucan*".



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 35 No. 8

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

P. S. O'Hegarty writes on The Fenians (1912)

Scattered over Ireland today there are several hundreds of men, old and for the most part grey, but still vigorous, who look out with an air of tolerant criticism on the generation around them, and who, on those rare occasions when they can be got to talk about Irish politics, have a supreme contempt for the modern methods of doing business. Survivors of an older generation, they seem to be of a type apart from the generations that followed them; in their countenances is something of a nobler intelligence, of a manlier life, than obtains nowadays; calm and silent they are on ordinary subjects, but there is a slumbering volcano behind it all. You will find them, a great of many of them, in the cities, but you will find them also in the country places, in villages that look as if a breath of passion had never stirred there, in lonely farmhouses where the world and the things of the world seem a dream, throughout the four great fifths of Erin, and in Ulster, too, you will find them; an older generation, an older dream, still keeping itself in evidence in Ireland, living and hoping and uncompromising.

For all the calmness of the face, the weakness perhaps of the limbs, the grey or grizzled locks, there is one subject upon which these men are always young, young today as they were forty years ago, and this is Irish Independence and how to get it. And they will tell you, fiercely and passionately, that there is but one way and that way the old way. "What is the good of your Sinn Fein movement, or of any of your movements", said one of them to me not so long ago, "unless you arm the people. Talk will never free the country, and all your plans are useless unless you can back them up with guns."

When Gavan Duffy in 1855 resigned his seat in Parliament and left the country he wrote to his constituents: "*Till all this*

be changed there seems to be no more hope for the Irish Cause than there is for the corpse on the dissecting table", and in his book on the Tenant League he tells us that it was the "*paralysis of national opinion*", which induced this step of his. This is a fairly representative example of the utter hopelessness which invaded nearly all the thinking people on the national side after '48. Of the brilliant band which had formed Young Ireland, all except Duffy were dead or in prison, or in America, and the famine horrors and the comparative failure of the '48 Rising had driven the survivors amongst the minor men either into Unionism, like M.J. Barry, to indifferentism, like John O'Hagan, or to despair, like Duffy.

It was indeed a period to try the hearts of the stoutest. It seemed as if the famine clearances and the constant emigration drain had broken Ireland's back: the "Nation" so far as the creation of an independent public opinion went, found itself helpless almost against the otherwise corrupt press; and Gavan Duffy's last resort, the independent Party in Parliament,

which was afterwards adopted by Parnell, had proved itself unable, as it is unable today, to withstand corruption, while an alliance between the British Government and the Bishops broke it up utterly. And, more than all, Duffy had found himself unable to rally under his Tenant League Banner the same class of men, lawyers and barristers and professional men of the better families, as those who had answered the call of Davis. It was a time when Duffy's public integrity, his genius for paper management, his tolerant and broad outlook upon national questions, were not sufficient to make an impression on the country. There were wanted other qualities, qualities which Duffy did not possess and the importance of which he altogether undervalued, the fire and passion of Mitchel, and the absence of all delusions regarding England, the logical reasoning of Lalor, the eloquence of Meagher and Doheny and O'Gorman.

It was in circumstances such as these I have described, with the whole country seemingly lifeless on the National question, that the unerring Irish instinct began again to assert itself through the stout hearts of James Stephens, John O'Mahony, John O'Leary, and Thomas Clarke Luby. As very young men they had all been out in '48: O'Mahony in Tipperary, where he was a large farmer, at the head of his own labourers and others in the neighbourhood; O'Leary and Luby, with Joe Brennan and Fintan Lalor, at the last fight at Cappoquin Barracks; and Stephens himself, the indomitable and persevering Stephens, with Dillon, at Callan. There, when he was quite a young man, Stephens almost forced the fighting at the critical moment. Standing behind the barricade at Callan with John Blake Dillon, he covered with his rifle an officer approaching, who rode at the barricade, but when he would have

Subscribers to the magazine are regularly offered special rates on other publications

Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

1 Sutton Villas, Lower Dargle Road
Bray, Co. Wicklow or
33 Athol Street, Belfast BT12 4GX or
2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT
or *Labour Comment*, TEL: 021-4676029
C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork

Subscription by Post:
12 issues: Euro-zone & World Surface: €40;
Sterling-zone: £25

Electronic Subscription:
€ 15 / £12 for 12 issues
(or € 1.30 / £1.10 per issue)

You can also order from:
<https://www.atholbooks-sales.org>

continued on page 23