

SAOTHAR 46

Book Reviews

Irish Labour History Society

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**An Cumann Stair Lucht Saothair na hÉireann
The Irish Labour History Society**

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Saothar: Journal of Irish Labour History

Saothar: Journal of Irish Labour History is a refereed journal, dedicated to the study of Irish working-class history in its broadest sense, including Irish workers abroad and comparative history. We welcome articles; essays; document, film and visual art studies; oral histories; archival and conference reports; as well as letters on the content of the journal or labour history generally. Articles should be of relevance to the history of the Irish working class, or Irish workers abroad, and should not deal primarily with events less than thirty years old. By the 'history of the Irish working class' we mean waged and unwaged workers, their lives, work, economic conditions, social and cultural relationships, leaders, organisations, movements, values and ideas. Studies of anti-labour organisations or anti-socialist groups are also of relevance. We are particularly interested in studies that focus on the 'everyday life' of workers and their families. Features other than articles, such as essays, may be more contemporary in scope.

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Book Reviews

UCD Press Life and Times - Fergus O'Farrell **Cathal Brugha**, Trish Ferguson **Maud Gonne**, Mary McAuliffe **Margaret Skinnider**, & Jim Smyth **Henry Joy McCracken**

The Historical Association of Ireland's Life and Times Series began in 1993, with the publication of what was intended to be new research on leading historical figures, including assessments of their historical significance and their interaction with the issues of their times. These short studies were intended to appeal to Leaving Certificate and A Level pupils, as well as undergraduates and the general reader. Seventeen were published, ending in 2010. Now a second series has been commissioned in partnership with UCD Press, an initiative which is to be warmly welcomed. The four books under review include both well-known historical personages and those less well known but eminently suitable for inclusion. In expanding the scope of the series, people who might be considered secondary figures, possessing less detailed archives, are given their due. In so doing, new light is shed on movements and historical periods and our knowledge of fascinating characters from our past considerably enlarged. For historians of women's history this is particularly significant. Important names, for example, in suffrage campaigns, are ubiquitous, yet little is known about them apart from their public activities. For married women, even discovering their maiden names and family background can be a task fraught with obstacles. They deserve rescue from oblivion, but the paucity of evidence probably prevents full-scale monographs. This series addresses this problem, and in so doing has the potential to make major contributions to Irish historiography. Jennie Wyse-Power badly warrants an updated biography, given the release of so much material since the appearance in 1991 of Marie O'Neill's original study. Figures lacking biographies and deserving of inclusion in the future include suffragettes Meg Connery and Margaret McCoubrey; long-standing campaigner for women Mary Sheehy Kettle; republican activists Winifred Carney and Maire Comerford; the unionist Lady Edith Londonderry. Material, in some cases substantial, certainly exists.

Cathal Brugha

Fergus O'Farrell has written the first English-language biography of Cathal Brugha, badly wounded in the Easter Rising, Minister for Defence in the first Dáil, an outspoken opponent of the Treaty, and the heroic figure who made a last stand for the republic before collapsing, riddled with the bullets of his erstwhile comrades. A devout Catholic, an austere figure, a non-smoker who abstained from drink in order not to contribute to the Imperial Treasury's tax on alcohol, Brugha has been portrayed by historians as a relatively uncomplicated figure: small in stature, incapable of compromise, an advocate of physical force as the way forward. As a 'highly secretive revolutionary' he was careful to leave little on record, which makes the task of the biographer a difficult one. He moved in the shadows to the extent that the British could refer to him only as 'the man with the quare name.' O'Farrell challenges what he believes has been a portrait of a 'one-dimensional gunman', through using testimony from the Bureau of Military History as well as the Irish language biographies of Brugha, to give us what he believes to be a more balanced picture. He traces the life of Charles Burgess, born to a wealthy mercantile family that had begun to experience financial difficulties. He attended Belvedere College, was an excellent sportsman, hoped to become a doctor, but family finances meant he had to leave his studies and earn a living as a salesman. He came into contact with the Gaelic League in 1899, at the age of 25, soon joining the IRB. His life was now devoted to the

national cause. He commanded a group of IRB operatives organised to remove the guns from the Asgard and stood up to the British military during the march back to Dublin. It was his 'public debut', and his coolness and decisiveness under pressure were to define his later career as a revolutionary.

During the Rising Brugha was second in command to Ceannt, continuing to urge resistance even after being badly injured and disagreeing with any suggestion that they should surrender. When he had recovered from his injuries he returned to action but, significantly, resigned from the IRB on the grounds that it was now redundant, its role taken by the IRA as an open military organisation. At the Sinn Féin Convention of 1917 he came second in the election to the executive and was also involved in the work behind the scenes to ensure that the organisation moved towards republicanism. O'Farrell stresses this political role; however, by 1918, when the threat of conscription loomed, the IRA executive decided that the British cabinet and hostile newspaper editors would be executed if conscription was implemented. As O'Farrell admits, it was most likely Brugha who conceived the plan and proposed it to the executive, but he uses evidence contained in the BMH from some of the would-be assassins that includes Mulcahy and Collins amongst those who briefed and recruited those involved in the mission. Brugha, as the mission head, spent weeks in London, visiting the House of Commons repeatedly, where he was treated with courtesy on the mistaken impression that the limp caused by his Easter Week wounds were those of a Flanders veteran. It is a fascinating tale, but the fact that the executive did possibly all endorse the plan hardly detracts from the received picture of Brugha as an activist who preferred the language of the gun to that of political intrigue. He tried to revive the assassination plot in 1921, but a horrified Collins called it a 'mad plan', telling Brugha he was countermanding the order.

Brugha presided over the first meeting of the Dáil, to be replaced by de Valera in April. O'Farrell agrees that Brugha's 'obstinacy' could obstruct political progress. The growing antipathy between Brugha and Collins is well described. It was a power struggle, with the former fighting for the primacy of the Dáil and the latter running the IRB. These differences were magnified by the personality clash between the two men - polar opposites in almost every way. The increasing strains of war led to a deterioration in relationships amongst other leading figures and Brugha came into conflict also with Mulcahy. While Brugha left little on record, one letter of his to Mulcahy was such that his sympathetic biographer admits the tone was 'hectoring and patronising and (he) should have had more respect for his seasoned and competent Chief of Staff.' Brugha attempted to use the period of the truce to reorganise the IRA in his favour but was unable to wrest power away from Mulcahy. When asked by de Valera he refused to be a member of the team appointed to engage in negotiations. O'Farrell agreed 'his uncompromising character would have been entirely unsuited to such a delicate diplomatic mission.' In contrast, although protesting he was a 'simple soldier' and unsuited to the task, Collins went, reluctantly. During the Treaty debates Brugha's furious attacks on Collins brought into the open the hostility that had existed throughout their time as ministers. O'Farrell argues this was not provoked by jealousy of Collins' fame, but stemmed from Brugha's passionate adherence to the cause of the republic. During the later debate to grant the suffrage to women over 21 before the Treaty be put to the country, Brugha's support was, concludes O'Farrell, 'political opportunism - Brugha was no feminist', calculating that young woman would vote against the Treaty. Following the Treaty split Brugha remained on the political side with de Valera, disregarded by the young militants of the anti-Treaty IRA, but when the Free State began to shell the Four Courts he joined the Dublin brigade, refused to surrender his outpost and came out to be shot by his former comrades. Collins wrote to a friend 'Because of his sincerity I would forgive him anything.' He left behind him a wife and six children. Not included in the biography is his funeral. His widow Caitlin was equally uncompromising. In protest against the 'immediate and terrible' civil war made upon Republicans,

she called for the women of the republican movement alone to act as chief mourners and guard of honour at her husband's funeral. Notwithstanding the best efforts of his biographer, while we have a fuller picture of the man at the end of this biography the paucity of sources leaves us with a shadowy and somewhat unsympathetic figure, whose reputation as a militarist remains dominant.

Maud Gonne

There have been numerous biographies of Maud Gonne, although Ferguson omits consideration of the last two to be written - Cardozo (1979) and Ward (1990) and also the study of the 'Adulterous Muse' by Frazier (2016) - as she briefly dismisses biographies for a 'reductive approach' in their focus on her romantic life and her stormy friendship with WB Yeats. Ferguson's major source of information comes from the Maud Gonne Collection in Emory University, lodged there by Professor Conrad Balliet, who spent decades researching the life of Gonne, including conducting a huge collection of interviews with family and friends in the 1970s. While Balliet did not complete his biography, 'For the Love of Maud', he published two articles, 'The Lives – and Lies – of Maud Gonne' and 'Maud Gonne – Violent Pacifist', the titles of which indicate his sensibilities. As Karen Steele comments (in an article not referenced by Ferguson) 'his focus...results more from his desire to portray Gonne as deceptive or quasi-schizophrenic instead of to reveal the psychologically complex woman behind the beautiful nationalist image.'¹ Ferguson's focus is on Gonne as political activist, however, given the propensity of the Yeats' admirers to criticise, marginalise or distort the contribution she made to Irish political life, some discussion of (male) bias would have been a welcome addition to this assessment of her life. The reliance on the material from Emory (and Balliet's obsession with Yeats) has consequences for the structure of the book. The first seven chapters deal with her early years and campaigns: a focus on her writings as 'the new Speranza', her fame as 'Ireland's Joan of Arc, the formation of Inghinidhe na hEireann; her marriage to John MacBride; the Easter Rising and its aftermath, her husband's execution, the ill-fated marriage proposal from Yeats and her eventual return to Ireland. The succeeding thirty plus years are dealt with in one chapter alone, 'The Treaty and after', which by its very brevity is unable to do justice to the full extent of her work during the Irish revolution and the feminist opposition to the emergence of the Free State and the 1937 Constitution. The result is that Yeats continues to be more of a focus than the biographer intended. There are some inaccuracies, due no doubt to the need to be concise: 'When Inghinidhe na hEireann evolved to become Cumann na mBan in 1913, Gonne held the role of honorary president from France, where she continued to write articles for *Bean na hEireann*.' In reality, Inghinidhe became a branch of Cumann na mBan and Gonne was never involved with that organisation, some of its leadership being actively hostile to her involvement. *Bean na hEireann* had ceased publication in 1911. It is odd also to learn that John MacBride's 'most enduring contribution to Irish politics was the nationalist movement would adopt a motto of "Sinn Fein"' (when the inspiration for its use has always been attributed to Mary Butler).

The lack of bibliographical details is regrettable, but Ferguson makes full use of Karen Steele's extensive collection *Maud Gonne's Irish Nationalist Writings* (2004) and the letters between Gonne and John Quinn, from the John Quinn papers in the New York Public Library and now published by Janis and Richard Londraville (1999). Although Witness Statements from the Bureau of Military History contain the recollections of a number of former Inghinidhe na hEireann members these are not included. As an academic in the discipline of English, Ferguson's strengths lie in her use of Gonne's writings. Her analysis and comparison between *Cathleen ni Houlihan* and Gonne's *The Dawn* (only published in 2004) as a reflection of 'the ideological conflict between Yeats and Gonne over the cultural role of art' is welcome. She also builds on the writings amassed by Steele to highlight Gonne as a 'prolific and ardent political writer from the 1890s and for the rest of her life, and that, far from removing herself from political life during her self-imposed exile...she continued

to publicise the plight of marginalised, voiceless individuals suffering under British rule, particularly evicted tenants, the Boers, children and prisoners.’ The book should have appeal to both historians and cultural studies.

Margaret Skinnider

For most people Margaret Skinnider is at best a marginal figure in the history of the Irish revolution, best known as the only woman to receive injuries as a result of her role as a combatant in the Easter Rising. Her name resurfaced when the first tranche of military service pension applications was released in 2014. Although badly wounded her application was refused because the assessor argued the law was ‘applicable to soldiers as generally understood in the masculine sense.’ In this pioneering biography Mary McAuliffe triumphantly rescues Skinnider from the condescension of history, using archival and family sources to reveal an uncompromising socialist feminist; a gender subversive who employed male drag in both personal and revolutionary settings, openly enjoying the company of woman, and who never retired from political life, devoting her later years to trade union activity. Through painstaking research and the support of Skinnider and O’Keefe family descendants, we now have a much fuller portrait. The biography is greatly enhanced by photos from family archives, including two with her long-time companion and life partner, former Cumann na mBan member Nora O’Keefe. The famous photo of Skinnider in male attire, a cigarette in her mouth, is revealed to be even more gender-subversive as McAuliffe includes an unedited version of the photo, complete with a woman linking arms on either side of Skinnider in her Fianna uniform. The biographical approach of McAuliffe is, as far as the archives permit, to uncover not only the public figure but her private life and choices. As biographers increasingly acknowledge the existence of same-sex couples in the revolutionary period, we are able to begin what McAuliffe urges is central, ‘a reassessment of the lives and times of these women’.

Skinnider’s autobiography *Doing my Bit for Ireland*, written while she was in America and recovering from her wounds, told her life up to her involvement in the rising. McAuliffe has used additional sources, such as the unpublished diary of WSPU militant Helen Crawford and witness statements from Glasgow republicans to flesh out these early years of life in a Glasgow full of Irish emigrants, where the young Skinnider became a fluent Irish speaker, a suffrage militant, member of the Independent Labour Party and an Irish republican. One of three daughters with three older brothers, the family was not wealthy but it was able to support the education of all the girls and Margaret qualified as a mathematics teacher for primary schools. By 1913 she was helping to train and drill the boys of the Glasgow Fianna and when Cumann na mBan developed in Glasgow she was captain of what was named the Anne Devlin branch. Those influences were to inform her politics for the rest of her life. She was physically brave and drawn to militant action, taking part in raids on munition factories and mines as Glasgow republicans began to seek sources of supplies to smuggle over to Ireland. With great relish and some private amusement, she participated in the rifle practice club set up at the start of war in 1914 and intended for women who wanted to help in the defence of empire.

During the Rising she argued with her commanding officer Michael Mallin, that the Proclamation had given women ‘the same right to risk our lives as the men.’ In that dual role she would change out of her grey dress into her moleskin uniform, complete with knee breeches, which had been given to her by Markievicz. This ‘gender mimicry’ was a way, McAuliffe argues, of disrupting the traditional gender order, although both Skinnider and Markievicz understood that ‘it was only in male dress that they, as women, could really be soldiers.’ Skinnider’s biography stressed the importance of the Proclamation, where ‘for the first time in history’ the principle of equal suffrage had been proclaimed. As a contemporaneous document it provides evidence that from the outset of the Rising women activists fully realized its significance in terms of the future equality of

the sexes. Mallin put Skinnider in charge of a mission leading five men out from the College of Surgeons to burn down two buildings in order to cut off the retreat of the British forces, during which she was shot three times. She spent seven weeks recuperating in hospital, thereby escaping prison, before returning to Scotland. At the end of 1916 she travelled to New York, one of a number of women to speak at rallies to raise support for the Republican movement. Before leaving she had helped Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and her son Owen to be smuggled over to America and during 1917 and 1918 Skinnider, Nora Connolly and Sheehy Skeffington were in close contact, eventually travelling back together to Britain on a war ship. While Skinnider returned to Glasgow and to teaching, Ireland was where she wanted to be. In March 1919 she returned, immediately rejoining Cumann na mBan. She had met Nora O'Keefe, a Tipperary woman who had been living in America since 1909, and by 1919 both women were in Dublin, and living together. They would continue to live together, recognised by their friends as a couple, until O'Keefe's death in 1961.

O'Keefe family archives and other new sources provide a snapshot of 'Margaret and Nora at home and at war'. The O'Keefe family were close friends with such well known republicans as Sean Treacy and Sean Hogan. It was Nora who went to identify the dead body of Treacy, gunned down in Talbot Street. In detailing the activities of Skinnider and O'Keefe: storing arms and hiding men in their Fairview home as well as delivering dispatches, providing guns for ambushes, fundraising and other activities, we have a glimpse of the toll exacted on those who participated in these revolutionary years. Skinnider became an executive member of Cumann na mBan and its Director of Training. During the quieter time of the Truce her widowed mother, on her way to visit her daughter in Dublin, drowned when the *SS Rowan* was involved in a collision after leaving Glasgow in heavy fog. The civil war years saw both woman active on the anti-Treaty side. Skinnider ended up as Paymaster-General of the IRA before arrest and eleven month's imprisonment while O'Keefe too was one of the hundreds of republican women to suffer imprisonment by Free State forces. Papers of Cumann na mBan members lodged in the UCD Archives are mined for Cumann na mBan activity in the desolate years of the 1920s. When Skinnider stood unsuccessfully in the election for president after Markievicz resigned in order to join Fianna Fail, O'Keefe resigned in loyal indignation while Skinnider stood down from the executive. By now she was again a full-time teacher and an activist within the Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

The final chapter covers the years 1941 until Skinnider's death in 1972. It traces her activism in the INTO and her support for Clann na Poblachta, where she was joined by many of her former comrades. She stood unsuccessfully for the Clann in the Dublin Corporation election and was also an executive member of the INTO. The woman known for her role in 1916 had, by the time of her retirement, spent 30 years as a trade union activist and was still continuing to fight for women's equal pay and improvements to the old age pension. Her grave in Glasnevin lies beside that of her former comrade, Countess Markievicz. In an afterward McAuliffe traces her growing public reputation, and the use of images of Skinnider during the 2016 commemorations. As one of the few women of the period to have her memories recorded, we can still hear Scottish-accented voice as she talks about her 1916 involvement. With this slim biography we now have a much fuller picture of a woman who devoted her life to the causes of Ireland, socialism and women's emancipation.

Henry Joy McCracken

It seems extraordinary that in the plethora of books on the United Irishmen and the 1798 rebellion, we have no biography of Henry Joy McCracken, a name particularly revered in his home town of Belfast. Most of our knowledge of McCracken is from the splendid biography of his sister Mary Ann, first published by Mary O'Neill in 1960 and reprinted in 2019, and from Jemmy Hope,

weaver poet and radical, who ‘admired McCracken above all others.’ McCracken, unlike comrades such as Tone or Hope, kept no diary and wrote no pamphlets. His sister complained about his ‘careless’ spelling and poor attempts at correspondence when he was incarcerated in Kilmainham jail prior to the Rising. Those who knew him agreed upon his attractiveness as a human being but the lightness of his footprint in terms of historical sources compels Smyth to provide a background in which his leading character appears only intermittently until the climactic last years of his short life.

This short, elegantly written biography by Jim Smyth, author of *The Men of No Property: Irish Radicals and Popular Politics in the Late Eighteen Century* stresses the context from which (in Guy Beiner’s words) McCracken, a ‘Belfast Presbyterian manager of a cotton mill’ became the revolutionary leader of the Battle of Antrim, his call to arms issued to ‘The Army of Ulster’ on 6 June, in ‘The First Year of Liberty’. The development of Belfast from its earliest days to its triumph as a centre of enlightenment and of commerce, is succinctly described, contextualised by a description of the character of northern Presbyterianism, determined by those 17th century Scottish settlers who refused to conform to episcopal authority. While Smyth is cautious about reading too much into ‘national character concepts’, he does believe a ‘composite Ulsterman’ could be described in terms of the political personality of Ulster Presbyterianism – ‘a rhetoric of Calvinist certainty and immovable principle.’ It is an evocative phrase which one could argue has a resonance still in the 21st century.

In Belfast, a busy port town with a merchant elite dominated by Presbyterians, the families of the Joys and the McCrackens were amongst the most important. Francis Joy established the *Belfast Newsletter* in 1737 as a liberal and entrepreneurial paper and it was the Joy family who pioneered the use of textile spinning machines in the north. The McCrackens came from seafaring stock and Captain John McCracken started the Marine Charitable Society for aged and indigent seamen. Henry Joy was secretary of the Belfast Charitable Society. Civil philanthropy was important for both families. At the age of 18 Henry Joy was apprenticed to the family firm, becoming a manager by 22. In 1791 Belfast celebrated Bastille Day. Smyth explains the enthusiasm for the French Revolution in terms of the peculiarities of the north. As the most powerful Catholic nation in Europe had thrown off the yoke of tyranny no longer could Catholics be dismissed as being subservient to authority. They too could fight for liberty. It was the moment for a ‘seminal realignment of Irish politics’ and Wolfe Tone was the man who seized the opportunity. In 1792 the United Irishmen in Belfast launched a newspaper the *Northern Star*; a Catholic Relief Act was passed; agrarian disturbances began, and so too did government repression against the United Irishmen and the Volunteers.

Until this moment, Henry Joy McCracken is absent from the historical records, but, as Smyth says, ‘It is characteristic of Henry Joy McCracken, a man of action, that he re-enters the historical record at this moment of escalating conflict.’ When a riot took place outside the offices of the *Northern Star* it was McCracken who confronted the officer in charge, replying when accused of being a ringleader of the mob and ‘a rascal’ that ‘I am your equal’, demanding ‘satisfaction’ for the insult. In 1795 he joins the United Irishmen, standing, as Smyth describes, at the intersection of the revolutionary forces challenging Protestant ascendancy and the British connection. Tone includes him on the list of those who took the famous oath on MacArt’s Fort, at the top of Belfast’s Cavehill. McCracken is the person who transforms the Belfast movement into a revolutionary underground movement. More than any other leader he devoted time to building up a relationship with the Catholic Defenders. Smyth devotes several pages into explaining the importance of the Defenders and other agrarian societies in the increasingly sectarianised landscape of Ulster.

Fears of French invasion bolstered by the support of Irish radicals led to increased repression and in October 1796 Henry Joy, his brother and others were incarcerated in Kilmainham as state

prisoners. Only in the letters between him and his sister do we truly hear his voice. By the time he was released on the grounds of ill health at the end of 1797, the heart of the movement had moved from Belfast to Dublin. The north hesitated to act even while Wexford and Wicklow rose. The Ulster Directory debated their course of action, with McCracken arguing for action against those who wanted to wait until French support arrived. On 5 June 1798 McCracken became Commander in Chief for Ulster. Later, defeated and hiding out in the Belfast hills, he wrote to Mary Ann that Antrim had been lost ‘entirely owing to treachery, the rich always betray the poor.’ It is the sentence he is best known for and one which Smyth, in his own words, spends some time ‘unpacking’, considering the role of informer and the extent to which the leadership of the United Irishmen could be considered as supporters of the poor. The conduct of McCracken before his hanging in Belfast’s corn market echoed, said Mary Ann, his frame of mind five years previously, when he said to his friend Russell, ‘of what consequences are our lives or the lives of a few individuals, compared to the liberty and happiness of Ireland?’ It would take more than a century before his remains, buried with little ceremony in St George’s churchyard, were reinterred so that Henry Joy McCracken could lie beside his sister in the grounds of Clifton Street graveyard, beside the poor house built by their uncle Robert Joy.

The final chapter ‘Remembering Henry Joy’ discusses memoirs of the period, paying full tribute to the devotion of Mary Ann McCracken in handing over her letters to Richard Madden for his multi-volume history of the United Irishmen, also providing an overview of the glimpses of Henry Joy that can be obtained in other sources. The ‘communal trauma’ of 1798 had the effect of inducing public silence and ‘defused radical politics’. An article by Guy Beiner is referenced here, though not his monumental and essential *Forgetful Remembrance* (2018). The historical figure of McCracken today, argues Smyth, ‘resonates with left-wing republican sensibilities, and with a spirit of protestant nonconformity, ill at ease equally with Hibernian nationalism and backwoods unionism’. He finishes with an insightful discussion of Stewart Parker’s wildly inventive and exuberant *Northern Star*, in which the playwright marries the last days of McCracken with the realities of Belfast at the height of the Troubles. Having seen both the original Lyric production in 1984 and a more recent production by Rough Magic in 2017, again at Belfast’s Lyric theatre, but now in a post-peace process context, the legacy of Henry Joy remains as compelling as ever.

Margaret Ward

NOTES

- 1 Karen Steele, ‘Biography as Promotional Discourse, the case of Maud Gonne’, *Cultural Studies*, 15 (1), 2001, 138-160

Martin O’Donoghue **The legacy of the Irish Parliamentary Party in independent Ireland, 1922-1949** (Liverpool, 2019), Liverpool University Press, ISBN: 978-1-78962-030-6, 279 pp, £80 hb
 James Doherty **Irish liberty, British democracy: the third Home Rule crisis, 1909-14** (Cork, 2019), Cork University Press, ISBN: 978-1-78205-360-6, 308 pp, €39 hb

Conor Cruise O’Brien, a grandson of David Sheehy, Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) MP from 1885 to 1918 (with one brief interruption, 1900-1903), was once discussing the 1916 Rising and its consequences with his father-in-law, Seán McEntee, a 1916 veteran and long-time Fianna Fáil TD and cabinet minister. He said to McEntee somewhat ruefully that ‘your people pushed my people aside’, and that is indeed the popular impression of what happened in the 1918 general election. But

it is not as simple as all that, as Martin O'Donoghue demonstrates in *The legacy of the Irish Parliamentary Party in independent Ireland, 1922-1949*. He writes that the IPP 'left a distinctive mark on the politics of independent Ireland', and he sees that manifested in three ways: the adherence of the political parties of independent Ireland to the parliamentary and democratic norms to which the IPP had accustomed the Irish people, the continued participation of some former IPP members and supporters and their families in Irish politics, and the persistence of commemorative events – such as Ivy Day – celebrating the heroes of the IPP and their achievements through agrarian agitation and in other areas.

Ivy Day – immortalised by James Joyce in one of his best-known stories in *Dubliners* – is still held each year in Glasnevin cemetery on, or close to, the anniversary of Parnell's death on 6 October 1891. In addition, the annual Parnell Summer School at Avondale, Parnell's ancestral home in county Wicklow, remains a staple of the Irish calendar. O'Donoghue and this reviewer are both former academic directors of the Summer School. O'Donoghue places much emphasis in his book on the political careers in independent Ireland of those identified with the old IPP tradition, most notably Captain William Redmond, James Dillon and Frank MacDermot. Two of them were, of course, sons of the last two leaders of the IPP – and both of them, with MacDermot, ended up in Fine Gael or its antecedent Cumann na nGaedheal. All three, however, had first attempted to revive the IPP – albeit in new configurations – as a means of circumventing the Civil War divisions that defined Irish politics after independence.

Captain Redmond, an independent TD for Waterford from 1923, founded the Irish National League party in 1926 but joined Cumann na nGaedheal in 1931 after the League collapsed. He died in 1932, and was succeeded by his widow, Bridget (née Mallick) – who held the seat for Fine Gael until her death in 1952. Dillon and MacDermot entered politics as independent TDs in 1932, and then established the National Centre Party in 1933 – though it soon merged with Cumann na nGaedheal to form Fine Gael. Dillon was Minister for Agriculture in the two inter-party governments of 1948-51 and 1954-57 under John A. Costello as Taoiseach. Costello did not come from a conspicuously IPP background, but neither had he been a Sinn Féiner in 1918 – and his biographer, David McCullagh, is quoted by O'Donoghue as stating that there 'could be no doubt' he had been a 'staunch home ruler' in his youth. Another Fine Gael Taoiseach, John Bruton, has distinguished himself in defending the achievements of the IPP – in particular, those of John Redmond.

Not everyone with old IPP loyalties gravitated to Fine Gael. One former IPP MP, Thomas O'Donnell, who was a co-founder with Captain Redmond of the National League, later joined Fianna Fáil; he failed to win a Dáil seat as a candidate for either party. Another former IPP MP, Alfie Byrne, remained an independent – and was a TD for north Dublin constituencies almost continuously from 1922 until his death in 1956 and, famously, was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin on ten occasions. His name was canvassed as a possible candidate for the Irish presidency in 1938, but Douglas Hyde was chosen instead. The greatest legacy of the IPP in independent Ireland was, however, the parliamentary tradition which those who pushed the IPP aside in 1918 inherited from Parnell and his successors. As Brian Farrell observed in a Thomas Davis Lecture in 1972, the leaders of the Irish revolution 'did not seek to destroy the institutional status quo in Ireland; they sought to take it over'. They commandeered the parliamentary tradition, and used it for their own purposes – and the governmental apparatus of the new state that emerged after 1921 drew upon that tradition in almost every detail.

Why did the Irish revolution, drawing its inspiration from a cult of political violence, not repudiate the parliamentary tradition? The obvious explanation – which the leaders of the revolution would perhaps have been loath to admit – is that constitutional politics had served the Irish people well, especially in the four decades before 1916 when the IPP skilfully exerted pressure in Westminster to demand a solution to the land question and to address other grievances. Parliamentary

agitation in those years had delivered ameliorative measures that transformed Irish society beyond recognition. Moreover, the IPP under Redmond had come within a whisker of winning Home Rule, only to have it postponed at the outbreak of the First World War.

Just how close the IPP came to winning Home Rule is the theme of James Doherty's book *Irish liberty, British democracy: the third Irish Home Rule crisis, 1909-14*. Doherty's argument is that the IPP would likely have secured Home Rule but for the outbreak of the First World War. Redmond's tragedy was that 'the unexpected cataclysm [of the war], usually seen as averting the eruption of civil war in Ireland, may have served to dash a life's work on the cusp of its culmination'. Two indecisive general elections in 1910 had given the IPP the balance of power in parliament, and this enabled them to get Home Rule back on the political agenda for the first time since Gladstone's fourth and final premiership came to an unhappy end on the issue of Home Rule in 1894. Asquith's Liberal government took up the cause of Home Rule in 1910 out of political necessity – not with any Gladstonian moral purpose. In short, they were forced to do so by the parliamentary arithmetic. However, Doherty suggests that there was solid support for it among the British public, particularly the rank-and file of the Liberal party – as distinct from the party's leadership. This, in addition to the parliamentary arithmetic, constrained the government from abandoning Home Rule despite the opposition of Ulster Unionists, supported by the Conservative party at Westminster. He contends that Redmond and the IPP were, therefore, in a much stronger position to secure Home Rule than has been generally recognised in previous studies of this period.

Doherty presents an impressive array of material from pamphlets, newspapers and periodicals to support his claim that British public opinion – the 'British democracy' of the title of his book – supported Home Rule. He shows that, with the veto of the House of Lords abolished by the 1911 Parliament Act, the passage of the Home Rule Bill was widely regarded throughout Britain as a test of the new political dispensation – in other words, a test of whether the will of the House of Commons would prevail. He writes: 'the essence of Unionist opposition, Liberal writers asserted, was an effort to preserve oligarchy, while Home Rule was a struggle to assert democratic rights ... the assault on Home Rule [was] a fresh eruption of the constitutional struggle between peers and people'. It is a persuasive analysis. Nevertheless, public opinion is a nebulous concept – even more so in the early years of the twentieth century than now – and it is fickle. Doherty may be right about Britain public opinion favouring Home Rule in 1912-14, but I wonder whether it would have countenanced the use of force against Ulster Unionists in order to coerce them into a unitary Home Rule Ireland.

Doherty concedes that Redmond and the IPP 'failed utterly to grapple with the legitimate fears of Ulster's Protestant population'. That, and not the First World War, is ultimately why Redmond and the IPP were denied a Home Rule parliament. The threat of armed rebellion in Ulster prevailed over British democracy, and this raises the awkward matter of how a democratic society which espouses liberal values can be made to accept the type of measures – irredeemably illiberal in character – that are required in order to defeat political violence. Asquith's government was reluctant to adopt such measures despite the pressures of public opinion and the parliamentary arithmetic. War intervened to take them off the hook. Would the Home Rule Bill have satisfied Irish aspirations? It was undeniably a modest measure of self-government, and the best that Doherty can say about it is that its 'most ardent supporters and steadfast opponents could agree that ... [it] would open the door to ever-greater autonomy'. Those who would eventually lead the 1916 Rising would certainly not have been satisfied. Accordingly, even if Home Rule had come into operation in 1914, the Rising might have happened anyway. In that case, poor old John Redmond presiding over an insubstantial parliament in College Green would be remembered today as the Kerensky of the Irish revolution.

Felix M. Larkin

Elizabeth Malcolm and Dianne Hall, **A New History of the Irish in Australia**, (Cork, 2019), Cork University Press, ISBN: 9781782053057, 448 pp, €25.00 pb

A New History of the Irish in Australia ends with something not quite new – the Irish joke. It may be unusual to begin a review with the end of the book, but it is here that the authors make the point that whatever the waxing and waning of attitudes towards the Irish in Australia, derogatory stereotypes remain, even if they are tramped out much less frequently now. The significance of this? That jokes capitalising on such negative stereotypes reflect real contemporary and historical prejudice and discrimination. As Malcolm and Hall state, a nation of immigrants, like Australia, cannot afford to take such humour lightly. The challenge, as presented in the final chapter, is to try to understand why such negative stereotypes continue to have currency, even potency, today – more than 100 years after large scale Irish migration to Australia. Understanding contemporary prejudice may be the challenge on which the book ends but investigating the historical foundations of these attitudes and analysing their impact on Irish Australians – Irish-born migrants and those identifying as ‘Irish’ (with Irish parentage) – from the beginning of white migration to the colonies is the task which is sustained throughout the volume. To achieve this, the authors adopt a multi-layered approach. They examine the racialisation of the Irish. They also trace the impact that events in Ireland had on the experiences of the Irish diaspora in Australia.

Much of the authors’ investigation revolves around the concept of ‘race’. Race is, and has been, a much contested and maligned but highly pertinent category of analysis for a settler colonial society like Australia. Arguably, Australians have been obsessed by ‘race’ since white migration began. The colonies were built on the dispossession of Aboriginal people and, for much of its history, colonial, state and national policies and legislation were structured along racialised lines. In this first section of the three-part study, Malcolm and Hall explain the contested concept of the Irish as a ‘race’ beginning with the notion that Irish migrants were ‘lawless savages’ set to destroy the ‘civilised’ Anglo-Saxon character of the colonies. Through exploring interactions between the Irish, Indigenous Australians and Chinese Australians, Malcolm and Hall argue that the Irish occupied a somewhat liminal space in racialised narratives. Although they were never subject to the same degree of nineteenth century colonial violence as Australia’s First Nations people, the ‘white’ Irish were regarded as having much in common with non-European, non-white populations.

Not surprisingly, this issue of racialisation directs much of the second section of the book, ‘Stereotypes’. Here the authors cover an impressive breadth of topics from madness and criminality to popular culture and employment. To make the scope of this selection manageable, they employ a gender lens. For example, they trace the derogatory use of stereotype, including that of the ‘simianized’ Irish man, to undermine the potency and the revolutionary potential or danger of the rebellious Irish man. In a rigorously researched and engagingly titled chapter, ‘Bridget need not apply’, they also undertake a myth or reality test, assessing just how far the ‘Irish need not apply’ restriction was deployed in the Australian labour market. The result is revealing of the complex intersections of ‘race’ and ethnicity, class and gender at play in Australian society.

The final section of the book focuses on that seemingly troublesome and disruptive aspect of Irish life – politics. As the authors say early on in their study, plotting the history of the Irish in Australia is not simply about tracing a story of physical migration. Rather, it is about analysing how this group of migrants transferred and adapted ways of imagining the world. To do this, they delve into the culture they come from and with which they maintained contact over generations. The most obvious and perhaps dramatic of these cultural aspects – especially as the nineteenth century progressed and certainly as the twentieth century dawned – was the politics of Irish nationalism. Through examining the impact of Irish politics on the experiences of the Irish

in Australia, the authors reveal the ebb and flow of sectarianism, while also exposing the quite stark distinctions between the experiences of Catholic Irish Australians, who were increasingly at odds with loyal imperial Australia, and Protestant Irish Australians who were overwhelmingly in synch.

Malcolm and Hall criticise a long tradition of Australian historiography for downplaying the significance and value of the contributions that the Irish have made to the development of modern, non-Indigenous Australian culture and society. While doing so, they acknowledge that their *New History of the Irish in Australia* knowingly builds on Patrick O'Farrell's ground-breaking 1980s study, *The Irish in Australia*. Some of O'Farrell's findings no longer resonate, still they applaud his 'courage' in posing the challenging questions that he did. In the same vein, these authors should be lauded for the courage they demonstrate in posing 'new' and sometimes uncomfortable questions about the place of the Irish in mainstream Australian historiography at a time when pursuing this strand of research is neither current nor popular. Their research is meticulous, attention to detail impressive, and their elucidation on the complex intersections of 'race', ethnicity, class, religion, gender, and imperial-colonised positioning makes their history so new, and so necessary.

Sharon Crozier-De Rosa

James Loughlin **Fascism and Constitutional Conflict: the British Extreme Right and Ulster in the Twentieth Century**, (Liverpool, 2019) Liverpool University Press, ISBN: 978-1-78694-177-0, 366 pp, £90 hb

This is a comprehensive, well written and lively account of the British far-right's interest in Northern Ireland. It discusses in detail organizations such as the British Fascists, the Ulster Fascists, the Union Movement, the National Front, the British National Party and Combat-18. There were dramatically different political and social contexts in the eras in which these organizations functioned. Many embraced a visceral Loyalist ethos, to the extent of aping violent sectarianism, while a few, notably Oswald Mosley's various parties, attempted some form of 'cross-community' appeal. Loughlin rightly locates the emergence of British fascism in the crisis of empire after the Great War. It was no surprise then, that the loss of Ireland loomed large in the minds of those who feared working class militancy at home and anti-colonial revolt abroad. There was a strong crossover between the 'Die-Hards' who resented any compromise with Irish nationalism and those who formed the first fascist organizations. The former intelligence chief at Dublin Castle, General Sir. Ormonde Winter was an early recruit to the British Fascists (BF). Some saw echoes of Edward Carson in Mussolini and the Ulster Volunteers as a precursor of his Blackshirts. The BF organized in Ireland, north and south, but in Northern Ireland its tone was set by the prominence of activists such as Dorothy Grace Harnett. A former female searcher for the Ulster Special Constabulary, Harnett's virulent sectarian organizing led to a virtual pogrom against Catholics in Kilkeel during 1933. The BF's politics meant it could not cooperate with the Blueshirts nor émigré fascist groups like those based in Northern Ireland's Italian community.

Its tone was mirrored somewhat by the National Front of the 1970s and 1980s, which too embraced rabid loyalism, though its sectarianism often seemed a case of trying too hard. People with no family or political connection to 'Ulster' (and even in some cases with Irish Catholic backgrounds) cheered on loyalist paramilitaries and ranted about 'Fenians' and 'Taigs.' This tallied with (and was not unrelated to) certain English football fans embracing Loyalist iconography in the same period. Loughlin shows how many actual loyalists remained unconvinced, suspicious or unsympathetic to these efforts. But a few, particularly those based on the 'mainland' did

become fascists themselves and certainly attacking Irish events in Britain provided the NF (and later the BNP) with a focus for violent mobilization. Though politically the NF made little headway in the North it did have some impact. The young Johnnie Adair and some of his contemporaries were teenage NF skinheads before graduating to sectarian murder. The NF's presence at Windsor Park helped finally alienate the few Catholic fans Northern Ireland still attracted in the 1980s.

However, Laughlin also illustrates that some Irish nationalists were not immune to fascism's appeal. Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists (BUF), took a different approach to the BF, including seeking contact with prospective allies in the Free State. To many nationalists Mosley was seen as sympathetic to Irish concerns, a perception largely based on his criticisms of British policy during the War of Independence. (Though ironically his deputy William Joyce was a southern loyalist). The BUF courted Catholic support in Britain, trying to take advantage of tensions between the Irish and Jewish communities, notably in London. This was countered somewhat by the labour movement but is often underplayed in the more romantic retellings of 1930's anti-fascism. The BUF could rhetorically summon up Parnell, praise Joseph Devlin and de Valera and astonishingly did not condemn the IRA's 1939 bombing campaign (the NF in contrast made every effort to mobilize anti-Irish sentiment in the aftermath of IRA attacks). Interned alongside Mosley and other fascists during the Second World War was Cahir Healy, the former Sinn Féin TD and long-standing nationalist MP who became a confidante and correspondent of the fascist leader. Mosley's Union Movement tried to use the popular anti-partition mood to influence the Irish in post-war Britain, condemning Stormont misrule and demanding fair play for nationalists.

The Connolly Association played an important role in countering Mosley's efforts, as did an anti-fascist statement by IRA prisoners during 1948. Noting an attack on Connolly Association supporters by Irish right-wingers in London during 1950, Laughlin mistakes the *United Irishman* for the publication of a fascist splinter group when in fact it was the paper of the mainstream republican movement. This is an easy mistake to make however, as at that time the *United Irishman's* tone was anti-communist, anti-Masonic and anti-Jewish. That partly reflects the entry of several former Ailtirí na hAiséirghe activists into the IRA and Sinn Féin after the war. While Mosley ultimately failed to secure major Irish support, the smug view that fascism was the sole preserve of Irish loyalists does not withstand scrutiny. Laughlin's narrative extends into the 21st century and he includes an analysis of Combat-18, whose notoriety in Ireland is largely based on the 1995 riot at Lansdowne Road. Laughlin rightly takes C-18's inflated claims of responsibility with a grain of salt. The widespread casual anti-Irish sentiment among the travelling English support, whose anthem was 'No Surrender to the IRA' was always likely to produce trouble, with or without a fascist presence.

But this reviewers' abiding memory of the game was the monkey chanting from hundreds of *Irish* fans aimed at England's Paul Ince. This was countered by anti-fascist Irish supporters, who themselves were prepared to confront the English hooligans. There now exists an Irish far-right with an ability to quote Pádraig Pearse and James Stephens and utilize the imagery of the War of Independence. It has been able to exploit confusion during the Covid crisis and displays a street level aggression reminiscent of the NF in its heyday. James Laughlin's fine book illustrates how incoherence and opportunism are sometimes no barrier to fascists gaining influence and makes useful reading for anyone observing the emergence of these toxic politics in Ireland today.

Brian Hanley

Ann Marie O'Brien **The Ideal Diplomat? Women and Irish Foreign Affairs, 1946-90** (Dublin, 2020) Four Courts Press, ISBN: 978-1-84682-851-5, 176 pp, €40.50 hb

The Ideal Diplomat? is concerned with highlighting the contribution of women to Irish diplomacy between 1946 and 1990. The monograph draws on an impressive array of archival sources, primarily from the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as State publications and oral history interviews. Placing female employees of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs at the centre of her expansive study, O'Brien demonstrates just how systemic the previous failure to include females in studies of Irish diplomacy has been. (10). The book also highlights how the development of the international community after World War II – paired with Ireland's own increasingly international outlook, and its expanding membership of various international organisations – was particularly beneficial for the careers of women in Irish diplomacy. As significant as the shifting international environment was, a local change in personnel was equally important. The first chapter emphasises how from the early years, a narrow vision of the 'ideal diplomat' was fostered by the Department of External Affairs during Joseph Walshe's tenure as secretary. Walshe viewed the position as one for educated, well-to-do men. O'Brien is strong in her assessment that both Walshe and de Valera held innate prejudices against women in their department; 'viewing them as less important and carrying less prestige' than men in the same roles. When Walshe was replaced by Frederick Boland in 1946, the department gained a secretary who was more open to the recruitment and promotion of women – albeit those who were equally as privileged as their male counterparts. Noting that women's increasing access to third level education was certainly a factor in their successful entry to the Irish diplomatic service, O'Brien also emphasises that these women shared with their male colleagues 'the privileged life of the middle class'.

The utility of O'Brien's research also lies in its transnational elements. With her account of Máire MacEntee's posting to Madrid in 1948, we are given a healthy reminder that Ireland was not the only cold house for women in this period. MacEntee increasingly resented her appointment to Spain, stating that 'all participation in public life was denied' to women there. As a result of these attitudes, she was seldom given adequate recognition by the Spanish foreign office as a *bona fide* member of the Irish diplomatic staff; and was even physically assaulted by a Spanish official during a trade price negotiation. The book progressively reveals the increasing agility of women in the diplomatic service from the 1950s. However, they continued to operate at a distinct disadvantage; in addition to the marriage bar, women such as Josephine McNeill, appointed to the Hague in 1948, also faced far lower pay than many of her married male colleagues. Later, McNeill was obliged to publicly emphasise Ireland's family-centric values – the right of parents to educate their children, and, more uncomfortably, the marriage bar, as a member of the Irish delegation to the Third Committee of the United Nations. The publication of the final report of the Commission on the Status of Women and the end of the civil service marriage bar in 1973 coincided with the appointment of Ireland's first female ambassador, Mary Tinney, to Sweden. In the same year, Ireland became a member of the EEC; consequently, the Department of Foreign Affairs expanded considerably. An increasing number of women were appointed to diplomatic positions; but O'Brien is careful to note that for women, foreign postings were initially confined to developed countries. Women were also making an increasingly definitive contribution to the shaping of foreign policy; the era of the 'token woman' was fading fast. A contributing factor here was the scope for women to have a longer career in the department after the marriage bar was removed.

In the same period, the Troubles came to cast a shadow over the work of Irish diplomats. While women were routinely excluded from postings in Northern Ireland during the Troubles (even as they came to be appointed to 'hardship postings' in African countries), they were nevertheless compelled to implement Anglo-Irish policy from other areas. We are informed, for example, of

Thelma Doran's experience as vice-consul in San Francisco. Reflecting state policy on the matter, she was careful not to share platforms with Irish American republican organisations who supported the Provisional IRA. This is just one example of how this book makes a valuable contribution not only to our knowledge of gender and diplomacy, but equally to our wider knowledge of international affairs through Irish eyes in the second half of the twentieth century. O'Brien accounts for increased, if imperfect, equality in women's promotions, postings and policy designations in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At home, she notes, the situation remained particularly uneven. Women continued to be designated primarily towards administrative roles in the department's headquarters, though these positions still resulted in progression as family friendly policies were implemented by human resources. The EEC division of the department, however, remained a 'male bastion' until the early 2000s, ostensibly due to the critical importance of policy formulated therein.

For the uninitiated, a minor introduction to the lexicon and particular hierarchy of diplomacy (first secretary, chargé d'affaires etc) would perhaps have strengthened this reader's own immediate understanding of this book. Similarly, a brief account of the state of affairs vis à vis gender prior to 1950 would be helpful in contextualising the later environment explored by the book. However, this volume is extremely detailed and useful. It is a major contribution to our knowledge of women's work in 20th century Ireland, and is essential reading for scholars of gender history, the civil service and Irish foreign policy.

Deirdre Foley

James H Murphy, **The Politics of Dublin Corporation, 1840-1900, From Reform to Expansion**, (Dublin, 2020), Four Courts Press, ISBN: 978-1-84682-853-9, 212 pp, €45 hb

This book fills a major gap in the political history of Dublin between Jacqueline's Hill's, *From Patriots to Unionists*, and the many works that pick up the story in the twentieth century after the passing of the 1898 Local Government Act. While very welcome, by ignoring the wider intellectual, social and economic life of the city, the author has missed the opportunity to situate the 'Corpo' and its members in context. In fairness, he admits in the Introduction that the book has the limited aim of offering a narrative of the Corporation's proceedings and presumes a wider knowledge of the city, and Ireland's history. Consequently, there is little of interest for the student of the labour movement and a brief mention towards the end of J P Nanetti as the leader of that movement. This failure to examine the intrinsic links between the politics of the council chamber and Dublin's wider society leads to a fairly dry record of proceedings. The Chamber of Commerce and the Port and Docks Board are the only other substantial civic actors to receive a significant mention. The problem, as Murphy admits, is that the achievements of the Council were extremely modest. The development of the Vartry scheme to bring fresh water into the city was its' only major achievement in an era when local authorities in Britain, and of course Belfast, were embracing 'municipal socialism' and transforming urban centres in what was the golden age of self-government.

Of course, the city fathers inherited a long and troubled history of ethnographic division. Catholic Emancipation and the new £10 franchise may have widened the electorate from the old narrow guild base to 8,000 substantial property voters, but the large number of 'freemen' still entitled to vote in municipal elections, mainly descendants of guild members, gave the old Conservative oligarchy a buffer in its' dealings with the new, mainly Catholic nationalist majority. The fact that many of these voters no longer lived in Dublin, let alone practised a trade there caused some resentment. Daniel O'Connell was the first Lord Mayor under the new dispensation and sought to make the Corporation an exemplar for a restored Irish Parliament. Subsequently, the Mayoralty alternated between Conservative-Protestant representatives and their Liberal-Repeal-Catholic counterparts. This

arrangement finally broke down with the rise of the Home Rule movement, after which the mayoralty was usually the preserve of nationalists.

The idea that Dublin Corporation could provide a show case for Irish democracy was, as Murphy points out, always flawed because the capital's interests had little to do with Ireland's largely rural based culture and economy. An extreme example during the famine occurred when a motion to allow grain to be diverted from the market to feed the starving populace was defeated because it could affect adversely the city's distilleries, although a Lord Mayor's fund was established for famine relief. Similar expressions of narrow self-interest revealed themselves in other debates such as that over the Vartry reservoir when John Martin, a Conservative representative of the Fitzwilliam ward denounced 'the inexpediency of bringing water into the homes of the poor'. It took from 1854 until 1875 to bring the scheme to fruition. The possibility of the city's water supplies being left to private enterprise, as happened with the provision of gas lighting, was only narrowly averted.

Dublin remained a poor, backward cousin of Belfast. Even the new railway lines that linked the city to the suburbs had a negative consequence, in facilitating the flight of the capital's business elite to the townships, where the air was cleaner and rates were lower. The population of the southern townships grew from 12 per cent of the capital's population in 1831 to 30 per cent by 1891. Their rateable valuation grew by 42 per cent over the same period. Howth and Malahide provided similar bolt holes to the north of the city. The controversy over the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland was one of the few debates where Dublin Corporation approached the status of a national civic assembly, but its members had little useful to say about the Fenian Rising of 1867 and the city fathers suffered the indignity of having management of the city's jails removed after staff helped the IRB leader James Stephens to escape.

It was the rise of the Home Rule movement that finally saw Dublin corporation align itself with the spirit of the nation or, as Murphy puts it, become 'a creature of the Irish Parliamentary Party'. The old Liberal bloc was devoured by the Conservatives, who increasingly came to identify themselves as Unionists, while the flight of business leaders to the suburbs saw the rise of the 'shopocracy' or more accurately, 'pubocracy'. One result was a decision of the new nationalist majority to increase the salary of the Lord Mayor from £2,000 a year to £3,000 on the basis that a publican or shopkeeper elevated to such a position could not be expected to maintain the dignity of the office in the way that earlier wealthy incumbents had out of his own pocket. By the end of the century 19 of the sixty seats on the corporation were held by publicans and licensed vintners. Comparing the smugness of this new political class with the 'miles of streets where the poor were huddled together', T W Russell, the Temperance crusader, said that, 'It was only in Dublin that men were chattering about politics when the very foundations of the state were being undermined'. The Parnell split only intensified the dominant incestuous political debate in nationalist ranks. It would not be until the Local Government Act of 1898 saw the electorate enlarged to 38,000, still leaving the vast majority of Dubliners disenfranchised, that the city's appalling social problems would begin to be addressed. But it would be another decade before radical mass movements would challenge the hegemony of the Home Rulers.

Padraig Yeates

John Mulqueen, *An Alien Ideology: Cold War Perceptions of the Irish Republican Left*, (Liverpool, 2019) Liverpool University Press, ISBN:978-1-789-62064-1, 296 pp, £75 hb

This is an important contribution to our understanding of the Irish left in the Cold War era and John Mulqueen performs a very useful service by researching British and American diplomatic and intelligence sources during the Cold War from the 1945 to 1990. That it is unbalanced is perhaps

inevitable as it does not cover the Soviet side of the conflict to any significant degree. That shortcoming is hopefully something the author will have the opportunity to redress at some stage. The focus is very much on the republican movement's turn to the left in the 1960s and the book's title derives from a debate within it about whether republicanism was an alien ideology. This view was rebutted by many of the champions of the left within the movement and encapsulated in a contemporary pamphlet by ard comhairle member Derry Kelleher entitled, *Republicanism, Christianity, Marxism, an Alien Ideology?* Arguably, this leftward turn was the most significant new departure in Irish politics on this island since independence. Arguable because the consequences are still spinning themselves out with the arrival of modern Sinn Féin's nationalist populism south of the Border; the consequences of which remain an unknown quantity. That the organisation itself grew out of an atavistic right wing Catholic nationalist reaction to left republicanism in Belfast at the time of the split in 1969/1970, shows that Clio has a malevolent sense of humour.

However, this book is focussed primarily on the Official Republican Movement in its various permutations between that split and the merging of one of its successor organisations, Democratic Left with the Labour Party. The central figure in the story is Sean Garland, a man of great strengths and shortcomings. He was also one of the most secretive individuals in Irish politics and many of those who worked with him closely over decades, including this reviewer, are left wondering at how little we really knew him. Even if the Soviet, GDR, Iraqi, North Korean or other archives are thoroughly rummaged, I doubt if we will ever know the full story. In many ways it is immaterial because, whatever his great strengths they could only operate within a closed political environment and his greatest weakness was his poor strategic political judgement, which left him at sea in the wider world. Paradoxically, Sean Garland could possibly have been a unifying figure in 1969 and 1970, when the political storm broke over the failure of the IRA to defend the Catholic ghettos in August 1969 (a responsibility that lay as much with Sean MacStiofáin for holding in reserve weapons he had under his control, as with Cathal Goulding for withholding what few he had in his arsenal because he underestimated the threat of a Loyalist backlash). Sean Garland was still hopeful of averting a split and was one of the few people in the Dublin leadership who retained standing among some of those who would leave to form the Provisional movement. Unfortunately, he had to go on the run after an armed robbery for funds to buy more guns in the autumn of 1969. By the time he returned the split had solidified. A united movement might have restrained the atavistic Catholic nationalism that did so much to characterise Provisional 'republicanism' in the following decades, or maybe not.

The Official IRA ceasefire in May 1972, sold initially as a short term measure to avert a slide into sectarian civil war after a series of self-inflicted disasters such as the killing of the Unionist Senator John Barnhill in Tyrone, the Aldershot explosion and the execution of Ranger Best became another strategic turning point that ceded the 'armed struggle', and with it the capacity to determine the pace and direction of events in the North to the Provisionals. The breakaway split that followed with the IRSP/INLA was an early warning of the political dangers ahead, as well as raising the tempo of violence. The final step was the decision to denounce the H-Block hunger strikers in 1981. The only significant figure in the leadership of the Official movement to oppose this was Tomás MacGiolla, but he did so within the confines of internal debate. Unfortunately, like many before, we discovered that anti-sectarian, class based politics were a barren field in the North and that proved an embittering experience for many activists as they saw the Provisional movement leap frog not alone them but ultimately the SDLP. Significantly, the movement rejected the opportunity offered them by John Hume to join his talks with Gerry Adams, which might have provided a chance of electoral recovery.

This understandable bitterness became politically blinding. Professor Jim Smyth, himself a former member of the Official movement put it vividly in a review of the *Lost Revolution* quoted

by John Mulqueen, in which he wrote that ‘opposition to the Provo “other” ultimately defined Official republicanism. Rivalry turned into *raison d’etre*, white whale and a way of life.’ That some of this bitterness was justified did not make it any less politically damaging in a society as deeply divided on sectarian lines as Northern Ireland. Anger as a motive force became politically incapacitating. Ultimately, the Official movement faced defeat in the south as well because of inherent contradictions. It could not sell itself to the electorate, or indeed growing numbers of its own members on the basis of increasingly social democratic policies while retaining tight democratic centralist structures. Sean Garland’s affinity with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is perfectly understandable, given that republicanism grew from the same Blanquist tradition as Bolshevism, but it was designed for revolutionaries attempting to overthrow reactionary dictatorships not achieve state power in modern democracies. When the Soviet Union collapsed there was nowhere to turn for inspiration or support.

This book confirms much of what many readers will have suspected about the nature of British and American attempts to monitor and influence Irish politics through diplomacy and intelligence operations, particularly after the Troubles began. Both powers moved gradually from relative ignorance to being well informed, which inevitably led to constant reassessments of the main players. In the 1970s they saw the Official movement as the greatest threat. It was only gradually that the Provisionals were promoted to the most significant player. However, there are no revealing details of secret intelligence operations, the operations of the Official IRA or money trails; and in places the extensive quotes from British and American source documents can read like a long diplomatic communique. Nevertheless, it is a welcome addition to the *Lost Revolution* and other studies of the Official republican movement.

Padraig Yeates

Lea David **The Past Can’t Heal Us: The Dangers of Mandating Memory in the Name of Human Rights** (Cambridge, 2020) Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781108861311, 243 pp, £75/€87.53 hb

Back in 2011 a few of us came together with Jack O’Connor in SIPTU to plan a Centenary Commemoration of the 1913 Lockout. It was not intended as a sentimental, bowdlerised remembrance of heroic workers fighting the evils of exploitation, although there was certainly a fair amount of that, rather it was meant to be a rallying point for the Labour movement in the aftermath of the deepest recession since 1929; to remind people of how important trade unions are for defending their interests, and of the enduring value of collective bargaining in a market economy where tooth and claw capitalism was back with a vengeance. It also had the attraction, for this reviewer at least, of cutting across the traditional divides of nationality and religion on this island. In 1913 Irish employers, catholic and protestant, nationalist and Unionist, stood shoulder to shoulder to starve their employees into submission. Likewise, Irish workers found their staunchest allies in English, Scottish and Welsh workplaces among fellow trade unionists. It was also undertaken because we knew that a decade of other commemorations was following close behind devoted to remembering more divisive themes; quite a few of which did indeed reopen old wounds.

Lea David’s book is important because it addresses a question central to the whole commemoration industry, *Can the Past Heal Us?* It is a brave book, because it challenges the human rights agenda that is now almost universally accepted as self-evidently the best way of dealing with the past. She describes how the status of victimhood can become ‘a comfortable one. If I am a victim, then I cannot be held responsible for anything and no one can argue with me because that would be

showing lack of respect for a victim. It is actually a powerful position when one can play the role of an under privileged and victimised nation'. The same argument can of course be applied to smaller collective entities and to individuals. A major instrument of this new phenomenon is the concept of Moral Remembrance, a standardised process developed by the United Nations and other international bodies, including the EU for confronting poisonous legacies of violence and oppression. States wishing to join the EU must comply with its criteria for moral remembrance before their applications can be considered. However, as David shows, greater compliance is required from some applicants than others, and a blind eye is sometimes turned towards how existing EU members such as Austria or the Baltic Republics deal with the past.

David looks in detail at the different standards applied to the legacy states of former Yugoslavia seeking EU membership, as opposed to Israel's record, where the enormity of the Holocaust has given that government a more or less free pass for its own transgressions. NATO can drop bombs on Belgrade for bad behaviour, but not on Tel Aviv. International power relationships can trump other considerations. David's starting point is to look at the agenda of the international human rights movement, not as the implementation of immutable truths bestowed on us by lawyers, but as an ideology. As with other crusaders, secular or religious, human rights activists have created institutions and developed cumulative organisational power to achieve their objectives and advance their interests. This can certainly help unite people and bind old wounds, but it can also divide them and perpetuate an often suppressed sense of grievance. One of the most important ideological and organisational tools of human rights activists has been the adoption of Moral Remembrance as an almost universal practice, accepted as the best method for dealing with the past. Its key principles are 'facing the past', accepting a 'duty to remember' and ensuring 'justice for victims'. The aim is to ensure that major crimes against humanity, such as genocide and ethnic cleansing, never happen again. Anyone involved in the Irish commemoration industry will quickly recognise the role of this programme in dealing with our own past and it has, to a large degree, been successful.

But there are flaws, such as applying simplistic categories of 'victims', 'perpetrators' and 'bystanders' to participants in past conflicts, while failing to appreciate that people's roles can change in the course of a conflict. Groups and individuals subjected to this process very quickly learn that the acquisition of victimhood is a valuable asset, a means of accessing political power and obtaining reparations. This is a phenomenon we are familiar with in Ireland, where Legacy Lawfare has evolved as a successor to previous forms of conflict. Victims can be weaponised by politicians and championing them can prove lucrative for lawyers. As well as healing past divisions, moral remembrance can be a means of perpetuating them. In her examination of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the warring states of former Yugoslavia, David looks at the consequences, many of them unintended, of having international experts tell the inhabitants of countries such as Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia how they must deal with their past. It is often a case of making small parochial round holes accommodate much larger international square pegs.

The responses of local elites can be remarkably inventive at subverting these agendas. For instance, the Croatian government hosts Holocaust remembrance events and finances the Jasenovac Concentration Camp Museum, where 100,000 people were killed by the Nazi collaboration regime of the Ustase, but it also funds official delegations to Bleiburg commemorations in Austria to remember the self-same Ustase members 'martyred' by Yugoslav partisans in the closing stages of the Second World War. Attempts at reconciliation can themselves generate conflict, as with communal commemorations organised by the Israeli-Palestinian Bereaved Parents for Peace movement. Its events have to be given police protection from enraged Israeli counter demonstrators denouncing Jewish participants as traitors. One underlying pattern that David identifies in most post-conflict states is their failure to provide adequate structural supports for reconciliation projects, leaving them to wither in a desert of hostile communities after much publicised launches. This book

explains how moral remembrance can become a minefield rather than a pathway to peace. Anyone interested in the complex relationships between human rights, historical memory and how we continue to battle with the past in a globalised world should read this book.

Padraig Yeates

Dana Hearne (Ed) **Anna Parnell, The Tale of a Great Sham**, (Dublin, 2020) UCD Press, ISBN: 9781910820599, 232 pp, €20.00 pb

In June 1912, Vida Goldstein, president of the Women's Political Association of Australia, added her voice to demands for the inclusion of female suffrage in the current Home Rule Bill, and in a letter to John Redmond urged that the Irish Party should

In the name of justice and chivalry ... pay the debt that Ireland owes to Anna Parnell and the Ladies' Land League by enfranchising Irishwomen on the same terms as Irishmen.

For Goldstein, as for Irish feminists such as Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and Jenny Wyse Power, Parnell was an inspirational figure, 'a New Woman', in Margaret Ward's words, 'a radical, a feminist and the first modern, militant Irish woman activist'. Parnell's *Tale*, her personal account of the Land War and the part played by the Ladies' Land League, fully supports that contention. In revealing the 'inability of most key Nationalist men to work on an equal footing with Nationalist women', however, it also makes clear that any appeal to the Irish Party based on Parnell's achievement was likely to fall on very stony ground indeed.

Born at Avondale, Co Wicklow in 1852 Anna Parnell was the second youngest of eleven children of Delia and John Henry Parnell. Her father's death when she was seven left the family, but particularly Delia and her daughters, in much reduced circumstances. It was an early lesson for Anna in the inferiority of women under the law: as she commented bitterly later, 'if the Irish landlords had not deserved extermination for anything else, they would have deserved it for the treatment of their own women.' On the other hand, the Parnell girls' *déclassé* status combined with their American mother's relaxed attitude towards parenting was not without its advantages, permitting the young Anna a degree of independence rare at that time for girls of her class. She and her elder sister, Fanny, were encouraged to read widely in literature, history and politics, and with their brother Charles, the third of the 'political Parnells', developed strong nationalist sympathies. By 1875 Anna was living in London, and when Charles was elected MP, she gravitated towards Westminster, listening to debates from 'the ladies' cage' at the House of Commons, and reporting on them for the Irish American press.

With the outbreak of the Land War, Anna moved from being an observer to a participant in political events. In early 1881 her brother reluctantly agreed to Michael Davitt's proposal for the establishment of a Ladies' Land League, with Anna as its effective head. Significantly, Anna played no part in this decision, and was given virtually no guidance on what the Ladies' role was intended to be: 'that the women might carry on the work after the men were imprisoned, was the only reason ... I ever heard.' This lack of consultation did not augur well for the new organisation's relations with the male leadership. Worse, Anna would come to have deep reservations about the League's 'Rent at the Point of the Bayonet' policy, which she damned as 'not ... consistent with sanity.' Nevertheless, in the months that followed the Ladies set about putting the League records in order, speaking and fundraising, attending evictions and processing applications for relief. Both their role and their problems intensified following the arrest of the Land League leaders and the 'No Rent manifesto' in autumn 1881, and as evictions multiplied, so too did agrarian violence, leading to accusations against the Ladies of extremism and extravagance.

The release of Anna's brother and his colleagues under the terms of the Kilmainham Treaty in May 1882 gave hope of 'an early release' from what had become 'a long and uncongenial bondage.' In fact, an acrimonious wrangle ensued before the Ladies were able to evade the male leadership's determination to keep them 'at the grindstone' while bringing them fully under its own authority. Not until August was the organisation in a position to disband itself, and 'at length', as Anna expressed it, 'the ghost of the Ladies' Land League rested in peace.' For Anna herself, profoundly embittered by the conduct of the Land War and of the Land League leaders, it can have come as no surprise that the Ladies' immediate legacy was to persuade nationalist men of the undesirability of women's participation in their counsels: as Maud Gonne was informed years later when unsuccessfully seeking a forum in which she might participate, the Ladies' Land League 'did too good work, and some of us found they could not be controlled.' Writing a quarter of a century after the events described in the *Tale*, Anna looked to the future with pessimism. 'We know', she wrote,

That the character of Irishmen is at present incompatible with any great change for the better in Ireland ... I say "Irishmen", because ... if the men of that country have made up their minds it shall not be done, the women cannot bring it about.

Yet she did hold to the hope that history would recognise 'the noble example' set by the Ladies 'to all the women of Ireland', maintaining contacts with some of the suffrage activists of a younger generation, for whom, in the words of Sheehy Skeffington, 'the fine enthusiasm, the generous spirit of co-operation' of 'those noble-hearted women' would indeed be a cause for celebration.

As Margaret Ward remarks, the 1986 publication of Dana Hearne's edition of *The Tale of a Great Sham* 'was a landmark event in Irish women's history', and its impact in terms of subsequent research is evident in the bibliography included here. Its re-publication will be warmly welcomed by present-day scholars of both the Land War and women's role in nationalist politics, while Ward's splendidly insightful overview and Hearne's updated introduction together offer an exemplary analysis of Parnell's argument, explain her disillusionment, and contextualise her *Tale*.

Rosemary Raughter

Fionnuala Walsh, **Irish Women and the Great War** (Cambridge, 2020), Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781108867924, 254 pp, €86.55, hb

Walsh's work examines the broad impact of the Great War on Irish women through six comprehensive and thoroughly researched chapters. The book opens with a study of mobilization to explain how women 'threw themselves into war relief activities on the home front' by establishing Red Cross working parties. Women were preparing bandages, providing food and comfort parcels for soldiers, assisting Belgian refugees arriving in Ireland, and they were nursing on the frontlines. While women's activities in war (and revolution in Ireland) is not new knowledge, the depth of participation and the variety of activities carried out by women during the Great War is unearthed in this book and is backed up by statistical evidence. Comparisons are drawn against the mobilization and involvement of women in Britain to arrive at fascinating conclusions. Walsh also delves into the complexity of women's wartime efforts across the socio-economic divides to reveal that class often dictated the type of voluntary work performed by women. Religion and politics created prejudices, biases and collusions within the various war charities run by women and the chapter reveals how this generated divisions between Ulster and the rest of the provinces. The attitudes, readiness and behaviour of women that became involved in wartime activity in Ireland are investigated in the closing section of this chapter to show the diversity of psychological motivations and experiences.

Chapter two brings home the realities of war on the domestic front to show how enlistment left bereft families behind and how postponed weddings, bereavement and anxiety impacted on real lives. The urban rural divide in terms of economic privation is explored to highlight food shortages and rising inflation in towns and cities. Unlike those in the industrial sector in cities like Dublin, rural farmers prospered as did Belfast with its engineering and shipbuilding industries. And the message to women was ‘careful housekeeping and frugal spending’. Government and philanthropic relief to working class families, the separation allowance, and the provision of clean milk, infant and midwifery practice are reviewed and scrutinised to show how the war resulted in greater state intervention in the domestic sphere. Chapter three delves into the oft maligned ‘separation women’ to expose exaggerated accusations and the social policing these women found themselves subject to. Prostitution, illegitimacy and the hysteria surrounding VD is tempered by the author through, for example, evidence to show that syphilis declined over the war years. And, in chapter four, Walsh turns her attention to geographic location, changing employment patterns in industry and agriculture, and the disruptive impact of war and these are shown to have particularly affected female-dominated trades. Using interesting source material this chapter also explores the employment interests of women, and the impact of war work on changing fashions. The final section provides illuminating statistical insight into the female membership of Irish trade unions that proves there was a shift in women’s attitudes.

Chapter five reveals how radicalisation and the importance of collective action initiated by the war led to the politicisation of women. The division amongst women in response to the war highlights the complexity of attitudes across the island and prompted some anti-war activists to become energetically rebellious in the Irish revolutions, leading to the formation of new movements (such as Cumann na mBan). Others were openly vocal and volatile towards the new republicans and continued to support the war effort; and polarisation between Ulster and the rest of Ireland fuelled partition. Demobilisation and the consequent unemployment suffered by women is analysed comprehensively in this chapter – perhaps the most original chapter of the book. While the resulting emigration, financial hardships and the distress of soldiers returning to a volatile country has been covered in other works, Walsh’s study focuses on the experiences of women who struggled to return to caregiving or domestic pre-war work roles, who also encountered hostility, and who faced the consequences of ailing or shell-shocked husbands. The interdisciplinary approach of drawing on literature, contemporary and modern works and the use of atypical sources provides us with a thought-provoking account of post-war family and domestic life.

For women in Ireland and throughout Europe the war brought opportunities in employment, education and national service, yet there were nuances and Walsh draws these out in her study of Ireland. Women’s wartime work was perceived as both necessary and as potentially damaging to the structure of society – in child neglect, prostitution, and activism – and the state or organisations believed they had to police their behaviours. This exploration of the ideological context of women’s war work at home and abroad, the impact on the domestic sphere, and the resultant legacy has been long overdue, and only a flavour of the book’s content can be offered here. There are at times broad sweeps in the narrative in the comparisons between rural and urban where the shades and gradations of life are overlooked. But this *is* the first single-authored, academic book length study of the impact of the Great War on Irish women, and it certainly draws on a wealth of archival sources to provide a commendable pioneering study. It should motivate further scholarly study in the regional and local to build on this narrative. What stands out and is most interesting is that this work covers the lives of ordinary and extra-ordinary Irish women.

Elaine Callinan

Connie Kelleher, **The Alliance of Pirates: Ireland and Atlantic piracy in the early seventeenth century** (Dublin, 2020), Four Courts Press, ISBN: 9781782053651, 552 pp, €30.00 hb

Piracy was an integral part of life for those living along the coast of Ireland during the seventeenth century. The outlawing of privateering by the new king of England, James I, in 1603 forced many of those who were engaged in seafaring activities to move their base of operations to the south-west coast of Ireland. Unlike his predecessor Elizabeth I, James did not encourage the clandestine deeds of seamen. The most south-westerly corner of Ireland was an ideal base for those looking westwards towards the New World, as well as the more traditional routes of Mediterranean Europe and the north-west coast of Africa. In *The Alliance of Pirates* Connie Kelleher begins by exploring the genesis of piracy in Ireland during the sixteenth century. The Elizabethan period has several famous “pirate” figures, including Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh, who, as natives of the West Country, were surely familiar with the coast of Ireland. Several decades earlier, during the reign of Henry VIII, Ireland was described as “the very land of refuge that English pirates most resort to” (p. 8). Of course, piracy was a feature of the medieval period as well, but this is not explored in this book. The focus of this volume are the opening decades of the seventeenth century and the “Alliance” of pirates, which was almost exclusively made up of Englishmen.

Before English pirates moved in and set up base in south-west Ireland the area was dominated by the ruling Gaelic elite, namely the O’Sullivan Beara and the O’Driscolls. The fall of the Gaelic lordships in the aftermath of the Battle of Kinsale in the opening years of the seventeenth century created a power vacuum in the locality that was quickly filled with English privateers. It was also the process of plantation during James I’s reign that influenced the development of piracy along the coast of Munster. This locality, far away from the centre of power in London, or even Dublin, made it the perfect place to establish pirate nests. The landscape played a part in where these nests were located too. Munster, with its inlets, harbours and rugged coastline, provided many places for pirates to hide away and evade authority. The book not only offers a detailed narrative of the Alliance of Pirates in Munster, but it also positions it within the larger framework of Anglo-Irish politics and society in the aftermath of the Flight of the Earls and the aforesaid Battle of Kinsale and the transplantation of men from England that was facilitated by the power void created here. The scope of this book, however, goes beyond the Anglo-Irish polity and the operations of these men, newly relocated from the English West Country, is set within the wider Atlantic world and, indeed, beyond, including links with the Islamic world.

Kelleher explores the interactions between the pirates and government officials, which could often end very badly for the pirates. James I was very concerned with piratical activities in Ireland and the Piracy Act was enacted here in 1613. This legislation brought admiralty law in Ireland in line with its equivalent in England and pirates could either be tried and executed in Ireland, or they could be brought to England, to face judgement there. I personally found the material on execution compelling, since it is a subject that I have done some research on. Kelleher relates the story of three pirates, John Morris, Peter Hilliard and Hugh Rogers who were executed in Dublin on 30 May 1614. They were hanged “upon the strand, at low water-mark, by Dublin”, because the foreshore was outside the jurisdiction of the common law courts. Kelleher also outlines how pirates in England and Scotland were also executed on the foreshore, within the jurisdiction of the admiralty. Who was executed is as noteworthy as where they were executed. The authorities executed less senior ship captains and crew members, but rarely made an example of pirate leaders. Men of high social standing who aided and abetted pirates also escaped serious punishment. The aptly named Thomas Croke, who established a plantation in Baltimore, co. Cork, was often in collusion with the pirates who set themselves up on the coast close to his lands. Croke’s activities did not prevent him from receiving a knighthood in 1613 and he was

created a baronet a decade later. The reaction of the English crown towards men like Crooke demonstrates the leniency that high status men could expect to receive, even when they were breaking the law.

This book utilises a wide and impressive array of original sources, both manuscript and printed, but its real strength is the engagement with the archaeological evidence. Kelleher demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the south-western seaboard of Ireland and her experience as an archaeologist, particularly excavating the early seventeenth century Dunworley Bay shipwreck, gives the book an added dimension and helps to flesh out the documentary sources. It is a fascinating account of Ireland in the early seventeenth century and it is an important and very welcome addition to the scholarship of early modern Ireland.

Áine Foley

Jeffrey Leddin, **The ‘Labour Hercules’: The Irish Citizen Army and Irish Republicanism, 1913–23** (Dublin, 2019), Irish Academic Press, ISBN: 9781788550741, 304 pp, €24.95 pb

The historiography of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), such as it is, relies heavily on memoir and witness testimony. Jeffrey Leddin’s exhaustive archival research in this analysis of the interaction between the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Republicanism aims to redress the balance. While the book is presented as an analysis of the interplay between the forces of workers’ militia and nationalism, it is essentially a history of the ICA in the time period concerned. The genesis of the ICA in defending striking workers and their communities in 1913 is well-known, but the historical and philosophical roots of citizen armies less so. Leddin situates the ICA within socialist and internationalist tendencies that existed in the fifty years or so before its foundation, tracing succinctly the development of such ideas. Of course, a particular set of circumstances existed in Ireland as a colony, and, in this context, the formation of Irish radical groups from Connolly’s Irish Republican Socialist Party onwards is also intrinsic to the origins of the ICA. As such, he contends that there was no specific founder of the ICA, rather it came out of a synthesis of ideas inspired by Jim Larkin’s rhetoric, James Connolly’s interest in previous worker and citizenry uprisings and Jack White’s military knowledge.

In March 1914, moves to transform the ICA from a militia on-call to a structured fighting force begin. A spat between Markievicz and Sean O’Casey on the merits or otherwise of a uniform is the first of many organisational battles that O’Casey will lose. Meanwhile, attempts to recruit outside Dublin founder due to the strength of the nationalist Irish Volunteers, although the question of why the Volunteers were much more successful at recruitment is not really addressed. However, this coexistence with nationalism influences the drafting of its constitution, largely written by O’Casey, as it attempts to carve out its own place amongst the revolutionary and rebellious movements of the time. There is a move towards nationalism in its wording and the Citizen Army is renamed the Irish Citizen Army. Armament of the ICA begins through contacts of White, and Leddin’s extensive details on these efforts indicate how much time was dedicated to sourcing weaponry. Unsurprisingly, these attempts correlate with the development of Connolly’s thoughts on the desirability of insurrection and the Curragh Mutiny, in particular, clarifies these thoughts. The role of the UVF is, of course, also important, both in terms of providing an organisational blueprint for the ICA and the time pressures for rebellion posed by the threat of partition.

However, given the mixed bag of opinions that existed within the ICA, internal tensions also existed from the outset. White and O’Casey both resign in 1914. White does so due to a culmination

of disputes, the final straw being the failure to grow and militarise alongside ongoing antagonisms with the Volunteers, whom he subsequently joins. O'Casey resigns, allegedly, due to the ICA being too close the Volunteers and his resultant attempt to force Markiewicz out of the organisation. Leddin adds that some ICA members thought this may have been a convenient out for O'Casey, who may not have had the stomach for a fight if a Rising did break out, as was looking increasingly likely. Larkin and Connolly continue to maintain close links at this time with Republicans and Nationalists, with Larkin continuing to do so in the United States. The overlap in thought of the ICA and the Volunteers is evident in policies and statements issued by both groups in this period, with similarities in language and analysis. This, combined with the intellectual and socialist basis of Connolly's ambition to rise up, and repeated commitments from European socialists to interrupt the war effort in any way possible, makes ICA rebellion inevitable. In particular, the dismissal of union men from companies to facilitate economic conscription leaves many in the ICA seeing no alternative. The increasing symbiosis between the Volunteers and ICA is clear, with the Volunteers publishing some of Connolly's writings and each organisation's papers publishing approving articles about the other. In all of this, however, the ICA does not forget its roots and is still active on the docks in settling disputes with armed pickets (the existence of these armed pickets is contested mind) and preventing the army from replacing striking workers, as happened elsewhere in the UK.

The ICA continues its efforts at growth, trying to establish units in Cork and Scotland. There are moves towards increased discipline and drilling, with street fighting training, tactics and first aid classes organised. Drills are announced via bills on Liberty Hall, a strategy that pays off come the Rising as instructions and mobilisations issued from there become such a regular occurrence that the authorities don't pay much heed to them. In addition to the big displays at funerals and commemorations, the Volunteers and the ICA also engage in joint training manoeuvres. However, Connolly's impatience with the pace of developments lead to his infamous co-optation onto the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and plans for rebellion gain pace. Weapons caches are supplanted with home-made devices, using some ingenious tactics and relying on the workplaces of ICA men for materials and Liberty Hall as a workshop. To a large extent, it becomes a military base and the green flag is raised overhead, sparking tensions with the ITGWU.

Easter week is for the ICA is well described, although one might contest the assertion that Sean Connolly's disregard of plans was militarily successful at Dublin Castle. The proclamation has echoes of the Citizen Army constitution and the subsequent general confusion of war is well captured. The Volunteers and the ICA essentially coalesce under one leadership structure in the internment camps that follow the Rising but separate leadership structures re-emerge once internees return home. Efforts to rearm commence, along similar lines as before the rising, with an additional supply route being established from Scotland. Despite separate leaderships, co-operation with republican forces is maintained and the ICA co-operates with the Volunteers/IRA in the War of Independence. However, it is not active in the major union struggles of that era, instead tensions are exacerbated with the ITGWU over the ongoing use of Liberty Hall for quasi-military purposes, not helped by the more conservative nature of the leadership of the ITGWU under William O'Brien. There is a brief final chapter on the legacy of the ICA that feels somewhat tacked on. The Workers Party are mentioned as one of the organisations that see themselves as fulfilling that legacy, yet the 'The Lost Revolution' doesn't mention the ICA once. The Socialist Party, not noted for their high opinions of Republicanism, are also cited as inheritors of the ICA tradition.

The author places great emphasis (as the title would indicate) in exploring what he appears to see as the complexity of the interplay between socialism and republicanism. Perhaps because his archival

research is so impressive, and because he very clearly traces the contours of the disagreements between the ICA and volunteers and other nationalist forces, this complexity is not necessarily evident. Different interpretations of otherwise impeccable primary research can arise. For example, there is the odd discordant note in his writing, such as referencing the “apparent contradiction” in the British state not cracking down on Carsonism – the state’s reluctance to apply the cosh to its own puppets is hardly surprising. He is very focused on the activities and political positions of the leadership in the relevant organisations, and closely chronicles their disputes, both internal to the ICA and with other external organisations. However, this is largely to the exclusion of the rank and file and to the extent that we have an insight into their views from other sources, co-operation both in and across organisations seems to be the dominant dynamic. The roles of women in the ICA is explored in detail, rehabilitating the organisation somewhat from Ann Matthews assessment of sexist practices in her 2014 history.

Leddin successfully fills in many of the minutiae of ICA activities in the period concerned, but there is arguably little that we do not already understand about the ICA in terms of its overarching political trajectory. The text is heavy, and a lighter touch would have made for a more accessible history. The myriad creative examples of weapons procurement from a variety of seemingly unlikely sources, for example, could have been presented in a more personalised, engaging manner. Apart from readability, this would give some sense of what it meant to be active in the ICA on a day-to-day basis. Also, the cast of characters is large and a Who’s Who index may have helped, while the occasional use of Irish will confuse the non-gaeilgoirs among us. Nevertheless, all told this is an impressive body of work that will be invaluable for scholars of the ICA. There may still be further ICA pension files to be released which might facilitate further efforts to bring to life the incredible story and achievements that is the small bunch of men and women that was the ICA. We may also learn some useful military strategies should Liberty Hall ever again decide to arm the proletariat!

Eoghan Ryan

Christine Kinealy and Gerard Moran (eds), **Irish Famines Before and After the Great Hunger, (Cork, 2020)**, Quinipiac University Press/Cork University Press, ISBN: 9780578484983, 352 pp, €25 pb

Between 1880 and 1882 the English Quaker philanthropist James Hack Tuke visited the west of Ireland seven times, in his endeavour to effect meaningful, long-term social reform in that much-afflicted region. Hack’s initiatives (centring on assisted emigration) in relieving the Irish poor were considered, effective and truly heroic, yet have remained largely omitted from the historical narrative. An interesting aspect of Tuke’s work in western Ireland during the 1879–82 subsistence crisis was that he had visited that region in the late-1840s during the Great Famine and, thus, was in a rare position as an ‘outsider’ to contrast the social conditions of the Irish peasantry in one famine with their quality of life during the earlier crisis. As Gerard Moran informs us in his contribution to this volume, it was evident that many parts of the country had not progressed since the 1840s — potato dependency remained excessively high, the wretched cabins and labouring system of the pre-Famine period were still evident, and the landholding system still needed considerable reform.

The instance of James Hack Tuke provides a useful entry point into this reflection on the subject volume, which devotes almost an entire section (five chapters) to Tuke and the wider 1879-82 crisis, with some resulting overlap between chapters. Tuke’s example demonstrates the continued prevalence of demographic crisis into the second half of the nineteenth century and the centrality, across the early modern and modern periods, of migration as a safety valve to mitigate the structural

faults of the Irish society and economy. For example, Brendan Scott's essay on famine and poverty in late-medieval and early-modern Ireland demonstrates that the Irish poor were migrating to England in the Elizabethan period, while a significant migration of Irish persons to Britain and Europe occurred during the crisis years of 1628–31. However, despite these observations, the issue of famine-era internal migration throughout the island — most noticeably from rural parts to urban centres — is not addressed at length by this volume's contributors, reflecting the wider historiographical gap on this particular topic.

Elsewhere in this volume, Karen Sonnelitter's study of the 1739–41 famine builds upon the work of David Dickson and James Kelly and examines the role of private philanthropy and local corporate entities in relieving the wants of the destitute and starving poor in the absence of state intervention. Ciarán Reilly's chapter on the fascinating topic of crime during the 1831 famine suggests that violence arising from the pressures of deprivation were exacerbated by unrest linked to land issues and tithes grievances, thereby nuancing our understanding of crime and protest at times of famine. Christine Kinealy makes a convincing case for noting the significant humanitarian contribution of Maud Gonne to the subsistence crises experienced along the western seaboard during the 1890s. While acknowledging the fact that part of the existing historical record constitutes Gonne's 1938 autobiography (which inflates her role to the status of hero, we are told), Kinealy argues that Gonne was singular in not only undertaking speaking tours of Ireland, Britain and America, as well as fundraising and publishing, but also in visiting the areas where distress was greatest and engaging directly with the poor.

This is the latest publication arising from the Great Hunger Museum, based at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. Other volumes include: *Irish Hunger and Migration Myth, Memory and Memorialisation* (2015), *Women and the Great Hunger* (2017) and *Children and the Great Hunger in Ireland* (2018), as well as the well-received series of *Famine Folios* (2014–17). The text as presented proves irksome in parts, especially in the endnotes (which are vexing by themselves, but that is beyond the control of the editors). Inconsistencies in referencing conventions abound, which may escape most readers' notice but do raise questions about the thoroughness of the publisher's editing process. It is disappointing not to see a chapter on the subsistence crisis of 1816–19, as it does leave a noticeable gap in the timeline of famines covered by this volume. The famine and typhus fever epidemic of the post-Waterloo years informed much of the reaction - at national and local level - to subsequent crises, such as 1822, 1831–3 and, most strikingly, the late-1840s, and warrants considerably greater scholarly attention. One must question the relevance of some contributions to the overall theme of this volume: Robert Smart's chapter on Gothic overlaps between Ireland and the American South speaks little, if anything, to the book's theme, while a number of (admittedly very fine) chapters on emigration to Canada in the late-1840s sit awkwardly in a volume devoted to famines before and after the Great Famine. Having said that, this is a useful collection of essays, containing some important contributions to the historiography of famine in Ireland.

Ciarán McCabe

Seán Cronin. **James Connolly: Irish Revolutionary.** (Jefferson, 2020), McFarland & Co, ISBN13 9781476682228, 208bpp, \$45.00 pb

The latest biography of James Connolly is based upon an unfinished manuscript by author and journalist Seán Cronin who passed away in 2011. Its publication represents a labour of love by David and Sally Gover who were able to finish it with the help of extensive notes left behind by Cronin. This means that although it is the most recent biography of Connolly to be published, it is by no

means the most up to date. The bibliography contains only two works issued in the past 40 years – a biography of Roger Casement by Brian Inglis from 1992, and Seán Daly’s study of Ireland and the First International from 1984 – with the vast bulk of secondary material sourced from the 1970s, as is Cronin’s analysis. The Troubles looms large on its pages, along with the (now tired) debate over whether Connolly’s socialism was ‘compatible’ with his republicanism. With that in mind, it may be fairer to see the book as a reprint, albeit of an unpublished manuscript, than as a biography produced in the 21st century.

As regards its strengths it is well-written and makes superb use of primary sources, building upon Cronin’s earlier work, *Young Connolly*, which was published by Respol Press in 1978. He weaves private letters, newspaper articles, speeches and other printed material into a solid narrative that avoids the clunky mess of Donal Nevin, the myopic determinism of Desmond Greaves, and the conservative handwringing of Ruth Dudley Edwards. The book, however, lacks a conclusion, ending with a quote from Yeats’ poem *Easter, 1916*. (Incidentally, his 1981 publication, *Irish Nationalism: Its Roots and Ideology*, also ends with a Yeats quote, from *September 1913*.) As such, it wears its ideology lightly on its sleeve, which means it works relatively well as a general introduction to the life of James Connolly, laying out the facts of his life in Scotland, Ireland, and the US with great detail and care.

Having said that, it is a book of its time – and that time was forty years ago. Cronin spends the opening pages on the issue of where Connolly was born – an altogether settled fact that needs no explanation today. In 1894 Connolly stood as a socialist in the local elections in Edinburgh. Cronin highlights this as proof of Connolly’s belief that ‘the socialist commonwealth would be established by the ballot box’ – a belief that seems curious to have to state in 2020 but makes sense in the context of the 1970s and the Troubles. The book is peppered with such references to the constitutional methods pursued by Connolly in his quest for a socialist republic. The problem here is that as early as 1897 Connolly was highlighting the eventuality of a violent confrontation with Britain over the issue of independence. Cronin quotes from an article Connolly wrote for *Shan Van Vocht* where he says that the formation of an Irish parliament through an election would trigger a military response by Britain, which in turn would lead to violent insurrection on the island, one that could spread to other parts of the Empire. Even though he quotes from it, Cronin does not seem to fully grasp Connolly’s point.

Time and again we see Connolly explain British interests in Ireland as imperialist and capitalist in nature, and time and again Cronin refuses to join up the dots. He calls Connolly a Fenian Marxist, yet unlike the IRB or the Volunteers or the Irish Nationalist Party, Connolly did not see Irish independence as an end in itself. He understood that Britain’s presence in Ireland was part and parcel of a wider imperial project. He also knew that there was a class in Ireland that benefitted from those imperial links, and that unless those links (and that class) were shattered the exploitation of the Irish working class would continue as before. Connolly was both a socialist internationalist and an anti-imperialist Irish republican. If there is a contradiction in this – as Cronin seems to suggest – then it is one that was shared by marxist anti-imperialist nationalists across what is now known as the global south. The anti-colonial struggles that followed the ending of the Second World War were nationalist by design – the imperial projects of European States and the US ensured that this was so. Connolly’s marxist republicanism fits perfectly in this dynamic – and yet people still ask why he walked into the GPO.

As for the idea of Connolly as a Fenian – it needs to be pointed out that he did not go to the IRB and ask for permission to form his own socialist republican army. That was not how it worked. He did not leave the project of Irish independence to the nationalists and the Fenians because he knew full-well what they would do with it. He knew that unless the working class shaped the process of Irish independence, they would be damned by it, and he was right. Even now, one hundred years after

the formation of the first Dáil, we are still waiting for trade union recognition as a legal right. That is no accident. There has been a resurgence of sorts in the study of Connolly's anti-colonial/anti-imperialist republicanism. Cronin's book, simply by the nature of its authorship, is not reflective of any of it. He also makes the error of equating capitalism in Ireland with the urban and industrial – an outlook shared by Official Sinn Féin/Workers Party in the 1970s with whom Cronin was close. Similarly, the middleman class, which Connolly did so much to highlight, is barely mentioned and quickly passed over. At one point Cronin says that Connolly was not invited to the formation of the Irish Volunteers in 1914, in all probability because he was a socialist, but does not expand on the implications of that for our understanding of the myriad visions of Ireland at play at the time and the struggle for orthodoxy that was taking place. He correctly cites the 1913 Lockout as a struggle over the parameters of a Home Rule Ireland yet fails to follow through on that with regard to the period that followed. Such are the limitations of a book that was researched and written decades ago. And while it does serve as a decent, well-written introduction to the life of James Connolly, it is as much a timepiece as the badges, flags and emblems that hang in the National Museum.

Conor McCabe

James A Cousins, **Without A Dog's Chance; The Nationalists of Northern Ireland and the Boundary Commission, 1920-25** (Newbridge, 2020), Irish Academic Press, ISBN: 9781788551021, 380 pp, €24.95 pb

James A Cousins has chosen a curious title for his book and readers expecting a detailed study of the Irish Boundary Commission might be disappointed. What he does offer is a valuable account of Northern nationalism in the formative years of partitioned Ireland with particular emphasis on Joe Devlin and his networks of supporters including the Belfast-based *Irish News*. Cousins skilfully charts the various fault lines – political, strategic, and geographical – within and between what amounted to four distinct clusters of Irish nationalist politics in this period of flux; pro- and anti-Treaty factions in the South, border nationalists within Northern Ireland who hoped that a redrawing of the border would deliver them from Belfast rule, and those who, as Kevin O'Higgins put it in October 1922, had 'not a dog's chance' of salvation via that route.

Drawing on the work of Israeli anthropologist Dan Rabinowitz, Cousins depicts the nationalists of the North as a 'trapped minority', twice alienated from both the state which they inhabited and from the 'mother nation' from which they had been severed. Such minorities, according to Rabinowitz are prone to 'chronic ideological and political internal divisions' and 'difficulties in forging a united front' or articulating a 'strategic vision', characteristics that, as is amply demonstrated, were very much in evidence here. The author's focus on the Devlinites of Belfast adds a further layer of estrangement, separated as this remnant of the Irish Parliamentary Party was by politics and history from both wings of Sinn Féin. *Without A Dog's Chance* includes a great deal of background information that might be burdensome to specialist readers but it also adds rich and occasionally delightful details. Chief among the latter are the author's extensive utilisation of letters and verse published in the nationalist press. These range from comic doggerel to more serious political laments while on other occasions the humorous effect was probably not intentional. Despite its shortcomings, one acrostic poem penned to celebrate the 1925 Northern Ireland election result in West Belfast, in which, the first letters of each line spell 'Victory for Devlin,' is a small triumph in its own right. Often submitted by anonymous writers (that may have included women and men although this is unclear), Cousins makes good use of these 'people's editorials' to

elaborate aspects of popular culture and outlooks beyond those of the leading political figures and journalists.

Notwithstanding this effort to foreground non-elite voices, readers of *Saothar* may also be disappointed by the absence of any sustained consideration of class politics or relations. Partially this reflects the fleeting treatment of the evidence considered by the Boundary Commission itself, as class was a major feature of the arguments presented at its hearings. Unionist representatives in particular, repeatedly argued both that property-owning Catholics – ‘stake in the country’ people – would prefer to be in Northern Ireland (were they not intimidated by their priests or swayed by ‘clannish’ devotion to their co-religionists), and that the wishes of employers should count for more than those of workers. One incredulous border farmer, for example, complained that he and his father between them had six labourers’ cottages on their land in which there were twelve nationalist votes, outnumbering their four unionist votes by eight on their own property ‘and by [their] own dependants.’

Cousins has produced a valuable study of the tensions that beset Northern nationalism and its fraught relationship to the politics of the South that builds on the existing literature. He highlights how differences of perspective arising from the geography of partition were intertwined with others, most notably over abstentionism, and astutely assesses the role of figures such as Eoin MacNeill and Kevin O’Sheil as essentially Southern political actors who hailed *from* or were experts *on* the North rather than representatives *of* its anti-partitionist voters. Although it does not appear in the bibliography, the case presented can be read in opposition to elements of Margaret O’Callaghan’s argument that ‘the great division that was to open up between nationalists north and south, dates from’ the suppression of the Boundary Commission report. By emphasising the impact of Collins’s death in 1922, the erection of a customs barrier a year later, Dublin’s frustration with Six County ‘impatience’ and preference (shared by Devlin but not by nationalists on the border) for a negotiated settlement, Cousins actually shifts attention away from the Commission and its failure and onto a growing gap well before the conference of 1925.

As *Without A Dog’s Chance* approaches its conclusion, O’Higgins’s distinction starts to crumble as the hopes of those border nationalists ‘mainly concerned with the inclusion within the Free State of their own Parish’ evaporate. In this respect, Devlin and his cohort are seen to have had one distinct advantage from the outset, summarised through reference to the so-called ‘ninth Beatitude’ attributed to Alexander Pope: ‘Blessed are they who expect nothing,’ Cousins concludes, ‘for they will not be disappointed.’

Peter Leary

Pádraig Ó Caoimh, Richard Mulcahy: From the Politics of War to the Politics of Peace 1913-1924, Irish Academic Press, 2019, ISBN: 9781788550987, 340 pp, €24.95, pb

Pádraig Ó Caoimh states that this book is a study of ‘two interrelated processes which transpired during the revolutionary period of Irish national liberation, 1913-1924, namely the politico-military career of Richard Mulcahy and the struggle for supremacy within the nationalist elite, especially the struggle for supremacy on the vital question of the nature and extent of the emerging government-army relationship’. In the introduction, Ó Caoimh outlines the political life of Richard Mulcahy, from when he first became inspired by the ideas of Arthur Griffith in the late 1900s until his retirement from politics in 1959. The book is structured chronologically, with each chapter titled with a word the author views as reflective of Mulcahy at that time: Inspired, Zealous, Committed, Assiduous, Confined, Pragmatic, Purposeful, Adamant, Aloof, Ambivalent, Recalcitrant, and finally, Disillusioned. The conclusion he titles Enduring.

Chapter one traces Mulcahy's nationalist origins and political inspiration. This lay in the Irish language, the Gaelic League, and the writings of Arthur Griffith, and led to Mulcahy joining the IRB in 1908. Chapter two and three discuss his increasing military activity. He joined the Irish Volunteers in 1913 and became a more active IRB member, attending meetings and becoming involved in activities such as the Howth gunrunning episode. During Easter week 1916, Mulcahy came into his own and was credited with planning and directing operations at what became known as the Battle of Ashbourne. While imprisoned in Frangoch, he gained prominence and encountered Michael Collins. He became more radicalised and was credited with saying that 'In the course of revolution, any man, woman or child who is not with you is against you. Shoot them and be damned to them' (p.32).

Chapter four, five and six see him enter the political arena. He held leading military and political roles: Chief of Staff of the Volunteers, senior member of the IRB, and, as a member of Sinn Féin, was elected MP for Dublin City Clontarf in 1918. While 'he had not reached the very top of the nationalist elite, the circumstances of the imminent military struggle would improve his standing still further' (p.55). However, the war would also expose him as a conservative individual rather than a bold radical and Mulcahy's response to the Treaty was both political and practical. Having declared himself pro-Treaty, during the Treaty debate he stated that 'we are not in a position of force, either military or otherwise, to drive the enemy from anything but a fairly good sized police barracks' (p.90). However, mindful of his other audiences, he asked the IRB to 'disassociate my position as Chief of Staff from that as representing a constituency. I would do or say things as a public representative that I would not do or say as Chief of Staff' (p.94).

Chapter seven and eight offer insights into the political and military manoeuvrings which took place during the Treaty debate and deals with efforts made to avert civil war and Mulcahy's role in these. Ó Caoimh suggests that Mulcahy may have been somewhat cynical in his efforts and that he was trying 'to give his army the edge over the IRA executive forces pending the Civil War' (p.116). Following Collins' death, Mulcahy became both Minister for Defence and Commander-in-Chief, a situation which Thomas Johnson, Labour Party, suggested might not be a problem in 'present circumstances and the present personnel but it is not a good principle to adopt at the beginning' (p.130). Publicly Mulcahy asserted that 'the Army must be the people's Army and responsible absolutely to the national Government' (p.134), yet his actions indicated otherwise, and chapter nine examines how he was finding it 'as challenging as ever to live up to the demands of the evolving civil-military relationship' (p.158). Chapter ten and eleven examine the post-Civil War demobilisation of a considerable number of army personnel.

The difficulties and tensions involved in moving from revolution to democracy, and more specifically, from military to civil control are teased out, as are the loyalties of different groups within the National Army to the IRB and the IRAO, tensions which led to the Army Mutiny in 1924. Detailed in chapter twelve, an Army Enquiry was established to examine the state of the National Army following the Mutiny. Acknowledging Mulcahy and his Generals, the Committee recognised that 'the Army had to be built up from the foundations ... and the evolution of the National Army is an achievement of no mean order' (p.228). However, they deemed Mulcahy's handling of the Kenmare Case 'a grave error of judgment' which had militated against military discipline generally. His roles were now publicly exposed as conflicting and his position became untenable. As Kevin O'Higgins succinctly put it, 'the Minister of Defence came to the Executive Council, not so much as a colleague to do business with colleagues as in the capacity of a delegate ... [having] a watching brief for the Army' (p.229).

While this book draws on a wide variety of sources, Mulcahy's own papers form the backbone of material used. Ó Caoimh balances this with a variety of other contemporary sources and is also in the enviable position of having spoken to participants of the period such as Todd Andrews, Seán

Dowling and Peadar O'Donnell. His narrative captures the complexity and tension of this time of political and military revolution and normalisation and achieves his stated objective for the work. The publication of this book is timely, and it is a useful and well researched addition to the Irish revolutionary bookshelf.

Susan Byrne

Liam Mac Mathúna, Brian Ó Conchubhair, Niall Comer, Cuan Ó Seireadáin, and Máire Nic An Bhaird (Eds), **Douglas Hyde, My American Journey**, With a New Foreword by Michael D. Higgins (Dublin, 2019), University College Dublin Press, ISBN: 9781910820483, 250 pp, 79 plates, €50.00 hb

Mo Thuras go Meiriceá, originally published in Irish in 1937 on the eve of Douglas Hyde's inauguration as the first President of Ireland, has long been tied to the significance of its author and the Gaelic Revival. Hyde spent nearly eight months touring the United States from November 1905 through June 1906 and kept roughly daily diary entries that chronicle long train journeys and scores of late nights wining and dining, in addition to the acoustic challenges of a variety of auditoriums and local halls where he spoke about the Irish language and other topics. His cultural encounter with Americans includes descriptions of their cuisine, especially new drinks like high balls, mint juleps and eggnog, and college students at Catholic and secular institutions ranging from Notre Dame to Oberlin. He notes meeting Captain Francis O'Neill in Chicago, Archbishop John Ireland in St. Paul, Fr. Peter Yorke in San Francisco, and Theodore Roosevelt in Washington, D.C. But he is especially pleased to encounter fluent native Irish speakers; in Lawrence, Massachusetts, for example, Hyde was so moved that he described them as "honest, decent, kind people, the real Irish on whom one could depend despite what jealousy or treachery exists among their leaders from time to time" (p. 37).

The memoir has a precise pecuniary element too. Hyde carefully records the dollar amounts he raised (or didn't) for the Gaelic League in each location, which eventually totaled £10,000 or the equivalent of 1.2 million euros today. Hyde quickly learns that "there is no better way to gather subscriptions than to make people laugh while collecting" (p. 49). The competing Irish nationalist undercurrents beginning to emerge at the time tantalizingly come into focus just behind Hyde's figures for ticket sales and attendance but, in general, he finds support for the language movement among a very wide range of Irish American organizations. In this respect, his diary is a primer on American fundraising and therefore arguably a forensic preview of Éamon de Valera's 1919 and 1920 tours to raise money for the Irish Republic.

In fact, *My American Journey* is like a Rosetta stone for early twentieth century middle-and upper-class Irish America as Hyde names his various hosts – Conroy, the furniture dealer in St. Louis, Sullivan, a millionaire doctor in Providence, Heafey, an undertaker in Omaha, etc. These are the kind of significant research leads that future scholars can use to uncover the networks of associations that undergird all local Irish communities. Irish American wealth and comfort are also chronicled through comments about houses, carriages, dinners, cigars, or the \$30 million collective worth of Catholic girls Hyde met at a dance in New York, the beneficiaries of their Irish fathers' success in America.

The production values of this new bilingual edition are excellent, with a beautiful dust jacket and endpapers. The editors chose to illustrate Hyde's journal with, among others, 59 color postcards he and his wife sent to their young daughters in Ireland, most collected by Aidan Heavey and now preserved in Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Because the postcards include handwritten commentary in Irish and English, this novel approach puts the peregrination documented in *My American Journey* in conversation with a pseudo-manuscript the Hydes simultaneously created on their travels. Seven

pages of Liam Mac Mathúna's introduction are devoted to these postcards, in an essay that is largely a descriptive summary of the memoir with some background on the tour's organization and the roles of Tomás Bán Ua Concheanainn as advance agent and John Quinn as patron and mastermind. Hyde dedicated his book to the latter, a New York lawyer who had done the same for William Butler Yeats in 1903.

The editors attempt to identify the people Hyde met but their endnotes are surprisingly thin given the excellent online resources available for such research. A major error was not recognizing that the 'Garretty' man with whom Hyde spent time in Philadelphia and who accompanied him by train back to New York was Joseph McGarrity from Creggandevskey, Carrickmore, Co. Tyrone. In addition to averting ticket 'saboteurs', Hyde says McGarrity gave him \$500: "While some ten or twelve members of the [Philadelphia] executive committee were richer than Garretty, none were as generous" (p. 33). Given the assistance that McGarrity would shortly offer to Bulmer Hobson, Pádraig Pearse, and Roger Casement – no less influential than what Quinn did for Hyde – this was a missed opportunity by the editors, especially since there is an entire chapter on McGarrity in University College Dublin Press's 2016 volume *Ireland's Allies: America and the 1916 Easter Rising*. Likewise, the important San Francisco banker, Eugene Kelly, whose trajectory from Co. Tyrone to American fortune fascinates Hyde, was a native of Trillick not "Frellick" (p. 324), an 1894 newspaper error that could have easily been verified by more robust triangulation with Irish placename reference material.

Though these examples suggest other mistakes might have been made in the editorial process, they do not undercut the new potential of Hyde's old memoir as a primary source. With this first English language translation, *My American Journey* makes clear that it is more than the record of how the second decade of the Gaelic League was underwritten from abroad; now, it is clearly invaluable for diaspora historiography before, during, and after Hyde's tour.

Marion R. Casey

Francis Devine and Mike Shuker, **'To Make a Universe of Love, Not a Universe of Hate' – Leicestershire Labour and the Dublin Lock Out, 1913-1914** (Dublin & Loughborough, 2020), Irish Labour History Society and Leicestershire Labour History Society, 2020), 56 pp, £7/€8 pb

Addressing a meeting of the Glenfield Socialist Party near Leicester in February 1914 as part of his 'fiery cross' speaking tour of Britain, Jim Larkin encouraged his audience to believe there had always been men of 'no limited vision ... no narrow spirit ... to make a universe of love, not a universe of hate'. The phrase is used by Francis Devine and Mike Shuker as the title of their pamphlet which explores the links between Leicestershire and Loughborough labour and the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout. Of course by the time Larkin addressed the meeting in Glenfield the Lockout was over and any prospect of sympathetic industrial action on the part of the TUC, the primary goal of his "Fiery Cross Crusade", had been decisively rejected at its special conference in December. The failure of the TUC to sanction sympathetic action has been at the centre of how historians and activists have considered the end of the Lockout and this pamphlet airs views on both side of the debate. For some, including Larkin and Connolly, the TUC's decision was a betrayal. Desmond Greaves saw the sending of foodships to Dublin as a mere substitute for sympathetic strikes while Pádraig Yeates' interpretation emphasised the breakdown in the relationship between Larkin and the TUC leadership as a result of his aggressive speeches attacking them. The authors quote approvingly recent work by Ralph Darlington that point to the 'limitations of rank-and-file socialist organisation [in Britain] to overcome the entrenched resistance of the official union leadership.

This discussion is part of a useful context-setting exercise which sketches out the circumstances that led to the Lockout in Dublin and the corresponding developments in the labour movement in Britain in the early years of the twentieth century. The scale of the TUC's overall support via the Dublin Food Fund was enormous at over £93,000, amounting to more than €8.5 million in 2020 values. This is in the context where the ITGWU had only been four years in existence and had no British connections. On the other hand, the union had shown its commitment to workers' solidarity by providing material support for strikes by the National Sailors' & Firemen's Union and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in 1911. The fourteen weekly contributions of £1,000 made by the South Wales Miners' Federation in 1913 (over €1.2m in 2020 values) stands out. But the story at the centre of this pamphlet is about the rank-and-file labour organisations referred to by Darlington and the material and financial support they provided for workers and their families in Dublin. Patricia King and Frances O'Grady, in their message of solidarity from the ICTU and TUC in the introduction, describe it as a micro-history of 'how ordinary people in a particular place reacted and made their small contribution'. In this case those ordinary people were the men and women of the labour movement in Leicestershire and Loughborough whose solidarity with locked out Dubliners has been researched by local labour historian Mike Shuker. What is striking is the huge range of trade unions and cooperative societies in Leicestershire that contributed to the TUC Dublin Food Fund. While anti-Tory politics in the county was still heavily influenced by Non-Conformist approaches, the presence of an active Independent Labour Party appears to have been a key factor in encouraging local organisations to support Dublin's workers. Almost twenty separate unions, labour organisations and cooperative societies are listed as taking up collections for the Food Fund. Regular contributions were made by the Loughborough Federated Hosiery Union (over €1,500 in 2020 values), €966 in 2020 values by the Borough of Leicester Working Men's Club and almost €400 by the Loughborough Typographical Society.

The rich network of labour organisations was most evident in Loughborough, the county's second biggest city with a solid manufacturing base and a tradition of Chartist activity. Local hosiery unions referred to above, together with branches of national unions, were the driving force behind the Loughborough Trades Council. At its October 1913 meeting reference was made to Larkin's success in Belfast in 1907 in bringing together Protestant and Catholic workers 'to fight side by side the forces of tyranny and oppression'. Almost €1,000 (2020 values) was collected at Loughborough Corinthians Football Club a few days after the fund was launched. What is also notable, in political terms, is the mix of backgrounds of those in leadership roles in many of the local organisations. The chairman of the Loughborough fundraising committee was a brewer and merchant with labour sympathies, while one of the organisers of the meeting in Glenfield at which Larkin spoke was a Church of England rector and had been associated with the Christian Socialist movement. The other main organiser of that meeting was a Labour councillor who had been active in the Liberal Party. The Liberal leaning *Loughborough Herald & North Leicestershire Gazette* also encouraged contributions to the fund.

The depth and breadth of the support evident in Leicestershire is in stark contrast to the manner in which Dublin's locked out workers were abandoned by both nationalist politicians in Ireland and by the Church and the way in which they were castigated by the media – and not just outlets owned by William Martin Murphy. This publication is a welcome recognition of the historic importance of solidarity in promoting the interests of working people. Francis Devine and Mike Shuker are to be congratulated on seeing to fruition a project born out of a chance meeting in a pub in Loughborough – the kind of happy event we look forward to experiencing in the not-too-distant future.

Peter Carroll

John P Swift **Brendan Scott; The Struggle for a Socialist and Secular Ireland** (Dublin, 2020), Umiskin Press, ISBN: 978-1-8381112-1-2, 257 pp, €35 hb

Last December, an economist in the Irish Times suggested that inequality merits less attention than economic productivity, how to divide the cake being less important than the size of the cake. Brendan Scott would have relished the chance to pen a scathing retort. In fact, shortly before his untimely death, he eloquently addressed that exact issue in a pamphlet *Labour and Socialism*, which is included as an appendix in this book. He drew on Galbraith's remark that the urge to increase GNP has often been used as an alternative to redistribution and expressed his contempt for that attitude.

Don't talk about better slices of the National Cake for the workers; talk instead of baking a bigger cake so you can give a bigger share to workers without letting Rockefeller, Krupps or Onassis go hungry.

Scott's style of writing has the kind of fluency you would get from Jonathan Swift. The 14 pages of that pamphlet remain today a crystal-clear presentation of socialist beliefs that rivals many much longer books. Younger left-wing activists, particularly in the Labour Party, should study it and learn not just the ideas but the clarity and commitment in the way he presents them.

Each chapter of Swift's book is devoted to a different aspect of Scott's involvement with left-wing activism in Ireland that spanned his adult life to his premature death at the age of 40. We know now in exhaustive detail from official enquiries into institutional abuse just how deeply reactionary Irish society and political culture was in the 1950s as Scott was growing up in Co Sligo. Swift meticulously chronicles his role in the political campaigns and cultural movements to counter that ethos. As an innovative teacher he was influenced by the radical ideas of iconoclastic education reformers such as A.S. Neill in the UK and he sought to put these into action in a co-educational and non-denominational setting in Dublin. Various chapters describe his enthusiastic participation in groups such as the Left Club as testament to a wish to create a progressive political culture that would be the bedrock of campaigns to bring left wing policies into the mainstream of Irish Politics.

Swift rightly gives due weight to this aspect of Scott's work and devotes a thought-provoking chapter to the development of an 'Irish Enlightenment'. There are stimulating chapters on Scott's interest in international issues such as Nuclear Disarmament, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Vietnam war. On the domestic front Swift provides fascinating detail on movements such as the Dublin Housing Action campaign in the late 1960s, which alone merits close attention as Ireland again faces a housing emergency that replicates many of the features that motivated anger half a century ago. Of course, the chapters on Scott's involvement in Labour Party politics are of great interest including the accounts of his association with Dr Noel Browne. One particularly absorbing chapter is devoted to the hysterical reaction to Browne's controversial 1971 Tramore speech which lacerated the record of the Catholic Church in Ireland. This was a seminal event both in Labour's own history but also in the more general evolution of secular politics. It offered Browne and allies such as Scott an opportunity to lay the ground for an all-out drive to undermine the vice like grip of denominational forces on Irish politics.

The Troubles in the North became a dominant issue in the last 5 years of Scott's life and Swift includes an appendix with the text of an essay Scott wrote in 1971 on Labour and the North. A chapter devoted to Scott's advocacy of a Socialist and Secular Ireland also highlights how he approached the Northern issue combining a scrupulous revulsion of violence with a political imperative to win the consent of Northern Protestants through essential reforms to the blatantly confessional nature of the southern State. This chapter also contains some interesting correspondence between Scott and Conor Cruise O'Brien in September 1971 when there appeared to be a consensus

that both could endorse though, of course, that evaporated in the subsequent 2 years up to Scott's death. My one regret about this book is the absence of much detail on Scott's personal life and upbringing. The Scott I knew was eloquent and resolute, but he was also debonair, handsome and witty.

He died in September 1973. A week beforehand Allende's Government in Chile had been overthrown, a body blow to the international Left. His own death produced a heartfelt response of sadness from Irish socialists which is faithfully recorded in this book. I met him about six weeks before he died. Though extremely weak from stomach cancer he was lucid about the future of left politics in the Labour Party. What Michael Foot said of the great Nye Bevan, another victim of stomach cancer, could be equally said of Brendan Scott. 'He was like a great tree hacked down, wantonly, in full leaf'. John Swift has done a great service by bringing his ideas and his exemplary political life the attention they deserve to a modern audience.

Pat Carroll

Linda Connolly (Ed), **Women and the Irish Revolution: Feminism, Activism, Violence** (Dublin, 2020), Irish Academic Press, ISBN: 9781788551533, 272 pp, €24.95 pb

Women and the Irish Revolution is an exceptionally well-timed publication arriving in print just weeks before the eventual release of the Mother and Baby Homes investigation report. That report exposes the long-standing abuse and exploitation that many women and their children endured in Ireland since the foundation of an independent state. This volume sheds new light on the foundation of this misogynistic culture through the contribution of twelve well-crafted and meticulously researched essays by leading scholars. The decade of centenaries has led to a welcome influx of research uncovering the contributions of women during the key periods leading up to the establishment of the Irish Free State. Such contributions add greatly to our knowledge and understanding of this time period, but more research is still required to represent a balanced historical account. This volume is a very welcome addition, greatly expanding on work previously published on women and the revolutionary period. As Liz Gillis points out in her preface, all accounts need to be considered including 'those who were not involved, the women who witnessed the events, who experienced the revolution from a different perspective.' (p. ix) This volume covers the experiences of women directly active in the revolution and of those affected by it from a new and engaging perspective.

Linda Connolly sets out her aim for compiling this book in her introduction, which was 'to advance new, additional scholarship and perspectives in Irish sociology, history politics and literary studies on women's equally complex and varied role.' (p. 3) A mere glance at the table of contents identifies that this aim has indeed been achieved. A range of scholars represent all of these disciplines in three sections covering women's activism in feminist and nationalist campaigns; the traumatic impact of violence; and commemoration and remembrance. The range of focus is wide and inclusive yet the chapters interweave forming a clear overall narrative. Establishing a base of understanding in chapter one, Louise Ryan expertly navigates the reader through the complex relationship of nationalist and feminist goals. Such interrogation portrays how it was almost impossible for politically active Irish women to 'separate themselves from the wider political issues of Ireland's independence.' (p. 32) The contributions of women in the north of Ireland have often been excluded from historical analysis of the Irish revolutionary period. Margaret Ward's chapter ensures that the activities of these women are acknowledged by examining the Belfast Cumann na mBan from 1917-

1922. This chapter identifies the difficulties of constructing such a narrative which Ward overcomes through the extensive use of the Military Service Pensions Collection.

The significance of this archival resource is also showcased by Marie Coleman in her examination of violence and loss suffered by women from 1921-1923. A noteworthy inclusion here is Coleman's assessment of the Pensions Collection as a historical source, including controversial and problematic aspects of the pension application process itself. The thought-provoking assessments of violence experienced by women is a particular strength of this volume. As well as Coleman's contribution, three further chapters examine this topic using new sources and applying engaging analysis. Connolly's own extended chapter challenges the approach previously taken by historians of the Irish revolution in their framing of violence. Connolly not only interrogates Irish historiography but positions the use of 'gender-specific punishment,' used by all sides in the conflict. (p. 11) This aspect of Connolly's research was referenced by President Michael D. Higgins in his commemoration address on 4 Dec. 2020. Higgins highlighted how 'ethical recall should also include an examination of under-researched or avoided areas, such as the violence against women that occurred during this period.'¹ Indeed, such examination is continued in Andy Bielenberg's chapter which presents an individual account of a Mrs. Lindsay and provides particular detail of women killed during the Irish War of Independence in county Cork. While Mary McAuliffe sheds new light on domestic violence during this time period, identifying how the women of Cumann na mBan were targeted by both sides of the conflict in their own homes. These chilling accounts offer a vital new perspective on the use of gender-based violence during the time period 1919-1921.

Of particular note in this volume is the unique focus on remembrance of the Women and Children of the Tuam Mother and Baby Home by Sarah-Anne Buckley and John Cunningham. In this chapter, the authors contrast how the bodies of others were buried and their memories commemorated on the Tuam Bon Secours site. The bodies of six men executed on the Tuam site by Fress State forces in April 1923 were buried in consecrated ground and later commemorated by state officials with the help of the religious order based there. Such respect was not afforded to the remains of hundreds of children who died in the same building and whose bodies were discarded unceremoniously in a sewage area on the grounds. Utilising a myriad of sources including interim reports of the Mother and Baby Home Commission, this chapter raises pertinent questions that all historians and socially responsible citizens need to assess. Ultimately, as the authors conclude, 'during the "decade of centenaries," who we choose to commemorate, memorialise and remember should continue to be challenged and explored.'

This is an impressive and stimulating volume which also includes contributions by Lucy McDiarmid who follows the course of women imprisoned in Holloway Prison, while Claire McGing examines female representation in Dáil Éireann during this key period. John Borgonovo focuses specifically on women's military roles during the Irish Civil War and Ailbhe McDaid offers a valuable literary perspective on women's representations during hostilities. The collection concludes with a moving poem by Doireann Ní Ghríofa. This volume adds fresh perspectives and ground-breaking insights on the topic of *Women and the Irish Revolution*. The editor and contributors have chartered new territory that will undoubtedly inspire scholars and researchers to new depths of thinking.

Sonja Tiernan

1 "Of Centenaries and the Hospitality Necessary in Reflecting on Memory, History and Forgiveness" - Centenary Commemorations Address by President Michael D. Higgins.

Liam Cullinane, **Working in Cork. Everyday life in Irish Steel, Sunbeam Wolsey and the Ford Marina Plant 1917-2001**, (Cork, 2020), Cork University Press, SBN: 9781782054139, 206 pp, €39.00 pb

Some valuable labour history research has been carried out in Cork in recent years using oral history interviews as the primary source. Liam Cullinane not only provides an important addition to that body of work but he makes excellent use of the existing interviews to supplement those he conducted himself. This strategy gives him access to a large and wide-ranging sample of oral testimony, which is balanced to admirable effect with archival sources. The sixty-six interviews in the book come from four sources, including the 24 interviews Cullinane carried out himself. The others were Miriam Nyhan's 33 interviews for her book *Are You Still Below? The Ford Marina Plant Cork, 1917-1984*; seven were provided by the Cork Folklore Project and two interviews with former Sunbeam Wolsey workers were part of University College Cork Women's Oral History Project. Cullinane's collaboration with other researchers is a very useful model to follow in expanding the scope of an oral history project. It can overcome such obstacles as age and gender imbalance in the availability of interviewees, or 'narrators', the term preferred by Cullinane.

The Introduction explains how the city's fortunes waxed and waned in accordance with shifts in the country's economic policies. Detailed case studies form the body of the book, with Chapters 1 to 3 giving an overview of the business and operating history of the three Cork factories, followed by Chapters 4 to 7, focussing on workers' recollections about their experiences. These chapters are divided chronologically and thematically, dealing with issues that are common to all three enterprises, such as the management styles in the companies, working conditions, industrial relations, and the impact of national and international events in the course of the 20th century. For instance, the application of 'Fordism' to the running of the Ford Marina Plant was problematic in a city that was more commercial than industrial when the factory was set up in 1917. However, the welfare capitalism that Ford practiced, including paying higher wages than the local norm, ensured the loyalty of the workforce and for decades was a bulwark against the introduction of trade unions, which did not happen until 1949.

As in the Ford plant, a determinedly ideological figure, William Dwyer, oversaw the Sunbeam Wolsey factory in its establishment and its operation, until his death in 1951. Dwyer was a fervent believer in industrial paternalism, which had worked very well from the 19th century for such large enterprises as Guinness, which carried on the practices well into the 20th century. Cullinane describes it as a forerunner to welfare capitalism, with important differences 'Industrial paternalism is best applied to firms in which a real or imaginary relationship with the business leader is at the centre of the employment relationship. Welfare capitalism more accurately describes firms in which the same sense of loyalty and mutual endeavour is achieved through a standardised system of rules and rewards'. (p. 114). The workers' testimony emphasises the loyalty and respect that Dwyer and his son enjoyed from their employees and from residents in the Millfield area of Cork. Cullinane argues that a broadly similar pattern operated in both Ford and Sunbeam '... peaceful industrial relations established under the rubric of protectionism, followed by industrial conflict during the transition to free trade conditions and finally, a gradual consolidation of managerial power in these new conditions'. (p. 139). He also identifies this pattern as applying to the labour history of Irish Steel, albeit with important and significant differences.

The Irish Steel Plant was an integral part of Cobh for decades, providing job security, high wages and 'a place in which a worker and his family could live in dignity', as an *Irish Press* report described it in 1977. Despite these benefits, former employees remembered both the harsh conditions and the dangers of the plant 'The conditions of employment, they were really bad there because, from a

health and safety point of view, there wasn't any. ... The heat was just unimaginable'. (pp 143-144). Irish Steel was a workplace where the danger of injury and death was a permanent feature, through to its final days. The final two chapters in the book are devoted to examining the general context of working lives in Ireland. The discussion on 'Employment, Inequality and Emigration' concludes that class and gender played a significant role in the opportunities for employment that were accessible to working-class people, especially in the first half of the 20th century. The high unemployment levels in Cork were associated with a lack of job security and high rates of emigration. The penultimate chapter on 'Gender, Status and Resistance' notes that while all the narrators were trade union members and had some experience of strikes, their attitudes varied. The final chapter summarises the 'big questions' that Cullinane asks of 'small places' in this excellent book. He has performed a valuable service in unearthing hidden working-class voices in Cork while demonstrating how oral history practitioners can work together to enrich labour history research.

Mary Muldowney

Karina Holton, Valentine Lawless, Lord Cloncurry, 1773–1853: From United Irishman to Liberal Politician (Dublin, 2018) Four Courts Press, ISBN: 978-1-84682-705-1, 320 pp, €55 hb.

The Lyons estate, just outside Newcastle, County Dublin, is within striking distance of my house and during the Covid 'lockdowns' it was graced by my presence at least once a week, sometimes twice. Its abandoned old estate village and mill have been scrubbed up (or down) into something called Cliff at Lyons, with a double-Michelin-star restaurant, boutique hotel, an art gallery and cafés. Importantly, the coffee is good and there's a beautiful walk along the towpath of the Grand Canal from Lyons to where the barges tie up at Hazelhatch bridge. It's an idyllic place. It's also poignant to recall that one walks in the footsteps of the impressive African-Caribbean Catherine Despard, who found refuge here in 1803 immediately after the execution of her revolutionary husband, Colonel Edward Despard, and remained for some years as a guest of Valentine Lawless.

Unseen by visitors, across a hedge from the old village, is the big house, a tremendous neoclassical mansion begun in 1797 by Nicholas Lawless, the first Lord Cloncurry, the offspring of a poor Catholic shop-boy. Robert, the shop-boy, through ability, and by marrying his employer's widow, had risen to become a prosperous Dublin merchant and both he and Nicholas conformed in 1770 to the Church of Ireland, enabling them to purchase land and gentrify the family. Apart from the Lyons estate, Nicholas bought land in Blackrock where he built Maretimeo, a substantial coastal home he used for entertaining. He also reputedly greased his way into the aristocracy with £3,000, becoming Baron Cloncurry in 1790. But his son, born in 1773, is a more intriguing figure. Valentine Lawless is not a name immediately familiar to most with an interest in the history of social radicalism in Ireland, despite his senior leadership role in the United Irishmen, active engagement with the Owenite cooperative movement of the early 1820s and involvement with the long campaigns for Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform. Karina Holton, in this landmark biography, hints at the reason for this obscurity, though, when she observes that his politics shifted as the decades passed, from radical republicanism to liberal reform, and his brand of liberal Protestantism appealed little to committed nationalists or unionists when pantheons were being constructed. Lawless (the second Lord Cloncurry from 1799) was dropped into a memory hole.

Despite his later transformation into an influential liberal politician, Lawless was not capricious.

His time with the United Irishmen was important and formative, and he was a sincere advocate of revolutionary ideas from the mid-1790s to at least 1803. As early as June 1795, he hailed those ‘who wish to plant *l’arbor* [sic] *de la liberté*...tis pitty no seeds of that luxuriant plant have hitherto fallen on our fertile little Isle – I hope I may yet see it in vigour tho’ I become pendant from its branch’ (p. 31). These private remarks reveal an awareness of his own class position, but, like Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O’Connor, his republican radicalism overcame the attractions of social privilege and he became deeply involved with the United Irish movement. As a principal leader, he was arrested in London in late May 1798. In custody, Holton says, ‘Lawless refused to answer any questions put to him...a strategy that John Binns had advised at his London lectures on how to resist interrogation’ (p. 46). After six weeks, he was freed on bail, but was arrested again in April 1799 and then held in prison until March 1801. His engagement with the revolutionary movement had remained strong even after the brutal crushing of the 1798 rebellion and it seems he had connections to the failed attempt at a second United Irish uprising in 1803. Thereafter, however, he withdrew from revolutionary republicanism and began his political transition to liberal reformist, though his admiration for Edward Fitzgerald, Arthur O’Connor and other leaders of the United Irishmen never diminished and was openly expressed in his autobiography in 1849. Likewise, he knew Colonel Despard as a revolutionary colleague and, after his execution, took care of his wife, Catherine, apparently providing her with a financial stipend for the rest of her life.

Holton provides a tremendous narrative of the political life of Valentine Lawless, with most attention, naturally, on his time as a liberal politician. It is clear that he shed his revolutionary ardour, but the values that motivated him remained progressive, humanitarian and anti-sectarian. He believed in reason and rational thought and was a creature of the Enlightenment. Lawless agitated for Catholic emancipation, repeal of the union (he had a strained relationship with Daniel O’Connell), economic development in Ireland, against slavery and anti-Jewish discrimination and, in general, was a benevolent landlord. He endorsed the socialist Robert Owen and facilitated his lectures in Ireland in the 1820s. During the Great Famine, Lawless worked hard to stem the starvation and misery he saw around him. His time in the British House of Lords (he was eventually made a British peer) went badly because of his frustration at the unwillingness of government and British politicians to treat Irish grievances with any urgency. His sponsors eventually grew weary of his constant complaining, a sure sign that he refused to be mere lobby fodder. In turn, he lost interest in attending a parliament that rarely took him seriously.

This biography establishes Lawless as a substantial political figure, despite his lack of success in parliament. One issue that I do have, however, with Holton’s textured reading of her subject’s life is the reason she ascribes to his turn away from revolutionary republicanism, which she persists in depicting as political and psychological maturation, inferring that his time with the United Irish movement was almost the folly of youth. But Lawless was 25 years old when the 1798 rebellion occurred and 30 in 1803 when tangentially connected to Robert Emmet’s abortive uprising. This might be a young man now, but that’s less true for the late-eighteenth century, when a man was considered to be well on in life at 30. More to the point, his disengagement from republicanism is not particularly difficult to understand. The United Irishmen as an organisation was utterly and violently repressed after 1798 and it was impossible to openly affirm any connection to republicanism in the early decades of the nineteenth century. If Lawless wished to remain an advocate of an Irish republic, he would have had to go into exile to France (like Arthur O’Connor, who lost his property in Cork) or to the United States (like the lawyer Thomas Addis Emmet). It would have meant giving up everything and that in the context of a crushed movement that showed no hope of reviving. The United Irishmen had failed and been successfully destroyed by the state. The effective repression of the republicans also pointed to revolution in Ireland as a problematic

strategy in the medium term. Arguably, outside of liberal reformism, Lawless (now Lord Cloncurry, of course) had nowhere to go politically unless he left the country.

Holton is clear, though, that the ‘more liberal and egalitarian ideals’ of the United Irishmen greatly influenced Valentine Lawless throughout his later life and contributed to his belief that ‘a good citizen should promote the welfare of the whole of society’ (pp 279–80). He was a complicated man, and far from perfect, but his importance cannot be doubted. One hopes that this excellent book will help to write him back into Irish and British history.

Fintan Lane

Peter Rigney, *How Railwaymen and Dockers defied an Empire – The Irish Munitions embargo of 1920* (Dublin 2020), Umiskén Press, ISBN: 978-1-8381112-2-9, 58 pp, €9 pb

The traditional imagery of the War of Independence is of an IRA Flying Column waiting to ambush a convoy of policemen or British forces. The message being that small numbers of heroic men, always men, fought and eventually succeeded in a war against superior forces. This imagery and accompanying narrative over time, has given a distorted historical account of the various components to the struggle for independence including mass mobilisations of this period. There were two, nationally successful general strikes during these years and a third in the interval between the treaty and the civil war. In addition, there were two nationally significant industrial disputes, the motor permits dispute and the munitions embargo. Peter Rigney’s ‘How Railwaymen and Dockers defied an Empire – The Irish Munitions embargo of 1920’ is a superb and important account of this politically and militarily significant dispute that is better known to students of labour history than to general history readers. A crucial point to note is that the author, correctly, uses the word ‘embargo’ instead of the commonly used ‘strike’. Railway workers and Dockers refused to transport armed soldiers and munitions. They did not refuse to transport unarmed soldiers, ironically providing them with a safe haven from attacks for the duration of the dispute. Thousands participated in the dispute and when confronted, individually accepted suspension or dismissal, thereby degrading the rail system while at the same time succeeding in halting military transport.

The author writes; ‘Based on what they knew about the Irish trade union movement the British might well have thought that dismissals would be followed by an immediate railway strike based on the Larkinite slogan ‘An injury to one is the concern of all’. Congress chose to go in a diametrically opposite direction for strategic reasons because it considered that Lloyd George and Winston Churchill wanted to provoke social and economic chaos in Ireland by closing the railway system and projecting the blame for this on the railway workers.’ The significance of this is seen in the useful map of the Irish Rail network at the time. It was the main conduit for long distance transport of food supplies and people. Its potential closure ran the risk of near famine conditions developing in parts of the country. Additionally, accepting suspensions and dismissals while supporting workers from the significant funds raised (€5.2 million in today’s terms) allowed the dispute to last for seven months. In contrast, the ‘all out’ Limerick Soviet of April 1919 lasted less than two weeks.

The dispute was inspired by the actions of London Dockers in refusing to load the SS Jolly George with munitions for use by the Polish Army in its fight with the Bolshevik Red Army. This action was backed by their London Unions, the NUR and the TGWU. This ‘revolutionary’ act was short lived but Irish trade unionists took note. Two 1916 veterans triggered the dispute by following the example of the London Dockers. Christopher Moran, one of these instigators later commented;

'I began to think that if the British dockers refused to handle munitions for their troops to kill Russians, why should I handle munitions for British forces to kill my own countrymen.' Most of those eventually involved were members of the British based NUR and because they had no official backing for the action, the dispute was essentially managed in Ireland through the Congress and its Secretary, Tom Johnson. This enabled close liaison with Republican forces in fundraising in addition to the uninvited benefits of occasional intimidation and arson as well as a high-profile assassination of a Railway Company Director.

The duration of the dispute is explained by the general reluctance of the Railway Companies to close the network and to lose the financial advantages they retained from World War contracts. In many cases, local supervisors were reluctant to escalate the dispute or to confront what was a popular action by local workers. The bravery of the workers was manifest. One observer recalled; 'I have seen railwaymen being hammered by police and soldiers and refusing to budge, and it was an extraordinary sight to see the detachment of military lined up on the platform fully armed and those three or four ordinary workmen getting off and telling them that they would go no further...I have seen a man of between 50 and 60 years of age, a driver, being battered and kicked around the platform by a military officer and an auxiliary officer and the revolver being put into his mouth and he still refusing to budge.' The author also clearly illustrates that this popular solidarity only existed in parts, albeit the majority of the country. The fact was that Ireland was already divided geographically at the time of the dispute. The dispute was not just generally ineffective in the North East but there was widespread hostility towards any action that undermined British military forces. In truth, the country was divided before it was partitioned. A subject for another day.

The final word should go to General Sir Neville Macready, Commander of the Army in Ireland, who described the dispute as 'a serious setback to British military actions in Ireland'. A setback, caused by trade unionists, that was actually more significant than any individual ambush of the period. The importance of this civilian led role in the struggle for independence is well captured in this publication.

Shay Cody

Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd, **Marriage in Ireland, 1660-1925**, (Cambridge, 2020), Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781108645164, 448 pp, €31.80 pb

In an impressive study divided into four parts, Luddy and O'Dowd examine the historical experience of marriage - from what constitutes a marriage to how marriages were conducted, marital relations and the 'unmaking' of marriages. This covers all aspects from consent and courtship to domestic violence and divorce and is peppered with an array of figures, illustrations and tables. As such there is something of interest to scholars of love or the law, dating or desertion, the 'normal' route of matches and marital relations or the more salacious breach of promise or bigamy cases. This rich social history of marriage and its aftermath is an impressive study from two of the foremost historians of Ireland and readers who have heard presentations over the years and eagerly awaited this book will not be disappointed. The authors make the point on the first page that they have presented a history of heterosexual marriage and while this is an obvious point given the lack of marriage equality until the twenty-first century, it is a welcome and explicit acknowledgement of heteronormativity in Irish society and history. The book is a detailed reflection on how patriarchy has operated given that men made the laws that set the conditions for marriage and the authors explore patriarchal control of the institution of marriage from both a state and religious perspective.

Politics determine the dates chosen for the study, from the Restoration of Charles II which marked the beginning of a new legislative structure to the last debate in the Oireachtas on divorce in 1925, the year that also saw the first petition for a divorce from Northern Ireland. This reflects the availability of sources, but it also highlights another important aspect of how high level politics shaped the choices ordinary people made about the most intimate aspects of their lives, and for almost all of that time period the power to shape laws was in the hands of elite men. In a classic example of how gender historians often use sources in novel ways, the review of breach of promise cases includes detailed and personal information about courtships and the socially permissible behaviours agreed between couples who were ostensibly intending to marry. This tells you much about norms and the authors emphasise the class dimensions of dating across this period: how much contact, whether it was supervised, what kinds and the frequency of acceptable gifts are all expertly analysed and were greatly dependent on the couple's class. The higher the class the higher level of surveillance of courting couples.

The darker parts of Ireland's history of marriage are sensitively explored through a variety of methods. Luddy and O'Dowd present aggregate, quantitative analyses of abductions and trials for such in Ireland, acts of violence against women and children and cases of desertion. They estimate there were 213 abductions in Ireland in the 18th century, rising to 1,479 between 1800 and 1850 before declining to a recorded 120 cases from 1860 to 1918. They also explore these aspects through individual case studies, such as the abduction of Jane Matthews in 1825 in which her own family were found to be complicit in trying to force her to marry a soldier when she was in love with someone else. Luddy and O'Dowd highlight Jane's attempts to physically resist the abduction, resulting in significant injuries, an outcome mirrored in other instances from the time. We can observe women's attempts to assert their agency in such extreme instances, and also the lengths that men, in coalition at times with their own or their victims' relatives, went to in securing the desired wife. Luddy and O'Dowd highlight that women could potentially have such marriages voided, but there is little evidence they did, suggesting the limit to such agency was in preventing the marriage, and that once concluded, there were few avenues of escape.

The 'unmaking' or undoing of marriages is also explored where 'Irish solutions' to the unavailability of divorce included desertion. This had particularly gendered consequences as more frequently it seems husbands left wives rather than the other way around, thereby exposing wives and children to destitution and the workhouse. Women claiming support from local boards of guardians were not always believed and, in some cases, it seems women were attempting to use the workhouse to create an exit path from their marriages, such as Johanna Daly who claimed her husband deserted her but had her case dismissed as the court found he was perfectly willing to do so, but she would not live with him. In cases where wives left husbands, Luddy and O'Dowd reveal a complex array of reasons women did so, but it often involved leaving abusive partners. The sources do not always reveal the full details of each case, but this book raises interesting questions about how we can view marriages, and separations, in the past.

The sources used in this book will be of particular significance to postgraduate students interested in following up threads the book reveals. The authors disclose they were unable to access marriage records in some diocesan archives despite these records being over 200 years old. This points to the difficulties social historians face when writing about topics that the Catholic Church has an administrative relationship to. It is hoped that recent innovations in genealogical databases can be capitalized on by scholars who are interested in further exploring the history of marriage in Ireland, and that these repositories are opened, particularly the records from earlier time periods that are not always captured in commercial databases.

Jennifer Redmond

Seamus Cullen, **Kildare: the Irish revolution, 1912-1923** (Dublin, 2020), Four Courts Press, ISBN: 978-1-84682-837-9, 224 pp, €22.45 pb

Seamus Cullen's study of County Kildare during the revolutionary decade is the eighth (of nine published to date, with five more close in press) in the Four Courts Press Irish revolution series produced under the direction of the editorial team of Daithí Ó Corráin and Marian Lyons. Together with separate standalone volumes covering other counties a sizeable historiography is now emerging that will allow for a more collective analysis of political, military and social developments during these seminal years of modern Irish history. While common threads can be discernible, the merit of the county-based studies is that they also highlight the region-specific factors. Trends or causes identifiable in one county might be completely the reverse of the situation in another. A defining feature of Kildare during these years is the significance of the military presence at the Curragh, initially the British and latterly the new Irish national army. The exceptionality of Kildare in this regard is most observable when Cullen addresses the thorny question of Protestant depopulation in the years between the population censuses of 1911 and 1926 (pp 139-40). The proportionate decline for the county was 70 per cent, double the national figure for the reduction in the number of members of non-Catholic denominations. The significance of British withdrawal in accounting for this demographic phenomenon is illustrated starkly in the figures cited for Ballysax parish (home of the Curragh), which lost 96 per cent of its non-Catholic population in the fifteen-year interval between the censuses.

This is only one area in which the exceptionality of 'Kildare's long established status as a garrison county differentiates it from all others [counties]' (p. 1) during the war and revolutionary years. Not surprisingly there is also a more detailed account of the impact of the First World War on the county (chapter 3) than is the case in studies of some of the other counties in this series (and in other county-focused studies) which were less directly affected by that conflict. The book is nicely presented containing some very helpful and clear maps identifying key placenames mentioned in the text, outlining local and parliamentary electoral divisions, and plotting the distribution of crown forces and IRA battalions during the revolutionary phase of the period under review. These are complemented by thirty black and white photos, where the predominance of male subjects reflects the military nature of the county, the dominance of men in the political sphere at the time, and possibly the difficulty in obtaining contemporary images of local women. One striking photograph of a female character referenced in the text is that of Eve (Aoife) Burke, a nurse who offered her services to Pearse and Connolly in the GPO during the Rising. Burke is depicted in a uniform, presumably of Cumann na mBan, but this is not identified and would have been an interesting observation to have included.

In general the treatment of women is scant, with passing references in individual chapters rather than a systematic treatment of, for example, the activities of Cumann na mBan in the War of Independence and Civil War. This might reflect the paucity of appropriate sources; there are as yet very few military service pension files available from Cumann na mBan who were active in the county. Some of the references to women are tantalising in offering further lines of enquiry for researchers to expand upon. The attendance of Church of Ireland members, Elizabeth Bloxham and Maud Wolfe at the inaugural meeting of Cumann na mBan in Naas in 1914 offers further evidence for themes explored recently by Conor Morrissey in his study of Protestant nationalists in Ireland during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Other areas of women's activities that are mentioned, but only in passing, include the suffrage movement, the 'Introduction', setting the scene in Kildare at the beginning of the book's timeframe, mentions a meeting of the Irish Women's Franchise League held in Naas town hall at which Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington addressed a meeting of 250 people, only one-third of whom were women (p. 13). Given the prominence of the army

within the county it would be interesting to know more about the attitudes of army wives and what role if any they played within the local community, though suitable sources might not be available on this subject. To be fair to the author these are tight volumes, cramming a discussion of all events from 1912 to 1923 into fewer than 150 pages of text so there is not often adequate space to expand upon some subjects.

Readers of this journal will be especially interested in the discussion of labour issues. One especially interesting episode described is a farm labourers' strike which occurred during the War of Independence. Not nearly enough attention has been given to rural class agitation during the revolutionary years (outside discussions of the setting up of republican courts at least) and Cullen's focus on it highlights the threat which class-based agitation posed to local IRA units. In light of the centrality of the army to the county, the detrimental impact of the most significant national labour agitation - the 1920 railway munitions strike - might have merited a more detailed analysis (p. 86). While in this review I have chosen to identify specific themes, the structure of the book follows the chronological outline of all volumes in the series. Therefore, students of specific aspects, such as the War of Independence and Civil War, will find these sections very valuable in providing the Kildare experience on these conflicts. I would certainly have found it valuable had it been published before I wrote the 'Leinster' War of Independence chapter for the *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. The final chapter touches on a number of themes that are emerging within literature, such as political party formation in the new state and the new political home found by old home rulers. The end date of 1923 does not allow for any serious examination of the impact of the army mutiny on the new armed force which replaced the British one as a major force in Kildare society.

Seamus Cullen's study of revolutionary Kildare is a welcome addition to the vibrant scene of local studies of the Irish revolution. Readers will find much local colour and valuable comparisons with other regions. The strictures of the series limit discussion of some subjects but by introducing them here, the author points the way for others to explore them in further detail in subsequent more focused studies.

Marie Coleman

Elaine Farrell, **Women, Crime and Punishment in Ireland** (Cambridge, 2020) Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781108884242, 292 pp, £75.00 hb

In this meticulous study of women sentenced to spend time in the convict prison system in Ireland between 1854 and 1900, Elaine Farrell provides us with a window into the lives of Irish women during the post-Famine period. While the 'site' of this study is the convict prison system (Newgate Auxiliary Gaol, Grangegorman, Spike Island and Mountjoy Female Penitentiary) the broader implications are quite obvious; Farrell offers us a window through which we can begin to understand how gender, class, criminality and social networks intersected in the lives of largely working-class women during this period. Relevant to historians of prisons, it also lays down a series of themes and questions that those examining Irish social history more generally would do well to adopt. Innovative analysis of the soundscape of the Irish convict prison for example, allows us to develop a sense of what it was like to experience the 'auditory landscape' (p.183) of Mountjoy in the nineteenth century. Our ears are not assailed by the cacophony of confined women we might expect as silence was considered necessary for contemplation and reform, but we begin to understand what it was like to be Margaret Burke, confined in her prison cell, and 'aggravated by the matrons talking outside her door' (p.184). In this way, and in many others then, this is a history told with great empathy.

Broken down into a series of five chapters and five case studies, the book adopts an unusual structure that works to provide what Fergus Campbell referred to as a ‘concertina’ approach to the past, where we can zoom in and out to recover a sense of the broad experience of the approximately 4,000 women who ended up in the convict system as well as understanding the more singular experience of women like convict Mary Enright, prison matron Delia Lidwill and the Carroll family, experts in ‘coining’ in Dublin and Liverpool (Campbell, 2005, p. 5). The case studies, much like Mark Peel’s dramatizations of the encounter between social worker and the poor in Britain and elsewhere in the 1920s-40s, provide atmosphere, detailed and at times, heart-breaking intervals between the traditional chapters that provided a synthesis of experience (Peel, 2011).

Foucauldian interpretation of the prison system often confers analytical status on the prison warden – prisoner relationship, as well as the relationship between the prisoner and the space of the prison. But Farrell moves beyond this perspective to examine the relationships between the prisoners themselves, those that pre-dated and those that were formed during incarceration. In this way then it is a social history of the prison system, illuminating our understanding far beyond the administrative work pioneered by Patrick Carroll-Burke, Tim Carey and others. It points towards new approaches to institutionalised populations in Ireland’s past, and how we might approach the workhouses, lunatic asylums, Magdalen laundries and mother and baby homes once we have access to the archives.

The archival sensitivity within this work also affords a sophisticated model for students of Irish history. In discussing occupation for example, the author usefully outlines the wide variety of occupations that those who ended up in the convict system held at some point prior to incarceration. The single occupation given in the prison registers reflected a point in time, providing officials with a rigid, usable category of analysis. But official records also work to ‘flatten’ the perspective historians can arrive at unless attention is paid not only to the content of the records themselves, but also the ways in which those records faithfully performed an administrative function. The reliance of the social historian on large registers from workhouses, asylums and prisons, as well as the more universal census, possesses a danger that Farrell is attuned to – those records can yield the hidden complexity of individual lives, but only if we read along the archival grain (Stoler, 2008).

The largest employed group were servants and charwomen (667) while the majority were described as unemployed (1,290). The wide variety of occupations included those who operated in the agricultural sector, within the domestic sphere and within the emerging manufacturing sector. Also present were more typically ‘criminal’ occupations, such as sex-workers and brothel-keepers (103, Farrell, p. 177). The relationship between occupation and conviction is not necessarily clear-cut, but the economic vulnerability of women in an Ireland that held little security meant that women were forced to turn to activity that saw them come under the notice of the criminal justice system, and by extension, through conviction, the prison wardens. Sex-work, illegal possession, pickpocketing and shoplifting may have been strategies of survival for women on the margins of society, but these strategies also constituted criminal action and often led to further marginalisation through imprisonment. Farrell’s work on women in nineteenth century Ireland broadens our understanding not only of the imprisoned convicts pictured throughout, but of the hundreds of thousands of faceless women whose lives never appeared in the official records, but whose experiences were equally framed within the contexts of their gender, class and occupation. This is a very welcome addition to an increasingly healthy social history of Ireland.

Georgina Laragy

Fergus Whelan **May Tyrants Tremble: The Life of William Drennan, 1754–1820 (Dublin, 2020)**
Irish Academic Press, ISBN: 9781788551212, 350 pp, €29.95 pb

Brexit has created an economic Irish ‘sea border’ despite the continuing political partition of Ireland. There is currently an upsurge in the movements towards both Scottish and Welsh national self-determination. Meanwhile, demographics are shifting in the Six Counties with the unionist community ageing and its younger cohorts emigrating to Britain. This has engendered a debate over the future constitutional set up in Ireland – a debate which is currently being thrashed out in both the halls of power and in ordinary homesteads in every community throughout the country. We are also nearing the climax of the ‘Decade of Centenaries’ of the revolutionary period of 1913-1913. The narratives of Protestant Irish republican women and men who lived, fought, and died during that turbulent period have, thankfully, had a light shone on them by commemorations. A number of important publications have also elucidated the centrality of their networks to the struggle for independence. Within the context of an ever-evolving, and historically informed, discourse between unionists and republicans about the future of Ireland over the next decade, the radical Protestants of the revolutionary generation of c.1890-1923 (Alice Milligan, Anna Johnston and Roger Casement, among others) will probably be less a feature than the Presbyterian Dissenters of the late eighteenth century.

Of the latter group, none should feature more in these cross-community debates than William Drennan (1754-1820), his life pieced together in this timely and absorbing biography by Fergus Whelan. Drennan was born in Belfast, ‘in the manse of First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Lane’ (p.1), and was the son of Thomas Drennan (1696-1762), a ‘New Light’ Presbyterian minister. His father’s enlightenment politics and doctrine of religious tolerance shaped the young William from his early years and he became the leading and most articulate voice of Presbyterian radicalism in the North. Despite Drennan’s anti-sectarian pedigree ‘a consensus persists among historians that he was an anti-Catholic bigot with an obsessive dislike and mistrust of Catholics’ (p.x). This line of argument, most forcefully promulgated by Louis Cullen, rested, as Whelan demonstrates, on shoddy foundations. A single private statement by Drennan from his time in Newry in 1786 – a low point in his life – where he remarked how nothing was stirring in the town except ‘pigs and Papists’ (p.50) was used to construct a skewed portrayal of religious intolerance. Whelan sets the record straight by assessing Drennan’s entire career, including his involvement with the United Irishmen from their earliest days, his post-1798 rebellion writings in the *Belfast Monthly Magazine* where he fervently argued in favour of Catholic emancipation and against Orangeism, and even up to Drennan’s death where ‘his long-standing request his remains be carried to the grave by six Catholics and six Protestants [was] complied with’ (p.283). Ultimately, for Whelan, Drennan ‘made his life’s work the forwarding of a brotherhood of affection’ between Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter and the breaking down of the ‘brazen walls of separation’ (p.289) that stood between them.

Drennan went about this task not with the sword, but with the pen. His polemics and open letters – sometimes written under pseudonyms – were hugely influential and encompassed the Volunteer movement of the 1780s, the French Revolution of 1789 and its aftermath, the ‘savage coercion’ of British government repression in Ireland and its policy of instigating the 1798 Rebellion, the Act of Union 1800, and the civic life of Belfast, in which Drennan was centrally involved in the 1810s. Whelan incorporates and analyses these sources incisively in the narrative, noting that Drennan’s public pronouncements were often carefully tailored so as to avoid division and, as a result, often did not reflect his real convictions. Therefore, it is Drennan’s private correspondence with his older sister, Martha McTier, which he kept up when he moved south to Dublin, that offers the real insight into his personal life and political thought. Indeed, Martha, whom Whelan remarks ‘displayed a

talent of perception in discerning the truth' (p.213), features throughout the book – a radical ahead of her time in the mould of Mary Ann McCracken and deserving of her own biographer, sources permitting.

The question of how Drennan survived the turmoil of the 1798 Rebellion looms large throughout this work. Many of his United Irish comrades ended up dead or in exile in America. Whelan contends that by 1796 Drennan had chosen not 'to bear the moral or political responsibility for the awful things that were happening and about to happen' (p.205). Thus, he was not 'directly involved' in the armed conspiracy, although he remained active in materially supporting his imprisoned radical friends and in propagandising on behalf of the movement. Whelan notes that it was simple 'good fortune' (p.288) that the notorious spy, Francis Higgins (aka the 'Sham Squire'), failed to register this treasonous activity by Drennan in the lead up to 1798.

Besides a minor quibble with the book in that the opening paragraph of some middle chapters do not state the date and are therefore sometimes hard to follow, this is an excellent biographical account of a key United Irishman. Not only does it allow us to comprehend the mind of an eighteenth century Presbyterian radical republican pre- and post-1798, but it offers a real sense of what the tumultuous 1790s felt like on the ground in both Dublin and Belfast. It also elucidates many of the personal links between Irish, Scottish and English radicals and the affinity they, and Drennan, held for 'the men of no property'. *May Tyrants Tremble* should be required reading for anyone interested in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Irish politics, religion, social movements and civic engagement or, indeed, anyone researching the Presbyterian radicalism of the wider Atlantic world.

Kerron Ó Luain

Rebecca Anne Barr, Sarah-Anne Buckley and Muireann O'Cinneide (eds), **Literacy, Language and Reading in Nineteenth-Century Ireland** (Liverpool, 2019), Liverpool University Press, ISBN: 978-1-786-94208-1, 213 pp, £90 hb

That literacy would 'civilise' and 'modernise' the Irish was no doubt most urgent in the nineteenth century, as British colonial rule required an increasingly disciplined and productive agricultural economy and militarised population to serve its rapidly expanding capitalist and imperialist ambitions. It was also part of the moral justification of Empire. As James Paul Gee observes, literacy has more broadly, 'across history and across various cultures', been thought of as 'something the possession of which makes people better and higher human beings. [...] If language is what makes us all human, literacy, it seems, is what makes some of us "civilised"'. How, then, is literacy conceptualised in the history of a country that has so often been the victim of ill-conceived and clumsily applied theories of modernisation and 'civilisation'? And how much more complicated are the politics of understanding literacy in a context where the indigenous language was waning, as part of a process of deculturation, just as literacy in the language of the coloniser was beginning to expand? By the end of the nineteenth century, Ireland had travelled along a dramatic, complicated and painful path to various forms of literacy, and through the trauma of losing a great deal of its indigenous tongue. The picture of change here might suggest a zero-sum game in which loss in one language was simple a gain in the other, but that too is somewhat misleading. As *Literacy, Language and Reading in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, edited by Rebecca Anne Barr, Sarah-Anne Buckley and Muireann O'Cinneide (2019) argues, the story is much more complicated, not least because literacy in English enabled the previously inaccessible reading of Gaeilge for some who had fluently spoken it but not read it before.

This is an important and welcome text. It's diverse and lively discussions of literacy, or *litteracies*, in nineteenth-century Ireland, produces myriad insights into the intricacies of language loss and acquisition in a mostly Irish-speaking populace that started the century with little ability to read and write, but ended it, on some estimates, over 80 per cent literate in English. Barr, Buckley, O'Conneide and their contributors are careful to tease out what being "literate" might mean—cautious about how this definition can be subject to oversimplification. This scrutiny is one of the great merits of the book, which both expands the horizons of what literacy might or ought to mean in an Irish context and produces nuanced and detailed readings of the contexts in which it is traditionally, more broadly understood. The book advances what we know about periodical cultures, cartography, Irish-language revival, women's histories, class relations and educational policy in Ireland over the century, and while it does not set out to provide a comprehensive and exhaustive study of the multi-layered history of literacy across all of these categories and others, its contributors bring vital new knowledge to the field, charting rich terrain on which future scholarship will no doubt blossom.

Barr, Buckley and O'Conneide set out the parameters of debate in their introduction, discussing the ways in which literacy could be simultaneously part of a colonial hegemonic process and profoundly enabling for those participating in print communities, identity formation and cultural revival that opposed colonial rule. Writing, reading and literacy must be disentangled, they argue, as concepts that need to be understood in their own right *and* in how they interweave. This is not least necessary because of the distinct oral traditions in Ireland, where 'the primacy of the textual raises distinctive political and moral problems' and where 'an explosion of manuscript sources in Irish matches the paucity of nineteenth-century printed books in the language' (p. 3). Where practices of reading periodicals to crowds took hold, the extent to which those who attended were simply 'illiterate' is questioned. Attention to the concept of 'new literacies' is important too, the editors add: map-reading, visual symbolism, imperial cartography – even matters such as palmistry, the reading of hands, and graphology, the interpretation of handwriting – must form part of the story told. An understanding of the ways in which literacy was always subtended by ideology under colonialism is indispensable too. 'Indeed, it may be that the monolingualism of many contemporary historians circumscribes a fuller sense of the linguistic and literate terrains of the period' (p.4). Barr, Buckley and O'Conneide also discuss matters of class and the 'profound unease surrounding nineteenth-century discussions of women's literacy'—the presumed 'corruptions' and 'distractions' it might induce (p. 8).

The volume's ten chapters expand on these themes through a mixture of broad historical accounts and illustrative case studies, grouped under four core themes: literacy and bilingualism; periodicals and their readers; translation, transmission and transnational literacies; and visual literacies. Niall Ó Ciosáin's chapter on 'Varieties of Literacy in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Gender, Religion and Language', opens with a useful overview. Ó Ciosáin notes the tendency, even at the time of the time of the 1841 census, to view literacy levels as 'a proxy for economic development or "modernisation"' (p. 16). The standard of measurement most frequently employed to measure literacy at this time was the ability to sign one's name, which for various reasons problematises the data, not least because many at this time could read but not write. Ó Ciosáin provides a granular study of the causes and effects of gender and religious disparities in literacy levels, and of the history and impact of literacy in English rather than Irish. The following chapter considers how an elite, and one of the most important, Irish speakers of the century to come – came to learn Irish in his formative years. Máire Nic an Bháird and Liam Mac Mathúna's research on Douglas Hyde's teenage diaries reveals how a home-schooled and relatively affluent Protestant boy came to know affectionately the local men who served his house and with it became absorbed in the language they spoke. The chapter charts Hyde's emergence as an intellectual spanning 'two worlds: he had his English

persona, the son of Reverend Hyde, and his Irish persona, the young man who mixes with the local labourers and identifies with the local customs and language' (p. 35). This rich case study also illustrates the limited opportunities for a waning Irish-language community to pass on its language and traditions.

A major force of preservation and of literacy in nineteenth-century Ireland was the efflorescence of periodicals, which the second section of the book concerns. James Quinn's chapter on the *Nation* considers its role in cultivating citizenship, historical knowledge and dissent. The Young Irelanders behind this endeavour viewed with partial distrust the establishment of a national system of primary education from 1931. On the one hand, it could prove a bulwark to national consciousness—spreading literacy and thus opening the veins through which information and national feeling might flow. On the other, the schools were themselves undoubtedly instruments of colonialism, shaping young minds in support of the status quo. The *Nation's* support for popular education initiatives, including reading rooms and cheap history books for the less well off, was part of a programme that 'drew heavily on the ideals of civic republicanism and its emphasis on political education and engagement' (p. 57). Quinn chronicles the movement and its role in bringing literacy and its increasingly radical politics to the masses. The circulation of religious periodicals expanded enormously during the century, often resulting in fierce debates between and within religious sects, and Nicola Morris's chapter on Irish Methodism captures the energies behind this phenomenon. For all religions, though for Methodists in particular – as a small minority religious community in Ireland, looking to their more plentiful coreligionists in Britain for support – subscription to a faith periodical provided 'a means of feeling part of a broader, more dynamic, movement than that provided by the local chapel' (p.66). Morris's scrutinises the ways in which this relatively highly literate community used the periodical to voice grievances and lobby politically, considering sectarianism, silencing and schisms over the century.

A lull in periodical production followed the Act of Union in 1800, but as Elizabeth Tilley outlines, in her excellent chapter, 'by contrast, the (roughly) 20-year period between 1830 and the famine years at the end of the 1840s saw an explosion of new titles, though the lifespan of most of them was still no more than a year' (87). One of the relative publishing successes of this period, the *Dublin Penny Journal*, is the principal subject of Tilley's study. In a time of literary serialisation, increased public education through initiatives like the Mechanics' Institutes, and the 're-invigoration of literary and scientific societies like the Royal Irish Academy' (p. 88), a popular thirst for knowledge and news created space for cheaper, widely disseminated fare. Tilley considers the role of Irish antiquarian George Petrie in driving the *Dublin Penny Journal* project, its national and popular tone, and its importance, as with the later exploits of Young Ireland, in 'a programme of recover of Ireland's history' (91).

Some of the most influential public intellectuals of nineteenth-century Ireland were the clerics who had passed through Catholic seminaries at home and abroad. What they may have read in these formative periods of instruction is the subject of Darragh Gannon's chapter on the Irish College in Paris between 1870 and 1900. Gannon provides illuminating insights into the books shaping students who would wield considerable influence when they returned as priests. A far less timid foray into European affairs occupies the following study, by Florry O'Driscoll, of an Irish soldier in Italy. Dubliner Albert Delahoyde's adventures in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick, during Italian wars of the 1860s, are recounted in correspondence he sent home while defending the Papal States and as he continued to serve the pontiff. Another focussed case study that shines light on broader issues with transnationality, literacy and nationalism, O'Driscoll's chapter illustrates the importance of literacy for those who felt their stories would be subject to distortion and mendacity; Delahoyde was determined, in a contentious period, to act 'in essence, as a public relations officer for the Irish cause in Italy' (p. 132).

Michèle Milan zooms out, taking on a more expansive reading of the cultural politics of translation over the century. Hers is a particularly impressive contribution in terms of historical scope and in what it reveals about the anxieties and opportunities enabled by the growing translation of foreign literature, translation ‘at the heart of a debate on the morality of literature, and on “good books” vs “poison literature”’ (p. 140). The translation of continental literature could be connected to political empowerment for nationalists, for whom a ‘transnationalist perspective’ proved a ‘crucial feature’ (145). Cheaper publication also however drew accusations that ‘imported “poisonous stimulants”’ (p. 151) were being dispersed to moral detriment, particularly where they came from France.

The fourth section of the book brings welcome and original studies of ‘visual literacies’, encouraging a more holistic consideration of what literacy might mean. Nessa Cronin’s research on the mapping of Ireland and India illustrates the ways in which discourses and instruments of cartography, ‘as a visual language of space’ (p. 160) chimed across colonial contexts, constructing (rather than simply ‘reflecting’, or ‘mapping’) reality for the colonised. This chapter adds to our knowledge of how processes of colonisation were trialled and adapted across the British empire. It also illuminates ‘the essential role that cartography played in the power-geometries being too often kept off-stage’ (p. 164).

Stephanie Rains’ work on ‘palmistry, graphology and alternative literacies’ is both enlightening and entertaining in its exploration of the Irish experience of the nineteenth-century fascination with science, pseudo-science and mysticism associated with the human hand. Rains illustrates the extent of public interest in graphology (the interpretation of handwriting) during a period when it attracted increasing interest and when, due to growing literacy, more people were writing by hand. As Rains illustrates, advances in the serious study of fingerprints, combined with its appearance in the plots of popular detective fiction, played its part in driving the practice of palmistry (the reading of hands), which developed into something of a craze in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The shop assistant and shop owner alike were increasingly inclined to get their palms read by opportunistic mystics at, respectively, a back-street stall or society dinner. However, as Rains shows, the attitudes of newspapers and the law was sharply different regarding each—a blind eye turned to the ‘society’ palm-reader while socially lower soothsayers were prosecuted, amid alarm about their effects on the ‘young, the female and the working class’ (p. 186).

This is an important volume for those interested in periodicals, popular culture, literacy, literature and the colonial and social histories of nineteenth-century Ireland. It leaves the reader’s appetite whetted for further research that the book itself suggests: on the wider role of literacy and religion; on the impact of growing literacy on the consumption and development of Irish literature, drama and poetry; on the relation between ballad song and literacy, and the spread of popular sentiments and politics that this allowed; and on women’s and workers’ reading practices and associated periodicals and educational initiatives—not least those by trade unions and socialist radicals.

Michael Pierse

Gillian O’Brien, **The Darkness Echoing: Exploring Ireland’s Places of Famine, Death and Rebellion (Dublin, 2002)**, Doubleday Ireland, ISBN: 978-1781620502, 384 pp, £14.99, pb

The premise of Gillian O’Brien’s book – a tour through Ireland’s macabre and miserable histories – immediately brings to mind the challenge posed to historians by the 2018 Society for the Study of Nineteenth-Century Ireland conference. The theme for the conference was happiness: cue much head-scratching and rummaging in the archives. In a century known best for tragedy,

the turn to the cheerful was unexpected, but not unwelcome as a respite from a professional tendency to lean into strife and struggle for subject matter. O'Brien has, however, taken on the dark side with no holds barred, and despite its grim subject, *The Darkness Echoing: Exploring Ireland's Places of Famine, Death and Rebellion* is a remarkably enjoyable read. O'Brien brings the reader through some familiar aspects of Irish history, but throws fresh light on them through her exploration of heritage sites, material culture, and her observations on the often incongruous intersections of the past and present. She has a keen eye for these illuminating moments, noticing the stream of cruise ship tourists keen to visit the Titanic Experience in Belfast before returning to their own luxury liners, for example, or the fact that the small Boots chemist in MacDonagh Junction shopping centre in Kilkenny (a former workhouse) probably had enough medicines to save the lives of the 970 people lost to typhus, tuberculosis and scurvy, buried in mass grave at the site.

O'Brien's introduction locates her own position in relation to the book, and how her own personal and family history allows her to see how Irish history operates both within and beyond academia; how it is used in building 'brand Ireland' and tourist experiences; how it forms part of diasporic community consciousness; and how it becomes institutionalised within a sense of national identity. To give just one example, she cites the 1934 Department of Education 'Notes for Teachers', which suggested that if history was 'properly' taught in primary schools, pupils would learn that they are members of a 'race that has survived a millennium of grievous struggle and persecution' (pg. 9). Throughout the book, O'Brien gently reminds the reader that these monolithic narratives of triumph over persecution might be attractive, but they belie many internal complexities and complicities. She brings a sense of discovery to what might seem like well-worn stories, as well as a gentle skewer to some treasured, but often inaccurate, stories of Irish history. As she reminds the reader, 'there's little room for nuance at a bonfire' (pg. 38).

The book is structured around seven major themes: Battles and Sieges, Rebellion and Revolution, Maritime Disasters, Emigration, Incarceration and Death. Each section is prefaced by a map which locates the key sites that O'Brien visits in order to explore how her subject is being narrated and communicated. She visits replica WWI trenches, castles, workhouse buildings filled with shining agricultural machinery, encounters a vast array of famine soup pots, and stares into the eyes of Wolfe Tone's death mask. This approach infuses the book with a sense of fresh discovery, and O'Brien's passion for the material remains of the past is clear in each chapter. Writing about the stacks of cardboard archive boxes in the stores of the National Museum, she describes the 'particular whoosh sound, like air escaping a vacuum' when one is opened, 'I like to think of it as a bit of the past escaping into the present' (pg. 96). O'Brien provides a useful precis of each historical scene which she encounters, making the book accessible to someone new to Irish history, but goes beyond the standard narrative that might be familiar to others through her focus on the local, on the personal connections to specific historical narratives, and on revealing insights and details that expand our understanding of the subject at hand. In her chapter on the Famine, for example, she includes the story of Alexis Soyer, the celebrity chef who crafted a 'famine soup' recipe and established a model kitchen at Dublin's Croppies Acre. This was open to the public for a fee, who could walk around and observe the poor eating their soup with spoons chained to the table for a fee of five shillings. As she points out, the price of a visit to the zoo was sixpence. These details move the reader beyond the familiar narratives.

In many ways, O'Brien's book is an engaging, informative (if sometimes mixed) account of the visitor experience in the many different heritage sites across the country. Her account includes valuable details of how and when these sites themselves became the subject of controversy – describing the ketchup-smearing and protest placards reading 'Cromwell Drank Drogheda Blood' in 2000 when Cromwell's death mask was exhibited at Drogheda Heritage Centre. From the nuanced

and sensitive to the somewhat bizarre, O'Brien often hones in on what these sites have to offer – the localised telling of historical narratives through the objects that have survived. As well as her account of various heritage sites, from Vinegar Hill to the GPO Witness History, O'Brien considers the ethics of remembering, and of inclusion and exclusion in these heritage spaces in her concluding chapters.

O'Brien's book references many works of academic history, listed in a useful select bibliography at the back, but it moves at a much faster clip than most of these books. This is part of its specific contribution – O'Brien moves us through historical narratives at the rate of the tour bus, pausing in the gift shops and the service stations that make up the broader texture of how history is often consumed and experienced in contemporary Ireland. It is a book that moves that the rate of the intrepid, interested tourist, but with the perception of the expert, and this is what makes it such an engaging read, as well as a valuable contribution to our broader understanding of history culture in Ireland today. Furthermore, O'Brien's narrative allows us into the experiences of her husband Al, who remains somewhat shaken by the endeavour throughout, and a hardy troupe of children and teenagers who accompany her through various heritage sites and experiences. The pace of O'Brien's writing also allows her to engage with the contemporary – the realities and griefs of COVID-19 are noted throughout, as are controversies such as the dangerous 'Irish slave' narrative. This interweaving of contemporary experience with the material remains of the past means that the reader is promoted to think about the ways in which historical narratives are continually re-shaped and co-opted to serve different agendas.

Niamh NicGhabhann

Elaine Callinan **Electioneering and Propaganda in Ireland, 1917-21: Votes, Violence and Victory** (Four Courts, 2020) Four Courts Press, ISBN: 978-1-84682-870-6, 264pp; plus a 16pp Colour ill. Section.

The period of 1917 to 1921 in Ireland saw the presence of transformative political upheavals alongside the violence and insurgency of the country's revolutionary struggles. In this book, Elaine Callinan highlights the importance and influence of the elections and by-elections of these years, and demonstrates that the political campaigns and outcomes of these events played an important role in the formation and development of Ireland's modern political landscape. Her analysis of a number of the final elections to occur as an all-island entity ahead of partition illustrates the significant political and social changes afoot in Ireland in the prelude to the establishment of the Free State. Callinan notes that her research addresses a missing link in Irish revolutionary history through its comparative study of the propaganda and electioneering of all of the major political parties in Ireland from 1917 to 1921. Her work convincingly emphasises the powerful ability of clever campaigns and political promotion to influence the contemporary voting public, as well as enhance the development of parties and their ability to influence change and mass support. This comprehensive research deals with the four main election events of this period – the 1917-18 by-elections, the 1918 general election, the 1920 local elections, and the 1921 'partition' election. The publication is divided into five main sections, assessing election results, electoral candidate selection, campaign funding, and the methods and themes of propaganda. Four appendices also list the results of the 1918 general election, the 1920 urban election and rural district council results, and the 1921 Northern Ireland election results.

Substantial contemporary changes to the electorate were particularly pertinent to this changing political landscape. The passing of the Representation of the People Act in 1917 tripled the electorate

by the extension of the vote to men over the age of 21 and to Great War servicemen over the age of 19. This was also the first time that women were permitted to vote in a general election, but this gender was limited by property restrictions and by the minimum age of 30. The period of 1917 to 1921 saw the presence of four main political parties; the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP), Unionists, Sinn Féin, and the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party. The text examines the results of the four main elections of the time, considering a number of important issues which affected and impacted these outcomes. Voter turnout can be judged to have been affected by absent voters as a result of emigration and service in the Great War, as well as through erroneous registers, possible voter disaffection with the candidates, the effects of the Spanish flu, and likely by voter intimidation. Voting outcomes during this period were also heavily affected by the new youth vote, as well as the new contribution of women's votes. The inclusion of a wider female vote significantly influenced the election outcomes during this period. In the 1918 general election, the IPP's long-standing stance against women's suffrage impacted negatively on their ability to draw women voters. Conversely, Sinn Féin's new status and connection to women's organisations such as Cumann na mBan worked in their favour, and their targeted propaganda to the female voter was a successful electoral tactic.

The book brings to the fore many interesting examples of activities which illuminate the contemporary drama and bustle of the political arena. Fervent accusations of register falsification and personation was common for all parties during the elections of this era. In 1921, unionists were accused of personating nationalist voters, with a report from the *Anglo-Celt* noting that 'when a nationalist family of five voters from Mayo Street, West Belfast, arrived at the booth, they found they had all been personated'. The practice of personation appears to have been a common underhanded tactic on all sides of the political agenda, with Eugene Kilkenny of Leitrim remarking of the 1918 election; 'in an all-out effort to win the election and finally oust the Redmond Party ... personation was resorted to on a large basis. I myself voted at least fifty times' Comparison of the methods of candidate selection amongst the main parties show the varied means and evolution of how election candidates were chosen over the course of this period. Skilled party fundraising techniques to cover the costs of a successful propaganda campaign are shown to have been crucial to meet the considerable expenditure of printing and spreading substantial political literature, handbills, and posters, providing parties with coherent and modern mass media to help influence the electorate.

Callinan's work explores and emphasises the role and importance of propaganda as a central element to successful electioneering. The substantial influence of the Great War on Irish electoral propaganda is highlighted, with election propaganda reflecting recent war propaganda through the clear emphasis on 'justice or injustice for or against a political entity'. All parties are shown to have made clever visual use of nationalist and unionist symbols and identifiers, with public performance and pageantry provided by the use of bunting, banners, and ballads by canvassers and supporters, and by pipe bands leading political candidates to speak at mass gatherings. The book notes a number of interesting and innovative forms of propaganda used throughout the period. In 1917, a blanket of snow in Roscommon North led to the moniker of 'the White Election', and saw the use of an ingenious advertising medium, with the Plunkett campaign writing 'Up Plunkett' promotional messages in the snow. Motor cars were cleverly used as promotional methods during election campaigns, where they were decorated with party colours and flags. For the 1918 election, Sinn Féin imaginatively changed the registration on all of their cars to 'I.R. 1916', affording the cars with party recognition to supporters and the electorate, as well as attempting to avoid permit restrictions on the number of cars in use on polling day.

This book breathes life into the vibrant and active environment of the election campaigns, materialising the many modern methods which were used to promote candidates and causes and

ensure victory at the ballot boxes. It is a valuable and thorough study on the machinations of the political arena during Ireland's revolutionary years, underscoring the lasting impact and influence of the electoral activities and developments of the era.

Donna Gilligan

Eunan O'Halpin and Daithí Ó Corráin, **The Dead of the Irish Revolution** (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2020), 705 pp, £50 hb

The timescale of the project underpinning this publication – initially funded by a predecessor body of the Irish Research Council almost two decades ago – reflects the daunting task of seeking to identify all deaths by political violence in Ireland a century ago. Synthesising the available evidence of the 2,850 deaths recorded here - from the Easter Rising to the end of 1921 – is, therefore, a staggering achievement. O'Halpin's tables and charts break down fatalities between 1917 and 1921 to 413 members of the British military, 491 Irish military (the collective term accorded to 'rebels'), and 523 members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and other police forces. But the biggest single group killed were civilians, accounting for 919 deaths, or 39% of the total across those five calendar years. Although not close to the 55% civilians among 504 fatalities recorded for 1916, this figure highlights the degree to which violence in the Irish Revolution affected far more in society than the military protagonists and their families. These civilians occupy practically every one of more than 500 pages that tell us – in varying degrees of detail – about the lives that were ended and the circumstances.

O'Halpin's preceding analysis of the project findings is somewhat summary; unavoidable, perhaps, in a volume of such narrative and physical weight. But it touches on many aspects, with repeated emphasis on the Crown Forces' questionable strategies. The extraordinary licence they enjoyed to "fire in effect without warning" was responsible for around one-in-seven of the civilian deaths (page 8). That is not to say that republican violence does not merit scrutiny, which is not in short supply. While the shortcomings of the county as a unit of measurement are acknowledged, it is an inevitable and, by now, an established metric. Unsurprisingly, Cork stands out as by far the most violent county for numbers of deaths, and for deaths as a proportion of population. The 557 people who died there by political violence between 1917 and 1921 compares to just nine in Fermanagh, *appearing* to be the least troubled by the political violence of the period. Much space is given to high-profile events like Kilmichael and Bloody Sunday. But this is at the expense of lesser-known incidents, whose victims, their lives and their deaths *remain* largely unknown to readers as a result. The acknowledgement that "local context and local interpretations...are sometimes absent" (p. 3) in the narrative is somewhat an understatement, notwithstanding the doubtless difficulties of culling more than one-third of the text originally submitted to the publisher. The 705 total pages include an alphabetical list of those whose deaths are recorded, as well as a general index allowing readers to search by placename within each county.

The main text makes clear that there were many days other than successive Sundays in late November 1920 when horrific numbers of people died violently on this island. Take March 14, 1921, when six IRA prisoners aged 19 to 33 were hanged at Dublin's Mountjoy Prison. It is valuable to see (as throughout the chronological main entries) their occupations stated: a barman, railway worker, carpenter, tailor's apprentice, an electrician and a student. It is a cross-section of male urban employment, but also of IRA membership *and* its intersection with labour activism. Patrick Moran and Patrick Doyle were founder members in Dublin of the National Union of Vintners, Grocers and Allied Traders, and the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinetmakers and Joiners, respectively. They died an hour apart. Twelve hours later, IRA sentries opened fire on a police

convoy on the capital's Great Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street.) The direct outcome was eight deaths - two IRA members, two RIC Auxiliaries and four civilians. An indirect outcome was shoemaker and Dublin IRA member Thomas Traynor (married with 10 children) being charged, convicted by court-martial and, six weeks later, hanged for one of the policemen's deaths.

Within 36 hours, in north Co Waterford, the IRA shot dead RIC District Inspector Gilbert Norman Potter, held hostage and used as leverage by the Tipperary No. 3 Brigade in an unsuccessful attempt to secure Traynor's release. His widow waited four months to receive his remains for burial; Traynor's descendants waited until 2001, when he and the six men hanged on March 14 were among the IRA members exhumed at Mountjoy and re-interred after a State funeral. The so-called Forgotten Ten are far better remembered than the civilian dead of Brunswick Street. One of them, dressmaker Mary Frances Morgan, died of exhaustion from wounds almost a month later but it was impossible to tell whose bullet shattered her hip bone. She is among 176 people for whose deaths the responsibility is undetermined, "a rather unsatisfactory catch-all category" (p. 11). They represent 8% of deaths between 1917 and 1921. For most of the balance, Irish and British sides (including military and the island's multiple police forces) are accorded near-equal responsibility (1,002 and 1,096, respectively).

The death on the same date – March 14, 1921 - of 23-year-old labourer Richard Newman was the result of firing by the King's Own Scottish Borderers near his home at Allihies in west Cork (p. 337). It was one of 155 cases of Crown Forces shooting their victim for not obeying orders to halt, 112 of them civilians. Another 54 were killed trying to escape custody, including another dozen non-combatant civilians (p. 544). These were the official explanations, at least, showing the "extraordinarily lax rules of engagement" under which Crown Forces operated, and accounting for nearly one-fifth of those they killed. A dozen such victims did not have the capacity to hear or understand orders to halt "if indeed these had been given" (p. 19). On May 28, 1921, members of a British military motor patrol claimed to have given an order to halt to a figure moving in the trees at Carriglea outside Dungarvan, Co Waterford. Medical assistance failed to save Mary Foley after shots were fired. A deaf widow in her seventies, she had been collecting firewood with her grandson (p. 448).

Mary Foley was one of 98 females killed, the vast majority of them unintentionally. This may not have been the case for Eliza Blake, one of four people who died when the IRA opened fire on a car driven by her RIC District Inspector husband near Gort, Co Galway in May 1921. O'Halpin writes: "it is hard to believe that the attacking Volunteers did not notice that a woman sitting in an open-top motor car stopped at a closed gate was heavily pregnant" (p. 12). Here, we *do* get an insight into the complex task of unravelling conflicting accounts. She was either, as the RIC reported, "deliberately riddled with bullets while she lay on the ground"; or refused the chance to leave (local newspaper); or she was shot accidentally by the IRA, one of whose accounts said "we did our best not to hit" the women (pp. 425-426).

It is difficult for the 21st-century historian to establish truth of intentions or otherwise, even with all the documentary evidence that survives. But the authors' heavily-detailed referencing and bibliography, including the many British regimental archives and diaries consulted, will facilitate further investigations by those conducting scholarly research or family and local histories. Perhaps value might be added to this great book if an online resource could be produced from the printed content, with capacity for expansion, updating and (where necessary) correction of entries on a continuing basis. It would be a meaningful legacy for this long-running project, for the many scholars who contributed to it, and – most importantly - for the people whose deaths are central to what is an invaluable resource to all those interested in life, and how it was taken away, during the Irish Revolution.

Niall Murray

Notes on Contributors

Susan Byrne is an IRC funded PhD candidate at the Department of History, Trinity College Dublin. Her research examines women's experience of the Free State justice system, 1922-1937 and how gender impacted their experience as victims or perpetrators.

Elaine Callinan is a lecture in Modern Irish History at Carlow College, St. Patrick's. She is the author of *Electioneering and Propaganda in Ireland 1917-21: Votes, violence and victory* (Dublin 2020). She completed her MPhil and PhD at Trinity College Dublin

Pat Carroll is a retired Lecturer at the DIT (now TuD). Labour Councillor on Dublin City Council 1974 -1983 and a long-standing Executive member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Marion R. Casey, an historian, is Clinical Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies at Glucksman Ireland House, as well as Affiliated Faculty in the Department of History, at New York University.

Shay Cody is President of the Irish Labour History Society and is former General Secretary of Fórsa. He is currently working on a study of Thomas Johnson, Trade Union and Labour leader.

Peter Connell completed a PhD in Trinity College Dublin in 2017 on the history of public housing in Irish towns. He is currently a tutor in the Open Education Unit in DCU having work for many years in TCD where he was a SIPTU shop steward and activist.

Sharon Crozier-De Rosa is an Associate Professor in History at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Her research is situated at the intersections of emotions, gender, imperial/colonial and violence histories. She is the author of *Shame and the Anti-Feminist Backlash: Britain, Ireland and Australia, 1890–1920* (2018), co-author of *Remembering Women's Activism* (with Vera Mackie 2019) and co-editor of *Sources for the History of Emotions: A Guide* (with Peter Stearns and Katie Barclay 2020). Her current project on women's efforts to preserve and archive their own memory has been awarded a National Library of Australia Fellowship. She is the Deputy Editor of *Women's History Review*.

Áine Foley has a BA and PhD in History from Trinity College, Dublin. Her doctoral thesis examined the Crown lands in county Dublin during the medieval period. During the course of her research, she became interested in and has written about violence and crime in medieval Ireland. She is currently working as a researcher.

Deirdre Foley is a historian of modern Ireland with a particular interest in female associational culture and the legal status of women in 20th century Ireland. She completed her PhD on this topic at Dublin City University in 2020 and is the current Roy Foster Irish Government Research Fellow at Hertford College, University of Oxford.

Donna Gilligan is a museum archaeologist and material culture historian. She specialises in the visual and material culture of the Irish women's suffrage movement, and curated the centenary exhibition *Print, Protest, and the Polls: The Irish Women's Suffrage Campaign and the Power of Print Media, 1908–1918*, at the National Print Museum and as a touring exhibit from 2018 to 2020. She concentrates on work with historical and archaeological artefacts and museum collections, and provides services to the heritage sector through Scéal Heritage Consultancy

Brian Hanley is Assistant Professor of Irish History at Trinity College Dublin. His most recent book is *The impact of the Troubles on the Republic of Ireland, 1968-79* (MUP, 2018)

Fintan Lane is a former editor of *Saothar*. His publications include *The Origins of Modern Irish Socialism, 1881-1896* (1997) and *In Search of Thomas Sheahan: Radical Politics in Cork, 1824-1836* (2001).

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Felix M. Larkin, a retired public servant, studied history at UCD. He was co-founder of the Newspaper and Periodicals History Forum of Ireland, and its chairman from 2010 to 2013. A collection of his occasional writings, *Living with history*, will be published later this year.

Peter Leary is a Vice Chancellor's Fellow at Oxford Brookes University. His work includes *Unapproved routes: histories of the Irish border, 1922–72* (OUP, 2016), winner of the American Conference for Irish Studies Murphy Prize, and articles in *History Workshop Journal*, *Folklore* and the *Guardian*.

Mary McAuliffe is a historian and Assistant Professor of Gender Studies at UCD Her latest publications are *Margaret Skinnider* (UCD Press, 2020), as well as ‘Remembered for Being Forgotten; The Women of 1916, Memory and Commemoration’ in Oona Frawley (ed) *Women and the Decade of Commemorations*, (Indiana Press, 2020) and ‘The Homefront as Battlefield: Women, Violence and the Domestic Space during War in Ireland 1919-1921’ in Linda Connolly (ed) *Women and the Irish Revolution: Feminism, Activism, Violence* (Irish Academic Press, 2019). She is co-editor of *Saothar* 46.

Ciarán McCabe teaches in the School of History and Geography, Dublin City University. He is the author of *Begging, Charity and Religion in Pre-Famine Ireland* (Liverpool, 2018) and his research interests include the history of poverty and welfare, women and paid work, and associational culture in the ‘long nineteenth century’.

Conor McCabe is a research associate with UCD Equality Studies Centre. He is the author of *Sins of the Father: the Decisions that Shaped the Irish Economy* (2013) and *Money (Sireacht): Longings for Another Ireland* (2018)

Niall Murray is a PhD candidate at the School of History, University College Cork, and a UCC College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences PhD Excellence Scholar. His current research relates to community engagement with political and military aspects of the Irish Revolution, using as case studies the Dáil constituency of Mid-Cork and the IRA Ballyvourney and Macroom battalion areas. He is a contributor to *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* (Cork University Press, 2017).

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Kerron Ó Luain is currently undertaking postdoctoral research at DCU. His project is entitled *Stair Ghluaiseacht na Gaelscolaíochta, 1973-2023* (The History of the Gaelscoil Movement, 1973-2023). The work centres on the oral history of the activists involved in founding and promoting Gaelscoileanna throughout Ireland over the last fifty years.

Michael Pierse is Senior Lecturer in Irish Literature at Queen’s University Belfast. His research mainly explores the writing and cultural production of Irish working-class life. He is author of *Writing Ireland’s Working-Class: Dublin After O’Casey* (Palgrave: 2011) and editor of *A History of Irish Working-Class Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2017) and *Rethinking the Irish Diaspora: After The Gathering* (Palgrave, 2018; co-edited with Johanne Devlin Trew).

Rosemary Raughter is an independent scholar and local historian, with a particular interest in women’s history. Her publications include *Religious women and their history: breaking the silence* (2005) and *The Journal of Elizabeth Bennis, 1749-1779* (2007), as well as numerous articles on female involvement in philanthropy, religion, domestic life and political activism.

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Eoghan Ryan is a long-time union activist and is currently Chair of the Citizens Information Service section of SIPTU

Sonja Tiernan is the Éamon Cleary Chair of Irish Studies and co-director of the Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Sonja has published widely on modern Irish history, her most recent monograph, *The History of Marriage Equality in Ireland: A Social Revolution Begins*, was published by Manchester University Press in 2020. Her recently published report, *Irish in Aotearoa New Zealand*, is the first mapping project funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, to cover an entire country.

Margaret Ward is Honorary Senior Lecturer in History at Queen’s University. Her latest book is *Fearless Woman: Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Feminism and the Irish Revolution*. She has recently published ‘Irish suffrage: Remembrance, Commemoration and Memorialisation’ in (ed) Oona Crawley *Women and the Decade of Commemorations* and ‘Gendered memories: Belfast Cumann na mBan 1917-1922 in (ed.) Linda Connolly, *Women and the Irish revolution*.

Michael Collins coming down the stairs during this time and he sarcastically informs me if a piano is needed there is one in a room nearby. Ignoring his sarcasm I quite seriously reply that I do not think it would be needed. . In these days, watching him move about with his hand thrust in his breast Napoleon like I think him sour and unimaginative looking as his remark seems to prove, but I sense something deeper than that, ~~there~~ antagonism to J.C. for lack of that knowledge that made it impossible for them to appreciate him or to understand the forces he saw beyond the mere breaking of the connection with England. Directing operations outside Connolly is wounded. He is brought in and placed in one of the beds in what we describe "the front line trenches," from where he directs operations. I feel irritable and ask him why he should have exposed himself to danger when so much depended on him. He replies "Do not blame me now, I must take risks like the others." Sometime Joseph Plunkett asks me if I could get a bed for his brother George whom I see covered with grime and dust. I fix him up in a room off the main office which ^{members of} the Staff have been using. Someone tells me that George Plunkett relinquished his commission preferring to do the work of a private.

The firing from the enemy is incessant, a continuous shower of bullets from machine guns and the explosion of incendiary bombs. They apparently cannot get a clear range at the G.P.O. and so have been burning down the buildings that surround us from the Liffey side. The scene is fascinating as the fire consumes each building and, octopus like grips the adjoining