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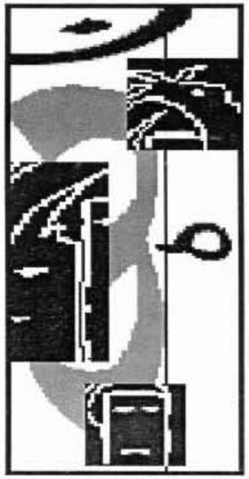

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Preface

Volume eight of *History Studies* is a strong addition to the now well-established series. University of Limerick scholars and their colleagues from national and international academic institutions have maintained the high standards set by earlier volumes. Historians from NUI Maynooth, the University of Sheffield and St Andrew's have contributed to this expanded volume. As researchers come from both the undergraduate student and staff population, this indicates the increasing strength in depth in the field of historical research.

Dr Owen McGee examines the considerable impact the Fenian Brotherhood had on Irish politics in the late-nineteenth century while Conor Mulvagh scrutinizes the often overlooked Buckingham Palace Conference on the eve of the Great War. Limerick-based history is provided by Alex McKillican and Sarah McNamara who utilize documentary and oral sources to illuminate their respective themes. Elizabeth Heggs addresses Thomas Wyse's political catechism and Michel Jacques Gagné provides an analysis of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement in its international context. Justin Dolan Stover addresses the often-contentious relationship that existed between John Redmond and Eoin McNeill in relation to the Irish Volunteers while Sukaina Haider provides an illuminating study of the absence of hostility towards the Irish community in Dundee in former times. A study of post-war refugee camps in West Germany is provided by Meryn McLaren.

The high quality and diversity of all nine contributions vindicates the decision of the editors, Dr. Conor Reidy and Adrian Cormican, to considerably expand the size of the current volume. Both are to be commended for maintaining the distinctive presence of *History Studies* in Irish Universities. As before, the dynamism of the History Society within the College of Humanities and the University of Limerick structure is worthy of note. The milestone of reaching its tenth anniversary is a testimony of its longevity and significance to academic life at UL. Those who inaugurated the Society and its journal have been vindicated and their successors are to be congratulated for driving this ambitious project from strength to strength.

Dr Ruán O'Donnell
Head, Department of History,
Patron, University of Limerick History Society

November 2007

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to thank Dr Ruan O'Donnell, Head of the Department of History for his ongoing support, both personally and financially. We also acknowledge the University of Limerick History Society, Dr Bernadette Whelan and Dr John Logan for their steadfast commitment to *History Studies*. The editors are indebted to Professor Tom Lodge, Assistant Dean of Research, College of Humanities for his generous financial support. Professor Pat O'Connor, Dean of the College of Humanities has provided important financial support and we thank the University of Limerick Foundation for its ongoing commitment to this venture. We thank Dr Willemijn Ruberg, John O'Callaghan and Anne Marie O'Donnell for their generous advice during the publication of this volume. *History Studies* has benefited enormously from the contribution of the Reviews Editor, Ken Bergin, and we also thank Jean Turner of Special Collections, and the University of Limerick Library. Snap Printing continue to maintain the high production values for which *History Studies* has become renowned. Above all we thank the contributors to this volume for allowing *History Studies* to continue in the tradition of the publication of high quality historical research.

Foreword

The University of Limerick History Society is delighted to present volume eight of *History Studies*. Since its launch in 1999 the journal has become an integral part of the History Society's annual programme of events. The progression of the journal in the years since it was first launched continues to be an enormous source of pride for the Society. The Society wishes to express its gratitude to the editorial team and the panel of reviewers, the Department of History, ours sponsors and the contributors to this volume. Our patrons, Dr. Ruan O'Donnell, Dr. John Logan and Dr. Bernadette Whelan continue to provide sterling support for the work of the Society.

In November 2007 the Society proudly marked the occasion of its tenth anniversary with a special dinner at Plassey House. As with the *History Studies* journal, the Society has played a significant role in fostering an interest in the study of history both on the University of Limerick campus and beyond.

Maeve Lawler, Auditor

Editorial

With the publication of *History Studies* volume eight the editors are pleased to present an interesting and diverse array of articles. The nine contributions that have been selected for publication in this volume are the result of a call-for-papers that was circulated to over one hundred centres around the world in the spring of 2007. This led to an unprecedented response with high-quality articles received from researchers in several continents. The high number of submissions from within Ireland demonstrates the abundance of postgraduate history researchers working in the country's academic institutions at this time. This brought about the inevitable difficult decisions for the editors in having to reject many exceptional contributions wholly on the basis of a lack of space. Over the past eight years *History Studies* has played an important role in providing an outlet for the publication of post-graduate historical research. The response to this call-for-papers provides strong evidence for the argument made by the editors of volume seven that there is an ever-increasing need for the post-graduate history research community to respond to its own greatest need by expanding the means through which researchers can disseminate their work. Academic institutions, funding authorities and post-graduate researchers themselves all have an active role to play in this process. This year's publication marks the largest volume of *History Studies* to date and its position as the standard-bearer for the publication of post-graduate historical research in Ireland has been consolidated by the inclusion of these outstanding papers.

Adrian Cormican
Dr Conor Reidy
Co-Editors

Soldiers and propagandists: the impact of the American Fenian Brotherhood on Irish politics

Owen McGee

The Fenian Brotherhood achieved some international notoriety during the American Civil War (1861-65) by protesting against both Britain's policy towards America and against its government of Ireland. Established in New York during 1859 by a number of Irish political exiles of 1848, it also strove to provide financial assistance to a secret revolutionary organisation that had recently been formed in Ireland.[1] Very soon, the terms 'Fenians' and 'Fenianism' became synonymous with all Irish opposition to British rule in the contemporary political imagination, although the generic use of these terms was essentially misleading. The secret nationalist-revolutionary movement formed in Ireland during 1858 was only ever named 'the IRB,' never 'the Fenians.'[2] Furthermore, due to basic reasons of geography, the Fenian Brotherhood and the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) operated within very different political environments and existed independently of each other, although efforts were made to maintain a close alliance between them. This article assesses how much of an impact the Fenian Brotherhood made on Irish politics by focusing first on its role in assisting the IRB and second on the influence of its propaganda on the Irish public.

The Fenian Brotherhood grew partly out of semi-official militia forces that were formed by Irish immigrants during the 1850s to prove their political devotion to America and overcome 'nativist' prejudice against them. Several leaders of these militia units, however, were men who had been exiled from Ireland due to their opposition to British rule and they continued to issue their anti-British propaganda in America.[3] Consequently, the British consulates in America were always opposed to the existence of these militias and occasionally even persuaded state courts to instigate legal proceedings against them for supposedly violating American neutrality laws.[4] This dual trait of the Fenian Brotherhood—being, on one hand, a vehicle for expressing a militaristic American patriotism and, on the other hand, being a vehicle for issuing anti-British propaganda—was a dynamic that soon created strife both within its own organisation and in its relations with the IRB.

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[1] The most detailed history of the American Fenian Brotherhood to date remains Fr. William D'Arcy, *The Fenian movement in the United States* (Washington D.C., 1947).

[2] Joseph Denieffe, *A personal narrative of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood* (New York, 1906—reprinted Shannon, 1969), p. 121.

[3] Fr. D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, pp. 1-15.

James Stephens, the founder of the IRB, hoped to create a secret revolutionary organisation that would begin purchasing large quantities of firearms with the Fenians' financial support if an opportune moment for a rebellion against British rule arose. In the meantime, his aim was simply to establish a powerful underground organisation in Ireland to advance Irish nationalist goals in anyway that was possible.[5] The expectation of Fenian financial support was very important for the IRB, however, whose members generally lacked money. Between 1859 and 1864, several IRB leaders travelled to America once or twice a year looking for this support. Prior to 1864, however, Fenian financial assistance to the IRB never exceeded £200 a year. This was only half the annual salary of the average Irish bank-manager of that time and less than what a single priest managed to collect in America within a few months during 1862 for poor-relief in Ireland.[6]

This failure of the Fenians and the IRB to work closely together occurred partly because American politicians had convinced the Fenian Brotherhood to focus primarily on assisting the Union war effort from 1861 onwards. Indeed, while the membership of the Fenian Brotherhood rose to approximately 10,000 men during the Civil War, excepting a handful of its leaders (most notably John O'Mahony) who had been republican political exiles from Ireland during the late 1840s, its members were invariably Union soldiers who, quite naturally, did not share the preoccupations of the IRB in Ireland.[7] The Catholic Church's decision to denounce specifically the Fenian leadership rather than its general membership for encouraging revolutionary sentiments amongst Irishmen was partly a reflection of this reality.[8] That Church criticisms were quite effective in dissuading men to join the movement is evident from the fact that O'Mahony felt it necessary during 1863 to make the Fenian Brotherhood a public organisation, protected by American state law, so that 'the

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[4] A good example of one such case is *United States vs. W.G. Halpin, D. Reidy, E. Keniffeck, S. Lumsden et al.* (Columbia, 1856). The defendants were found not guilty.
[5] Denieffe, *Personal narrative*, p. 195. John O'Leary, *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism* (vol.2, London, 1896), p. 46.
[6] Fr. D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, p. 29.
[7] Ibid., pp. 40-2.
[8] Fr. OP Rafferty, *The church, the state and the fenian threat, 1861-75* (Oxford, 1999).

ultramontane plotters against human freedom' could no longer get away with criticising the movement.[9] James Stephens did not welcome this move of O'Mahony's, however, because he believed it would limit the Fenians' capacity to act as a supporter of revolution in Ireland. Certainly, the Fenian Brotherhood's decision to become a legal and public movement made it much easier for the British consulates in America not only to supervise its activities but also to infiltrate its organisation with agents.

James Stephens succeeded in collecting £1,700 for the IRB during his 1864 American tour, but many IRB members were unhappy that he subsequently used this money mostly to support the *Irish People*.[10] This was a journal he had formed in November 1863 to counter the influence of a seemingly reactionary press in Ireland and that also issued a good deal of anticlerical propaganda. Some of the *Irish People*'s propaganda was actually written by a returned American and 1848 rebel, JFX. O'Brien.[11] Excepting O'Brien, however, and a few Fenians who accompanied the body of TB McManus back to Ireland for a large political funeral in November 1861, little or no Fenians came to Ireland prior to the end of the American civil war in early 1865.[12]

From 1860 until 1864, Dublin Castle had not paid much attention to, or even noticed the existence of, the IRB because of evident lack of any security threat within Ireland. Not until prominent American Fenians (who had already announced to the world their desire for a rebellion in Ireland) started coming to Ireland during 1865 did the government become concerned.[13] The IRB itself began making some preparations for rebellion at this time. In particular, it employed agents to recruit Irish soldiers in the British army to put the IRB on some kind of military footing as soon as possible, the most successful of these agents being John Devoy, formerly a French soldier.[14] The IRB had no actual statistics of its sworn membership, however, and having little or no time for making careful revolutionary plans, it simply guessed at how much public support it could potentially receive from the Irish public in the event of a rebellion.[15] Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the British government had little difficulty in taking effective initiatives against the Irish revolutionaries.

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[9] Fr. D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, pp. 33-4.
[10] Marta Ramon, *A provisional dictator: James Stephens and the Fenian movement* (Dublin, 2007), p. 165.
[11] Pat McCarthy, 'James Francis Xavier O'Brien (1828-1905): Dungarvan-born Fenian', *Decies*, vol. 54 (1998), pp. 107-38.
[12] LR Bisceglia, 'The Fenian funeral of Terence Bellew McManus', *Éire-Ireland* (fall 1979), pp. 45-64.
[13] This is clear from Shin-ichi Takagami, 'The Dublin Fenians' (Ph.D., TCD, 1990), the most detailed examination to-date of the relevant police reports from the 1860s.
[14] John Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish rebel* (New York, 1929), pp. 128-51.

That autumn, the British consulates in America were able to politically engineer the seizure of Fenian Brotherhood funds (which O'Mahony had intended sending to the IRB) from a New York bank.[16] Simultaneously, Dublin Castle acted against the *Irish People*, arresting its editors and suppressing the paper, seizing most of the IRB's capital (possibly as much as £7,000) in the process.[17] To coincide with Dublin Castle's moving against the *Irish People*, British intelligence agents in America (most notably James McDermott, formerly a member of the Irish papal brigade) worked to ensure that the Fenian Brotherhood would implode. Indeed, in October 1865, the movement split, causing O'Mahony to be deposed and a new Fenian Brotherhood (governed by a 'Senate') to be established. This immediately ordered that all Fenian resources should be deployed not to Ireland, which O'Mahony had been calling for, but instead used for performing raids into Canada. The subsequent Canadian raids were led partly by British intelligence agents who essentially acted as *agents provocateurs* that deliberately wasted the Fenians' resources.[18]

Reputedly, the Fenians' collected somewhere in the region of £30,000 for the IRB and actually sent this to Ireland between 1865 and 1867.[19] This seems highly unlikely, however, as the IRB was able to purchase only a few hundred firearms at this time (it would fare a lot better in purchasing firearms a few years later despite having no American financial support).[20] The reality of the situation during the mid-1860s was that any prospect of a significant Irish revolutionary endeavour being launched practically ended the moment the British government seized control of the Fenians and the IRB's funds during the autumn of 1865. Furthermore, the disturbances that followed seem to have been a product of the British government's manhunt for the revolutionaries more so than the result of any concerted Irish revolutionary endeavour. For example, although the rump 'O'Mahony wing' of the Fenians tried to find soldiers willing to go to Ireland to assist the IRB in arming and drilling, many of the men who offered their services and came to Ireland at this time, including FF Millen, JJ Corydon, DJ Buckley, Godfrey Massey and Rudolph Fitzpatrick, were simply adventurers that were either already in, or very soon entered, the pay of British intelligence.[21] Their arrival in Ireland simply led to the suspension of Habeas Corpus in February 1866 and the arrest of more many IRB leaders. Ultimately, after claiming a right to depose Stephens (who opposed any futile attempt at insurrection), the Americans organised a completely abortive, one-day attempt (6 March 1867) at a rising among many unarmed IRB followers in Dublin and Cork, leading to many more arrests.[22] As such, the '1867 rising,' if it can indeed be called a rising (it lasted but one day and involved no real fighting), may well have been an event that was organised far more so by British *agents provocateurs* than by Irish revolutionaries. Whatever the case, the social tensions caused by the suspension of Habeas Corpus naturally affected many Irish people adversely to some degree. This development ensured that the British government needed to introduce pacifying reforms after Dublin Castle finished its manhunt for the revolutionaries upon restoring Habeas Corpus in early 1868. It should be noted, however, that Dublin Castle's efforts to suppress the IRB at this time were not very successful: after 1869, the IRB not only developed a more systematic means of propagating its organisation and political beliefs but it also managed to retain a large membership, acquire more firearms and (capitalising upon the resentment caused by the recent mass arrests) made its presence felt to a greater degree at a popular political level.[23]

The durability of the IRB, which survived for another fifty-five years after the setbacks of 1867, is perhaps its principal claim to historical fame: one historian has even typified it 'the only lasting and successful revolutionary organisation on the model of early-nineteenth century conspiracy brotherhoods' in the entire history of modern Europe.[24] What, however, was the secret of its remarkable durability?

Although the IRB's enemies equated its survival to the existence of an apolitical Irish culture of 'fenianism' that was supposedly inherently sympathetic to

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[15] Owen McGee, *The IRB* (Dublin, 2005), p. 34; Marta Ramon, *A provisional dictator: James Stephens and the Fenian movement* (Dublin, 2007), p. 102.

[16] Sean O'Luing, *John Devoy* (Baile Atha Cliath, 1961), pp. 130-2.

[17] This is the estimate given by John O'Leary in a letter published in *Freeman's Journal*, 8 Nov. 1877.

[18] For the role of British agents in these episodes, see D'Arcy, *Fenian movement* and Christy Campbell, *Fenian fire* (London, 2002).

[19] Ramon, *Provisional dictator*, p. 279, fn. 20.

[20] Shin-ichi Takagami, 'The Dublin Fenians' (Ph.D., TCD, 1990), p. 141.

[21] For the careers of all these informers, see the index entries for them in D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*.

[22] Shin-ichi Takagami, 'The Fenian rising in Dublin, March 1867', in *Irish Historical Studies* (vol.29, 1994), pp. 340-62.

[23] RV Comerford, *The fenians in context* (2nd ed., Dublin, 1998), pp. 166-70; McGee, *IRB*, chapter two.

[24] Eric Hobsbawm, *The age of revolution* (London, 1962), p. 164.

the employment of violence, the lack of outrages committed by IRB activists across its entire sixty-five year history would indicate that the real reason for its durability lay elsewhere. Some sympathetic contemporaries credited the IRB and its underground networks, encompassing lower-middle class figures in political, literary and sporting clubs across the towns and cities of Ireland, as practically fulfilling the function of an open university in Ireland from the 1860s onwards, particularly for men of Irish nationalist inclinations.[25] While the absence of prominent educationalists in the IRB may make this claim seem rather absurd, this contemporary perception of the IRB nevertheless reflected something of the political culture in which the IRB operated and the nature of Fenian propaganda.

During this period, the question of education was becoming central in determining the basis of Irish political society's relationship with the British state. Generally speaking, leaders of the Irish Catholic and Protestant communities welcomed equally the buffer role that the British state played in preventing the spread to Ireland of the ideologies or politics of the French revolution (which some uneducated Protestants erroneously equated with the influence of Catholicism). At the same time, however, the secularisation of the British education system was creating grave concerns, particularly among leaders of the Catholic community, who henceforth found themselves torn between their political loyalty to the British state and a felt need for passive-resistance to the influence of its education system. To meet this problem, the Catholic Church began propagating versions of Irish history in its schools which claimed that the Catholic religion was central to the existence of a separate 'national identity' in Ireland, thereby practically equating religiosity with a form of patriotism. At the same time, however, Catholic schools naturally emphasising Catholics' inherent philosophical problems with, or opposition to, all ideologies of nationalism and the nation-state (including Britain's).[26] Therefore, although the British state and Irish Catholic education system effectively moulded different communal outlooks in Ireland from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, neither were compatible with the Irish nationalist ideologies championed by those 1848 revolutionaries who desired to form an independent Irish nation-state and went on to form the Fenian Brotherhood in America or the IRB in Ireland. A 'fenian' political culture was thus born whereby Irishmen—usually autodidacts of limited social means—strove to propagate an Irish nationalist political ideology in a society where the British state and Catholic education systems perpetually served as a buffer and intellectual glass-ceiling respectively against the achievement of their goals. The durability of the 'fenian political tradition' in modern Irish history would seem to have rested largely upon this dynamic, with its politics effectively enduring among autodidacts for so long as barriers against the intellectual formation of an Irish nationalist political society were felt to remain.[27]

The expulsion of leading 1848 Irish rebels to America, combined with the inherent problems in issuing seditious propaganda in Ireland under the rule of Dublin Castle, naturally made the IRB receptive to American Fenian propaganda. Recent developments in transport and communications technology had made the movement of print-material, money and civilians (if not of soldiers or firearms) between Ireland and America not only much more possible but also much more natural. Only a vocal minority of the American Fenian leaders, however, continued to pass comment on political affairs in Ireland (as opposed to simply attempting to define a potential role for all Irish exiles in America). The pioneer of this journalistic tradition was essentially John Mitchel, who had been celebrated (along with TF Meagher and TB McManus) by politically-influential Americans on his arrival in America as a hero of the Europe-wide 1848 revolutions.[28] Mitchel's New York *Irish Citizen* (1854-56) was co-edited by John Savage, a fellow Irish political exile of 1848 who also wrote a pioneering book on the history of Irish nationalism at this time, which was published alongside Mitchel's famous *Jail Journal*.[29] Following Mitchel's example, John O'Mahony later edited New York Irish papers such as the *Phoenix* (1860-65) or the *Irish People* (1866-72) and the latter, along with Mitchel's revived *Irish Citizen* (1871-73), Patrick Ford's *Irish World* (1873-81) and later John Devoy's *Irish Nation* (1881-85), would sometimes be imported into Ireland by the IRB. Dublin Castle

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[25] 'Concerning Freedom', *United Irishman*, 21 Jan. 1905; 'National Education', *United Irishman*, 17 Nov. 1900. On this theme, see also PA Townend, 'Academies of nationality: the reading room and Irish national movements 1838-1905', in LW McBride ed., *Reading Irish histories* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 19-39.

[26] LW McBride ed., *Reading Irish histories* (Dublin, 2003), chapters three and four.

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[27] For more analysis of these questions, see McGee, *IRB*, chapter one.

[28] LR Bisceglia, 'The McManus welcome, San Francisco, 1851', *Éire-Ireland* (spring 1981), pp. 6-20.

[29] John Savage, *'98 and '48: the revolutionary and literary history of Ireland* (New York, 1856). During 1848, Savage had been the editor of the *Irish Patriot* (Dublin) but this was quickly suppressed by Dublin Castle, while he was also expelled from the Royal Irish Academy for being an Irish nationalist. Savage later wrote *Fenian heroes and martyrs* (Boston, 1868).

greatly limited the circulation of these papers, however, by seizing copies of them at Irish ports.[30]

Unlike Patrick Ford (who lived virtually all his life in America), writers like John Mitchel, John O'Mahony and John Devoy had known of life within Ireland themselves and continued to be well-informed of developments in Ireland through reading imported editions of Dublin and London newspapers. Remarkably, they always maintained a strong belief in their ability to act as effective judges of all political developments within Ireland, even to the point of proposing initiatives to Irish politicians. This was something that was rarely appreciated, however. For example, John Martin, Member of Parliament (MP) was perplexed that Mitchel (his brother-in-law) often claimed during the early 1870s in the *Irish Citizen* that, from New York, he understood the political situation in Ireland better than any politician did in Dublin.[31] Similarly, John Dillon MP would later write to Devoy noting how - much though he admired his writings on Irish affairs – 'it is utterly absurd for a man who has not been in Ireland for years to be so positive and final in his views as you are' in passing judgments upon the realities of Irish politics.[32] In later years, even Michael Davitt - who loved Irish-America (he married an Irish-American and dedicated his memoirs to the 'Celtic peasantry' in America)[33] - sometimes lost his patience with Irish-Americans' claims to understand the political situation in Ireland, once complaining to a Chicago audience that while it might seem 'very easy to establish an Irish Republic three thousand miles away from Ireland,' 'I assure you it is no easy task to do it in Old Ireland.'[34]

The Fenian Brotherhood undoubtedly played a significant role in reviving interest in Ireland in the notion of establishing an Irish Republic, at least among revolutionary circles. The fortunes of its propaganda campaign, however, showed that there were clear limits to the degree to which this republican idea was liable to find popular support not only in Ireland but even, to some degree, in Irish-America. For instance, TF Meagher (who created the Irish republican tricolour in Dublin during 1848) and John Mitchel—two men who later joined the Fenian Brotherhood—first endeared themselves to the American political community by calling for the destruction of the temporal rule of the Pope in the name of all nations' right to political freedom and international republican liberty—sensibilities that O'Mahony and Stephens also shared.[35] Irish Catholics, whether in Ireland or America, was never likely to espouse or even tolerate such arguments, however: hence the Church's denunciations particularly of the Fenian leadership.

John Savage was reputedly a less ideologically-committed republican than either Mitchel or O'Mahony, although he was commissioned to write political literature for the US Republican Party during the late 1850s and 1860s.[36] His efforts as president of the 'official wing' of the Fenian Brotherhood (1867-71) to persuade President Grant to issue appeals for leniency towards all American Fenian prisoners in British jails would seem to have influenced the British government's decision to also offer early release (albeit on condition of expulsion from Ireland) to those IRB leaders who had been convicted alongside the Fenians. Many believed, however, that Savage's main motivation in endearing himself to the Republican Party ever since the 1850s was only to create sufficient leverage to allow American Catholics to champion their desire for the existence of schools independent of state control without inevitably being subject to very intense republican criticisms.[37] Meanwhile events in France at this time also served to highlight the limits of the appeal of republicanism amongst Irishmen.

Between 1869 and 1871 the British Home Office thought that the rise of republican enthusiasms in France would give a major boost to the IRB in Ireland, noting how Irish revolutionary circles had always exhibited an anxiety to see France a republic owing to their belief that 'it would be impossible to inaugurate a republic in Ireland without a sister republic in France, or some other country near.' Indeed during the republican upheavals of the winter of 1870, the Home Office thought that 'if France remains a republic after the war, it must exert an influence favourable to Irish

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[30] NAI, Fenian papers, 8980R and CSORP 1877/6742.

[31] John Martin to John O'Leary, letter of 4 January 1874, National Library of Ireland (NLI), John O'Leary papers, Ms5926.

[32]. John Dillon to John Devoy, letter of 6 Aug. 1891, reproduced in W. O'Brien and D. Ryan (eds.), *Devoy's post bag*, 2 (Dublin, 1953), p. 320.

[33] Michael Davitt, *The fall of feudalism* (New York, 1904), opening dedication.

[34] Speech of Davitt at the 1886 Chicago Convention of the Irish National League of America, quoted in Michael Funchion, *Chicago's Irish nationalists* (New York, 1976), pp. 97-8.

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[35] WF Lyons (ed.) *Brigadier-General Thomas Francis Meagher* (London, 1869), 142-7, D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, pp. 4, 33-4.

[36] T. Kunitz, P. Haycraft (eds.), *American authors 1600-1900* (1938), p. 672; S.A. Allibone, *Critical dictionary of English literature*, 2, (New York, 1870).

[37] *New York Times*, 11 Oct. 1888 (obituary); *Dictionary of American Biography*, viii (1935). Savage, an award-winning playwright, was a lecturer for various American Catholic colleges during the 1870s.

Fenianism.'[38] This existence of such a belief was partly reflected by John O'Mahony's journalism in the *Irish People* (New York). O'Mahony celebrated the resurgence of French republicanism and (together with Mitchel) was even prepared to defend the Paris Commune after it executed the Catholic archbishop of the city.[39] Not surprisingly, however, when this journalism was read in Ireland, there was a very significant degree of public aversion, while clerical condemnations were made of Irish revolutionaries' reputed sympathies with the Marxist International (which some IRB exiles had in fact joined).[40]

In January 1870 the Papacy issued an unequivocal condemnation of 'the American or Irish society called Fenians' which were branded alongside 'those sects called Freemasons, Carbonari, or any other kinds of sects which either openly or privately plot against the Church or legitimately constituted authorities.'[41] Although this condemnation was issued at the request of the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland rather than in America, it helped to ensure that the 'senate wing' of the Fenian Brotherhood (already decimated by its Canadian raids) disbanded during 1870, while the 'official wing' also lost many members (Savage resigned as leader in early 1871).[42] Due to public hostility, this body soon had to reconstitute itself as a secret society under the successive leaderships of John O'Mahony (1871-3, 1876), TC Luby (1874-5), James Stephens (1880) and finally Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa (1877-79, c.1881-c.1885) but it had clearly lost all of its influence.[43] Furthermore, excepting a nominal and very tenuous link with a tiny IRB faction up until roughly 1880, the Fenian Brotherhood had no connection with any Irish political organisation after 1872.[44]

In comparison to this situation in American Fenian circles, the papal condemnation of 1870 does not seem to have prompted many men to resign from the IRB, which maintained a membership of roughly 40,000 men from 1868 to 1875.[45] This was probably partly due to the fact that, being in a secret society, the IRB's membership could more easily avoid being identified by clergymen and so escape being boycotted by the Catholic community. JFX O'Brien (a prominent IRB figure after 1869 who had been a seminary student briefly during his youth) reputedly resigned from the movement during 1871-72 partly due to religious considerations. In the *Irish People*, O'Brien had often criticised Catholic clergymen for taking too prominent a role in Irish politics, arguing (in line with a general IRB view) that it would be detrimental both for religion and for Irish politics if Catholic bishops and priests were not permanently excluded from political activity or, at least, exercised no greater influence in politics than any other individuals.[46] During the time of the Paris Commune, however, O'Brien publicly disavowed any expression of Irish sympathy for its example. Meanwhile, the Dublin *Irishman*—which was often suspected by the Irish public of being an IRB journal (it never actually was)[47] because it republished John Savage's Fenian Brotherhood propaganda[48] — responded to the Paris Commune controversy by emphatically denouncing 'red republicanism.'[49]

John O'Leary, an anticlerical IRB leader who was released from prison in 1871 on pain of expulsion from Ireland, also seems to have deliberately expressed something of an aversion for republicanism during his 1871 interviews, with events in Paris evidently helping to convince him that the difference between a liberal constitutional monarchy and a moderate republic was not so drastic as to justify war, in France or anywhere else.[50] Furthermore, if the IRB was willing to ignore Church condemnations, its leaders were generally clever enough not to ignore the fact that the very phrases 'republic' or 'republicanism' had connotations to all contemporaries of a politics 'that smacked too much of Belleville and Montmartre for Catholic feeling to approve.'[51] Any Irish nationalist rebel with any intention of winning widespread and cross-denominational popular support in Ireland could not therefore be seen to espouse a dogmatic republicanism. The IRB's propaganda usually reflected this fact.

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[38] British National Archives (Kew), Home Office papers, H.O. 144/1538 (6), letter of Sir Robert Anderson, 14 Dec. 1870.

[39] Sean Daly, *Ireland and the First International* (Cork, 1984), 21; Brian Sayers, 'John O'Mahony, revolutionary and scholar' (Ph.D., NUI Maynooth, 2005), chapter nine.

[40] Sean Daly, *Ireland and the First International* (Cork, 1984), pp. 18-25.

[41] *Acta Sanctae Sedis* (5th ed., Rome, 1872-1911), V (1911), p.389, quoted (in translation from Latin) in Fr. D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, p. 329.

[42] D'Arcy, *Fenian movement*, pp. 329-33.

[43] Ibid., chapter nine.

[44] McGee, *IRB*, pp. 45, 83.

[45] NAI, Fenian papers, 7931R.

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[46] O'Brien's articles on this theme are reproduced sympathetically in John O'Leary, *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism*, 2 vols. (London, 1896) and with aversion in TD Sullivan, *Recollections of troubled times in Irish politics* (Dublin, 1905).

[47] Its proprietor, Richard Pigott, was never a member of the IRB but he was willing to act as a general informant to the British on IRB affairs. British National Archives (Kew), Sir Robert Anderson papers, HO 144/1538/8 (letters of Richard Pigott, Mar-Oct. 1872).

[48] Savage initially wrote the 'American letter' column in the *Irishman*. This job was taken up after 1871 by Jeremiah O'Donovan (Rossa), an exiled IRB convict in New York.

[49] Comerford, *Fenians in context*, pp. 185-6.

[50] Marcus Bourke, *John O'Leary* (Tralee, 1967), p. 166.

[51] AM Sullivan, *New Ireland* (2nd ed., London, 1882), p. 440.

This was perhaps best evidenced by the final input that old IRB veterans of the 1860s made to nineteenth-century Irish political life, namely its role (with some old American Fenians' support) in launching a 1798 Centenary Committee. At a time when the French Republic (the only republican state in Europe) was closing many Catholic schools (it soon expelled the Jesuits from France as well to create a more strongly nationalist education system), the IRB celebrated the example of Wolfe Tone, stressed the necessity of an Irish patriotism that could 'embrace the three great sects' if Ireland was ever to be a nation, and claimed that past 'denunciations of "French principles", of "revolution" and of "secret societies"' had prevented this from happening. Nevertheless it refrained from demanding the establishment specifically of an Irish Republic.[52]

The durability of the Fenian Brotherhood's appeal in Irish-America remained evident to some degree right up until the 1890s. For example, the Fenian Brotherhood still existed at this time, albeit purely within New York, as a public US civil war veterans' association. It expressed its total opposition to all 'secret' or 'nihilistic' revolutionary conspiracies and, true to old traditions, formed the 'Fenian Volunteers' among young Irishmen in New York as a militia force 'who shall hold themselves ever in readiness to aid the United States in case of a war with a foreign power.'[53] During 1895, some former Fenians also attended a large convention held in Chicago, Illinois designed to form a new Fenian Brotherhood-style pressure group in American politics (complete with its own affiliated militia) known as the 'Irish National Alliance.' Although this turned out to be an essentially abortive affair, middle-aged delegates from almost every state, including some old ex-Union and ex-Confederate soldiers, turned up at its initial convention that September.[54] To great cheers, the chairman, John Finerty (a native of Tipperary, veteran of the US civil war, the Canadian Fenian raid of 1870 and the 1876 war against the Sioux Indians) expressed his desire to see a major deterioration in Anglo-American relations, his detestation for British imperialism and his belief in Ireland's right (according to the principles of freedom underpinning the American constitution) to complete independence as a republic. He then concluded (to equally great cheers) that his greatest wish was 'to set the example to all my countrymen that I love America and, as the adopted son of America, I will never live under any government other than that of the Stars and Stripes!'[55]

This speech of Finerty's might be said to have been a fitting epitaph for the Fenian Brotherhood. Even while expressing support for the idea of a 'free Ireland,' the patriotism of most members of the Fenian Brotherhood had always been a matter of attempting to prove to their fellow Americans their worthiness as American citizens by emphasising that all 'men of the Irish race' were just as inclined to ardently desire, or defend, political freedoms as the greatest of American patriots.[56] As a public exponent of a militant American patriotism amongst Irish exiles, the Fenians were also largely responsible for creating a significant pressure group in American politics during the Anglo-American tensions of 1862-72. By the early 1870s, this impetus had created some of the first post-famine Irish-born congressmen of note, including men such as Finerty, PA Collins and William Roberts (formerly the leader of the 'Senate wing' of the Fenian Brotherhood).[57] By the mid-to-late 1880s, however, the political tradition of Irishmen in American forming militias in an attempt to highlight the potentially great contribution they could make to American society had been largely replaced by a somewhat different and less exaggerated brand of politics. Most influential Irish-born politicians, as well as its most influential journalists (such as John Boyle O'Reilly of the Boston *Pilot* and Patrick Ford of the *Irish World* —both of whom abandoned their initial radicalism around 1884), now became concerned primarily with acting as political spokesmen for the Catholic community in America.[58] Henceforth 'Irish-America' became largely identified with Catholic America, while the 'cause of Ireland' featured less prominently in their writings (IRB activists ceased to bother importing their papers). Collections for Irish political organisations among the general Irish-American public also became much less frequent, although collections for the Irish Party MPs in London were sometimes made after 1886 with the help of some very wealthy American Catholic businessmen, most notably Eugene Kelly, a millionaire who headed the Emigrant Savings Bank in New York.[59]

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[52] NLI, Henry Dixon papers, Ms35262(26), circulars of the 1798 Centenary Committee (quotations from circular of 22 Feb. 1897).

[53] *The Times*, 24 Oct. 1890.

[54] Biographies of all the delegates appear as an appendix in the souvenir journal: MF Fanning (ed.) *The new movement convention which gave birth to the Irish National Alliance* (Chicago, 1896).

[55] MF Fanning (ed.) *The new movement convention which gave birth to the Irish National Alliance* (Chicago, 1896), p. 97.

[56] This thesis is fully explored in TN Brown, *Irish-American nationalism 1870-90* (Philadelphia, 1966).

[57] See the entries for Collins, Roberts and Finerty in *Biographical dictionary of American Congress* (1961).

[58] JP Rodechko, *Patrick Ford and his search for America* (New York, 1976). FG McManamin, *The American years of John Boyle O'Reilly* (New York, 1976). On this theme, see also Alec Sullivan, 'The American Republic and the Irish National League of America', *American Catholic Quarterly Review* (vol.9, 1884), pp. 35-44.

If the impact of the Fenian Brotherhood on Irish politics—including the general history of the IRB—ultimately proved to be quite limited, this was partly because its very existence stemmed from a somewhat unique dynamic to Irish life. The British government's forcible expulsion of talented Irish nationalist activists from Ireland during the late 1840s, the late 1860s and again in the early 1880s (following the suppression of the Land League) undoubtedly limited the potential of many Irish political organisations of the day.[60] The sincere determination of many of these exiles to maintain a political influence within Ireland after they left, however, arguably represented a desire to reverse the irreversible. Furthermore, among the growing Irish diaspora of the mid to late-nineteenth century, the example of revolutionary journalists like John O'Mahony or John Mitchel of remaining focused (more or less) on the goal of revolution in Ireland and resisting integration into their host societies was ultimately very exceptional. The path eventually taken by Meagher, Savage, Finerty and countless others (including, albeit in a very different fashion, Thomas D'Arcy McGee in Canada) was effectively the norm. Similarly, ex-IRB political activists from the 1860s who became newspaper editors abroad after their release from prison (including JP McDonnell, who became a leading American labor activist during the 1870s) tended to follow the same integrationist example. [61] This often occurred because their initial Irish nationalism was quite naturally dissipated while living in alien circumstances and because they were naturally expected as editors to represent only the viewpoints and concerns of those immigrant communities that surrounded them. For instance, the decision of John Boyle O'Reilly during the early 1880s to become a Catholic journalist in Boston, Massachusetts, was practically repeated for similar reasons by other ex-IRB figures such as John Denvir in

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[59] Michael Funchion (ed.), *Irish-American voluntary organisations* (Westport, Connecticut, 1983), pp. 204-6.
[60] For John Mitchel's interpretation of this reality, see John Devoy's account of his 1871interview with Mitchel in *Recollections of an Irish rebel* (New York, 1929), p. 9.
[61] Cormac O'Grada, 'Fenianism and socialism: the career of J.P. McDonnell', *Saothar*, vol.1 (1975), pp. 31-41. LA O'Donnell, 'Joseph Patrick McDonnell (1847-1906): a passion for justice', *Éire-Ireland*, vol.22, no.4 (1987), pp. 118-33.

Liverpool, James Mullin in Cardiff and John Flood in Sydney, Australia as early as 1871.[62]

The most notable exception to this general pattern was the case of John Devoy, who was a member of the Fenian Brotherhood from 1871 to 1875 and was later described by Patrick Pearse as 'the greatest of the Fenians.' After fifty-five years in New York, Devoy dedicated his memoirs not to his comrades in America but instead to the memory of three generations of 'my departed comrades in the IRB' in Ireland.[63] As a leader of the Clan na Gael (a secret Irish-American revolutionary movement, initially modelled on the freemasons and affiliated with the IRB from 1876 onwards), Devoy always remained in contact with the IRB and kept quite well-informed of events in Ireland. He too had an intermittent career (of sorts) in American politics, first during the 1880s[64] and later (after launching a commercially-successful newspaper, the *Gaelic American*) as a supporter of Daniel Cohalan, a prominent Irish-American senator.[65] Perhaps the main reason for Devoy's generally exceptional example, therefore, was his rather unusual personality. An intellectual who was indifferent to religion and felt a patronising sympathy for the 'peasant traits' of most of his fellow Irish immigrants in America, Devoy also felt an exaggerated, Victorian-like respect for personal privacy and consequently found it very difficult to identify with the openness of American society (he never married). Writing in a private diary, Devoy once reflected that the reason why he often felt 'as little of an American today ... as on the day the English government sent me to these shores' (twenty-four years previously) was that he had never grown accustomed to listening everyday to Americans with accents 'that affect me like sandpaper' and who lived in what he considered to be a vulgar culture, where every man feels obliged to 'live in public,' 'disclose family troubles to the first reporter who comes along,' boast about sexual conquests (real or imaginary) and 'evidently thinks he is the greatest man you ever met' while 'talking incessantly in a loud voice.' Meanwhile, a single-day spent within earshot of an Irish, French and English tourist—people 'much more to my liking' who

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[62] John Devnir, *Life story of an old rebel* (London, 1910). James Mullin, *The story of a toiler's life* (London, 1921). Keith Amos, *The Fenians in Australia* (Kensington, 1988), pp. 280-1.
[63] Devoy, *Recollections*, opening dedication.
[64] See, for example, John Devoy, *Cleveland and the true story of the great Irish revolt of 1884 and why we oppose him today* (New York, 1892). Devoy was a prominent member of the New York central branch of the Land and National Leagues of America during the 1880s.
[65] For this aspect of Devoy's later career, see Michael Doorley, *Irish-American diaspora nationalism: the Friends of Irish Freedom* (Dublin, 2005).

'talk in a half jocular, half serious way about politics, war, poetry, Napoleon, Wellington, Moltke, Bazaine, Dreyfus, Victor Hugo etc.'—seems to have caused him to be floored by a tremendous sense of his own loneliness and cultural isolation.[66] This was something which he evidently tried to overcome by devoting all his mental energies to focusing or writing upon Irish politics, the one world to which he felt he really belonged. Even Devoy would eventually come to realise that America had become his true home. Although a significant organiser of the 1916 rising, he found himself painfully dismissed as a tool of American politicians during Eamon deValera's American tour of 1919-20 and, notwithstanding the Irish Free State's granting him a state reception during 1924, he resolved to return to New York after only a very brief stay in an independent Ireland to live out his final days under the proverbial Stars and Stripes. The magnetic pull of America had once again proved irresistible within the world of Fenian patriotism.

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[66] NLI, John Devoy papers, Ms9820, diary, pp.171-74 (entries for 7-11 Feb, 1895).

Liberal Catholic ideology: an exposition of the *Political catechism* by Thomas Wyse[1]

Elizabeth Heggs

This paper aims to measure the sources and significance of a nineteenth-century Irish Catholic ideology that was distinctly liberal in nature. Leighton contends in his work *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom* that the Irish *ancien regime*, based fundamentally on confessionalism, survived the eighteenth century almost entirely intact. The nineteenth-century Catholic response to this *ancien regime* was to enter into an alliance with liberalism. By the early-nineteenth century 'Catholicism and liberalism had become, politically, one force.'[2] The liberal Catholicism defined in the first three decades of the nineteenth century was the political ideology of a small and inter-connected group of wealthy and prosperous Catholics, many of whom were leaders in the campaign for Catholic emancipation. The writings of these figures in the nineteenth century were part of a developing strategy by Irish Catholics to find long-term accommodation within the existing political order. They were strongly influenced by the ideas pioneered by Charles O'Conor and John Curry from the 1750s. The point of departure for these writers was that Irish Catholics had to abandon intransigence and make an effective approach to the Protestant body.[3] Central to the argument of both periods was that Irish Catholics had accepted that Ireland was a Protestant nation, and aimed at finding an accommodation within the state. By the nineteenth century it had become apparent to Irish Catholic leaders that identification with liberalism could give an ideological foundation to their campaign for full Catholic inclusion in the state.

The impetus behind the development of this ideology was the drive for liberty and freedom for the Irish Catholics. The campaign for civil and religious liberty was symbolised in the 1820s by the struggle for Catholic emancipation, which would allow Catholics to enter parliament and the higher levels of the public service. Emancipation 'was seen as an all-embracing struggle for liberation and justice by the leaders and the people.'[4] Despite the fact that it would have little direct effect on the majority of Irish Catholics in their everyday lives, as vital political rights including the right to vote had been conceded in relief bills in the late-eighteenth century, emancipation came to represent much more to the population in Ireland. It symbolised the regeneration and reconciliation of the Irish people, through gradual reform of all disabling laws. Fergus O'Ferrall has offered an erudite analysis of the development of liberal Catholicism in a piece entitled 'The emergence of a political ideology: Irish liberal Catholicism 1800-30,' which was a part of his doctoral thesis analysing the growth of political consciousness in Ireland.[5] O'Ferrall divided the development of this ideology into two distinct stages: the early period of development lasting from 1803 to 1812; and the second phase from 1820 to 1829. This seminal work depicts the emergence of a liberal and educated Catholic middle-class leadership, whose flexible ideology was utilised to incorporate the broader population of Irish Catholics into the campaign for Catholic relief.

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[1] Research for this paper was aided by a postgraduate scholarship from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

[2] CDA. Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom: a study of the Irish ancien regime* (London, 1994), p. 160.

[3] Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom*, p. 131.

One of the most important propagators of a politically liberal Catholic ideology was Thomas Wyse. Wyse came from a wealthy middle-class merchant and landowning family in Waterford city. After nearly a decade on the continent, he returned to Ireland in 1825 and immediately engrossed himself in local and national politics. Through studying the argument and form of Wyse's political writings within the canon of liberal ideology developed by other writers before him, it becomes possible to make some conclusions about the significance and extent of liberal Catholicism in Ireland at the end of the 1820s.[6] *The Political catechism, explanatory of the constitutional rights and civil disabilities of the Catholics of Ireland* (London, 1829) was written during the latter phase of what O'Ferrall defined as the second period of development. As such, we can expect to find this liberal ideology fully developed, using a confident and assertive form and tone. This work was sanctioned by the Catholic Association of Ireland in 1829, and was intended for circulation in

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[4] Fergus O'Ferrall, 'The growth of political consciousness in Ireland, 1823-47: a study of O'Connellite politics and political education' (Ph. D thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1978), p. 131.

[5] O'Ferrall, 'The growth of political consciousness in Ireland, 1823-47', pp. 101-57.

[6] Thomas Wyse's *Political catechism, explanatory of the constitutional rights and civil disabilities of the Catholics of Ireland* (London, 1829), composed under the auspices of the Catholic Association, has been described as 'a popular summation of the [liberal Catholic] ideology', though it has been contended that it was published after the ideology has really served its purpose: O'Ferrall, 'The growth of political consciousness in Ireland, 1823-47', p. 150.

Ireland.[7] The fact that the volume was published in London leads one to believe that it may in fact also have been aimed at persuading the British people to support Irish Catholic equality, the majority of whom were adverse to Catholic emancipation. The late date of the publication compared with other liberal Catholic works tends to support this argument.

Perhaps the most obvious and fundamental aspect of Irish liberal Catholic ideology was its faith in progress. This notion of progress enabled Irish Catholics to believe that their position in Irish and British society could be improved. Inherent in this was the classical liberal faith that society could reach perfection through a gradual reform of the ills and inequalities of society. Wyse argued in his *Political catechism* that 'it is the duty of every citizen…to try to make British freedom as free and as British as we possibly can.'[8] Inherent in this statement is the belief in securing perfect freedom through cooperation and working towards a common goal. Wyse believed in the flexibility and improvability of the constitutional system, in a faith in progress towards perfection, and in a loyalty to reform and regeneration. This reference to 'British' freedom brings up a second point however. In creating a context through which Irish Catholics could be considered as full British citizens, he was participating in a revaluation of perceptions of Roman Catholic identity, first pioneered by Charles O'Conor in the mid-eighteenth century, which would be acceptable to British liberal opinion.[9]

The most important and defining feature of Irish liberal Catholicism was its historicist approach to contemporary politics. Political lessons tended to be drawn from history, and the treatment of the Irish Catholics throughout their history was utilised in explaining Ireland's contemporary ills. This was by no means a new development, and historicist interpretations had always been a vital element in creating and understanding identity for both Catholic and Protestant communities in Ireland. Donal McCartney has argued that the very purpose of writing history in the early-nineteenth century was 'to teach political lessons.'[10] The eighteenth-century Catholic apologists had attempted to undermine the Protestant paradigm of Roman

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[7] Wyse, *Political catechism*, i.

[8] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 29.

[9] For analysis of the writings of Charles O'Conor see Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom*, pp 102-9.

[10] Donal McCartney, 'The writing of history in Ireland, 1800-30', in *Irish Historical Studies*, x, no. 40 (1957), p. 352.

Catholic Jacobitism and disloyalty through adopting a pro-Hanoverian stance and suggesting that Catholics shared the fundamental convictions of the Protestant community. The implications of this commendation of Whiggery and support of the Revolution of 1688 were that Catholic writers could no longer complain of confiscations and loss of political power, but instead focused on social and economic reform aimed at altering the confessional nature of the state. Coupled with this was a conscious shedding of traditional Jacobite and Tory loyalties.[11] This was an attempt to argue for Catholic grievances without invoking Protestant alarm. This handling of the dichotomies of Irish history was complemented and reinforced by conciliatory espousals of the Catholic cause by liberal Protestant writers in the early-nineteenth century, such as Henry Parnell, who aimed to depict Irish Catholics as 'highly deserving of their [Protestant] confidence and their affection.'[12]

For nineteenth-century writers, this historicist interpretation was employed to propagate a sense of injustice at Catholic inequality. Civil inequalities were understood as being the root of all of Ireland's problems, and these inequalities were explained and remedies offered through recourse to history. This estimation of the uses of historical writing was one that historians now recognise as a subjective examination exploited for didactic purposes. In the *Political catechism*, Wyse offered such an examination. Since the arrival of Henry II in 1169, Ireland had been divided between two hostile 'nations,' the Gaelic Irish and the English settlers, with the boundaries being constantly redrawn. The arrival of Protestantism in Ireland served only to exacerbate existing divisions, as the discord now incorporated a religious dimension. The reformation became a symbol of Irish Catholic 'degradation.' Wyse argued that while in modern times the spirit and principles of the Protestant faith were virtuous, the motives behind the Henrician and Elizabethan proselytising campaigns were anchored in a hunger for political power, lands, honours and dignities.[13] The Treaty of Limerick was another particularly popular issue through which to establish a sense of injustice. After the Glorious Revolution in 1688, William III 'might have united the country into one' by establishing civil equality and freedom for Catholics through the Treaty of Limerick, which guaranteed Catholic rights. But the treaty was

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[11] Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom*, pp. 58, 93, 105-6.

[12] Henry Parnell, *A history of the penal laws against the Catholics: from the year 1689 to the union* (4th ed., London, 1825), p. 147.

[13] Wyse, *Political catechism*, pp. 8, 59-60.

violated and 'the nation was delivered up to a favoured faction.'[14] Instead of establishing civil and religious freedom, the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries witnessed the implementation of the penal statutes, which subjected Irish Catholics to a legal system that enervated their political, social and religious positions. Thomas Wyse argued that every degradation of Catholics since that time had stemmed from persecution, and this persecution, now in the form of civil disabilities, had to cease if real liberty was to ever be obtained.[15]

This inclination on the part of Wyse to create a sense of injustice through describing historical atrocities went beyond the rhetorical, and proved a mainstay of Wyse's arguments irrespective of the audience. For example, on giving evidence before the House of Commons Select Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland in 1830, Wyse recognised the problems of Irish agriculture in historical terms, blaming the middleman system which had flourished in the eighteenth century, and the Penal Laws, which had turned the majority of Irish peasants into 'mere serfs,' for the problems accompanying land tenure and use in the nineteenth century. The problem of competition for land, due to an increasing population and the decline of manufactures, was blamed on the historical repression of manufactures in Ireland.[16] For Irish Catholics, this sense of injustice, as well as an enthusiasm for change, was fuelled by a perspective of history that concentrated on these events. While eighteenth-century Catholics aimed at using history to invoke a common character for members of both Churches on the island, this perspective allowed Irish Catholics to draw their sense of exclusion from the historical lessons of the past.

Irish liberal Catholicism also sanctioned political and social moderation, which endorsed a patriotism and love of country. It resisted all explicit forms of bigotry, tyranny and intolerance. From this stemmed an aversion to revolution in all its guises, and most liberal Catholics also showed distaste for using violent tactics to forward political goals. This created a common ground between Daniel O'Connell – a leader who was 'liberal' in many important ways, yet who never fitted straightforwardly into the liberal ideological mould – and more conservative liberals; and it enabled a unity of purpose among Irish Catholics under the leadership of

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[14] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 9.

[15] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 67.

[16] *Third report of evidence from the select committee on the state of the poor in Ireland*, H. C. 1830 (665), vii, 634.

O'Connell, at least until emancipation in 1829. In the *Political catechism*, Wyse urged gradual, temperate and judicious reform.[17] Wyse argued that politically educating Irish Catholics to their rights and responsibilities would produce a rational and liberal society that would argue for reform through peaceful means. Political education, Wyse argued, 'produces by quiet and gradual means, all great and useful revolutions in the government of all human societies.'[18] This was a theme that was to fascinate Wyse for a large part of his political career. By 'revolution' Wyse meant not a violent uprising, but an extensive and gradual reform through constitutional means. He also argued against the use of physical force in campaigning for change. He who used physical force 'proves himself either ignorant of the interests of this country, or a traitor to the interests which he knows.'[19]

Closely connected to this is another important aspect of this ideology, namely an overt attachment to the British government and constitution. The majority of Irish liberal Catholics were unionists – at least until the early-1830s – and sought to redress their grievances through constitutional means. The fundamental aim for Irish liberal Catholics in this period was to obtain British liberties for themselves, with recognition for Ireland as an equal nation within the empire. Thomas Wyse's understanding of the significance of the constitution is set out clearly in his *Political catechism*

> The very essence of tyranny consists in leaving everything to the man, and nothing to the code. The essence of liberty consists in fixing clear and well-known boundaries, which no man, or set of men, can dare to pass.[20]

At the very outset of the *Political catechism*, Wyse stated that a 'British freeman' is 'the man who fully enjoys all the franchises and liberties, which of right belong to a freeborn Briton.'[21] He contended that every citizen born within the British Empire, who was loyal to the constitution, irrespective of religious or any other distinction should be entitled to the full privileges of the British constitution. But Irish Catholics were excluded from these privileges as 'they do not enjoy the same laws, the same government, the same interests, as other inhabitants of Great Britain.'[22] The main objective of Wyse's catechism was to argue that Irish Catholics, as loyal Britons,

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[17] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 29.
[18] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 96.
[19] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 97.
[20] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 44.
[21] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 5.
[22] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 30.

deserved full inclusion in the constitution. This created a tentative but crucial link with liberal Protestants, who formed a small but vocal minority in this period.

Liberal Catholics used their loyalty to the British constitution as a means of arguing for the enlargement of that constitution, through granting full constitutional liberties to Irish Catholics. The importance of British identity for Irish Catholics up until the late-1820s has been underestimated somewhat by historians, and many liberal Catholics believed, like Richard Lalor Sheil, that 'the happiness of our country depends on its junction, I should rather say its identity, with England.'[23] Making a case for Catholic equality in 1825, Dr James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin challenged the notion that Irish Catholics were disloyal due to their divided allegiance to the king and pope

> Allegiance is a *relative term*, and takes its *form*...from the *object* to which it relates: if then civil allegiance relates to the king, and religious allegiance to the pope, their *forms* [of allegiance]...must also be as distinct from each other as the king is from the pope: hence, the allegiance of the Catholic to his sovereign is one and undivided, as is also that obedience which he owes to the head of the Church.[24]

The language used in this instance was pointedly phrased so as to convince, yet avoid inflaming Protestant anxieties. Much of the language employed by liberal Catholics was in this vein, as it was inherently conciliatory and tended to avoid direct confrontations with those who opposed Catholic claims. Equally, Thomas Wyse argued that there was nothing in the Catholics' 'principles or conduct' that was incompatible with the constitution, and therefore they were entitled to a share in it.[25]

Linked into this was the argument for the adaptability of the British constitution. Wyse argued in the *Political catechism* that 'The British constitution is neither Protestant nor Catholic exclusively, but comprehensively both; it was once Catholic, it is now Protestant, it was always British.'[26] Addressing a Munster Catholic meeting in September 1827, Wyse contended

> There is no Protestant constitution, there is no Protestant ascendancy known to that constitution; the only ascendancy is the ascendancy of the laws, and he who would subvert those laws was the real traitor, whether Protestant, Catholic or Puritan.[27]

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[23] W. Torrens McCullough, *Memoirs of the right honourable Richard Lalor Sheil* (2 vols, London, 1855), i, p. 239.
[24] JKL [Dr James Doyle], *Letters on the state of Ireland* (Dublin, 1825), pp. 246-7.
[25] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 88.
[26] Ibid.
[27] *Waterford Chronicle*, 1 September 1827.

Through arguing that the British constitution had changed and developed over time, Wyse was offering a progressive way of thinking about and developing the constitution, without it losing its inherent 'Britishness.' If the constitution was adaptable, that meant that it could be enlarged to fully include the Catholics of Ireland, without undermining the principles contained within it. Here again the need was apparent to identify Irish Roman Catholics with a British identity, that was both evolving and capable of change. This constant reaffirmation of Irish Catholic compatibility with British constitutionalism and citizenship was used by liberal Catholics as a weapon in the context of the claims of conservative Protestants who were 'not prepared to countenance anything that was deemed to weaken their traditional ascendancy.'[28] These claims, put forward by conservative Protestants such as Patrick Duigenan, centred on the notion that the inherent Protestant nature of the constitution was sacred and inviolable, and that any expansion or evolution of that constitution would undermine its 'Britishness.'

Central to any thorough understanding of liberal Catholic ideology was its understanding of, and relations with, Irish Protestantism. Nineteenth-century Catholics were conscious of the internal divisions within Protestantism and often differentiated between their 'Orange enemies' and their liberal and moderate 'friends.' Despite the clear understanding of the differing opinions within Irish Protestantism, Wyse argued that 'many of the most earnest [Protestant] supporters of our cause were often, with very little inquiry, heedlessly included in the sweeping denunciations…during the course of the annual debates of the [Catholic] Association.'[29] While liberal Protestants tended to view their part in the campaign for Catholic liberty as an integral one, it is clear from these allusions that the Catholics very much felt themselves to be the central and the most essential element in their campaign for emancipation. This is noteworthy as it was a relatively new development. The campaign of the Catholic Association, coupled with the election highs in Waterford in 1826 and Clare in 1828, created a new political confidence

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[28] James Kelly, 'The genesis of "Protestant Ascendancy": the Rightboy disturbances of the 1780s and their impact upon Protestant opinion', in *Parliament, politics and people: essays in eighteenth-century Irish history* (Dublin, 1989), p. 125.
[29] Thomas Wyse, *Historical sketch of the late Catholic Association of Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1829), ii, p. 4.

based on the assumption that the Catholic majority could displace Irish Protestants from their dominant social and economic role.[30]

Despite liberal Protestant support for Catholic liberties, the Catholic perspective of history meant that Irish Protestants were always divided from them in certain key respects. As Catholic confidence grew towards the end of the 1820s, the Catholics began to play down the support given by Protestants to the emancipation campaign. Liberal Protestants were beginning to be described in a way which illustrated the Catholics' ultimate dislike and distrust of the Protestant view of society and politics. With reference again to his speech at the 1827 Munster Catholic meeting, Wyse contended that the 'real traitor' to the British constitution was he who would subvert its laws, unambiguously declaring that traitors could have been Protestant or Puritan as well as Catholic. Without explicitly juxtaposing Catholic and Protestant loyalties, Wyse alluded to the Catholic belief that Protestant disloyalties could undermine the constitution to as great an extent as those of Catholics. This concept was one that appealed strongly to the less affluent Catholic population outside the middle and upper classes, and this fact points to an undercurrent of hostility to Irish Protestants, ever-present within the mass of Catholic opinion. As the tone of liberal Catholic works became more confident in the 1820s, attacks on the intolerant and regressive nature of certain Irish Protestants were made with a view to contrasting it with Catholic liberalism and loyalty to the crown and government. Irish Catholics, they argued, were in fact *more* loyal than Irish Protestants. As Thomas Wyse stated in his *Political catechism*

> the Catholic labours under grievances which the Protestant does not; he has, therefore, a greater anxiety to get rid of them….A Catholic is, therefore, more interested at the present moment in the enjoyment of this great right [freedom under the British constitution] than a Protestant.[31]

In his consideration of the anti-Catholic Brunswick clubs, which were established all over Ireland in the late-1820s by conservative Protestants fearing a diminution of their ascendancy, Wyse was at pains at point out their reactionary and unconstitutional nature, going as far as to call them 'foes to the House of Brunswick.'[32] This was contrasted to the Catholic Association, 'a mere moral engine' which sought 'a real and permanent union with England, and an enlargement of the constitution.'[33]

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[30] Eugene Broderick, 'Waterford's Anglicans: religion and politics, 1819-72' (Ph. D. thesis, University College Cork, 2000), p. 192.
[31] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 52.
[32] Wyse, *Political catechism*, p. 115.

With this more assertive and confident tone appeared the argument for the central importance of Catholics in the Irish 'nation.' Not only were Irish Catholics by far the most numerous group in Ireland, they also possessed a large portion of the commercial wealth of the country. Thomas Wyse mentioned that by the early nineteenth century, the Catholic middle classes were the chief element in commerce, and that they were gaining greater educational attainment at all levels of society. This was a concept that became central to ideas of Catholic nationalism in the 1830s and 1840s, but here marks a distinct development from earlier works. Early works by liberal Catholics expressed objections to appeals to the multitude, and this mirrored the belief of Irish liberal Protestants to a significant degree. The early development of Catholic liberalism, despite its rousing rhetoric, tended to avoid invoking ideas of direct representation and the democratisation of the masses. This was to a degree part of the tendency of avoiding the evocation of Protestant fears, and is revealed by the use of conciliatory language such as that used by Denys Scully in 1812

> We know the benignity of nature, the generous and enlightened feelings, which belong to our estimable fellow-countrymen....We impute to them no innate hostility....We complain only of the injustice and oppression which those intolerant laws continually create and prolong.[34]

As the argument for the significance of Catholics in Irish society took root, their numerical superiority became a useful weapon in the campaign for civil equality. It was clear to Wyse and other liberal Catholics by the late-1820s, that through gaining mass support for their objectives, they could pressure the government into considering their grievances. This idea was first manifested with huge success in 1824 by O'Connell's Catholic Rent campaign, when the potency of mass support for Catholic emancipation was harnessed through the collection of 'a penny a month' subscriptions. This weapon was applied further by Richard Lalor Sheil in his schemes for a denominational census and simultaneous parish meetings.[35] This would illustrate the huge numerical superiority of Catholics, while highlighting the staggering strength of their support for Catholic emancipation. Additionally, Thomas Wyse's plan for the Liberal Clubs, aimed at creating a nationwide network of representative parochial clubs which would offer the Catholics a forum for their grievances, while nurturing and extending the political consciousness created by the Catholic Association campaign for emancipation, built on this. These ideas stemmed from the perceived necessity 'to compress, concentrate and to direct' the force of public opinion, which would lead to 'a more complete organisation of the Catholics.' Wyse reasoned that 'no grievance was ever yet redressed by silence and tranquillity. To be attended to, men must complain; and complaint must, of necessity, produce agitation.'[36] In the 1820s, the liberal Catholic perspective of history was utilised for inflaming the Catholic passions on a much broader scale than earlier anticipated. This approach, coupled with burgeoning Catholic confidence and self-assurance, enhanced a developing sense of an exclusive historical identity that was based fundamentally on their Catholicism.

Irish liberal Catholicism was something of a unique force in nineteenth century Europe. As Duvergier de Hauranne remarked in 1826: 'Catholicity and Protestantism in this country seem altogether to have changed sides; the latter is dogmatical and intolerant, the former has suddenly become almost philosophical.'[37] Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the leading opposition to European liberalism came from the Catholic Church.[38] Early liberalism throughout Europe was viewed by the papal see as a novel and even revolutionary force. The belief that man was born good, that his progress was inevitable, and that through progress both individuals and society could attain perfection on earth, was fundamentally contrary to the Catholic Church's teachings on original sin, on salvation through Christ, and on the sovereignty of God over earth and heaven.[39] In Ireland, the historical and political position of Irish Catholics within the state made the reconciling of liberalism and Catholicism somewhat more straightforward. In the political sphere, the liberal argument for free institutions that would recognise the needs of all, and would work towards the freedom and happiness of the greatest number, suited them perfectly. Spiritually, they could argue that their politics sprang from the Christian belief that all men should be treated equally, and that all men should use their God-given faculties to the best of their ability.

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[33] Wyse, *Political catechism*, pp 109-13.

[34] Denys Scully, *A statement of the penal laws, which aggrieve the Catholics of Ireland; with commentaries* (London, 1812), pp. 61-2.

[35] McCullough, *Memoirs of...Richard Lalor Sheil*, i, p. 248.

[36] O'Ferrall, 'The growth of political consciousness in Ireland, 1823-47', p. 386.

[37] Duvergier de Hauranne, *Letters on the state of Ireland* (1826), quoted in Wyse, *Historical sketch*, ii, lx.

[38] Irene Collins, *Liberalism in nineteenth-century Europe* (London, 1957), p. 14.

[39] Collins, *Liberalism*, p. 15.

Nowlan has recognised Irish liberal Catholicism as paralleling a new Catholic liberalism which became prevalent in Germany, France and Italy in the nineteenth century; one in which men like Lamennais, Ventura and Montalembert attempted to reconcile liberalism with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.[40] Although it is true that the liberalism of continental Europe provided a significant support to Irish liberal Catholicism, with both Lamartine and Ventura revealing deep attachments to O'Connell, the roots of liberal ideology in Ireland were divergent from those of the continent in important ways.[41] While the liberalism of nineteenth-century France and Italy was linked strongly into the rise of romanticism and the advent of nationalism, Irish liberal Catholicism at this stage had much stronger links to liberal Protestantism and the British Whig tradition. Thomas Wyse's main argument in the *Political catechism* was for the full freedom of British citizens. The nucleus of his ideology revealed a strong attachment to British Whig principles, and this was reflected in his denunciation of O'Connell's campaign for repeal of the union throughout the 1830s.[42]

The Irish liberal Catholicism of the early-nineteenth century was part of a much longer Catholic tradition dating back to the 1750s, but it had also incorporated essential tenets of British Whiggery. This ideology was one that provided the impetus for a unity of Catholics during the emancipation campaign. After 1830 Irish liberalism was checked by its association with nationalism. After emancipation, liberal Catholics began to diverge in their opinions. One loose group, including Thomas Wyse, used their 'liberalism' as the basis for their political ideology, while another group, whose unequivocal leader was Daniel O'Connell, tended to focus more on their Catholicism as a basis for their identity, and later their nationalism. The *Political catechism* was written at the end of one era of Catholic politics and the beginning of another, and as such represents a watershed in nineteenth-century Catholic ideology.

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[40] Kevin Nowlan, 'The meaning of repeal in Irish history', in GA Hayes-McCoy (ed.), *Historical Studies IV* (London, 1963), p. 9.

[41] Nowlan, 'The meaning of repeal in Irish history', p. 10.

[42] For example, Wyse refused to take O'Connell's repeal pledge during the 1832 general election and consequently lost his seat until 1835, see *Waterford Mirror*, 10 November 1832; *Waterford Chronicle*, 1 & 22 December 1832.

Community building in West German refugee camps 1945-1960

Meryn McLaren

Over the decades since the end of World War Two, many articles, local studies and books, both popular and academic, have been written about the expulsion of the Germans from east of the Oder-Neiße Line and their integration into German society.[1] The subject hit the headlines in Germany in 2005 and 2006 with the controversy surrounding the *Zentrum gegen Vertreibung*,[2] and in February 2007, ARD aired a much publicised two-part television drama, *Die Flucht*, following a mother's flight westwards in 1945.[3] The subject of the refugee camps, in which thousands of refugees and expellees had to stay for varying periods of time following their arrival in the west, has been deeply neglected and has attracted little interest other than a handful of regional studies.[4]

The prevailing narrative of the Federal Republic of Germany's early years is one of the success stories of the post-war reconstruction, recovery and expellee integration. Echoing many other historians, Bark and Gress write of the 'solving' of the refugee problem by the late 1950s, that 'this was perhaps the single most difficult and impressive feat of reconstruction, not only in the material, but in the human and psychological sense.'[5] The reconstruction process was by no means so quick for all refugees and expellees. The significance of the refugee camp topic to getting a balanced picture and better understanding of the social dynamics in 1950s Federal Republic can clearly be seen, when one considers that in 1955 – a full ten years after the end of the second world war and at a time when the Federal Republic was said to be feeling the force of the 'economic miracle' – there were still 371,440 German refugees living in camps and temporary accommodation.[6] Up to now there has been no comprehensive – or even comparative – research carried out focusing on the phenomenon of the German post-war refugee camp. This article, thus, attempts to redress the balance, looking at the development of community feeling within a selection of camps for expellees and refugees from the Soviet Occupation Zone in Bavaria, and Lower Saxony.

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[1] For an idea of the extent of this literature, see, for example, Gertrud Krallert-Sattler, 'Kommentierte Auswahlbibliographie zur neuzeitlichen Geschichte des Ost- und Südostdeutschtums bis zum Zusammenbruch 1944/45 und zum Vertriebenen- und Flüchtlingsproblem in West- und Mitteldeutschland 1987-1994/95' in Wilfried Schlau (ed.): *Die Ostdeutschen. Eine dokumentarische Bilanz 1945-1995* (Munich, 1996) pp.183-279 and Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *Flüchtlinge, Vertriebene und Aussiedler in Nidersachsen: Eine annotierte Bibliographie* (Osnabrück, 1986).

[2] Cf. 'Es wird keine Umdeutung der Geschichte geben', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 16 March 2007; 'Umstrittene "Vertriebene Ausstellung": Heimweh, das ich meine' *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 11 August 2006; 'Kaczynski fordert Planungsstopp für „Zentrum gegen Vertreibung"', *Frankfurter Allgemeiner Zeitung*, 26 October 2005.

[3] http://www.daserste.de/dieflucht/.

[4] Mathias Beer, 'Lager als Lebensform in der deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaft: Zur Neubewertung der Funktion der Flüchtlingswohnlager im Eingliederungsprozeß' in Jan Motte, Rainer Ohliger, Anne von Oswald (eds.) *50 Jahre Bundesrepublik, 50 Jahre Einwanderung: Nachkriegsgeschichte als Migrationsgeschichte* (Frankfurt/Main, 1999), pp. 56-75; Mathias Beer, 'Ich möchte die Zeit nicht missen: Flüchtlingslager nach 1945 als totale Institutionen?', *Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen*, 29, (2000), H.3 pp. 186-193; Uwe Carstens, *Die Flüchtlingslager der Stadt Kiel: Sammelunterkünfte als desintegrierender Faktor der Flüchtlingspolitik*, (Marburg, 1992); Helmut Grieser, *Die ausgebliebebene Radikalisierung: zur Sozialgeschichte der Kieler Flüchtlingslager im Spannungsfeld von sozialdemokratischer Landespolitik und Stadtverwaltung 1945 – 1950* (Wiesbaden, 1980); Dagmar Kleineke, *Entstehung und Entwicklung des Lagers Friedland 1945-1955* (Dramfeld, 1994).

Before the boundary changes of the Potsdam Agreement of August 1945, Germany stretched much further east than it does today and up to 1937 included the so-called 'German Eastern Territories' of Silesia, Pomerania East Brandenburg and East Prussia, where just under 9,600,000 Germans lived.[7] Many east and south-east European countries, including Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and parts of the Soviet Union were also home to an ethnic German minority. Altogether there were around fifteen million *Reichsdeutsche* (German nationals) and ethnic Germans in eastern Europe in 1939. From August 1944, as the Red Army advanced through Poland, thousands of Germans began to flee their homes westwards, fearful of the stories circulating of Russian rapes and violence.[8] In early 1945, *Reichsdeutsche* began to be driven from their homes by the Poles and Czechs in the first unofficial and chaotic expulsions. At the end of the war, the Potsdam Conference culminated in the Potsdam Agreement signed by America, France and Britain in August 1945, redrawing Germany's eastern borders along the Oder-Neisse River and ordering the Germans still living in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to

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[5] Dennis L. Bark and Davis R. Gress, *A History of West Germany I – From Shadow to Substance 1945-1963*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), p. 15.

[6] Statistisches Bundesamt, *Die Kriegsbedingten Lager und ihren Insassen im Jahre 1955. Statistik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Band 167* (Wiesbaden, 1957), p. 5.

[7] Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, *Tatsachen zum Problem der deutschen Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge* (Bonn, 1956), p. 1.

[8] Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, Vol. II (Oxford, 1981), pp. 480-3.

be removed into within Germany's new borders 'in an orderly and humane manner.'[9] Around fourteen million people embarked upon the journey westwards, mostly by foot or goods train, and by 1955 West Germany had absorbed nearly nine million refugees and expellees, representing close to a quarter of its 1939 population.[10] The first port of call for most refugees, once they had reached West Germany, was a reception or transit camp, where they were fed, medically examined, registered, and sent on to their final destination. For many of the refugees, an immediate move into a room in a house or flat was impossible. In West Germany over 2,202,000 dwellings were destroyed during the war and by 1946 27.5 percent of the 1939 housing stock no longer existed.[11] Many Germans were reduced to living in bombed out houses and cellars and it was a huge enough task for the authorities to find sufficient accommodation for the locals, let alone the streams of newcomers arriving. Therefore, emergency accommodation needed to be found for the refugees and expellees, and those not lucky enough to be quickly allocated rooms in private lodging, had to make do with stays of varying lengths in schools, dance halls, gymnasiums, former forced labour and Prisoner of War (POW) camps, and *Wehrmacht* training camps. This situation was intensified when refugees also started arriving from the Soviet Zone of Germany. The majority of refugees were able to be found private accommodation within a few weeks, but a significant minority of German refugees faced far longer spells in refugee camps. The reality of this housing crisis was reflected by the gradual changing status of a number of camps from 'reception camp' or plain refugee camp to *Wohnungslager*, meaning 'housing camp.'[12]

The majority of the few books and articles on the German refugee problem that mention the refugee camps tend to focus primarily on their deprived material conditions – the wooden huts that were too hot in summer, but freezing and not weather-proof in winter, the large rooms that had to accommodate dozens of families, the use of sacks filled with straw for bedding, dreadful and/or inadequate food and so forth.[13] Some of the refugee camps were not inviting places but there was also another side to camp life, where as time went on, life went on and people made the best of the situation they found themselves in. Fasching and May Day celebrations were held, children went to school, and in some camps even public houses were later established, offering a place to relax and socialise. Refugee camps were also the places of births, deaths, Christenings, conformations and wedding celebrations.

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[9] Article XII of the Potsdam Treaty, Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents from Germany Under Occupation: 1945 – 1954*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 49-50.

[10] Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, *Tatsachen*, Tafel 1,Tafel 9.

[11] Sylvia Schraut, 'Make the Germans do it': The Refugee Problem in the American Zone of Post-war Germany' in *Forced Migration in Central and Eastern Europe, 1939-1950*, p. 116.

[12] This can be seen in amendments made to list of refugee camps, Verzeichnis für Durchgangs- und Wohnungslager, HstaA Hann Nds. 120 Hann 40/78 Nr. 49.

The theme of the growth of community in camp situations has already been touched upon by a few academics. As part of a project that culminated in a museum exhibition, Beer in 1999 and 2000 wrote of the community life that developed in Camp Schlotwiese in Baden Württemberg.[14] In a slightly different context, Stibbe wrote about the internment camp Ruhleben during the First World War, wherein he detailed the rich cultural and social life that grew up there.[15] Research into refugee camps in Lower Saxony, North Rhine Westphalia and Bavaria broadly reflects the findings in these previous studies into individual camps, to the extent that the majority of former camp residents questioned by the author believed that there was a sense of community that built up in the refugee camps in which they lived. This was by no means a universal opinion and there were variations in experience, not only between different camps, but also within the same camps. Therefore, the significant question here is what different things affected the ability for camp communities to form and camp residents to feel part of these communities?

The extent to which community feeling could be felt and a community was able to develop in West German refugee camps was dependent on a number of factors, some of which were personal to the refugees' particular situation and others were more based on the location, geography and situation of the camps themselves.

The personal situations of the refugees revealed themselves to be important in influencing how residents experienced their time in refugee camps. Free of the worries and responsibilities that plagued the adults, despite the hunger and bleak material conditions, many children, for example, found this period to be one of great freedom and adventure, with plenty of playmates to share it with. Herr M, who spent eleven years in a refugee camp based in the IG Farben factory in Bavaria, wrote

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[13] Cf. Carstens, *Die Flüchtlingslager*; Grieser, *Radikalisierung*.
[14] Beer, 'Lager als Lebensform'; Beer, 'Ich möchte die Zeit nicht missen'.
[15] Matthew Stibbe, *British Civilian Prisoners of War in Germany, 1914-1918* (Manchester, forthcoming, 2008).

> I think back to this time with very happy memories for the following reasons. Family bonds were very tight, as you had to get along with one another in a very confined space. As children, we had many opportunities to play, thanks to the IG Farben Factory, for example large playgrounds and play-areas, a sports ground and football pitches, bunkers, a swimming pool and the Bavarian forests.[16]

Similarly, Frau S wrote

> The camp kindergarten was like our second home. The crèche was not only a place for child-minding, but also socially and culturally an experience. Us children were protected just as if we were in a village community.[17]

Frau G, living in Camp Poxdorf, remembered, 'us children found it great fun, we ran around the barracks and in the forest, we could move freely. The camp became our playground for three years.'[18]

Seventeen young, single, male workers living in refugee camps in the Ruhr responding in a 1951 survey collected by the Dortmunder Sozialforschungstelle also found advantages in camp life. They particularly valued the opportunities to meet people. As one of the respondents stated, 'for single miners, the camp is really ideal, because we can always congregate with the young people and we have more diversions here.'[19] In contrast, Herr G, a 28 year-old returned prisoner of war who spent two years in Dachau refugee camp, found work outside the camp, but did not live with his colleagues, so was very detached from the camp, regarding it only as 'emergency accommodation.'[20] Those who were children at the time also acknowledged that the older children and adults found camp life and especially the lack of privacy more of a trial. But even here, in many cases it is still a matter of degrees, as adults too experienced the spirit of togetherness and community spirit that existed in the camps. Herr M wrote 'the adults stuck very close together, offered each other help, and improvised games with us children.'[21]

Regarded by some to be a private matter, religion has nonetheless been noted by many people to have been an important binding factor in the refugee camps. In camps with a church barrack, it was a regular meeting place, offering both comfort in the bad times and a way of feeling closer to home by singing hymns from the East

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[16] Herr M, survey response, June 2006.
[17] Frau S, survey response, June 2006.
[18] Magdalena Geißler, *Erinnerungen* (unpublished memoirs, Baiersdorf/Hagenau, 1996), p. 1.
[19] Bernd Parisius, 'Arbeiter zwischen Resignation und Integration. Auf den Spuren der Soziologie der fünfziger Jahre' In Lutz Niethammer, (ed.) *Hinterher merkt man, dass es richtig war, dass es schiefgegangen ist* (Berlin/Bonn, 1983), pp. 152-3.
[20] Herr G, survey reponse, June 2006.
[21] Herr M, survey reponse, June 2006.

German dioceses, as well as representing togetherness and the return of some sort of normal life. Although denominational differences, where many Protestant refugees came to settle in Catholic areas and vice versa, was a common cause of tension between refugees and locals, it did not appear to be a major problem in the refugee camps. Indeed, in Camp Schafhof in Nuremberg, on Sundays alternating Protestant and Catholic services were held throughout the mornings.[22] Refugees of a minority denomination in a particular camp obviously would not have found religion to contribute particularly to community feeling in the way that followers of the majority denomination would have.

As the refugee camps became longer term, an increasing number of facilities sprang up, from schools and crèches, to 'community' and church rooms, as well as, occasionally small shops. These facilities were not only important in creating an almost village-like appearance in some of the camps, but they helped foster social networks and in some cases offered the residents employment opportunities. Camp Poxdorf in Bavaria, for example, grew from modest beginnings as a barrack camp on the site of a former Luftwaffe spare parts storage area in 1946 to the town district of Hagenau, celebrating its sixtieth anniversary last year. During the transformation from the wooden huts to a proper refugee housing settlement, which was begun in 1950, Poxdorf acquired numerous facilities, including a kindergarten, a camp school, church, hospital and old people's home.[23] Frau G has many happy memories in particular of the school, her classmates and first teacher there.[24] Camp Poxdorf was also the venue for masked balls. Great inventiveness was used by the residents in constructing their costumes at a time when it was difficult to get hold of materials and the ball became the highlight of the social calendar, not only for the camp residents themselves, but also for expellees living outside the camp and even for locals. Importantly, numerous expellee businesses also opened in Camp Poxdorf.[25] Alongside the early small businesses, which thrived until the currency reform in 1948, the Fränkische Wäscherei factory moved to Camp Poxdorf from its old site in Erlangen in 1950. As the Landsrat commented in July 1950, this made a huge difference

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[22] Interview with Herr J, April 2007.

[23] Staatsarchiv Bamberg (StABa) K3.1975 Nr.657; K3.1975 Nr. 658.

[24] Frau G, survey response, 2006, interview April 2007.

[25] Frieda Mayer, *Ortsteil Hagenau: Chronik* (unpublished manuscript).

> The Fränkischer Wäscherei und Appreturanstalt GmbH has started work in its newly-built premises in Camp Poxdorf and is now fully employed, with the result that in the housing-settlement camp Poxdorf there are now hardly any able-bodied unemployed residents.[26]

By enabling most of its residents to get back into employment in a difficult economic environment, this development in Camp Poxdorf also created a more favourable condition for community feeling to develop, as fewer residents were locked in unemployment-related lethargy and depression.

Many larger camps offered some sort of community room for recreation. Herr L wrote of the community room in Camp Georgensgmünd where the young people could play table tennis and on occasion performed sketches they wrote themselves. The camp residents also used the room for singing and dancing.[27] In Camp Schafhof in Nuremberg, a former agricultural college, dance evenings, cultural events, as well as the annual Christmas party, were held in the 'big room.'[28] The type of camp and the position the refugee had in it was also a determining factor for the possibility of community building. In contrast to *Wohnlager* like Camp Poxdorf/Hagenau, Camp Friedland in Lower Saxony was a Transit Camp and so the vast majority of refugees passing through stayed only twenty-four hours, and few stayed longer than five days, therefore those residents had no time to establish community.[29] Certain groups in Friedland did stay for longer, such as the young men in the 'Youth Camp' section of Friedland (for unaccompanied boys between 15 and 18 years-old), and a group of expellees from Poland who arrived in the camp in 1949.[30] Camp staff – among them refugees – were another group of longer term residents there, and they were provided with relaxation and entertainment opportunities for their free time. The camp directives for staff mention a lounge, a book borrowing service, that the staff had a piano and radio at their disposal, and regular staff dance evenings, as well as informing the readers about local sports events involving the camp sports teams.[31] Dr. K, who worked in the camp for six months as a 16 year-old refugee from the Warteland, describes Camp Friedland as having had a 'professional, loose' camp community and did not build up any real friendships whilst there, but attributes this to the age difference: 'my colleagues were five to ten years older than me. They were mostly former soldiers whose homes were in East Germany.'[32]

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[26] Monatsbericht Juli 1950. StABa K9 9014.

[27] Herr L, survey response, June 2006.

[28] Letter from Nuremberg councillor to the Office for Refugee Matters, Government of Mid Franconia, 16 October 1956, Hauptstaatsarchiv Nürnberg, Reg. v. Mfr., Abgabe 1978, Nr. 19802; Herr J, interview, April 2007.

[29] Kleineke, *Friedland*, pp. 32, 149.

[30] Kleineke, *ibid.* p. 149.

[31] HStA Hannover Nds. 386, Acc. 16/83, 7, pp. 42, 63, 72, 101.

Although the camp facilities appear to have been invaluable in creating an environment in which a community could grow and thrive – schools and community huts and rooms providing the opportunities for the residents to meet and get to know one another, as well as centre points for Fasching, May Day and Christmas celebrations, most of the former residents interviewed by the author felt that camp facilities were on the sidelines of significance compared to the actual people living in the camp, and a camp having many residents from the same or nearby regions, or being of the same religion, was the real key to community feeling. Herr K, for example, remembers the East German camp he was in as having much more community feeling than the Youth Camp in Friedland

> Even if at home some people did not get on, the shared experience was still something that brought people together. In the Youth Camp community feeling was restricted to the momentary situation and was superficial.[33]

It was also the cohesion that grew out of having had the same experiences, being in the same boat. It is maybe for this reason that few of the former camp residents see the camp community as being distinct from that of the expellees who were living in private accommodation. This is certainly the impression one gets from Herr L, who lived at camps Georgensgmünd and Schwabach, and wrote

> one had the same experiences as those outside the camp, only with the difference that everything was more intensive and immediate. You got to know people more in depth, but at the end of the day, a bastard is a bastard and a gentleman is a gentleman, whether inside or outside a refugee camp.[34]

How were the refugee camp residents viewed by the locals and 'mainstream' society and the press? Contemporary studies and reports, such as those written by welfare organisations, reveal a very dreary picture, where emphasis was frequently placed on the depressing state of the camp and the lethargy and listlessness of their residents, who had given up all hope of finding proper accommodation and lacked the will or energy to enter employment. For example, Feuser, General Secretary of the *Christlicher Verein für Junge Mädels* (the German YWCA) *Heimatloser Lagerdienst*, wrote in a 1952 report, 'the world of the huts takes all hope away from people, as well

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[32] Dr. K. survey reponse. July 2007.
[33] Herr K. survey response. July 2007.
[34] Herr L. survey response. June 2006.

as the belief that life can still have a special meaning for them.'[35] Refugee camps were also singled out as crime hotspots, where the black market blossomed. Concerns were expressed on the moral and psychological harm that a camp upbringing must be having on the children there.[36] In contrast, whilst concerned for a quick dissolution of the refugee camps under their control, local government officials only rarely passed comment on the moral state of the camps.

The stance of contemporary newspapers towards refugee camps was decidedly ambiguous. The story of the refugee camps as written by newspapers vacillated between feel-good articles about children's Christmas parties (usually prompted by local government press releases) and reports focusing on the dependency culture in camps and calling for their closure.[37] For example, the *Hannoverische Presse* wrote of Camp Hulsen in 1949

> There are cases in which the habits formed through living in the camp have deadened the will to live. They act similarly upon job-seeking. There have been instances where someone, after years of unemployment, has the opportunity to get work, but faced with this possibility of being engaged in normal life, suddenly shrinks away from it. This is the effect of the camp environment, with its deadening uniformity of destitution that can become normalicy.[38]

But in contrast, the journalist remarks later in the article "one can enter one of the ordinary one-room barrack flats and forget in an instant that one is in a camp at all, everything looks so clean and tidy!"[39]

Frau A wrote that the 'barrack people,' as she termed them, were seen as 'inferior creatures' and so avoided writing her address whilst at secretary college, as she wanted to avoid it being known that she lived in Camp Schafhof.[40] Most of the fifty former residents, questioned by the author in 2006 and 2007 do not feel that their living in a camp had much baring on the treatment and attitudes towards them show by locals. Relations were tough at first, wherever the refugee was living. So, despite the fears shown in some of the media and official reports, singling out the camp refugees as being particularly endangered and potentially more difficult to integrate, in the issue of refugee-local relations and their integration into West German life, refugee camp residents seem to associate their experience with locals and integration with that of the refugee community as a whole, rather than see it as something possibly mitigated by their living in a refugee camp.

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[35] Heimatlosen-Lagerdienst CVJM/YMCA, Generalsekretariat Günther Feuser: Bericht über die Entwicklung des Dienstes seit dem 1.10.1951, HStA Düsseldorf, NW-67, Nr. 1258 Bd I, 31 May 1952.
[36] K. Valentin Müller, *Heimatvertriebene Jugend. Eine soziologische Studie zum Problem der Sozialtüchtigkeit des Nachwuches der heimatvertriebenen Bevölkerung* (Kitzingen/Main, 1953), pp. 146, 156.
[37] For example, Presseinformation, Nds. 120 Hannover, Acc. 40/78, Nr.12, 21 December 1953.
[38] 'Hier halten wir es nicht mehr aus' *Hannoversche Presse*, 17 November 1949.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Frau A. survey response, June 2006.

In conclusion, whilst acknowledging that life in the refugee camps could be tough, unpleasant and depressing, many refugees and expellees used community spirit and the cohesion that developed between residents as a coping mechanism to help bring them through the difficult times. The extent to which this 'coping mechanism' was available depended very much on the individual; those refugees who arrived alone and were faced with a camp full of people from regions different to their own found it comparatively difficult to form bonds in the camp, and children tended to adapt more easily into this environment than the adults. Whilst the location of the camp and the recreation and employment opportunities undoubtedly had a part to play, for the refugees that experienced this community spirit saw the people in the camp as being key to community development. Reports written by media of the time and welfare organisations, did not, on the whole, acknowledge these camp communities, seeing the camps' continued existence much more as a 'threat' to the *Ordnung* of the new Federal Republic of Germany, although newspapers occasionally printed nostalgic reports detailing a camp's facilities when it was due to be closed. Despite negative press coverage and the well-publicised fears of the church welfare organisations, most long-term camp residents do not feel that having spent so long in refugee camps had a negative effect on the way they were seen by locals, or stunted their subsequent integration.

Looking at the 'everyday life' aspect of refugee camps is a very fruitful avenue of enquiry, adding balance to the overly bleak picture of camp life that dominates most accounts. Although many of the communities that grew up in the refugee camps were relatively short term and did not out-live the camps – the establishment of permanent communities, such as Hagenau, was the exception rather than the norm - there seems to be no doubt that in many camps a sort of tight cohesion emerged between the residents. Thus, rather than concentrating on the refugees as 'victims,' this approach gives more recognition to their survival instincts, determination to make a new start and make the most of what they had; the silver lining to the post-expulsion cloud that is all too often forgotten.

Crown of Glory or Crown of Thorns: Middle-Class Women in and through Print in Limerick 1830-40[1]

Sarah McNamara

A wife, domestic, good and pure,
Like *snail* should keep within her door;
But not like snail in silver track
Place all her wealth upon *her back*.

A wife should be like echo true;
Not speak, but when she's spoken to;
But not like echo, still be heard,
Contending for the *final* word.

Like a town clock a wife should be,
Keep time and regularity;
But not like clock harangue so clear,
That all the town her voice may hear.[2]

This poem *The Good Wife*, printed in a Limerick newspaper in 1830 is illustrative of the domestic, feminine ideal presented to women in Limerick through its local and wider print culture in the early-nineteenth century. As current scholarship suggests, the prescribed model was a housebound domestic creature, whose primary function was to tend to the physical, emotional and moral needs of her husband and family. She only penetrated the public sphere through her charity work, a natural extension of her private duties at home. This archetype related mainly to the middling section of middle-class women and above, as 'lower class' and lower-middle class women were oftentimes forced to work out of economic necessity, which blurred the otherwise rigidly gendered public and private spheres. In addition, much of the women's didactic literature printed and circulated in Limerick made the assumption that its female audience was comfortably middle class.[3] Attempts were made by societies, charities, Sunday schools as well as clergymen to filter this feminine ideal downwards. More specifically, authors of such literature were inclined to make young middle-class 'ladies' of marriageable age the intended targets of their advice and instruction, however, they also reminded married women of their domestic duties and responsibilities. The ideology of separate spheres and gendered roles was not a recent phenomenon, however, it was redefined and perpetuated primarily by the middle classes, who strove to mould their identity based on domestic values. The ideals of masculinity and femininity were important to the middle-class sense of self and the ideology of separate spheres played a crucial part in the construction of a specifically middle-class culture, separating that class from the classes above and below it.[4] Therefore, it was essential for the middle classes to shape their wives and daughters into desirable domestic models, which would both reflect its identity and reproduce its ideals. Attitudes towards the behaviour and role of women does appear to be a rare common strand between various groups within the middle classes in Limerick, cutting across religious, political and status divides. A detailed analysis of print in early-nineteenth century Limerick identifies a complex reality where middle-class women retained their respectability while engaging in activities contrary to those promoted in the moralistic literature to which they were exposed. The ideals of domesticity and femininity provided the framework for the conduct of middle-class women, however, to understand the experience of these individuals in this way is to challenge the nature of various family relationships as well as their own private experiences.

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[1] I am indebted to the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences for their financial assistance in pursuing this research.
[2] *The Limerick Evening Post and Clare Sentinel*, 8 Jan 1830.
[3] M. Beetham, *A Magazine of her Own: Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London, 1996), p. 7.

The domestic ideal of the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth century was in itself a creation of print and this representation of women in Limerick's print culture was an echo of behavioural codes and norms appropriated to women in the wider print culture. Every aspect of women's lives and activities was under the constant scrutiny of the local newspapers. These borrowed heavily from ladies' periodicals and magazines as well as from didactic literature, in order to instruct women on how to become useful and virtuous ladies, wives and mothers. In her study of women's magazines from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, Margaret Beetham argues that woman was 'the sex' in eighteenth-century terminology, the signifier of natural sexual difference, yet historical women constantly needed to be told how to be feminine.[5] These efforts to promote the 'domestic goddess' betray an anxiety that the prescribed model of womanhood did not represent the reality of lived experience for many middle-class women, and that such didactic literature was 'prescriptive rather than

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[4] C. Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 95-6.
[5] Beetham, *A Magazine of her Own*, p. 24.

descriptive.'[6] Martha Vicinus maintains that if nineteenth-century women were not always the passive, submissive and pure creatures of popular idealisations, neither were they completely free from this stereotype.[7] In the Limerick context, death notices and eulogies in the local newspapers confirm that quite a number of middle class women did adhere (outwardly anyway) to the prescribed model, and they also illustrate how contemporary newspapers defined the lives of middle-class women. A typical example was that of Mrs. Ryan, wife of hat manufacturer, Denis Ryan, Esq., who was described by *The Limerick Herald* in 1831 as a "loving wife, and a tender and affectionate mother. Her charities, which were not very limited, were uniformly applied to the most deserving and needy."[8] These eulogies served to extol exemplars, and to remind middle-class women of their domestic and public duties. Although it was more common to print an extract from instruction literature, editors also inserted their own opinions of appropriate behaviour for middle-class women. When a number of women organised a charity bazaar in Limerick, *The Limerick Herald* lauded such public virtue and perceived it to be as much a benefit to the ladies planning the event as the proceeds would be to the poor. It stated

> we think that such things ought to be held two or three times a year, in order to give our young ladies more frequent opportunity of exercising their skill and ingenuity in the most pleasing and profitable employment – that of benefiting the poor.[9]

That the emphasis was placed on occupying the time of 'young ladies' serves to illustrate the concern over unmarried, thus idle middle-class women. These women did not yet have husbands and families to preoccupy their time, so fears of uncensored and inappropriate conduct stemming from idleness prompted contemporaries to suggest 'respectable' and 'useful' pursuits. Although the prescribed model was firmly in place by the 1830s, women were still being told and shown how to embody this ideal, which suggests that a significant number were failing to meet such expectations. Ellen, daughter of Limerick Catholic merchant, Patrick O'Callaghan received a present of *The Young Lady's Book* in 1839, which she describes as "a miniature almanach…an exquis little article."[10] First printed in 1829, it enjoyed successive reprints due to its immense popularity with Irish and English middle-class women. *The Young Lady's Book* set out a challenging moral and behavioural inventory for middle-class women: "Piety, integrity, fortitude, charity, obedience, consideration, sincerity, prudence, activity, and, cheerfulness…define those moral properties called for in the daily conduct and habitual deportment of young ladies."[11] It is difficult to imagine how middle-class women were expected to adopt these virtues effortlessly and accept them uncritically, and it is equally difficult to ascertain how women read and responded to such demands and expectations. Some evidence, at least, suggests that they found them restrictive. In her diary, Ellen protested against the tight social constraints placed on her by her father, and complained of boredom as well as the imposition of a strict daily routine, moaning that "it is very annoying to be kept waiting for two hours nearly for breakfast, between dressing, resting and taking spa. I am sure we are made losers of a great part of the day."[12]

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[6] A. Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History' in *The Historical Journal*, 36, No. 2, (1993), pp. 383-4.
[7] M. Vicinus (ed.), *A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (Bloomington, 1977) p. xix.
[8] *The Limerick Herald*, 1 August 1831.
[9] *Limerick Herald*, December 15 1831.
[10] Gonzalez, 'Women in Bloom' p. 64.

In Limerick, and indeed throughout Ireland, clear divisions were made between the modes of education and upbringing of middle-class males and females, which served to reinforce separate roles and identities from an early age. Advertisements for private female academies as well as for female poor schools illustrate the contemporary attitude that women were born with the propensity for virtue and integrity; however, these could only be realised and mature through a moral and religious education. An advertisement in 1833 for a charity sermon in aid of the St. Clare Nunnery Free School in Limerick announced that

> The education of women should be particularly attended to – the welfare and happiness of society are intimately connected with and mainly dependant on, their instruction; to them principally is intrusted the domestic arrangement of families and the care of children at that early age when the mind like soft wax easily receives every impression. An uninstructed female is neither capable of instructing others, or of fully appreciating the blessings of an instructed mind. The evils of society from her ignorance are incalculable; she communicates her own impressions to her youthful charge; bad habits are thus formed, which are with difficulty removed, and, perhaps, never completely eradicated.[13]

Although this school catered for poor females, the same principles and attitudes prevailed more so in relation to the education of middle-class women. Referring to the education received by the 'lower orders' of women at the newly established Sisters of Mercy Convent in Limerick, *The Limerick Reporter* held that "much should not be expected from poor females."[14] There was greater pressure on middle-class women since their upbringing, education and material advantages in life demanded more circumscribed codes of conduct. The education of young ladies was primarily aimed at producing good wives and mothers, and as such, religious and moral instruction was integral to their education. Throughout the 1830s, the *Lady's Museum*, a popular ladies' periodical, which was frequently quoted in the Limerick newspapers openly articulated the argument that intellectual activity was incompatible with women's moral role.[15] Most of the private female academies in Limerick, like their counterparts elsewhere only extended their curricula beyond the rudimentary academic subjects of English, Arithmetic, history, geography and languages to instruct young ladies in needlework, music, singing and dancing. One female boarding and day school in Limerick advertised that in order to improve the accents of young ladies "the servants more immediately about their persons shall be either English or French."[16] There was such an emphasis placed on the cultivation of ornamental arts in women's education that in 1826 the author of a Dublin publication, *The Complete Governess*, lamented that

> The education of females is, in most instances, an education of mere externals and of show – that the fingers, the ears, the tongue, and the feet are schooled in all those little arts and elegancies, that are calculated for momentary and external effect, but that the mind of the young lady, upon whom the most fashionable and expensive education has been bestowed, is left in nearly the same state of ignorance as that of her whose external education is limited to the business of housewifery and the drudgery of domestic life.[17]

Contemporary print, in both local and wider contexts, confirms that the women of the middle and upper-middle classes were not expected to work outside the home and although women's education was regarded as inferior to that of their male counterparts, with *The Limerick Reporter* describing it as an "unfortunate style of education", it must have been regarded by the majority as adequately fitting for the purpose.[18] Furthermore, Catherine Hall maintains that idle wives and daughters reflected the success of middle-class husbands and fathers.[19] Despite this, there were middle-class women in provincial urban Ireland who did not disappear into the

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[11] *The Young Lady's Book: A Manual of Elegant Recreations, Exercises and Pursuits* (London, 1829), no author given, p. 24.
[12] Gonzalez, 'Women in Bloom', p. 53.
[13] *The Limerick Evening Herald*, 28 February 1833.

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[14] *The Limerick Reporter*, 1 November 1839.
[15] Beetham, *A Magazine of her Own*, p. 29.
[16] *The Limerick Chronicle*, 27 August 1833.
[17] *The Complete Governess: A Course of Mental Instruction of Ladies; With a Notice of the Principal Female Accomplishments intended to Facilitate the Business of Public Establishments, and Abridge the Labour of Private Education*, (no author given) (London and Dublin, 1826), p. 2
[18] *The Limerick Reporter*, 19 July 1839.
[19] Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class*, p. 63.

domestic abyss when they married. Mary Canter, wife of printer Richard Palmer Canter, was a successful printer and bookseller in her own right from at least 1838 to 1846, independent of her husband and son who ran their own respective printing firms.[20] On the death of her husband, George Unthank, a £50 freeholder, Marianne Unthank trained as a midwife at the Lying-In Hospital in Great Britain Street in Dublin and afterwards set up a practice in George's St. in Limerick.[21] It is difficult to ascertain whether economic considerations or an aversion to domestic confinement motivated these women to work, however, they illustrate that the ideals of domesticity did not deter or impede them in any significant way. It is possible that their participation in business demoted them in terms of social status. More often than not, a woman carried on a business after her husband's death until the eldest son came of age, however, this still necessitated these wives to have an in-depth knowledge and some involvement in the quotidian affairs of their husbands business to be able to pass it on intact. In his will, wealthy merchant John Unthank appointed his wife Mary one of the executors, and directed that she and their eldest son should continue his trade and business after his decease.[22] An analysis of wills made by merchants, tradesmen and gentlemen in Limerick reveals that a significant number appointed their wives as the sole executors of their property, and these women would consequently have managed bank accounts, shares in insurance companies and real estate portfolios.

Much of the freedom that a middle-class woman enjoyed was, ironically dependant on the goodwill of her father or husband, and likewise a man's good standing in society depended in part on the propriety of his wife. Ellen O'Callagan's sister Kate was married to attorney John Sheehy, but took advantage of unchecked freedom while her husband was in Dublin to cure a lame leg, by meeting and keeping a correspondence with another man. According to Ellen's diary, a print or, rather manuscript window into this middle class world, Sheehy, on discovering Kate's indiscretions, attended a family council with the O'Callaghan's to discuss Kate's behaviour, in which he "went back to his matrimonial arrangement past intentions, present situation, expectations…and included Kate in a great deal of it not being very

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[20] Pigot & Co., *City of Dublin and Hibernian Provincial Directory 1824*, pp. 280-93.
[21] *The Limerick Star and Evening Post*, 27 January 1837.
[22] Will of John Unthank, merchant, Unthank Papers – P25 Limerick Regional Archives. *The New Triennial & Commercial Directory*; *Slater's Directory of Munster*.

complimentary to say the least of it."[23] Apart from Kate's alleged infidelity or indiscretion, Sheehy appeared to be generally unhappy with his wife's adherence to his idea of her marital obligations and likewise Kate seemed unhappy with his expectations of her. Such dissonance in perceived gender roles must have been a contributory factor to middle-class marital breakdowns. Unfortunately, it is impossible to establish or even approximate figures for marriage separations, as the Limerick newspapers were reluctant to print any allusion to local domestic disputes: *The Limerick Standard* communicated to a poetry contributor that "the poetry by B_ D___ is inadmissible, as domestic disputes can never find a place in our columns."[24] The Limerick newspapers featured regular advertisement/disclaimers from husbands warning shopkeepers not to give credit on their account, to wives who had left them. In *The History of the Condition of Women*, published in 1835, Mrs. Child wrote that this was the standard practice in the event of a run-away wife.[25] These advertisements usually followed a standard template, however, sometimes a disgruntled husband would add further details to disgrace or discredit his wife in a very public way. Thomas Harvey complained in his advertisement that his wife, Catherine, who had commenced business as a milliner and dressmaker, had "totally withdrawn from [his] protection, and acted in every way contrary to [his] advice."[26] Slightly more cryptic was the message for Ellen Kenna, whose husband advised her "that were it not for a little alteration of mind, she would not suffer herself to be imposed upon by impostors, who, by way of advisers, are her and my enemies in disguise."[27] It is likely that these messages were as much intended for the wives as they were for the shopkeepers and are a further confirmation of male control over the printed word at local level. There must have been confusion and misinformation as to what circumstances absolved husbands from payment as in 1837 *The Limerick Star* printed an extract from the *Legal Advertiser*, clarifying for instances where husbands were and were not liable to pay for necessities and debts incurred by estranged wives

> From the advertisements which are not unfrequently seen in the public newspapers, it would seem to be a commonly received opinion that a husband can divest himself of his liability of

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[23] Gonzalez, 'Women in Bloom', p. 67-8.
[24] *The Limerick Standard*, 24 March 1837.
[25] Mrs. DL Child, *The History of the Condition of Women, in various Ages and Nations Volume II* (London, 1835) p. 201.
[26] *The Limerick Chronicle*, 21 August 1833.
[27] *The Limerick Chronicle*, 20 July 1833.

> his wife's debts by giving some public notice that he will not be answerable for any debts she may contract after such notice.[28]

A husband was liable to pay for 'necessaries' if a separation was caused by ill treatment or adultery on his part, however, if a wife had 'dishonoured herself' after her husband's infidelity, he was not responsible for her maintenance. Furthermore, if a wife was 'forcibly ejected' from their home in the event that 'her conduct had been exceedingly incorrect,' a husband was again not responsible for her debts and maintenance. Thus, wives had to maintain decorum and propriety at all times during marriage and even after a separation. It is most probable that, where it was possible, many middle class couples, like John and Kate Sheehy would have sought to settle such matters in the privacy of the family circle, rather in order to avoid public disgrace and humiliation. The *Legal Advertiser* also commented that "the cases which would apply to persons in the middle ranks of society," were instances where a tradesman supplied "a wife with goods unsuitable to her station in life, without any authority from her husband." In this case, a tradesman 'does so at his own risk' and the husband is relieved from liability, therefore, husbands were materially protected from spendthrift and morally lax wives. Mrs. Child wrote, "whatever a woman earns, or inherits by legacy, becomes her husband's, and may be seized by his creditors, or a proportion of it divided among his relations, if he dies without children," unless legacies were placed in the care of trustees.[29] From a woman's perspective, marriage signified economic dependence and vulnerability so a bad marriage choice could be potentially devastating. It is then perhaps not surprising that a convent life was an appealing alternative for many Catholic middle-class women. Even though they were still subject to the patriarchal control of Church authority, Caitriona Clear has found that the number of nuns multiplied eight-fold between 1841 and 1901, despite the fact that the Catholic population almost halved during the same period.[30] From its inception in 1839, *The Limerick Reporter*, a Catholic newspaper, regularly printed lengthy reports of the reception ceremonies as well as the activities of the Mercy sisters in Limerick, whose convent was established in 1838 of nuns being received into the order. From these reports, it is clear it was mostly daughters of middle-class women who were received in the Limerick convent. On the reception of Margaret

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[28] *The Limerick Star*, 22 September 1837.

[29] Child, *The History of the Condition of Women* p. 208.

[30] Caitriona Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 1987), p. 37.

O'Gorman, *The Limerick Reporter* commented that "a vast concourse of fashionables were drawn…to witness a young lady of much personal attractions, and elegant attainments, renouncing the world," adding that "the home she has abandoned is one brilliantly lit up with domestic happiness."[31] In this and other reports of reception ceremonies, the relinquishment of domesticity and all that it entailed was portrayed as the ultimate sacrifice that could be made by a young woman, as the natural occupation for women was viewed as wife and mother.[32]

There seems to have been a discord between the ideals of domesticity and the reality of lived experience for many middle-class women in Limerick, who were bombarded with advice, instructions and rules of etiquette through the local newspapers and wider print culture. The O'Callaghan's and their two daughters would sit in the drawing room after dinner, as someone read a newspaper or novel aloud, while the others would make comments.[33] Through this shared access to the printed word, many middle-class women would have had a considerable knowledge of political, economic and social affairs, which is at variance with the supposedly domestic creature of the early-nineteenth century. In 1835, the *Lady's Museum* printed twenty-two pages of book reviews including Peter Gaskell's *Prospect of Industry*, Andrew Ure's *Philosophy of Manufactures*, John Clare's *Rural Muse*, a biography of The Young Queen, Sir James Mackintosh's *History of England*, Emma Roberts on *Characteristics of Hindostan* as well as numerous other books and periodicals.[34]

Local newspapers featured the usual items that specifically targeted a female readership, including fashion tips from popular women's periodicals; advertisements for clothes, household goods, toiletries and medicines, auctions, bazaars as well as charity appeals. A woman could even find a prospective husband in the columns of the local newspapers. The trend for advertising for wives attracted criticism from *The Limerick Herald*, which condemned "such heartless proceedings [as they] speak ill for those men who, with the advantages of rank, connexion, and tolerable fortune, cannot find amongst their acquaintance one to take them from their single state. Shame on such mal-practices."[35] Such advertisements prompted a sardonic imitation by the newspaper

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[31] *The Limerick Reporter*, 8 November 1839.

[32] *The Limerick Reporter*, 10 December 1839.

[33] Gonzalez, 'Women in Bloom', p. 58.

[34] Beetham, *A Magazine of her Own*, pp. 30-1.

> Wanted, by a young gentleman without incumbrance, who is not as yet possessed, of any fortune, but whose expectations are good, and whose family respectable, a very pretty lady for a wife. She must be young and healthful as *Hebe*, and 'Chaste as the icicle that hangs on *Dian*'s Temple.' If she have as much money for her portion as may serve herself, the Advertiser, and a little family of infants, so much the better.[36]

Actual marriage advertisements were less romantic and more businesslike in tone

> A Gentleman, aged 30, wishes to meet with a single or a widow lady, of an agreeable person, and possessed of from 5 to 6000l, independent property, to enable the advertiser to extend a business, already a profitable one – First references given and required.[37]

There were no corresponding examples of women advertising for husbands: women were spoken of and spoken to in the newspapers but were seldom given the opportunity to represent themselves in any way contradictory to the social norms of the early-nineteenth century. All of the local newspapers borrowed extracts from books, periodicals and other newspapers to define and dictate appropriate codes of conduct for women. Women did feature as advertisers for the usual female occupations and as charity subscribers and philanthropists. This is not to say that middle-class women were always respectable pillars of the community. In 1831 *The Limerick Herald* reported that Fanny Magrath, "who appeared to be far above the lower class, and to be very well educated" had stolen a hearth-rug from the Limerick Club House.[38] Middle-class women were more often than not associated with genteel and respectable pursuits in the local newspapers, such as poetry. This medium was the closest women came to expressing themselves in the local print media. Much of the poetry written by women is unremarkable, imitations of the verbose sentimentalism of the Romantic Movement, however, a female contributor to *The Limerick Monthly Magazine* departed from the norm in dedicating a lengthy thirty-three line poem, *Soliloquy on Stays* to the pain and discomfort of corsets: she poses the question, "Whether 'tis better for a dame to suffer…or to take arms against the tide of fashion, and with contempt oppose it."[39] This tongue-in-cheek invective on female fashions and social pressures is hardly an example of proto-feminism incarnate, however, it does demonstrate that when given the opportunity to voice their own opinion, women

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[35] *The Limerick Herald*, May 12 1831.
[36] *The Limerick Herald*, 18 April 1831.
[37] *The Limerick Star and Evening Post*, 7 February 1834.
[38] *The Limerick Herald*, 4 August 1831.
[39] *The Limerick Monthly Magazine Volume I* (Limerick, 1830), p. 96.

could be critical rather than acquiescent. Perhaps this is one explanation why women were given limited representation in the local media. *The Limerick Reporter* made an exception in the case of 'Eliza' whose rather caustic but witty pen provides a further example of women challenging notions of female compliance through poetry. She wrote this poem in response to a love poem written to her by 'Medicus' a regular poetry contributor in *The Limerick Reporter* in 1839

> Dear Medicus, I'm much afraid,
> Though favoured by the Muses aid
> With all the bright poetic flowers,
> That bloom in fancy's meagre bowers,
> You never can *inoculate*
> My breast, with love's delightful heat;
> And though your heart may freely *bleed*
> With me you never can succeed.
> …If charms like mine, you can't forget,
> And memory's dream retains them yet,
> The *poppies juice* can give a *balm*,
> The fever of thy soul to calm.-
> If this should fail, and still the beat
> Of *heart*, and *pulse*, should grow elate,
> Thy *case is hopeless*, and the doom
> That waits thee here, must be the tomb –
> *Fox-glove* and *Prussic acid* try,
> And bid the world and love good bye.[40]

Print culture in its various forms was a prominent feature of the private and social activities of middle-class women in Limerick. In addition to reading aloud novels, poems and pious works with her sisters, Ellen O'Callaghan swapped these texts with her friends, enlarging the distribution network of printed materials. Print culture was also part of the middle class courting process. One suitor, Henry Owens, gave her gifts of books, and hand written poetry and music while another borrowed books for Ellen under his name at the Limerick Institution. Although the libraries in Limerick were male domains, women could have access to a wider range of reading materials in this way. The catalogue of books purchased by the Limerick Chamber of Commerce Library in the 1830s and early 1840s documents works by Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Gore and Lady Blessington, which may collectively suggest some degree of female influence in the choice of books ordered.[41] Circulating libraries also provided women with further means of inexpensive access to books and other reading materials. Eliza O'Shaughnessy and

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[40] *The Limerick Reporter*, 12 November 1839.
[41] Minutes of the Meetings of the Limerick Chamber of Commerce Library. P1/56- Limerick Regional Archives.

Mary Crips both ran circulating libraries in Limerick, and, as women were perhaps aiming at a female subscriber base, offering a service unmediated by men. The impermanent nature of lending could suggest that women had greater control over their choice of reading than moralists would have liked. There was immense anxiety over the reading habits of women, and particularly young women as the fear of exposure to sexual content in literature would corrupt the purity and innocence of future middle class homemakers, thus disrupting the ideals of femininity.

In incidents of rape, women often married their rapists, as carnal knowledge would have ruined marital prospects with anyone else. In one case, John Cornwall, a policeman in Limerick was accused of raping Mary Bryan, who was asked by the counsellor for the defence to 'detail the particulars' to prove that she had actually been raped due to the fact that "the witness [was] not a married woman."[42] The distressed girl could not bring herself to recall the incident in such a public manner so the jury were forced to return a verdict of 'not guilty.' The judge, Baron Pennefather, cautioned Cornwall, warning him, "if you have ill-treated that poor girl, and will not make her the only redress in your power, I tell you solemnly you will not be the better of it either in this world or the next." *The Limerick Herald* expressed satisfaction that "the admonition of the judge had its proper effect," concluding that "they were married the same evening, and the girl's friends made up a purse of 20 guineas for her." Admittedly, this women was not middle class, however, her case highlights the assumption that unmarried women did not have sexual knowledge, and reflects how ideals of female chastity and purity filtered downwards. One Limerick newspaper felt obliged to protect female decency by calling on the mayor to put an end to the "shameful practice pursued by adults of bathing in the canal and Abbey River, at all hours of the day, to the great annoyance and inconvenience of ladies who, in consequence, are obliged to abandon these wholesome and useful walks."[43] While this public taboo existed in relation to nudity and sex, Ellen O'Callaghan's friend, Mary Hogan had a portfolio of nude drawings she had sketched, prompting Ellen to write

> Such a picture suffice it to say that is in the most distant formation of an idea in either expression or feature it is not like him I know I never could fancy it to have been painted as a likeliness of Father Patt [Mary's uncle, Fr. Patrick Hogan]…I could hardly look at it until I got quite chilled from the thoughts of how it was done.[44]

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[42] *The Limerick Herald*, 1 August 1831.

[43] *The Limerick Herald*, 18 August 1831.

[44] Gonzalez, 'Women in Bloom', p. 66.

The fact that Ellen was scandalised by the portrait's likeness to a priest rather than out of any embarrassment at nudes *per se*, suggests that the association of the middle classes with sexual prudery is not entirely accurate. *The Limerick Reporter* printed a poem about the consummation of marriage, in 1839, called 'The Matrimonial Iris.' While the symbol of the iris represented explicit sexual imagery, the sensuality of the last two lines made overt reference to the act of intercourse: "Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep, Upon the very naked flame of love."

Definite efforts were made by the local print culture to contain the exposure of sexuality in young females. *The Limerick Herald* borrowed the advice of Mrs. C. Hall, under the heading 'Hints for Lovers'

> If a youth is wooingly disposed towards any damsel, as he values his happiness, let him follow my advice; call on the lady when she least expects him, and take note of the appearance of all that is under her control… And I would forgive a man for breaking off an engagement if he discovered a greasy novel hid away under the cushion of a sofa, or a hole in the garniture of the prettiest foot in the world…As certainly as a virtuous woman is a crown of glory to her husband, so surely is a slovenly one a crown of thorns.[45]

Women were regarded as weak, fragile and easily corruptible. The print explosion of the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries coupled with an increase in idle, literate and affluent middle-class women created a market for sentimental novels. Everyone from moralists and clergymen to physicians voiced their concerns over the immoral influence of these novels, with an emphasis on young women. In 1834, *The Limerick Times* printed a warning from the *Medical Adviser*

> A greater number of young girls, between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, and of young men between eighteen and twenty four, fall victims to what they call love, than to any particular class of disease – and more particularly in England and Ireland than in any other country on earth. This is from the force of early impressions peculiar to those countries, and of comparatively recent growth, the effect produced by a certain class of romance writers. These writers give an obliquity to the young mind which leads to destruction. Scarcely has a young girl laid down her *Reading made Easy*, than she becomes a subscriber to some trashy library… now consumed with intensity of thought upon the maudlin miseries of some hapless heroine of romance, the abortion of a diseased brain…She fixes immediately upon some figure of a man – some Edwin, or Edgar , or Ethelbert ….and she then enjoys her tears and her tortures to her heart's satisfaction. Languor, inaction, late hours, late rising, and incessant sighing, derange her digestion – paleness, loss of appetite, and general debility follow…. We have known a young Irish lady who read herself into this situation…When this Leadenhall-street troop of romancers crossed her way, an officer of a very different sort of troop became her hero. She would "sit in her bower," (the second floor window), and gaze – and gaze – and gaze upon his steed, his helmet, and his streaming black – haired crest, as he passed to mount – guard, until she sobbed aloud to ecstasy of melancholy. She never spoke to this "knight," nor did she even seek to have an acquaintance – lest, perhaps, that a formal proposal, a good leg – of - mutton dinner, and all the realities of domestic happiness, might dissipate the sweet romantic misery she so much delighted in. A year passed over –"she pined in thought, and with a green and

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[45] *The Limerick Herald*, 8 December 1831.

> yellow melancholy," entered a convent (for all that is the climax of romance), where she died in a few months.[46]

Ellen O'Callaghan obviously disregarded this advice, reading one of these novels and records being moved almost to tears by the romantic sentimentalism. It is unlikely that women did heed these warnings as anxieties over the popularity of these works suggests widespread readership. Although Ellen's diary illustrates that she attended mass daily and read pious works and didactic literature, these 'respectable' activities and pursuits co-existed with reading materials contrary to the ideals of the Catholic Church and domesticity, suggesting that they were not incompatible with either the inward reality or the outward display of decency and respectability.

Print provided definite guidelines for the behaviour of women, more specifically young middle class females, whose education and upbringing presupposed virtue, decency and obedience. The local print culture in Limerick echoed and perpetuated these notions, eager to present a one-dimensional picture of middle-class women's lives. It is likely that those who espoused such ideals took them more seriously and more literally than middle-class women themselves did. A close examination of print in Limerick during the 1830s highlights a multi-faceted reality, where women could remain 'respectable' while engaging in pursuits contrary to those espoused by didactic literature. At once, the domestic ideology reflects and conceals reality: the ideals of domesticity and femininity provided definite parameters for the behaviour of middle-class women, however, to read the experience of women purely through this conceptual framework is to undermine the personal dynamics within familial and marital relationships and indeed, the personal experience of middle-class women themselves. Limerick's print culture illustrates the restrictions placed on women but it also provides a keyhole to a much richer reality where women ignored and criticised social norms. Middle-class women did read pious and prescribed literature, but they also read sentimental novels and newspapers. They read and wrote poetry, a 'respectable' and appropriate pursuit for middle-class ladies, but exploited the medium to challenge ideals of domesticity and femininity, albeit in a very flippant manner. While it is clear that many middle-class women adhered to aspects of the ideal, a closer study of texts generated in Limerick indicates a degree of dissension and a rejection of the prescribed model of womanhood in provincial urban Ireland.

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[46] *The Limerick Times*, 30 June 1834.

Deconstructing the Sectarian Epic: The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement and the World Beyond Irish Shores, 1963-1969

Michel Jacques Gagné

Accounts of Northern Ireland during the 1960s are numerous but brief and usually embedded inside works of a general nature.[1] Compared to the many publications discussing the period of the Troubles—the sectarian conflict that raged from 1969 to 1998—there exist few works that target the Northern Ireland civil rights movement specifically or in much detail. There is also a widespread tendency to weave the two periods into one under the rubric of sectarian violence.[2] Interestingly, the only three historical works that do delve seriously into the history of this movement were not written by members of the Irish historical profession.[3]

Much of the civil rights literature also tends to present twentieth-century Northern Ireland as a sort of hermetically-sealed society, a strange world locked in eighteenth-century socio-religious realities long discarded by the rest of the Western world. Such narratives have a tendency to gloss over the impact of international forces such as Cold War politics, decolonisation movements and the mass media. Interestingly, primary records—consisting of newspaper reports, letters, interviews and the memoirs of former activists—indicate that the Northern Ireland civil rights movement was spurred on significantly by events and ideologies which were in many ways foreign. In light of this, we should ask ourselves if the secondary literature does not suffer a blind spot in its analysis of the period, favoring the familiar historical thread of sectarianism over the more complex web of twentieth-century global politics.

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[1] For historical surveys of Northern Ireland that do discuss the civil rights movement, see Owen Dudley Edwards, *The sins of our fathers: roots of conflict in Northern Ireland* (Dublin, 1970); TW Moody, *The Ulster question* (Dublin, 1974); Thomas Hennessey, *A history of Northern Ireland: 1920-1996* (Dublin, 1997); James Loughlin, *The Ulster question since 1945* (Basingstoke, 1998); Jonathan Bardon, *A history of Ulster* (Belfast, 1992).

[2] See, for example, Bew and Gillespie, *Northern Ireland: A Chronology of the Troubles 1968-1993* (Dublin, 1993); Tim Pat Coogan: *The Troubles: Ireland's Ordeal 1966-1996 and the Search for Peace* (London, 1996); Brendan O'Brien, *The Long War: The IRA and Sinn Féin* (Dublin, 1999); Niall Ó'Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalities: Derry and the Birth of the Irish Troubles* (Cork, 1997); Peter Rose, *How the Troubles Came to Northern Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2000) Peter Taylor, *Loyalists: War and Peace in Northern Ireland* (London, 1999).

[3] An American, Brian Dooley, *Black and Green: The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland and Black America* (London, 1998; a Scot, Bob Purdie, *Politics in the Streets: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement In Northern Ireland* (Belfast, 1990); a Northern Irish graduate student and former participant-observer, Paul Arthur, *The People's Democracy 1968-73* (Belfast, 1974).

It is easy to disregard the international context in which the civil rights movement evolved and to conclude that it was typically 'Irish' in its goals and aspirations, part of a long tradition of Irish resistance against British oppression. Such a narrative fits in well with a wealth of existing historical and political studies on Northern Ireland and the Troubles. Doing so, however, requires one to neglect a large body of evidence that suggests it was largely a product of the global context.

Contemporary works on Northern Ireland have overwhelmingly taken the form of 'sectarian epics,' focusing almost exclusively on a localised but centuries-long sectarian struggle for independence from Britain. "As a consequence," wrote Shirlow and McGovern, "the reality of class, gender and other axes of social division [were] underplayed in the context of a highly politicised ethnic separation."[4] This is the case of histories of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement, which was written largely against the backdrop of the Troubles by historians grappling with the domestic causes of sectarian violence. Most chroniclers of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement have thus shed insufficient light on the other dimensions of Northern Ireland society at this time, namely the impact of foreign events and ideologies on local affairs. This has led to the creation of nebulous accounts of the movement's origins and purpose. A particularly glaring example reads

> From the early 1960s onwards, increasing sections of the Catholic community realised that this political obsession with partition was achieving nothing for the minority community. There was now a demand, particularly from within the emerging Catholic middle classes, for full participation within the Northern state. As a result of this attitudinal change, there developed civil rights organisations which focused on the widespread discrimination against the Catholic minority.[5]

This sudden and vague "attitudinal change" from traditional nationalism to "full participation within the Northern state" raises more questions than it answers about the underlying causes of the civil rights movement and is a simplistic and dubious extrapolation of what the primary literature actually tells us. While extreme, this account diverges only by degrees from the norm. Most accounts do cast a passing glance at one or more events rocking the non-Irish world during this time, namely the

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[4] Peter Shirlow and Mark McGovern (eds.), *Who Are 'The People'? Unionism, Protestantism, and Loyalism in Northern Ireland* (London, 1997), p.4-5.

[5] Jonathan Moore, 'The Labour Party and Northern Ireland in the 1960s,' in Eamonn Hughes (ed.), *Culture and Politics in Northern Ireland 1960-1990* (Milton Keynes, 1993), p.74.

American civil rights movement. Such references are for the most part brief; parenthetical statements that do not alter the rest of a highly politicised narrative.[6]

The picture that emerges from a survey of the civil rights literature, then, is that of Northern Ireland as a an insulated society consumed by its own peculiar past, marginally affected—if at all—by exterior forces. While no one can deny that sectarianism and the constitutional status of Northern Ireland have played a central role in the region's political and social affairs since its inception, one cannot assume that all political, social and economic phenomena occurring in Northern Ireland can be reduced to fit a two-sided debate over partition.

Coogan's *The Troubles* (1996), in which aspects of the civil rights movement are arbitrarily engineered to fit the author's traditional nationalist convictions, is an excellent example of the 'sectarian epic' genre. Coogan describes the civil rights agitation of 1963-69 as an offspring of Daniel O'Connell's nineteenth-century Catholic Association.[7] Ironically, one of the few Irish historical figures for whom civil rights activists did express open admiration was James Connolly—a radical Marxist revolutionary who had fallen into obscurity, neglected by traditional nationalist authors such as Coogan.

The writings of Bruce offer us a unionist variation on the 'sectarian epic,' in which the civil rights marches of the 1960s are described as "old-fashioned nationalism" and "deliberate exercises in coat-trailing."[8] Bruce altogether ignores the complex matrix of ideologies that made up the civil rights movement, and the fact that its most influential leaders were staunch advocates of moderation who often expressed little desire to see the civil rights platform be used as a vehicle for Irish nationalism. He acknowledges that the movement was "heavily influenced by the black civil rights campaigns and the student anti-war movement in the United States and major European capitals," but the assertion bears no further explanation, nor is it given much weight through the rest of a strongly politically-motivated text.[9]

A smaller group of manuscripts have approached Northern Ireland using an economic model of class conflict. Such accounts present the sectarian problem as a byproduct of capitalist economics. A useful alternative to unionist and nationalist accounts, this 'Marxist' approach, though less partisan, nonetheless concentrates its efforts on explaining the roots of sectarianism and spends little time exploring the forces of gender politics, popular culture, generational divides, and international influence. Their depiction of the civil rights movement has led to a somewhat skewed perspective of the movement's nature and origins, largely focusing on labour relations and local politics.

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[6] Arthur (1974) and Dooley (1998) are the only monographs that diverge from this trend. Despite their auspicious titles, Adrian Guelke's, *Northern Ireland: the International Perspective* (Dublin, 1988) and Ó'Dochartaigh's *Ulster's White Negroes: From Civil Rights to Insurrection* (Oakland, CA,1994) do not address the question of foreign influence in much, if any, depth.

[7] Coogan, *The Troubles*, p. 10.

[8] Steve Bruce, *The Red Hand: Protestant paramilitaries in Northern Ireland* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 27-8.

[9] Bruce, *The Red Hand*, p. 27.

Numerous chroniclers of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement have thus let their political passions and experience of the Troubles filter into their treatment of the civil rights campaigns. This has given rise to historical narratives which are simplistic, laced with a number of anachronisms, and which portray the Northern Ireland of the 1960s as a self-contained universe not unlike the dystopian island of William Gouldings' *Lord of the Flies*—a world of stubborn children torn apart by tribal conflict. This trend in Irish historiography does not limit itself to the civil rights literature, as Boyce argued. Much Irish historiography continues to be highly politicised, reflecting a mythical dualist tragedy "in which 'Taig' met 'Prod' yet again [...] a kind of Irish predestiny that linked past and present, and that saw the only valid theme in Irish history as the struggle, the long, enduring struggle, between Ireland and England."[10] Although "historians cannot ignore the historical dimension of the Ulster Troubles," he tells us, "they must also be aware of the danger of writing history teleologically."[11]

In May 1963, a group of Catholic housewives from the town of Dungannon launched Northern Ireland's first direct-action civil rights protest. This 'Homeless Citizens League' accused the Unionist-controlled municipal council of discrimination in the allocation of public housing. After weeks of ineffectual pressures and picketing, thirty-seven families squatted illegally in a row of council houses slated for demolition. This initiative led the Unionist Prime Minister Captain Terence O'Neill to demand that the gerrymandered Dungannon urban council provide housing for the squatters.

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[10] D George Boyce, 'Past and Present Revisionism and the Northern Ireland Troubles,' in Boyce and O'Day (eds.) *The Making of Modern Irish History: revisionism and the revisionist controversy* (London, 1996), pp. 217-9.
[11] Ibid, pp. 217-9.

The Dungannon housing protest marked the beginnings of a radical shift in the culture of Northern Ireland's Catholic population, swapping religious conservatism and nationalist myths for elements of the secular non-Irish world. To wit, the Dungannon squatters did not speak out against partition, complain about Cromwell or the Famine, or heap abuses upon the Protestant faith; their focus was placed on the American 'negro' and the poor social conditions which many Irish Catholics seemed to share with them as a result of their minority status. In 1963, Alabama and Mississippi experienced their own hot long summer of civil rights marches, freedom rides, and lunch-counter sit-ins. On 28 August 1963, in the midst of the Dungannon housing protest, Martin Luther King Jr. uttered his internationally televised 'I Have a Dream' speech, leading the Northern Ireland protestors to defend their cause with slogans such as "Racial Discrimination in Alabama Hits Dungannon,"[12] "Ship us to Little Rock,"[13] "Pals from Alabama,"[14] and "White Negroes."[15]

The 'white negro' rhetoric became a recurring theme in the Northern Ireland press, used by all shades of civil rights supporters.[16] Articles and editorials supporting the housing protest borrowed heavily from the American civil rights example. In January 1964, homeless Derry Catholics launched an illegal squatting protest at the Springtown prefabs, a former US military base slated for demolition. The *Derry Journal* proclaimed: "Derry's Little Rock Asks for Fair Play."[17] The American civil rights movement thus set the trend in Northern Ireland for future demonstrations over housing allocation, voting irregularities, and police brutality. Comparisons between Northern Catholics and African-Americans became the norm, as did expressions such as 'civil rights,' 'discrimination,' and 'segregation.'

Black America was not the only source of inspiration for Northern Ireland's civil rights protestors. The living conditions of black Africans in countries such as South Africa and Rhodesia—and later, war-torn Biafra—captured the imagination of Northern Ireland's civil rights proponents. The notion of 'apartheid' was also popularised by the newsletters of the Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ), a pamphleteering society that evolved out of the Dungannon housing protest.[18] The CSJ freely compared the social standing of Northern Ireland Catholics to that of black South Africans and claimed that their respective positions differed only in a matter of degrees.

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[12] *Dungannon Observer*, 18 May 1963.
[13] Ibid.
[14] *Dungannon Observer*, 15 June 1963.
[15] *Dungannon Observer*, 7 September 1963.
[16] *Dungannon Observer*, 7 September 1963 (letter); *Irish News*, 21 October, 18 November and 5 December 1968.
[17] *Derry Journal*, 31 January 1964.

In the early years of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement, the CSJ, led by Conn and Pat McCluskey, attempted to pressure the Unionist government through media, the courts and any available legal channel in Northern Ireland and Britain. While they made a number of allies in nationalist and socialist circles, they failed to convince O'Neill's Unionist government that legal and political reforms were necessary. Their calls also fell on deaf ears in London, where successive British governments avoided dealing with the issue of discrimination in Northern Ireland, fearing to upset the delicate political balance that seemed to reign there (and the Unionist MPs whose support in Westminster was often crucial to maintain a parliamentary majority). By 1967, the McCluskeys and a number of like-minded politicians in the Northern opposition joined forces with groups on the political fringe—namely communists and militant republicans—to forge a broader and more influential popular movement.[19]

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Communist Party of Ireland had relatively small followings at this time. Both sought greater visibility within the Northern Irish working class. Both saw sectarianism as the major cause of poverty and unemployment in the Northern State. Both believed the nationalist-unionist dichotomy had kept the working class divided, competing for precarious jobs and sub-standard incomes while foreign capitalists and their unionist minions grew rich over their backs.

The republican movement had utterly failed to kindle a war of liberation during the years 1957-62. As a result it was low on resources and bitterly divided. Under its new leader Cathal Goulding, a budding Marxist and proponent of grass-roots activism, the IRA dumped arms and pursued a path to politicisation until the civil rights coalition fell apart in 1969. Although the IRA and its affiliates—Sinn Féin and the Wolfe Tone Societies—did not discard their idiomatic revolutionary rhetoric, Goulding and his closest advisors were in fact bent on pulling the movement closer to

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[18] See CSJ, *Northern Ireland: The Plain Truth* (1964).

[19] Namely Austin Currie, Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin. John Hume was a notable exception.

a populist, and resolutely socialist, position. Becoming active in a broad campaign for civil rights, they believed, would allow the republicans to gradually achieve what they could not do as a small band of soldiers: the full independence, political and economic, of both parts of Ireland from the clutches of a predatory capitalist world system

> We today have been forced by circumstances to add new dimensions to our struggle for freedom, we have had to re-examine our goals in the light of today's conditions and have concluded that an attack mounted on a broad front, across cultural, economic and political fronts, promises the best hope of success in the future. [...] Historically the ending of partition has been the sole aim of our movement, since 1922, and this has been our mistake. For imperialism has many forms not least the cultural and economic take-over of underdeveloped countries such as ours. [...] The army guarded a frontier while the imperialists quietly entered by another and laid claim to Ireland.[20]

Goulding would later add: "We believed that the struggle for civil rights would become a struggle for class rights, that all Irish workers would become dissenters."[21] For this reason, the new IRA leadership was willing to put aside its military aims and to embark upon the civil rights bandwagon, which it did despite opposition in its ranks.

Though small, the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) had a solid base within Belfast industrial circles. Its support base was largely Protestant and its membership included a large proportion of women, including Betty Sinclair, a leading civil rights advocate. Sinclair and her fellow communists were outspoken opponents of sectarianism and its link to poverty and unemployment, and aspired to reforms that could realign the Northern Irish political spectrum along economic, not confessional lines. While the Irish border was not their priority, they were nonetheless republican in outlook, believing Northern Ireland to be the artificial creation of capitalist imperialists. Like the new republican leadership, Northern communists were vehemently opposed to American economic imperialism and any expansion of the European common market into the UK and the Irish Republic

> Workers from Spain, Portugal, Turkey, North Africa, etc. join in with their Italian brothers and sisters in a lifetime of emigration and deprivation. Is this the future that the Irish workers want? [...] In the capitalist world today there are over 60 million persons without work [...] Unemployment is rampant in Africa, South America, and the Middle and Far East due to neo-colonialist policies of the imperialist nations. [...] The United States has been waging war since the 1950s against the people of the Far East and has 500 military bases ringed around the world, including one in Derry.[22]

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[20] Cathal Goulding, Speech at the Wolfe Tone Commemoration, Bodenstown, June 1967, in *United Irishman*, July 1967.

[21] Cathal Goulding, 'EOLAS interviews Cathal Goulding,' *EOLAS* #10 (October 1973).

[22] Sinclair, *Unemployment*, pp. 10-1, 18.

Openly comparing the unionists of Northern Ireland to foreign right-wing regimes (Franco's Spain, Salazzar's Portugal, McCarthyist America and, later, Chile under Pinochet), the old-guard communists and the new republican leadership were to form, alongside a group of constitutional nationalists, the pillars of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement. Revolutionaries by nature but cautious reformers in spirit, Goulding, Sinclair and their fellow "red republicans" were able to maintain their anti-statist position and enter the arena of mainstream politics by taking part in the movement's new flagship: the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA).

NICRA was a broad-based public relations body formed in 1967. It comprised a cross-section of anti-unionist elements, most of whom held leftist convictions. Republicans and communists both played a large part in the day-to-day administration of NICRA. Despite Unionist fears of a joint IRA-Bolshevik revolution, red republicans proved surprisingly moderate in their methods. In fact, it was with great reluctance that NICRA's leading Marxists (such as Sinclair and the republican-socialist Fred Heatley) changed their tactics from political activism to mass protest.

It was in the summer of 1968 that the civil rights campaign truly became a mass movement. In June, a young Catholic politician named Austin Currie—a constitutional nationalist and fan of Martin Luther King, Jr.—joined a group of squatters protesting in Caledon, Co. Tyrone. Capturing significant media coverage, Currie declared

> The situation in Northern Ireland is the same as that in the southern states of the USA or that in South Africa, the sole difference being that discrimination in Northern Ireland is based on religion rather than colour.[23]

Currie then pressured the leaders of the Campaign for Social Justice and NICRA to launch a joint march for civil rights modeled on those of the American South. Speaking at the rally that followed, National Democratic Party leader Joe McCann echoed Currie's concerns

> We of the minority might be excused if we feel a bond of fellowship with the negro community in the American South, with the victims of apartheid in South Africa or the deprived peoples of Mr. Ian Smith's Rhodesia. [...] One has the feeling that if the Northern Ireland cabinet were transferred to Rhodesia, or Cape Town, or Alabama they would feel quite at home. [...] Are we so different, or yet again so inferior, to the coloured peoples that we do not attract the attention or concern from this liberal-minded British government? [...] Is the philosophy 'No Catholics need apply' so different from that of 'No coloureds need apply'?[24]

The 24 August march from Coalisland to Dungannon was widely attended by over 4,000 marchers. Despite a small skirmish between civil rights protestors and loyalist agitators (led by the loyalist cleric Ian Paisley), and despite the fact that the recent invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union had drawn much of the media's attention elsewhere, the march was considered a resounding success. Believing that civil rights reforms would come by capturing the wider world's attention through media coverage, the leaders of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement resolved to do it again. Mass protest, it seemed, was the way forward.

This was 1968 and not 1963. The global stage was not the same as that of the first Dungannon housing protest. The peaceful civil rights movement in America had by now given way to riots, Black Power radicalism, counterculture, and a militant anti-war movement. Vietnam was in the throws of an ugly civil war in which the United States was looking more and more like a ruthless imperialist. A war-induced famine killed off thousands in Biafra. Soviet tanks rolled through the streets of Prague. Nuclear proliferation and American imperialism were giving rise to the so-called New Left, a vaguely-defined revolutionary fervor that had captured the hearts of despondent socialists worldwide, roused not by political ideology so much as existential angst. Parisian students took to the streets in May to protest against de Gaulle. The ill-fated experiment turned to violence. Chicago saw its Democratic National Convention torn up by a violent clash between rambunctious protestors and a ruthless police force under the orders of Mayor Richard Daley, a hard-nosed Irish Catholic. Similar clashes erupted in Rome, Tokyo, Berlin... Protest was everywhere, or so it seemed.

The younger generations in Northern Ireland were strongly affected by these turbulent events and the New Left ideology, as testified by Michael Farrell and Ciaran McKeown, two of the younger leaders of the civil rights campaign

> Television made the world a global village so that the new music, new styles and new ideas spread like wildfire. [...] But television also brought home the injustices of the world: the Sharpeville massacre by South African police in 1960; the tortures inflicted by the French army during the Algerian war of independence; the horrors of Vietnam. And we grew up under the shadow of the atomic bomb.[25]

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[23] *Irish News*, 24 June 1968.

[24] *Irish News*, 26 August 1968.

[25] Michael Farrell (ed.), *Twenty Years On* (Cork, 1988), p. 12.

> 1968 was *the* year of student militancy: in May students had a genuine role in the 'revolution' that weakened de Gaulle in France; they were visible, vocal and brave in Dubcek's Czechoslovakia; in Germany, the Baader-Meinhof impulse was alive. [...] In the world outside our little student world, the situation also seemed to be one of disintegration: Martin Luther King was shot dead in April, Bobby Kennedy in June; in May came the strange event in France which the media presented as a 'revolution,' flattering the contemporary militancy, and suggesting that 'The System' was about to be destroyed, with no indication of what might follow. In August the Russians rolled into Prague and crushed the Dubcek liberalisation process in Czechoslovakia. [...] Tragedy on a terrible scale loomed in Biafra and Bangladesh.[26]

On 5 October 1968, a smaller march was held in the city of Derry. It was with great reluctance that the NICRA leadership endorsed this protest, planned as it was by a consortium of local radicals with New Left, Marxist and Republican convictions. Galvanised by the injustices they had seen perpetrated at home and in Czechoslovakia, Paris, Biafra and Vietnam, the Derry marchers took to the streets in defiance of a government ban, hoping to expose the Unionists and the police as tools of an international fascist conspiracy. In keeping with the heterogeneous nature of New Left rhetoric, they carried placards reading, "South Africa – Rhodesia – Ulster – [three swastikas]," "We Shall Overcome Someday," "Smash Capitalism" and "Class Not Creed."[27]

Before the march could get under way, a police barricade was set up at both ends of the crowd. The march turned into a violent clash between the police and demonstrators. Local youths joined the fray and the skirmish turned to chaos. A large number of unarmed protestors, including Gerry Fitt, Member of Parliament (MP), were violently beaten by the police. The civil rights altercation set off a whirlwind of support and condemnation across the North. Tempers flared. Angry students took to the streets.

In the wake of the Derry march, two new civil rights organisations were born: the Derry Citizens Action Committee (DCAC) and the People's Democracy (PD). Neither expressed the desire to join forces with NICRA, which was deemed too leftist by the first group and not enough by the second. The DCAC, led by John Hume and Ivan Cooper, was in large part the fruit of the local Catholic middle class (although Cooper himself was a Protestant and a Labour Party candidate). Over the following weeks, the DCAC mobilised tens of thousands of supporters in the streets of Derry. Its

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[26] Ciaran McKeown, *The Passion of Peace* (Belfast, 1984), pp. 41, 44.
[27] *Irish Times*, 7 October 1968.

rallies were widely attended, well-disciplined, and made good use of international symbols for human rights.

In early December, Prime Minister O'Neill sacked his Minister for Home Affairs Bill Craig, deemed responsible for the 5 October police attack and much of the violence that ensued. O'Neill promised to enact a reform package to address civil rights grievances and even appeared on live television, calling for moderation on all sides. The DCAC leaders proclaimed a moratorium on future marches, hoping to move the civil rights campaign into parliament where, Hume believed, it was most likely to achieve permanent results. With the rising threat of urban violence (many loyalists were caught smuggling weapons to a civil rights rally in Armagh) all other civil rights bodies—save one—agreed to suspend marches and wait for O'Neill's reforms.

Before the moderates could celebrate a victory, their achievements were annulled by the People's Democracy (PD) movement, a rambunctious confederation of Queen's University students and graduates influenced by the ideologies of Black Power, national liberation, and the radical socialist tenets of the New Left. The PD protesters pursued a provocative agenda deliberately similar to that of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the United Sates. Chanting "Sieg Heil, RUC, SS, RUC," the PD radicals saw themselves as members of a world-wide crusade against a rising fascist world order.[28] While Hume and Cooper's DCAC was imposing a rigid discipline on its popular rallies in the streets of Derry, the PD launched a number of militant marches, rallies and sit-down strikes throughout the city of Belfast, verbally promoting non-violence all-the-while inciting police aggression in the hope of exposing the fascist nature of Northern unionism.

The point of no return was reached in January 1969. In defiance of the moratorium on marches agreed upon by the NICRA and DCAC, leaders of the People's Democracy organised a 'long march' from Belfast to Derry, mimicking the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march in Alabama, USA

> We in the Young Socialists/People's Democracy identified particularly with the younger, more radical Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) who like us were in regular conflict with the older, more cautious leaders of Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. But King and SNCC chairman John Lewis had marched together from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama in 1965, and the violence of the racist state troopers who blocked that march had caused such outrage across the US that President

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[28] McKeown, *The Passion of Peace*, p. 50.

> Lyndon Johnson had been forced to push through the Voting Rights Act. The march to Derry was modeled on the Selma-Montgomery march and we hoped it would have a similar effect.[29]

Like its American archetype, the Belfast-to-Derry march did attract its share of violence, including a bloody ambush by anti-civil rights thugs at Burntollet Bridge, a few miles from Derry. The attackers inflicted serious injuries on some of the marchers. It was later revealed that a number of off-duty police officers had taken part in the attack.

In the wake of the Burntollet incident, sectarian tensions mounted at an exponential speed. Rioting broke out in Derry, Armagh and Newry. Prime Minister O'Neill, with a potential cabinet revolt on his hands, found himself unable to deliver his reform package without unleashing civil unrest. He ordered a snap election in February in the hope of consolidating his support among moderate Catholics and Protestants, a move that did not work out in his favour. Unsurprisingly, the Unionists did win the election, though many Unionist candidates had run (and won) on anti-civil rights tickets. A number of Unionists even threatened to break away and form a more militant party. Many Catholics continued to boycott the Unionists, snubbed the old Nationalist Party, and cast their votes for civil rights candidates instead—including those of a radical Marxist slant.

In April, loyalist paramilitaries launched a bombing campaign disguised as an IRA initiative. O'Neill was blamed by unionists for being too soft, and by civil rights supporters for being uncompromising. He resigned later that month. In the late spring of 1969, the divide between civil rights supporters and supporters of the Unionist government inched its way closer to the traditional sectarian divide. Despite the efforts of civil rights leaders to keep the movement inclusive and apolitical, the Burntollet attack and rising urban violence had so polarised public opinion that peaceful reforms could not be enacted without a major clash erupting. Most Protestants and many Catholics abandoned the movement, which no longer represented the moderate and progressive ideals they once espoused.

The civil rights movement came to a halt in August 1969 when British troops were mobilised by London to quell a riot in Derry, a brutal clash pitting policemen and loyalists against residents of the despondent and mostly Catholic Bogside. The presence of British troops (soon throughout Northern Ireland) helped transform the

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[29] Farrell, *Twenty Years On*, p. 57.

nature of the unrest by playing straight into the hands of radical republicans, who had until then disagreed with the tactics of non-violent protest and Goulding's foray into the "never-never land of theoretical Marxism and parliamentary politics."[30]

With O'Neill's failure to deliver palatable reforms, the army's indiscriminate use of internment (mostly against Catholics), and the incursions—some called them 'pogroms'—of armed loyalists into Catholic neighborhoods, militant republicans captured the hearts of many. 'Defence associations' were formed, a bitter split tore the IRA into two factions, with the Provisional IRA taking up the banner of armed resistance. Civil war had come. Civil rights were no more.

Paramilitary violence surged across Northern Ireland, dragging the sectarian beast back into full view. Whatever remained of the civil rights movement soon slipped into obscurity. The nationalists of DCAC and NICRA were the first to abandon ship, going on to form the Social-Democratic Labour Party (SDLP), taking their constitutional agenda out of the streets and back into parliament. The young militants of the New Left movement mostly fell by the wayside, having become all but irrelevant in the rising civil war. Some others did plod on at the cost of becoming nearly indistinguishable in their rhetoric from that of the armed 'Provos' and so NICRA was disbanded. Though later revived, it remained but a small and unimposing wing of the 'Official' republican movement.

Although sectarianism did play a role in Northern Ireland during the 1960s, a closer examination of the writings and speeches of Northern Ireland's civil rights activists reveals that the movement was a deliberate attempt to break with traditional nationalism and to embrace new themes and symbols which were not Irish in the ethnic or religious sense. A growing number of Northern Ireland residents—mostly Catholics—had thus begun as early as 1963 to turn their backs on sectarian definitions of Irishness and to forge a new and more inclusive identity. In doing so, leaders of the civil rights movement adopted the 'foreign' concepts of racial harmony, human rights, decolonisation, national liberation, and radical democratic socialism in their quest to end sectarian discrimination. On the other hand, very few in the unionist camp shared these concerns; nor did a significant portion of dedicated republicans, whose worldviews and political interests were deeply rooted in the traditional sectarian dichotomy.

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[30] Seán MacStiofáin, *Memoirs of a revolutionary* (London, 1975), p. 99.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to understand the role international events played in bringing the civil rights movement to life. The world that came to Northern Ireland in the 1960s was a complex patchwork of ideologies that further exacerbated the generational and ideological divisions that already existed in the Northern state. For a large number of Catholics and some Protestants, foreign events challenged and transformed their understanding of the nature of unionism, of sectarianism, and of discrimination in the Northern State. By joining in what they saw as a world-wide movement against right-wing tyranny, the civil rights protestors of Northern Ireland believed that social justice could be achieved through a democratic transformation of the state from a reactionary Unionist regime to a more socialist, democratic, and pluralistic system. The issue of the border would resolve itself naturally and peacefully, many hoped, if the unionist elite could be compelled to renounce the unfair practices that perpetuated its stranglehold on local and state institutions.

The short life span and mitigated successes of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement are best explained by the fact that it was a deeply divided coalition. The narrow strip of ground on which the movement stood united in the autumn of 1968 eroded as quickly as it appeared. It never did develop strong, central leadership such as the American movement had in Martin Luther King, Jr., and it was easily splintered by internecine squabbles over methodology and political convictions. Forging a strong and united movement proved impossible to achieve, mainly because the movement had no single long-term vision under which an anti-unionist majority could unite.

There remains a good deal of disagreement over the level of discrimination that existed in Northern Ireland leading up to the civil rights campaign. Nevertheless, authors such as Whyte, Purdie and Rose have convincingly argued that such practices had gone on with much the same intensity for nearly four decades.[31] Certainly, the significant lack of popular support for the IRA Border Campaign of 1957-62 suggests that unionist discrimination was not sufficiently intolerable in the early 1960s to drive large numbers of Northern Catholics into the revolutionary fold. Thus, a more important issue to consider is not the extent of actual discrimination that took place but the changing consciousness of those who suddenly came to believe that discrimination in Northern Ireland had exceeded its tolerable limits. While there is little doubt that discrimination had occurred and did occur, the reasons for which many Northern Catholics and some Protestants reacted the way they did, when they did, had more to do with what they were reading in the papers and watching on television than what was being done by a handful of gerrymandered municipal councils.

The Northern Ireland civil rights movement has not been altogether ignored by the historical literature, though it remains to this day a subject of secondary importance in Irish historiography. Too often has the movement been discussed solely in the light of the sectarian problem or as an introduction to the period of the Troubles. Our understanding of the civil rights movement as a broad coalition of socialists, and as the fruit of the international protest culture of the late 1960s, has greatly suffered because of this. Indeed, Purdie was right to warn us that the Northern Ireland of the 1960s is "a lost world in which most of the political landmarks are different and different assumptions and aspirations underpin politics."[32] As post-Troubles Northern Ireland enters a new era in which sectarianism might be on the wane, we can hope that the civil rights movement, as a pluralistic and forward-looking force, will stir-up greater interest and research in the years to come.

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[31] John Whyte, 'How Much Discrimination Was There Under the Unionist Regime, 1921-68?' in Tom Gallagher and James O'Connell (eds.), *Contemporary Irish Studies* (1983); Bob Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*; Richard Rose, *Governing Without Consensus: An Irish Perspective* (London, 1971).

[32] Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, p. 1.

SEÁN SOUTH FROM GARRYOWEN

Alex McKillican

On New Year's Day 1957 Seán South, a section leader with an Irish Republican Army (IRA) column was killed during an attack on a heavily protected Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) garrison in Brookeborough, Co. Fermanagh. He was born into a small business family at number forty-seven, Henry Street, Limerick and not in Garryowen as the song *Sean South of Garryowen* suggests.[1] It was in the context of a politically disparate and bourgeoning young Irish republic that South became involved in republican activism. This manifested itself through the attempted forceful dismantling of partition. South was infatuated with the 'unfinished deeds' of 1916. For the 1956 Easter Commemoration, South drew up flyers which were written in Irish, but translated to say the following

> To the men of Limerick, we have clear indication that Ireland is not yet free, nineteen Irishmen are in coffins because of their attempts to free her. Year after year their loyal friends [republicans] show them the deepest respect and honour them – the Easter heroes. And it is clear from the people who always come to pay their respects that the aim of the1916 rebellion is still alive and strong amongst us.

Each flyer is headed with the words, Arm Poblachta na hEireann meaning Irish Republican Army.[2] Much emphasis was placed on the ending of partition in the 1950s. This was an unstable decade in political terms and during election campaigns the rhetoric from all the main parties concentrated on the issues of economics and a settlement on the age old question of partition.[3] The emphasis on partition by constitutionally elected political parties proved to be nothing more than hyperbole, a way of tapping into the nationalistic mindsets of the voters. More simply, there existed two political traditions in the Republic of Ireland: Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. Both parties were born from the ashes of the civil conflict in the 1920s which had both marred and at the same time decided the course of Irish political history. South's political and cultural outlooks were ultra republican and conservative. He saw much wrong with the culture, politics and the economy, as well as the existence of the border, which defined partition.[4] South believed that by ending partition Ireland would be free to fulfil her potential, and in the process create a Gaelic utopia, freed from outside influence. In 1956 he joined a revitalised IRA.

Prior to joining the Limerick unit of the IRA, South led a life of clerical work, part time political activism and part-time soldiering with the local Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil (FCA) unit stationed at Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick.[5] He was employed by a local timber merchant where the 'low wages' and 'attitudes of the management' fuelled his dreams of the ideal republic.[6] When not attending to more practical matters of a clerk, South often sketched or wrote. His passion for both writing and sketching were heavily informed by his politics and these two mediums he explored with some talent and results. South was a member of the Limerick branch of the Gaelic League and his idealism manifested itself in a practical sense through the setting up of an organisation, Saighdiurí na Saoirse, to promote this side of Irish life. His insistence on only speaking Irish, unless the use of English was unavoidable, along with his persistence in only buying Irish goods, formed, among other things, the constitutional essence of the organisation.

Saighdiuirí na Saoirse, or, soldiers of freedom in English, was created to promote the awareness of the Anglo influence which was omnipresent in Irish life.[7] For South, this influence represented a stranglehold on Gaelic potential, both economically and culturally. South believed there was a 'reconquest' occurring, due in part, to wealthy English aristocrats who had bought lands in the republic after the Second World War. South's politics are best described as being conservative and at the same time revolutionary. His religious belief added to this hard-line and conservative outlook and was a major element of his life. The IRA's Chief of Staff at the time, Tony Magan, was committed a committed republican and devout Roman Catholic. He saw the volunteers under his control as a group who were zealous in their attitudes and lifestyles concerning their IRA involvement. He wished to create a revolutionary army of almost

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[1] Des Fogerty, *Sean South of Garryowen* (Ennis, 2006), p. 9.

[2] Easter Commemoration, flyer written by Sean South – Private collection courtesy of Tony Nolan.

[3] Diarmaid Ferriter, *The transformation of Ireland: 1900-200* (London, 2004), pp. 464-85.

[4] Cartoon by Sean South, satirising partition and its effects on the 'Free-state', Private collection - courtesy of Jim South.

[5] Jim South – interviewed 27 July 2006.

[6] Tony Nolan – interviewed 20 August 2006. Nolan was a close friend of Sean South, having been a colleague of his in McMahon's timber yard and having been a comrade of his in the IRA.

[7] Fogerty, *Sean South of Garryowen*, p. 37.

warrior/monk-like devotees and in Seán South he found one such soldier.[8] At the moment of his death, having been already shot many times, South is reputed to have continued to give orders in Irish as Bren gun bullets slammed into the confused column.[9] The influence of the Catholic Church on his politics was telling. A daily communicant and founding member of the Limerick branch of *Maria Duce* his growing zealousness was confirmed by way of the now controversial confraternity at his local place of worship, St. Joseph's Church on O'Connell Avenue.

South no doubt saw the ending of partition in Ireland as the 'holy grail' in his attempt to re-Gaelicise and unite Ireland. If his fairytale of a united and completely Gaelic Ireland could not come about through the democratic political process, then it could perhaps come about through the use of force. Being heavily involved at a community level with religious and cultural organisations, South experienced political involvement when he campaigned locally for Clann na Poblachta in the run up to the 1948 general election.[10] The 'Clann' moulded itself as the 'Republican Party' filling the political vacuum which constitutional republicanism was experiencing. Success in the 1948 election signalled the beginning of the end for Clann na Poblachta. As far as republicans were concerned the party had committed a mortal sin by going into government with Fine Gael. This was a step too far for many republicans including South. Allying themselves with Fine Gael was seen as hypocrisy personified and for South, became the 'straw that broke the camels back.'[11] Being hugely influenced by the sacrifice of Patrick Pearse South became fully intoxicated by the characters and events of 1916. He wasted no time in fixing his energies on his subversive activities, and after attending a high level IRA training camp in the Dublin Mountains, returned as the Limerick unit's Training Officer.

The underground and clandestine nature of IRA activity no doubt proved itself to be romantic and exciting for South. As the Training Officer for the Limerick unit he was dedicated to the point of being unrealistic. His insistence on making the Limerick volunteers into a unit of all-Irish speakers was more idealistic than any way pragmatic. Due to his FCA training, and because of his own dedication, South became a competent and faithful officer, quickly becoming 'the top man' in Limerick IRA circles.[12] At that time the IRA unit in Limerick, just as in other city and county units, apart from the army headquarters in Dublin, was quite simplistic in its structure. The basic set-up of the IRA unit in Limerick was as follows; the unit was made up of volunteers who were commanded by an O/C (Officer Commanding). The O/C prior to the opening of the IRA's campaign in late 1956 was Willie Gleeson. Gleeson was a staunch republican who saw active service with the unit in and along border areas of Northern Ireland. He also doubled as a Training Officer while his day job as an ESB worker lent itself, in particular, to bomb-making. Seán South was a most active Training Officer in his unit, training his comrades in field-craft, manoeuvres and weapon drilling and handling. South learned these skills during his time with the FCA. The weapons with which the IRA unit trained had come from the dramatic arms raids in Derry, Omagh and Armagh in the early part of the 1950s. The unit's training did not just concern itself with military matters, but also with education and propaganda. Tony Nolan, who had dual membership within the IRA and Sinn Fein, fulfilled the role of Education Officer.[13] The unit was left to its own devices and because of this became self-styled. Lectures in history and Irish classes were available to the volunteers and attendance was encouraged by the unit's more senior members. Just how in-depth, frequent or well-attended these events were is questionable.

The most important figure in IRA circles in Limerick City at this time was Paddy Mulcahy. A staunch republican, he had earned hardcore republican kudos following numerous arrests, and had served jail terms for his republican activity.[14] It was because of this activity as well as his internment in the 1940s, that he became a kind of 'godfather' of the republican movement in the city.[15] He was the figure most volunteers met before they were given permission to join the unit in Limerick and he also fulfilled the role of quartermaster. He liaised with General Headquarters (GHQ) on a regular basis. South's influence on his trainee volunteers was not just practical in a military sense, but was emotional and moral also. 1950s Limerick proved to be an innocent and naïve place for a young would-be revolutionary. One particular volunteer, who was struggling with the morality of being in the IRA, was quickly put at his ease by South

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[8] Brendan O'Brien, *Pocket history of the IRA: From 1916 onwards* (Dublin, 1997), p. 49.

[9] Paddy O'Regan, in TG4 Documentary on '50s campaign.' 2007. O'Regan was a comrade of South's during the raid on Brookeborough.

[10] Eithne Mac Dermott, *Clann na Poblachta* (Cork, 1998), p. 27.

[11] Nolan – interview 20 August 2006.

[12] Christy O' Sullivan, IRA volunteer and comrade of Sean South, interviewed 1 September 2006.

[13] This structure of the IRA unit is an interpretation of information given by various volunteers involved at the time.

[14] Uinseann MacEoin, *The IRA in the twilight years: 1923-1948* (Dublin, 1997), p. 603.

[15] Nolan, interview, 20 August 2006.

> Seán wouldn't speak English at all. He wouldn't speak any English and he would encourage you [to speak Irish]. I remember one night the clergy were on about it…any fella in the IRA…it was a mortal sin. That was a tough thing at the time, if a priest told you that you had to give up the IRA, you believed him. I used to say this to Seán South and he used give me a lecture and say it was "OK". "You'll go straight to heaven if anything happens". He was the biggest figure in the IRA in Limerick; everything centred round him. He took over the training as well. He was the supreme patriot – he was the reincarnation of Patrick Pearse.[16]

Buoyed by the recent success of arms raids, the IRA's plan to incite a nationalist uprising through guerrilla tactics, was now almost ready to be put in place. Due to the activities of splinter groups such as Saor Uladh and others, the plan known as 'Operation Harvest' was brought forward.[17] In late November 1956 the IRA sent units to border areas and based the volunteers in safe houses to await further instruction. The Limerick unit of the IRA had been training for approximately just over two years before Operation Harvest commenced. The opening of the IRA campaign took the Limerick unit by surprise and in late November 1956, five of its own volunteers departed for Dublin where they were assembled into columns, before the drive to border areas. In a letter written to his brother Gerard just a week or so into the campaign, South's attitude to the campaign and his involvement in it is telling

> Dear Gearoid,
> As soon as you read in the papers that the fighting has begun go to mam and tell her not to worry, myself and the other lads will be alright. We will wait in the hills until the fighting is over, and please God we will come home. Tell Seán Og, Sile and Aine that their uncle is an outlaw now. And finally try to put mam at her ease. May God bless you all.
> Seán.[18]

Brookeborough, in Co. Fermanagh was the home to the then Northern Ireland Prime Minister, Sir Basil Brooke. Using a cattle lorry for the raid the IRA column – the Pearse Column - commanded by Seán Garland, reached the Co. Fermanagh town and their objective on 1 January 1957. The target of Brookeborough held a special significance for the column to which South was attached. During the raid some basic errors in communication along with a hastily positioned lorry, cost the attackers the upper hand,

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[16] Frank Doyle, interviewed 13 August 2006.

[17] Brian Feeney, *Sinn Fein: A hundred turbulent years* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 203-4.

[18] As read by Gerard South, *Leargas*, RTE Television, 1997. (This is an edited version of the original letter).

and served as an ill-prepared platform from which to launch an effective attack. South was killed by Sergeant Kenneth Cordner who was on duty that night. Cordner had time to man and fire the recently positioned Bren gun from a top window giving him an advantageous and deadly line of fire on the lorry below.[19] The basic intention of the attackers was to blow up the barracks after the garrison had been forced to surrender. This was to be done by placing a mine at the entrance, which upon detonation, the column would signal for the defenders to relinquish their stronghold. After the garrison's personnel were rendered defenceless the entire barracks was to be destroyed using some further mines.[20] Due to badly prepared and completely ineffective mines the element of surprise was lost and the advantage was handed overwhelmingly to the defenders. Gunfire was exchanged, grenades thrown into the building and for a number of minutes mayhem reigned. During the gunfight South was hit many times as rounds from the defenders Bren pierced the lorry's panelling. Ironically, South too was manning a Bren, but had a poor angle of fire on the building. He died almost instantly from his wounds. Another IRA volunteer, Feargal O' Hanlon, was hit in the legs and dragged back on the lorry by comrades. Due to the severity of his injuries, he later bled to death.

The raid from the attacker's perspective had backfired completely, and had cost the column two members, with others sustaining a range of injuries. In the debacle, composure and indeed bravery eventually surfaced and the column made its escape. The column then made its getaway with the lorry bleeding oil while volunteers bled blood. The lorry was driven to a near disused farmhouse a few miles from Brookeborough, whereupon the decision was taken to leave the remains of South, along with the 'unsavable' O'Hanlon in an outhouse, while the rest of the column, some badly injured, made a dramatic escape back across the Co. Fermanagh countryside.[21] RUC and B-Special personnel soon discovered the bodies of the IRA volunteers while others searched in all directions for their fellow raiders. The escaping column walked through the night and eventually made their way back to relative safety securing the injured medical treatment in Monaghan General Hospital. The bodies of South and O'Hanlon were left overnight in the outhouse of the farm and were removed for medical examination the next day. The reaction to South's death, which became fully evident at his funeral, was dramatic. News came through by the start of early morning of the second of January. Among the first to hear the news was South's brother Jim

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[19] Sean Garland in 50th Anniversary booklet.

[20] Ruairi O' Bradaigh in 'Brookeborough' Leargas, RTE 1997. O'Bradaigh was an active member of the IRA during the 1950s Campaign. He was later Chief of Staff of the IRA and President of Sinn Fein.

[21] Garland, 50th Anniversary booklet.

> In fact I was already up. I was shaving and listening to the radio. I always would have the radio on in the morning while shaving. It was then I heard it. They said a man with 'red hair had been killed.' "Oh God" says I…I knew it was Seán.[22]

Emotions now ran high for Jim South and his next concern was for his mother. Firstly he made contact with his brother Gerard. Due to the severity and manner of the tragedy, brothers Jim and Gerard decided they needed some moral support when breaking the news to their mother. Seán South was a devout Roman Catholic and had a close relationship Father Athanassius, a local priest, for whom 'Seán did many favours.'[23] The brothers asked the priest to accompany them when breaking the news to their mother. The priest refused. This deeply hurt the brothers and is something they could never fully 'get over.'[24] Neither was there an official or unofficial visit from the Gardai.[25] The South family could not rely on their spiritual or civic leaders, but could rely on the IRA which dealt with the funeral arrangements and expenses. The IRA now had two volunteers killed while attempting to end partition. The reaction from the government led by John A Costello was obvious in its condemnation of the raid. Costello saw the IRA's campaign as 'older men leading younger men.'[26] The deaths, in the immediate aftermath at least, served to mark a kind of moral victory for the IRA. This became evident when fifty thousand attended South's funeral in his native city on 6 January 1957.[27] Such was the initial impact of his death that it was officially recognised at local governmental level. At a City Corporation meeting just a day after South's death, a moment of silence was observed in council chambers as members stood to pay respect, at least outwardly to the dead IRA volunteer.[28]

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[22] Jim South, interview 27 July 2006.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] John A Costelloe, former Taoiseach – from a recording of a live broadcast two days after Brookeborough. Leargas, RTE, 1996.
[27] *Limerick Leader*, 8 January 1957.
[28] A motion of condolence from the minutes of a Limerick City Corporation meeting, 2 January 1957.

After driving north to identify the body of their brother, Jim and Gerard South attended an inquest into the deaths of the raiders. The inquest was held in Co. Fermanagh, under heavily police and military guard. The following is a short reproduction of the findings which that inquest produced, concerning the actions and death of Seán South. The inquest on Seán South opens with Jim South giving evidence

> I was not aware […] that my brother was a member of an illegal organisation and was surprised when I heard of the circumstances of his death. At one time he was a member of the FCA but had severed his connections with it.[29]

Having read his deposition Jim South said to the Coroner

> I said that I was not aware that my brother was a member of an illegal organisation. I do not recognise that he was a member of any illegal organisation. The only illegal organisations in this country are the British Forces.[30]

The funeral represented a milestone in republican history in Ireland. The fifty thousand in attendance was a reflection of the political limbo which the young state was still experiencing. On that day Dermot Foley, a local pharmacist and camera enthusiast, captured the funeral cortege of South on 8mm black and white film from a third storey window as it made its way up Patrick Street and turned left onto William Street, where it eventually arrived at the grave site in Mount St. Lawrence's. This film is unique for many reasons. The thousands in silent attendance made obvious not just because of the lack of soundtrack but because of the stony grey countenances and almost uniform clothing of both the men and women, which adds to solemnity of the situation.[31]

The death and funeral of Seán South marked a watershed in physical force republicanism in this period. By the early 1960s the IRA's 'Operation Harvest' or Border Campaign had ended in failure. An official ceasefire was called in 1962. IRA GHQ released this statement in its newspaper, the *United Irishman*

> To the Irish people,
> The leadership of the resistance Movement has ordered the termination of the Campaign of Resistance to British occupation launched on December 12, 1956. Instructions issued to the Volunteers of the Active Service Units and of local units in the occupied area have now been carried out. All arms and other material have been dumped and all fulltime Active Service Volunteers have been withdrawn.
> The decision to end the Resistance Campaign has been taken in view of the general situation. Foremost among the factors motivating this situation has been the attitude of the general public whose minds have been distracted from the supreme issue facing the Irish people – the unity and freedom of Ireland.

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[29] Fogerty, *Sean South of Garryowen*, p. 117
[30] Ibid.
[31] VHS recording taken from the original footage shot on 8mm film by Dermot Foley of Sean South's funeral cortege – Limerick City January 1957. Courtesy of Jim South.

> The Irish Resistance Movement renews its pledge of eternal hostility to the British Forces of Occupation in Ireland. It calls on the Irish people for increased support and looks forward with confidence – in co-operation for the final and victorious phase of the struggle for the full freedom of Ireland.[32]

So what did South die for? Was his death necessary? What is the legacy of the Brookeborough raid? Opinions are undoubtedly divided. His legacy is now identified in popular culture through the song *Sean South of Garryowen* and it is through this that most people are familiar with his story. In Limerick City Library, the reader will discover files on an eclectic mix of Limerick characters. Alongside the names there is a short, more often than not, one word description of the person. For example, and in no particular order; O'Brien, Edna – writer; Ryan, James – Hangman; O'Mara, Joseph – Tenor; Tait, Peter – industrialist; Sarsfield, Patrick – patriot; Rice, Edmund Ignatius – Founder of Christian Brothers; O'Brien, Kate – writer. Seán South's file is there along with its contents telling the story of his tragic end. The file is marked South, Seán; he is simply described as – patriot.

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[32] *United Irishman*, March 1962.

Amicable in tone yet fruitless in result: politicians, press and public and the Buckingham Palace Conference, 1914[1]

Conor Mulvagh

The Buckingham Palace Conference (21-24 July 1914) stands as one of the great climaxes of the Home Rule Crisis. While much of the Home Rule saga was played out in the gritty forum of the House of Commons and even on the streets and crossroads of Ireland's cities and towns, the last great effort to reach an amicable solution to what was a rapidly deteriorating situation was held in the opulent surroundings of the British Monarch's primary residence. For Ireland, this was an event comparable to the great continental conferences of the nineteenth century, at a point in time where the Irish question, and especially the Ulster question, were paramount to the strength and survival of the Empire. For the British government and the Crown, this was conflict resolution on a grand scale. There would, however, be no Metternich or Bismarck capable of brokering an honest peace in this instance. With both sides more firmly entrenched than the armies that took to battle a short few months later, the saga of nationalist Ireland's constitutional struggle for self-government and Unionism's bid to oppose it would end with both sides content with deadlock and extremists fully prepared to usurp the throne that John Redmond soon began to neglect with the onset of the European War.

While the deliberations of that week would have a lasting impact on the shape of partition, the immediate result of the conference was utter failure. On 22 July 1914, only one day after it had started, it was becoming abundantly clear to the government that this conference, their last ditch effort to resolve the Ulster question, would soon come to an inconclusive end. Following the deliberations of that day, the Liberal Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, wrote to his mistress and confidante, Venetia Stanley, informing her of the hopeless nature of the negotiations. Speaking of the recalcitrance of the two Irish leaders, Asquith expressed his desperation, observing that 'nothing could have been more amicable in tone, or more desperately fruitless in result.'[2]

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[1] I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Professors Ronan Fanning and John Coakley and to Dr Kieran Rankin for their advice and encouragement in the course of researching this paper.

[2] HH Asquith to Venetia Stanley, 22 July 1914 [102], in HH Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, ed. Michael and Eleanor Brock (Oxford, 1982), p. 109.

While the results of the Buckingham Palace Conference have been the subject of a substantial corpus of scholarship over the years, the tone in which the conference was conducted has never been extensively analysed. On this topic, there is much to be addressed. Firstly, the conduct of the participants within the conference comes in for special attention. The presence of the King, which hung over the proceedings even in the Monarch's personal absence, was a pivotal factor in both the successful convocation and in the relative longevity of the talks.[3] Secondly, the general public both in Ireland and Britain, can be seen to have played a decisive role in dictating the actions of all representatives at the conference. By 1914, both the Unionist and Nationalist parties had aroused previously unprecedented levels of active support across Ireland. This was made all the more potent through the organisation of paramilitary volunteer forces in both camps during 1913. The subsequent arming of these factions meant that much political power devolved to grassroots level by the summer of 1914. This resulted in a shift in the power-balance away from the legitimate political arena and into the hands of each faction's political leaders, whose support now lay in the furtherance of the aims and objectives of their respective publics. The third and final factor in assessing the tone of the Buckingham Palace Conference was the media. In both Britain and Ireland, the media portrayal of what was intended to be a secret conference had a decisive role in altering perceptions of the event, and in bolstering its relative importance in the public mindset, in both public and parliamentary arenas. From the pages of *The Times* to the cartoons of *Punch* and from the nationalist *Freeman's Journal* to the Ulster unionist *Belfast News-letter*, there was much of interest and importance to be discussed about what was going on behind closed doors in Buckingham Palace that week. In this way, the media proved to be a crucial intermediary between the public and their political representatives within the palace. This paper will thus proceed along these three divisions, looking at the politicians involved, the public, and the press, and their respective roles in influencing the tone and outcome of proceedings between 21 and 24 July 1914.

Firstly, in terms of the politicians involved, the tone of the conference appears to have been set through a mixture of precedent and circumstance. In the advent of the conference, a fundamental dichotomy was opened up between the precedent that an invitation from the King could not reasonably be refused by any involved party, and the circumstance that matters in Ireland had gone beyond amicable inter-party resolution by that time. Thus, while it was neither possible nor desirable to resolve the Ulster question in such a conciliatory manner for either Nationalist or Unionist representatives, they were nonetheless compelled to attempt such a feat due to the presence of the King at the centre of affairs. Indeed, in the cabinet diary of Charles Hobhouse, the author records that Asquith had enunciated this belief on 17 July, stating that Carson – who had made it clear that he doggedly opposed participation in any such conference – 'would not refuse to attend if his sovereign summoned him to one.'[4] That the Unionist and Nationalist delegates agreed to attend only due to the fact that the King himself had called the conference, 'in my house' as he put it, is not to infer that either the Carsonite or Redmondite factions were merely 'going through the motions' at the conference.[5] It does suggest that for both the Nationalist and Unionist factions present at the discussion table, resolution was never a realistic aim in the proceedings of that week. Only the government side under Asquith wished for a speedy and conclusive agreement on the issues at hand. For both Irish factions, appearing strong in the face of the opposition took precedence over the pursuit of a successful outcome to the Ulster question at this time.

The worsening situation in Europe coupled with the sheer frustration that was felt in relation to the Irish question, which threatened to devolve into civil war - further engrossing the British government in the process - made Asquith and his allies desperately hope for a speedy conclusion to the Home Rule Crisis. In 1912, it had seemed that Ireland would finally be removed from the political arena by 1914; with the passing of the third Home Rule Bill, the Irish question - and Ireland's political parties - could finally be removed from Westminster.[6] To this end, Asquith spoke to the King on 17 July, urging him to convene such a meeting with the aim of firmly resolving the issue at hand.[7] According to Asquith's diary, the King displayed a keen interest in the prospect of a conference, personally suggesting that the Speaker should preside.[8]

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[3] On the third day of deliberations, Bonar Law made the point that 'it seemed right ... in view of the fact that this conference was called in the name of the King, to let it continue for at least three days.'; Andrew Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 23 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, p. 3.

[4] Charles Hobhouse, *Inside Asquith's Cabinet: from the diaries of Charles Hobhouse*, ed. Edward David (London, 1977), p. 173.

[5] George V to Asquith, 18 July 1914, NLI, RP, MS. 15,188/14.

[6] The idea of a conference had been circulating for quite some time; John Grigg, *Lloyd George: from peace to war, 1912-1916* (London, 1985), p. 124.

On Tuesday 21 July, the conference opened with a short address by the King in which he justified his actions, stating that his intervention was justified at that point by the 'exceptional circumstances' under which the delegates had been brought together.[9] In the eyes of George V, the situation had become so acute that 'to-day the cry of civil war is on the lips of the most responsible and sober-minded of my people.'[10] Regardless of the pessimism with which the Irish delegates viewed the conference, George V can be seen to have been the most enthusiastic believer in a fruitful outcome to the episode.[11] His naïve optimism would be short-lived, given the hopeless outcome of his supra-parliamentary gamble.

It was left to the delegates to decide whether the King's speech should be published or not. While Redmond's account simply notes that the conference unanimously resolved to make the speech public, in Bonar Law's memoir of the proceedings, it is noted that this unanimity was not immediately arrived at.[12] Significantly, both in terms of dictating the public perception of the event, and in indicating the degree to which the parties involved expected a successful outcome, Law's account notes that the Speaker intended to publish this speech at the end of deliberations. John Dillon, however, an otherwise peripheral figure in the conference, pointed out that the optimism of the King's speech would be tainted if it were to be published simultaneously with the announcement of the conference's failure.[13] Such an astute insight into the outside perception of the conference by Dillon indicates the level to which the Irish factions were intent on gearing deliberations towards public perception. In addition, the fact that this Nationalist delegate was already thinking in this pessimistic frame of mind, envisioning the 'unfortunate' breakdown of the conference before the parties had so much as stated their positions, indicates that a successful outcome was far

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[7] George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England* (London, 1966), p. 329.
[8] Ibid.
[9] George V, 'Speech to the Buckingham Palace Conference [published]', 21 July 1914, NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Harold Nicholson, *King George the Fifth: his life and reign* (London, 1953), p. 240.
[12] John Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 21st 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 1.
[13] Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 21 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, p. 1.

from expected even at the outset.[14] The enunciation of such a negative stance at this early stage is more easily explicable if one accepts that the parties did not need to state their cases at the opening of the conference; each stance had been preordained and was fully understood by all involved well in advance of these negotiations. In this light, the conference can be seen to have been more concerned with formalising deadlock than in making a serious effort on the part of either Nationalist or Unionist representatives to resolve the issues at hand.

The issue of the publication of the King's opening speech also gives an insight into the important issue of public perception to the conference. While this will be discussed at greater length later, it is important to stress the significance of media portrayal and public opinion in the minds of the delegates at this point. Not only was the question of publishing the King's speech important to all parties involved, the very next order of business rested on the same topic; the degree to which the public should be informed of the proceedings at Buckingham Palace, either during or after the event. Again the Nationalist side spearheaded discussions, suggesting that all deliberations be kept confidential.[15] There was universal consensus on this matter and it was also decided that no official record of the conference be taken.[16] In these discussions over the 'ground rules' of the conference, there were, in fact, only two items that were deemed necessary to release to the press: namely, the King's address and a statement announcing the final outcome of the conference. In the event of failure, the reasons for such an outcome were to be included in the latter.[17] Only when the issues of confidentiality and public perception of events had been successfully agreed upon did the conference move to discuss the actual issues at hand. On these matters, however, consensus was not so forthcoming.

Asquith opened discussions by splitting the issue of partition into two distinct topics of discussion; a time limit and the proposed area of exclusion.[18] While Asquith favoured discussing what he thought to be the more manageable issue of area, all accounts note that Carson was insistent that time limit be addressed in the first instance.[19] Just as Redmond had usurped the government's lead on the issue of secrecy, Carson now did likewise in proposing his own preferred schedule for deliberations. Redmond strongly rejected Carson's suggestion, declaring that area should be discussed first and promising that consensus would be more likely on the issue of time limit after the area to which this restriction would apply was first determined. Law notes that Dillon again raised the spectre of the break-up of the conference at this time if the Nationalist Party's proposed schedule for discussion was not accepted. Unlike in Redmond's account, Law notes that the Nationalists 'implied that they would give way on time limit, but they could not say so unless agreement was reached [on the question of area].'[20] Evidently, such a momentous compromise on the Nationalist side was not excluded from Redmond's account through fault of memory. He clearly did not wish to record that he and Dillon were prepared to yield such an important concession unless their gamble proved prudent in hindsight – Redmond was of course not aware that Bonar Law was taking note of such promises for posterity.

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[14] Ibid. It is unclear whether this adjective is a quotation from Dillon or if it reflects the sentiments of Bonar Law himself.
[15] Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 21st 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 2.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 21 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, p. 1.
[18] According to Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 21st 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 3.

The Unionists having thus gained the upper hand, and proceeding 'on the assumption that time limit was abandoned,' conceded to discuss proposals on the area to be excluded.[21] Carson couched his bid for a nine county Ulster in the terms that such an exclusion would, in fact, be amenable to the Nationalist side by shortening the period of exclusion. Redmond and Dillon could not agree to this suggestion, as the exclusion of such a high percentage of nationalists from Home Rule would irrevocably damage their standing in the eyes of their followers. Redmond then presented his own case in the form of a long, pre-prepared speech, extolling the virtues of the county option, and explaining the limits to which the Nationalist Party could reasonably support the principle of exclusion.[22] This speech ended with a comparison of the relative statistics for Catholics

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[19] Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 21^{st} 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 3 and Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 21 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, p. 2.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[22] 'Mr Redmond's Address, Buckingham Palace, July 21^{st}', PA, LGP, C/20/2/9.

and Protestants in Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry, and Armagh, emphasising what Redmond saw as the strength of the nationalist case there.[23]

Following Redmond's speech, the two accounts of the proceedings of that day differ markedly. According to Redmond, Carson then agreed that on foot of the Nationalist Party leader's speech, 'nothing was to be gained by discussing any further proposal for the total exclusion of Ulster' and thence the conference adjourned until the following morning.[24] At this stage, however, Law recounts an episode entirely absent from Redmond's memorandum of the day.[25] The Conservative Party leader claims that Carson took exception to aspects of Redmond's speech and proceeded to construct an elaborate rebuttal, focusing on the principle that only areas with significant willing majorities should undergo a complete transformation of government such as would be heralded by Home Rule.[26] According to Law, both Redmond and Dillon admitted that they personally would accept such a solution, but that they could not assent to it as delegates of the Irish Nationalist Party.[27] The Conservative leader's narrative goes on to describe how the conference then applied Carson's proposals to the case of Tyrone and only after this scenario had been fully exhausted did the conference adjourn.[28]

Given the detail of his account, it seems unlikely that Bonar Law would have fabricated such a long sequence of events. This leads one to conclude that Redmond simply omitted this portion of the deliberations from his narrative, either in order to make Carson appear more culpable for the impasse of that day, or simply due to a selective, and somewhat egotistical, recall of events. Given the gravity of the situation, the former appears a more plausible scenario. Whatever the truth of this affair, the first day of the conference thus ended with the 'ground-rules' for the proceedings having been agreed upon, and an impasse on the Ulster question firmly established. This deadlock would only further deteriorate in the proceeding sessions.

Much time has been devoted to the first day of the conference here. The justification for this is twofold. Firstly, while the climactic deliberations of 23 July would be more important in determining the outcome of the conference, the opening session on 21 July most certainly set the tone for future discussions, both in terms of its amicability and its inflexibility. Secondly, the above analysis into the discrepancies between the memoranda of Bonar Law and Redmond has, so far as this author can ascertain, not been seriously undertaken before - it is on the first day of the conference that these incongruities are most pronounced and significant.[29]

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 21^{st} 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 5.

[25] Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 21 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, pp. 3-4.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 4.

[28] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

If the opening session was important for the reasons given above, the meeting that took place on Wednesday 22 July was of significance here due to what occurred prior to the inauguration of formal discussions rather than during official negotiations on the question of Ulster. With the publication of the King's speech in the papers that morning, the conference was rudely awakened to the full force of media 'spin' and the bearing this could have on public perceptions of the conference. Quite unexpectedly, certain British press outlets focused on a seemingly un-provocative element of the King's speech that had been forwarded to them the previous day. In their eyes, the fact that the Monarch could remark that 'to-day civil war is on the lips of the most responsible and sober-minded of my people' was a gross infringement on the part of the Monarchy in parliamentary matters.[30] In the words of the *Daily Chronicle* – one of the publications involved in these 'attacks' on the King[31]

> His Majesty must beware of raising great issues which may dwarf all others in the field of politics. The Liberal Party has not removed the veto of the House of Lords in order to instal [sic] in its place the veto of the Crown.[32]

Evidently, the issues raised by the conference went far beyond the realm of Irish politics in the eyes of such commentators, who chose to portray the conference as the possible genesis of another constitutional crisis such as had erupted in the wake of the House of Lord's rejection of the 1909 budget. It is unclear whether such a slant was employed due to the convictions of the journalists involved, the dominant ideology behind their

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[29] George Dangerfield has perhaps come closest to making such a finding in *The Damnable Question: a study in Anglo-Irish relations* (London, 1977), p. 118.

[30] *The Times* referred to the papers that published these remarks as being of the 'Radical Press'; *The Times*, 23 July 1914.

[31] *The Times*, 23 July 1914.

[32] *Daily Chronicle*, 22 July 1914, quoted in *Freeman's Journal*, 22 July 1914. In stark contrast, *The Belfast News-letter* was quick to defend the King's speech, displaying the extent to which perceptions of this event, and the conference generally, differed in Ireland and Britain: *The Belfast News-letter*, 22 July 1914.

publications, or simply the will of their editors to sell newspapers. What is of significance here, however, is the reception this episode received within the conference itself.

Prior to the official commencement of the second day's proceedings, Bonar Law confronted Asquith on this issue. This confrontation appears to have been phrased amicably, the resulting solution being that Asquith agreed to receive a pre-prepared question in the House of Commons later that day, to which he would answer that he accepted full responsibility for the King's speech. Furthermore, Asquith would publicise the fact that it was the decision of the conference rather than the Monarch to have the document published.[33] Just as in the previous session, issues relating to the outside portrayal and perception of the conference can be seen to have played heavily upon the delegates.

The conference then proceeded to discuss the division of Ulster along Poor Law boundaries. By proposing such a basis for division, the government hoped to resolve the deadlock that was rapidly emerging over what Asquith despairingly referred to as 'that most damnable creation of the perverted ingenuity of man – the County of Tyrone.'[34] Again, the tone of discussions comes in for attention in memoirs of the proceedings. Asquith noted how both Carson and Redmond declared 'I must have the whole of Tyrone, or die; but I quite understand why you say the same.'[35] Such a preposterous stance at a conference table where compromise was the only visible way forward can be understood to have greatly frustrated both the Speaker, in his role as Chair, and the Government – the only party that appeared to wish for a conclusive outcome by this stage.

While the events of this day would go down in infamy in the various memoirs to reflect upon the conference, in the eyes of contemporary public opinion both the Irish parties appeared to be doing good work in upholding their principles in the face of concerted opposition. Thus, Winston Churchill would reflect upon the conference that 'since the days of the Blues and the Greens in the Byzantine Empire, partisanship had rarely been carried to more absurd extremes.'[36] On the other hand, contemporary public reaction saw these developments in quite a different light. Following the conclusion of this, the second session of the conference, all representatives were greeted with cheers as they left the palace. Press reports of a detachment of the Irish Guards cheering Redmond and Dillon on their departure bear testament to the fact that both the nationalist and unionist masses took very seriously the nature of the deliberations at the palace.[37] Just as in the days of Byzantium, those owing allegiance to a faction could not be expected to see their struggle as anything other than iconic.[38] Any grounds for inter-factional compromise paled into insignificance in the face of Ireland's very own *Kulturkampf*.

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[33] Bonar Law, 'Conference at Buckingham Palace, 22 July 1914 [Memorandum], PA, BL 39/4/44, p. 1; Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 22nd 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 1.

[34] Asquith to Stanley, 22 July 1914 [102], in Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, p. 109.

[35] Ibid.

Discussions on 23 July continued along similar lines as those of the previous day. Here, in what was the longest session of the conference, it appears that the issues upon which the conference was convened were discussed more seriously and in more depth than in any other sitting. The positions of both sides remained unchanged from those that had been first stated to the conference on 21 July. Hence, the events of that Thursday were more a case of the government clutching at straws in the vain hope of a compromise than one in which resolution was a likely outcome. While these facts may have been clear to all inside the conference room, it appeared to the press and the expectant public at the gates of the palace that the exact opposite was the case. Given the length of the discussions that day, journalists across the political spectrum concluded that the conference was, in fact, coming closer to reaching agreement on the prospective shape of Ulster than it had been in previous sittings.[39] That the media were entirely wrong in this conclusion should not detract from the significance such reports had on external perceptions of the conference. Indeed, the press coverage of the meeting of 23 July can be seen to have greatly altered the public's attitude towards the conference in both Britain and Ireland.

Interestingly, the *Freeman's Journal* reported that the crowds outside the palace on 23 July did not display any of the optimism they had so loudly shown on the previous two days upon the arrival of delegates at the conference. It seems that pessimism had become firmly rooted in the public mindset by the morning of the third session. This resulted in a waning not only of public optimism, but also of popular interest generally in the negotiations. Now, with the prospect of a fruitful outcome, the public and the media eagerly awaited what would be an anti-climactic conclusion to the four-day conference the next morning.

The government's tactic appears to have been a simple one in these middle days of the conference. Just as on 22 July, when the government's proposal of exclusion based on Poor Law divisions had injected some life into what was already a stagnating affair, as deadlock was approached early in the session on 23 July, Asquith put forward the fresh proposal that area be determined on the basis of plebiscites in each of Ulster's parliamentary constituencies.[40] On this occasion, Nationalist, Unionist and Conservative representatives were unanimous in their unwillingness to entertain such a proposal.[41]

Faced with such unanimous rejection, Asquith attempted the tactic once more, this time suggesting that agreement be reached on all matters excluding Tyrone and that this last unresolved county be left to a third party to parcel out equitably.[42] This and other suggestions could only prolong the conference by hours and minutes rather than an entire day as it had done previously. Thus, with all government initiatives being met with flat and unilateral rejection, 'the question was then discussed as to whether the conference should there and then terminate.'[43] From this point on, Redmond's narrative of the conference records that discussions turned to the matter of how the conference should break up and what statements should be issued to both the public and to the King himself.[44] Given the serious nature of this question for all present, it was to further discuss this matter, and to agree on a wording of the official statement of the conference's failure, that the conference agreed to reconvene on 24 July, for what all accepted would be its final and failing session.

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[36] Winston S Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1911-1918, Volume I* (London, 1938), p. 155.

[37] *Freeman's Journal*, 23 July 1914.

[38] See Robert Blake, *The Unknown Prime Minister: the life and times of Andrew Bonar Law, 1858-1923* (London, 1955), p. 216.

[39] *The Times*, 24 July 1914; *Freeman's Journal*, 24 July 1914; and especially *The Irish Times*, 24 July 1914.

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[40] Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 23rd 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 2.

[41] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[42] Ibid., pp. 4-6.

[43] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[44] Ibid., p. 7.

Significantly, the surviving accounts of this session – those of Redmond and Bonar Law – reflect a marked difference in attitudes towards proceedings that day. Following this, the longest session of the conference, Redmond discoursed extensively on the event, giving detailed information about the topics that were discussed and the stances taken by all sides on issues raised. Indeed, the Nationalist leader's memoir of this day is his longest out of any of the memoranda of the conference, running to seven pages in length.[45] In marked contrast, however, the Conservative leaders' recollections of this session are, in fact, shorter than those he had written following negotiations on Tuesday and Wednesday. In addition, Law's account ignores many important details included in his Nationalist counterpart's version in much that same way as Redmond had omitted vital facts two days previously. In the case of Thursday's meeting, Law's account goes as far as to omit the fact that the conference had failed in all but name by the end of deliberations that day.[46] Perhaps the only conclusion one can draw from such a half-hearted and inaccurate recollection on the part of a central participant in the conference is that Bonar Law had become dispirited by the fruitless and repetitive nature of proceedings by this stage.

That the Buckingham Palace Conference survived for a day after the practical failure of negotiations bears testament to the importance of public perception to all representatives at that conference. The short session of 24 July therefore set about determining how the conference's failure, arrived at the previous day, was to be conveyed to both the King and the public. Asquith notes that discussion on the form of these reports was, in fact, rather dramatic.[47] This adds much credence to the point stressed above that public perception of the conference was paramount in the minds of the delegates. Nonetheless, the only compromise that could be reached on the wording of the conference's report resulted in the speaker publishing a 'rather bald and jejune report,'

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[45] Ibid.

[46] Two independent sources corroborate the fact that Friday's meeting 'consisted merely in settling the words to be publicly used [to announce the failure of the conference]: Asquith to Stanley, 24 July 1914 [103], in Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, 122. Redmond also bears testament to this; Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 23rd 1914' [Confidential memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 7; and Redmond, 'Home Rule Conference at Buckingham Palace, July 24th 1914' [Memorandum], NLI, RP, MS. 15,257/3, p. 1.

[47] Asquith to Stanley, 24 July 1914 [103], in Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, p. 122.

which in no way reflected the drama incurred in its drafting.[48] In the first official announcement to come from behind the closed doors of the conference since the King's speech three days beforehand, the press was informed on 24 July

> The Conference held meetings on the 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th of July respectively. The possibility of defining the area to be excluded from the operation of the Government of Ireland Bill was considered. The Conference being unable to agree either in principle or detail upon such an area brought its meeting to a conclusion.
> (Signed) J.W. Lowther.
> 24th July 1914.[49]

Given the brevity and vagueness of this document, it now stood to the politicians involved to go about salvaging some much needed political capital from the debris of the scuttled conference and the media circus that followed would not disappoint.

As the delegates exited the conference, certain public gestures were made on the part of the Irish delegates from both factions which can be seen to have had a decisive impact in determining the media 'spin' that would be put on the event. Not only did publications such as the *Freeman's Journal* include photos of Redmond and Dillon surrounded by jubilant crowds following the failure of deliberations, a number of somewhat dubious, yet nonetheless significant, anecdotes concerning the conclusion of the conference slowly filtered down to the public.[50] Firstly, there was a reported instance of *rapprochement* between Carson and Redmond in which the latter offered his hand to the former 'for the sake of the old days together on the Circuit.'[51] Similar scenes were observed between Craig and Dillon – two figures that had reportedly never spoken a word to each other prior to the conference.[52] Asquith recounted that 'Redmond assured us that when he said good-bye to Carson, the latter was in tears.'[53] Such manifest stunts can be seen to have been an intrinsic element in cementing the political capital on offer in the aftermath of the conference. Indeed, Redmond made much of his interview with the King, making both press and fellow politicians very aware of the fact that he had been warmly received by the Monarch, who viewed the Nationalist Party leader's position with sympathy – although this enthusiasm on Redmond's part did not escape Asquith, who noted it in his correspondence.[54] In this light, the conference's closure was not the conclusion of the politicking that day. Instead, the careful choreography of the conference's aftermath by Nationalists and Unionists alike is vital to understanding the significance of that day.

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[48] Ibid.

[49] *The Irish Times*, 25 July 1914.

[50] The caption to this image reads 'Mr Redmond and Mr Dillon greeted by enthusiastic supporters on their way from the Buckingham Palace Conference'; *Freeman's Journal*, 25 July 1914.

[51] This anecdote has become a set piece in the hagiography of the conference and is often quoted in histories of the conference. For some examples of its usage in the subsequent historiography, see Stephen Gwynn, *John Redmond's Last Years* (London, 1919), p. 122; Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, p. 332; and Denis Gwynn, *The Life of John Redmond* (London, 1932), p. 343.

[52] John Hostettler, *Sir Edward Carson: A Dream Too Far* (Chichester, 1997), p. 213, and FSL Lyons, *John Dillon: a biography* (London, 1968), p. 353.

[53] Roy Jenkins, *Asquith* (London, 1964), p. 321.

In conclusion, it is perhaps more fruitful to look at the Buckingham Palace Conference in terms of its tone as it is to attempt to reconstruct the intricacies of the deliberations which led to deadlock on the Ulster question. While the content of these negotiations contributed significantly to the shape partition would take in 1920, this was not a significant outcome to the conference when it ended in mid-1914 – indeed it has been shown above that a successful outcome was deemed unlikely by all parties involved from the outset.[55] In this light, the particulars of the conference become, in fact, largely incidentals. The real worth of the conference to both Irish factions was that it provided a forum, a spectacle around which the strength and resilience of each side could be displayed in the face of their opposition. By July 1914, the nationalist and unionist masses, through arms and organisation, had come centre-stage in determining the progress of Home Rule. Both Irish factions had to pander to their respective publics and bolster their support through shows of strength, typified by the Buckingham Palace Conference.

To all parties involved, media portrayal and public perception of the conference were a primary concern. From the very inception of the conference, all sides, but in particular Nationalists and Unionists, made it clear that the amount of information released, and the slant that would be put on it, would be closely controlled as it entered the public arena. Given the enormity of what was before them, neither side could afford to concede any ground, or appear weak, in the face of their opponents. It was for this reason that the government willed such a conference in the first instance, 'especially at Buckingham Palace, the publicity of which would force the negotiators to reveal the slenderness of difference.'[56] Thus, even the government saw public opinion as a pivotal tool in solving the Ulster question. The government's tactic in this regard was quickly usurped by the Irish factions, who firmly grasped the reigns of public opinion and made of the conference what they desired.

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[54] Asquith to Stanley, 24 July 1914 [103], in Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, p. 122.

[55] One of the best articles to deal with the subsequent shaping of partition is Maureen Wall, 'Partition and the Ulster Question (1916-1926), in *The Irish Struggle*, ed. TD Williams (London, 1966).

Somewhat surprisingly, the conference readily agreed on how it was to portray itself to the outside world and, as has been shown above, much time was spent discussing this. Both Nationalist and Unionist representatives were in tacit agreement over their stated aims in the conference: for them, a formally arrived at deadlock was, in fact, a highly desirable result. Therefore, on the main issue of the conference; namely the Ulster question, both sides were unyielding. This insight into the motivations behind Irish involvement in the Buckingham Palace Conference can be seen to account for the resultant tone of the proceedings. While Asquith soon became frustrated by the circular pattern of the negotiations, both Redmond and Carson subtly and diligently cultivated a fruitless conclusion across the four days of discussion.

While the internal tone of the conference was important to the delegates only in so far as decorum had to be maintained in respect to the role of the Monarch in the affair, George V's presence alone can be seen to have accounted for the degree of amicability that existed between the parties assembled at the palace. This paper has shown the extent to which the delegates themselves were in control of the external tone of the conference: the perception of the event having been the subject of much attention throughout deliberations.

Finally, not only does the Buckingham Palace Conference provide an invaluable case study into the workings of internal diplomacy in the British Empire prior to its re-invention with the dawn of Wilsonian political theory, it also gives an insight into the motivations and mandates behind constitutional nationalism, unionism, and government policy prior to the outbreak of the First World War and the resultant metamorphosis of the Irish question. Given the significance of tone over content in this, one of the last great *fêtes* of old world diplomacy, the Buckingham Palace Conference provides an important case study in the importance of showmanship over statesmanship. To the government's utter dismay, the King's Conference more closely resembled a Victorian circus than one of the great feats of nineteenth-century diplomacy. This is not to say that the Buckingham Palace Conference was a farce, but rather it was a well choreographed and carefully orchestrated public spectacle in which playing to the crowd took precedence over all other considerations. It was a spectacle that would, in Churchill's famous assessment, die its death in 'the muddy byways of Fermanagh and Tyrone.'[57] This would not be the last set of talks to flounder over the Irish question: a morass that would relentlessly resurrect itself throughout the history of Ireland and Britain during the twentieth century.

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[56] Hobhouse, *Inside Asquith's Cabinet*, p. 174.

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[57] Churchill, *The World Crisis*, p. 155.

A Notable Absence of Hostility?: Attitudes Towards the Irish in Dundee 1865-1925[1]

Sukaina Haider

Recent historians, recognising the heterogeneity of the Irish experience in Britain and the relative paucity of scholarly research on the prejudice encountered by immigrant communities in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century have expressed the need for more local studies.[2] This essay on the Irish in Dundee 1865-1925 is a response to that call. In order to illustrate that hostility towards the immigrants was notably low, the first section compares the level of anti-Irish sentiment in Dundee with that observed in other British cities. As inter-communal violence was often sparked off by the Home Rule debate, general elections, St Patrick's Day and July Twelfth, these occasions are studied for evidence of the attitudes of the working class host population towards the Catholic incomers, and this is followed by analysis of everyday relations in the city. Court papers, police records, descriptions of employment patterns and reports from the local press are used to highlight that the Dundonian authorities were peculiarly non-discriminatory, since previous investigations have highlighted these sources as providing clear evidence of deep-rooted anti-Irish hostility within British society.[3] The second section offers a series of explanations for the notable lack of prejudice in Dundee. Factors traditionally used to account for the decline in anti-Irish hostility in the period are applied. In addition, it is argued the city's unique social circumstances were crucial in determining the ease with which the immigrants integrated with the local population.

Throughout Britain St Patrick's Day celebrations frequently provoked serious violence. In Dundee, apart from 1872 when the *Advertiser* reported a 'disgraceful riot,' the day passed relatively quietly, with only 'some slight collisions' occurring between juvenile members of the Irish and Scotch communities up until the end of the century.[4] According to Fielding, this probably had more to do with the fact that to fight on St Patrick's Day was a cultural norm, transmitted from one generation to the next, rather than anti-Irish prejudice.[5] The adults' absence from the disorder indicates that there was not the generalised hostility within Dundee's host population as was witnessed in Glasgow for example.[6] A contrast that is all the more notable given that Glasgow and Dundee had almost the same proportions of Irish-born in the 1850s and 1860s.[7] As recent historians argue Glasgow displayed non-typical sectarianism, it is insufficient to compare what in the period were Scotland's first and third cities.[8] It is pertinent therefore, given that communal strife in Britain was often associated with Orange marches taking place around July Twelfth, that there are no reports of events commemorating the Battle of the Boyne being organised in Dundee. In fact, during the 1920s when Orange activity in Scotland increased,[9] judging from the directories, there was no Orange movement in the city.[10] As far as elections and the Home Rule debate is concerned, press research similarly suggests that these events passed without any expression of ethnic tension. Crucially, it seems there was little enthusiasm for arguments on subjects that elsewhere were typically contentious. For example, the Special Commissioner who spent the night at a Dundee lodging house in 1922 described how 'Ireland seemed to be the chief topic of conversation' amongst 'groups of down cast, sullen-looking men … [but] none of them committed himself by expressing an opinion in any way.'[11]

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[1] I wish to acknowledge the support of AHRC and the Institute of Scottish Historical Research, St Andrew's University.

[2] John Herson, 'Migration, 'Community' or Integration? Irish Families in Victorian Stafford' in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds), *The Irish in Victorian Britain: The Local Dimension* (Dublin, 1999), p. 182.

[3] Frances Finnegan, *Poverty and Prejudice: A Study of Irish Immigrants in York 1840-1875* (Cork, 1982); Carolyn A Conley, *The Unwritten Law: Criminal Justice in Victorian Kent* (Oxford, 1991); Lynn Hollen Lees, *Exiles of Erin: Irish Migrants in Victorian London* (Manchester, 1979); Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*. MAG Ó Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Problems of Integration' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31 (1981).

It has been observed that the Irish in Britain had to 'endure continuous hostility from the native populations,' and competition for jobs in particular provoked the antagonism of the host community.[12] There were periodically violent confrontations between the Irish and English in Manchester,[13] and economic distress in Tredegar (South Wales) was the catalyst for racial disorder in 1882 for example.[14] From the late-1870s Dundee's textile economy was in decline, yet despite the frequent periods of short-time and unemployment suffered by the vast majority of the city's workforce, there is no evidence in the archival sources that this background provoked anti-Irish violence. Crucially, the Dundonian crime sources reveal that assaults and breaches of the peace were overwhelmingly alcohol-fuelled and without an ethnic dimension.[15] While Herson found that there was an absence of anti-Irish disorder in Stafford when the shoe-making and agricultural economy was failing, at such time many of the immigrants left. Moreover, the Irish population was small; their low numbers meant an Irish community was 'not a realistic long-term option.'[16] In Dundee on the other hand, when the staple jute trade was in a state of collapse, Irish migrants continued to arrive, adding to an already significant and readily identifiable expatriate community.

O'Day maintains discrimination in many forms, rather than rioting, was the prevalent expression of racial hatred in the period.[17] Thus to be sure that Dundee's Irish community experienced notably low levels of prejudice it is necessary to establish whether the working class population expressed hostility in more subtle ways than by acts of physical violence. It is significant therefore that there was not a racial element to the well documented division between Dundee's weavers and spinners. Unlike London and Greenock, where a dominant Irish influence created something of a 'Hibernian closed shop,' there is no evidence of religion influencing employment in Dundee.[18] Nevertheless, as previous studies have found, evidence concerning the attitudes of the host population is contradictory.[19] For example, in 1883 there was intense opposition from Dundee's host community when a Catholic Church erected an image of the

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[4] *The Weekly News, Dundee City Edition*, 20 March 1880, 21 March 1885.

[5] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 34.

[6] Panikos Panayi (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, 1996), p. 10, Alan O'Day, 'Varieties of Anti-Irish Behaviour in Britain 1846-1922 in Panayi (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain* p. 35.

[7] Ó'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain', p. 152.

[8] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 5.

[9] Scott C Styles, 'The Non-Sectarian Culture of North-East Scotland' in TM Devine (ed.), *Scotland's Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 126.

[10] *The Dundee Trades and Professions Directory 1876-1925.*

[11] *The People's Journal*, 14 January 1922.

[12] Panayi, *Racial Violence in Britain*, p. 8.

[13] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 36, 33.

[14] Panayi, *Racial Violence in Britain*, p. 10.

[15] *Dundee City Police Annual Criminal Returns for the years ending 31st December 1876-1925, and Burgh of Dundee, Returns of Crimes and Offences Reported to the Police and of Cases Brought Before the Dundee Police Court with Other Details and Statistics 1878-1887*, High Court Papers, Sheriff Court Indictment Books, National Archives of Scotland (JC26 1865-1925, CS45/37).

[16] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 264.

[17] O'Day, 'Varieties of Anti-Irish Behaviour', pp. 35-6.

[18] Ó'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain', p. 158, Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 11.

[19] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 33, and Joanna Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1960: Gender, Class and Ethnicity* (London, 1994), p.144.

crucified Christ in its grounds adjacent to a busy thoroughfare. When the cross was removed by the Church authorities they found 'various prominent parts of the image had been painted over with tar.'[20] Even so, given that when a sense of territory similarly provoked religious hatred in Manchester in the 1920s a Catholic Church was firebombed three times, the anti-Irish abuse that did occur in Dundee appears mild in comparison.[21] Moreover, notwithstanding the existence of contradictory sources, the overwhelming absence of evidence of inter-communal tension from the pages of the Dundonian press suggests that ethic hostility was rare. A finding that may be confirmed by the fact that there are no references in the city's extensive local history collection relating to sectarianism in this period.[22]

Nevertheless, assuming there was a relative absence of anti-Irish hostility amongst Dundee's working class community on the basis of the lack of evidence to the contrary is problematic. It is unlikely records of minor confrontations, spiteful comments and other subtle expressions of prejudice will have been made. Evidence gathered from Dundee's Oral History Project relating to the early-twentieth century preserves many facets of life not recorded in the official sources. Dundonian testimony that recalls 'meh pal wis a Catholic, bit me sister's pals were Protestant' suggests that religious difference was not a substantial barrier to working class relationships in the city. Moreover the testimony that 'ma father was Catholic an' ma mother was a Protestant'[23] contradicts Fielding's belief that friendly relations between the English and Irish only existed on a superficial basis.[24] A Dundonian born in 1916 recalled of relations between Catholics and Protestants 'we knew baith sides … we went aboot them, thir wis nae difference.'[25] In London, on the other hand, despite the sharing of neighbourhoods, the social distance between the Irish and English 'was vast.'[26] Here anti-Irish sentiment was common even though many families could have claimed Irish descent.[27]

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[20] William M Walker, *Juteopolis: Dundee and its Textile Workers 1885-1923* (Edinburgh, 1979), p. 118.
[21] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 35.
[22] *The Lamb Collection*, Dundee Local Studies Library.
[23] Graham R Smith, '"None Can Compare" From the Oral History of a Community' in Billy Kay (ed.), *The Dundee Year Book: An Anthology of Living in the City* (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 188.
[24] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 34.
[25] Dundee Oral History Project, tape 013/A/1.
[26] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 63.
[27] Jerry White, *The Worst Street in North London: Campbell Bunk, Islington, between the Wars* (London, 1986), p. 105.

Indeed, as Dundee's historians emphasise the ease with which generations of Irish were absorbed, and their integral part in the city's identity, the shortage of accounts depicting anti-Irish hostility may indeed be a reflection of the exceptionally low levels of racial antagonism in the city.[28] Furthermore, the proclivity of Dundonians for tolerance is indicated by the fact that the Irish were not the only newcomers to thrive in the city. As well as migrants from the Highlands, Glasgow and the Angus countryside, Russian-Jews fleeing their homeland at the turn of the nineteenth century received a welcome. One immigrant born in Minsk in 1901 described the centre of Dundee as 'an awful friendly place,' whereas in other British cities historians have observed that the Eastern Europeans regularly experienced the hostility previously accorded to the Irish.[29] In short, if a Russian-Jew regarded Dundee's atmosphere as 'good humoured' in the period, it is argued that the Irish-Catholics would have found it equally so.[30] It may have been at this time that Dundonians first earned their reputation for being, as a recent travel guide declared, 'among the friendliest, most welcoming … people you'll meet.'[31]

While it is largely the lack of evidence to the contrary which proves that there was a relative absence of anti-Irish hostility amongst the working class host community, there are plentiful press and judicial sources revealing the attitudes of the city's elite. Throughout Britain anti-Irish prejudice was apparent in newspaper editorials and local news coverage.[32] At best the Irish were portrayed as unpatriotic, at worse they were singled out as being an inferior and criminal race. Conley reflects that in Kent the term 'Irish' meant 'brutal, drunken, and generally disreputable.'[33] In Dundee however, Irishness was not depicted negatively. In its St Patrick's Day reports, the local press did not stigmatise the Irish community generally, but blamed both Scotch and Irish juveniles for the disorder. In 1885 *The Weekly News* published an article about working class life in the city entitled 'An Irish Heroine.' It declared of its subject – Mary Sullivan, an Irish immigrant - that a 'more healthy illustration of what a working woman should be it would not be easy to find.'[34] This pronouncement is surprising as Mary was the embodiment of the Victorian Irish stereotype; she resided in one of the city's slums; she had a criminal record and bred pigs. Thus her background provided the paper with ample ammunition to take a jibe at the immigrant community. Indeed, Curtis observes the British press habitually used the porcine symbol as shorthand for the 'brutish, primitive, and dirty qualities' associated with the Irish.[35] Instead Dundee's press praised Mary as an 'assiduous' breeder of the creatures.[36] This is not the only occasion when Dundonian journalists failed to take up an opportunity to insult the migrant population. In 1886 the *Advertiser* reported on the unemployed in the city. The 'professional loafer' was described as the 'vagrant lackall' - however there was no mention of ethnicity which previous local studies found so prevalent in this type of vituperative article.[37]

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[28] AW Brotchie and JJ Herd, *Old Lochee and Round About* (Dundee, 1981), p. 18; Christopher A Whatley, David B Swinfen, Annette M Smith, *The Life and Times of Dundee* (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 109.
[29] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 420, Panayi, *Racial Violence in Britain*, p. 10.
[30] Dundee Oral History Project, tape 017/A/1.
[31] *The Guardian* 24 April 2001, www.guardian.co.uk, accessed 17 June 2007, quoting *Lonely Planet Guide to Dundee*.
[32] Finnegan, *Poverty and Prejudice*, pp. 134, 166.
[33] Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, p. 161.

Further evidence that there was no institutionalisation of the Irish stereotype within the fabric of Dundee's authorities is provided by reports concerning Lochee. This was the area of the city consistently associated with the Irish. As historians have observed contemporaries perceived a connection between Irishness and criminality,[38] it is salient that the residents of Lochee were neither blamed by the press for the 'nefarious' poaching in the vicinity, nor for the production of shebeen whisky.[39] Nowhere is the stark absence of editorial prejudice more apparent than in the account of the serious violence perpetrated against two police officers in 'Tipperary'– the area of Lochee, as its name suggests, particularly noted for its Irish community. No allusion was made to the ethnicity of the 'gang of rough characters' irrespective of their names denoting Irish extraction, (Garrity, Burke, Malone, Boyle),[40] and despite the reputation of the Irish as perpetrators of assault on the police in Britain generally.[41]

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[34] *Weekly News*, 21 February 1885.

[35] LP Curtis, *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: A Study of Victorian England* (Connecticut, 1968), pp. 57-8.

[36] *Weekly News*, 21 February 1885.

[37] Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, Lees, *Exiles of Erin*.

[38] Jennifer Davis, 'From "Rookeries" to " Communities": Race, Poverty and Policing in London, 1850-1985' in *History Workshop Journal*, 27 (1989), p. 73.

[39] *Weekly News*, 15 May 1886.

[40] *Weekly News*, 7 April 1888, David Lennox, *Working Class Life in Dundee for Twenty-Five Years: 1878-1903* (unpublished dissertation, St. Andrews University, no date, approximately 1906), Table 2, names of Dundee recruits of Irish birth or extraction 1900-1903, p. 380.

[41] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 414.

Moreover, neither the Irish nor Catholics were regarded with suspicion by the Dundonian press. In an article on how the poor lived, the 'kindly welcome' the journalist received from 'two Irish girls-women' is commented on before he describes their home without condescension or mockery as 'like the true descendant of an Irish man ... placed in a prominent position a coloured lithograph of Robert Emmet, the leader of the Irish rebellion of 1803. On the other side of the window was a portrait of a well-known priest.'[42] According to one published poem '[h]ad it not been for the Catholics/We'd all be English Slaves.'[43] It was *The Weekly News* that included a tribute to a recently deceased Irishman under the heading 'A remarkable Fenian,' which is all the more remarkable considering the paper was owned by DC Thomson – a Tory, and a man known for his anti-Catholicism. Presumably the *Weekly's* editor was reflecting public opinion, rather than seeking to shape it.[44]

Mainstream Scottish society however was anti-Catholic, and according to Gallagher this was reproduced in police and judicial prejudice.[45] Indeed, crime historians are united in finding that the immigrants' reputation for heavy drinking and violence meant that Irish districts in England and Wales (there are no comparable Scottish studies), were expected to be hotbeds of crime, and were therefore more closely watched by the police, with the inevitable result that the Irish were over-represented in the criminal records.[46] Once again Dundee is seen to be a city apart. Scrutiny of the police-station returns may be used to illustrate that the Irish were not over-represented in the city's crime statistics. In fact, as Lochee recorded only eight per cent of offences on average, the suburb was slightly under-represented in the police figures in relation to its population. This suggests that the Irish were not the focus of repressive policing and therefore that there was an absence of racist policing in Dundee.[47] As historians argue police anti-Irish prejudice was allied to the immigrants' poverty, it is notable that the Lochee Irish were amongst the poorest members of the suburb's community.[48] Harris refers to an announcement made at St Mary's Catholic Church in 1886, that in future there would be 'no collection and all are invited to attend in their everyday working clothes.'[49] Incidentally, as beat policemen were the working class in uniform, the crime figures, as well as reflecting the attitudes of the chief constable and the city's other officials, supports the view that there were low levels of anti-Irish prejudice within the working class host community.

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[42] *The Dundee Year Book: Facts and Figures Reprinted from the Dundee Advertiser*, 1888, p. 14.

[43] Lamb Collection, 125(55), Dundee Local Studies Centre, a reference to the Battle of Bannockburn.

[44] *Weekly News*, 18 July 1885.

[45] Tom Gallagher, 'The Catholic Irish in Scotland: In Search of Identity' in Devine (ed.), *Irish Immigrants and Scottish Society*' (Edinburgh, 1991), p.23.

[46] Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, p. 158; David Taylor, *Crime Policing and Punishment in England 1750-1914* (London, 1998); David JV Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 1992), p. 184; Clive Emsley, *Hard Men: The English and Violence Since 1750* (London, 2005), p. 82; Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', pp. 420, 401-2; Davis, 'From "Rookeries" to " Communities", p. 82.

[47] Calculations based on census information 1901 and police station returns 1878-1904. Lochee made up 9 per cent of Dundee's population in 1901.

On the other hand, irrespective of the inherent problems in the use of statistics, the finding that the Irish were not over-represented in the Dundonian crime figures may not be evidence of atypical policing. Although criminologists recognise that the Irish at the turn of the century were 'scapegoated by the criminal justice system,' Swift argues the association between crime and the Irish was not necessarily based on ethnicity.[50] The apparent police 'prejudice' may have been a general discrimination against the 'dangerous' or 'criminal' sections of working class society, within which the Irish were particularly vulnerable.[51] Until there is a clearer understanding of the attitudes of the British police towards the Irish per se, it is impossible to determine the extent to which Dundee's force differed in its response to the immigrant community. Nevertheless, it is pertinent that the Irish in Dundee were not singled out for attention in the city's annual police reports. Even more crucially, while both Chief Constable Dewar and Carmichael repeatedly blamed the 'habitual drunkard' for the bulk of crime, unlike colleagues north of the border, they did not ascribe the recidivist with an ethnic profile.[52]

The records that would determine whether, as has been found elsewhere, the Irish were over-represented in Dundee's prison population have been destroyed.[53] As there is an absence of prejudice in the court papers, there is reason to suppose there would not have been a disproportionate number of Irish prisoners. For example, in one of the few

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[48] Shani D'Cruz (ed.), *Everyday Violence in Britain 1850-1950: Gender and Class* (Essex, 2000), p. 13; Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, p. 170.
[49] Pat Harris, *Scotching the Myths of Lochee Cox Bros.: Lochee and the Irish* (Dundee, no date), p.10, press cutting 6 June 1886.
[50] Michael Keith, 'Criminalization and Racialization' in John Muncie, Eugene Mclaughlin and Mary Langan (eds), *Criminological Perspectives: A Reader* (London, 1998), p. 272.
[51] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 410.
[52] *Dundee City Police Annual Criminal Returns.*
[53] Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, p.157.

hearings where ethnicity is mentioned the judge delivered a typical sentence, crucially without diatribe, to an 'Irishman' guilty of drunkenness. Indeed, the defendant's response was '"well, it's very raisonable, ye'r Honour." (Renewed laughter).'[54] Mirth also enlivened proceedings in a case of breach of the peace. The accused, a member of the host community, argued that as he 'was a Protestant' and the witnesses, along with the 'rest of them on that stair,' who had complained about his drunken behaviour, 'were Roman Catholic they were all banded against him like a lot of Fenians.'[55] The court responded to the allegation that there was a plot to remove him from the tenement, with laughter, indicating that while Catholics may have been politically suspect in England beyond the late-1860s, in Dundee the idea that they presented a threat was absurd.[56] Significantly the court was told that 'the Catholics have the better of it in appearances against the Protestant. They are respectable old people.'[57]

Irish-Catholics were respected in Dundee. According to one reader of *The Weekly News*, whose 'professional duties' had brought him into 'contact with *all grades* of the Irish population … for the last fifteen years,' the experience had made him 'like and respect the individual Irishman socially'[my italics].[58] As Catholics won first and fourth place in the competition for the 'most popular car-conductor' in 1913, it is apparent that they were well liked by a significant proportion of Dundonian society.[59] A finding that is in sharp contrast to the contempt immigrants in Lancashire often experienced. Here it was not uncommon to see notices on factory gates declaring 'no Irish need apply' and Fielding notes such discrimination continued well beyond the 1920s.[60] In Scotland too, the labour market discriminated against Irish Catholics, but as Knox describes, Dundee was the exception.[61] The city's Irish were one of the first parts of the immigrant community in Scotland to participate in trade unions.[62] Moreover, the expansion of the Dundonian textile industry, at the start of the period, provided the greatest possibility of advancement to the immigrants.[63] The large proportion of Irish foremen, Walker argues, illustrates their favour with the city's mill-owners.[64]

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[54] *Weekly News*, 13 March 1875, (7s 6d or 5 days imprisonment).
[55] *Weekly News*, 21 August 1886.
[56] Conley, *The Unwritten Law*, pp. 162-6.
[57] *Weekly News*, 21 August 1886.
[58] *Weekly News*, 27 March 1880.
[59] Walker, *Juteopolis*, p. 141.
[60] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p.36.
[61] WWJ Knox, *Industrial Nation Work Culture and Society in Scotland: 1800 – Present* (Edinburgh, 1999), p. 142.
[62] Gallagher, 'The Catholic Irish in Scotland', p. 27.

The attitudes of the city's elite may however have been unremarkable, for in addition to being portrayed as 'feckless, stupid, violent, unreliable and drunken,' Swift argues the Irish were also perceived 'as chaste, hospitable, witty, kindly and generous.'[65] Moreover, Herson found in the small town of Stafford the local press, as in Dundee, offered no obvious channel for the expression of anti-Irish prejudice, it only rarely noted ethnic origin in petty crime reports, and also its employers appear to have been non-discriminatory.[66] Nevertheless, given that in other British cities with a sizeable immigrant community: London, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool for example, the negative Irish stereotype prevailed, the support and praise Dundee's working class immigrant community received in the period from both journalists and judges indicates that there was a marked contrast between general British attitudes towards the Irish and those held in Dundee. A contrast that is all the more surprising given that in the first half of the nineteenth century the immigrants' 'immoral habits' were said to have 'seriously ... injured the ... character of the poor of Dundee.'[67] Blamed for importing disease and being politically disruptive, it was alleged that the Irish were refused poor relief on the grounds of their ethnicity.[68] The working class community also expressed its patent hostility; attacking a chapel and a number of Catholic houses.[69] The immigrants were accused of taking jobs and causing employers to pay lower wages. Memories of which, according to Gallagher, were slow to vanish in Scotland.[70]

Historians have traditionally applied both political and social explanations as to why racial and religious violence declined after 1870. Ó'Tuathaigh argues Gladstone's 'conversion' to Home Rule in 1886 effectively legitimised Irish political aspirations, thereby reducing tensions. Furthermore, the spread of religious indifference may also have blunted the edge of religious prejudice.[71] Indeed, a contemporary complained the Dundonian Catholic community reflected the same patterns of declining church attendance as had been identified across the city.[72] Equally the reduction of anti-Irish violence must be considered in light of the emergence of a more ordered society that occurred at this time. More usually however, historians point to the vast slow-down in Irish immigration for reducing the pressure within working class communities.

In Dundee the numbers of Irish-born declined sharply from 14,195 in 1871 to around 5,000 in 1901.[73] Nevertheless as O'Day highlights, although immigration decreased, the number of British-born Irish increased.[74] Newspaper accounts reveal a vibrant Catholic parochial life in Dundee in the period. For example, in 1880 the hearse of a Roman Catholic clergyman 'was followed by about 5000 ... [and] as a mark of respect, many ... Catholic shopkeepers ... shut' for a time.[75] While in 1920 almost '3000 men' from the Dundonian branches of the Catholic Young Men's Society 'were assembled in Albert Square, and marched through the streets.'[76] So the question must be asked, given the visibility of the immigrant community, why were the Irish not the focus of more pronounced hostility? It is impossible to tease out if the notably unprejudiced attitudes of the city's elite encouraged tolerance amongst the working class community. Nevertheless, it is proposed a combination of factors; some identified in previous studies and some uniquely Dundonian, account for the successful assimilation of the Irish.[77] Moreover, it was the high level of integration that helps to explain the exceptionally low level of anti-Irish hostility within Dundee's working class population.

It is debatable whether there were any instances of true ghettoisation in Britain; even Liverpool arguably did not have complete Irish segregation.[78] Nevertheless, although Aspinwall insists that Scottish Catholics were 'never a tribe,' and they were

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[63] Roger Swift, 'The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: Problems and Perspectives' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxv (1986), p. 266.
[64] Walker, *Juteopolis*, p. 141.
[65] Swift, 'The Outcast Irish', p. 272.
[66] Herson, 'Migration, 'Community' or Integration?', pp. 181-2.
[67] Lorraine Walsh, *Patrons Poverty and Profit: Organised Charity in Nineteenth Century Dundee* (Dundee, 2000), p. 53 quote from J. Myles, *Rambles in Forfarshire* (1850).
[68] Joe Handy, *A Century of Dundee: Glimpses of Life 1790-1890* (not published, 1990), no page numbers.
[69] Whatley, *The Life and Times of Dundee*, p. 109.
[70] Gallagher, 'The Catholic Irish in Scotland', p. 27.

[71] Ó'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain', pp. 171-3.
[72] *Weekly News*, 21 March 1885.
[73] Brenda Collins, 'The Origins of Irish Immigration to Scotland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' in Devine (ed.), *Irish Immigrants and Scottish Society*, p. 9; SGE Lythe, 'The Historical Background', in Jackson, JM. (ed.), *Third Statistical Account of Scotland the City of Dundee* (Arbroath, 1979), p. 77.
[74] O'Day, 'Varieties of Anti-Irish Behaviour', p. 37.
[75] *Weekly News*, 6 March 1880.
[76] *The Dundee Courier and Angus*, 13 May 1920.
[77] O'Day, 'Varieties of Anti-Irish Behaviour', pp. 26-44.
[78] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, pp. 27-8.

never insulated from the larger community,[79] many cities had 'little Irelands' where the Irish lived separately from the indigenous population.[80] Notwithstanding Lochee's reputation, the Irish were only ever in a minority. According to Miskall, the suburb's Irish association would have had more to do with local memory than statistics. She found in Camborne (Cornwall), the immigrants' sustained predilection for the same areas caused the long-term identification of certain districts with the Irish.[81] In reality, the Irish lived throughout Dundee. The permanent shortage of housing in the city probably prevented self-segregation. The *Advertise*r reported that the young Irish girls who came in search of work in the late-1880s found lodgings 'in a family with householders' or were 'looked after by elderly ladies who [had] rooms to let.'[82] Catholic clubs were similarly dispersed, with the branches of the United Irish League meeting in Lochee, Hilltown and Murraygate for example.[83]

It is argued that mixed marriage would have joined the working class host and immigrant communities and diluted the readiness with which the Irish partner, as well as their offspring, identified with Ireland. Unlike Liverpool and London, there is no evidence to suggest that those born into the immigrant community in Dundee were more 'Irish' in culture than their parents.[84] Studies of London and Greenock indicate that the Irish generally married within their own ethnic group.[85] In Dundee this would have been difficult given the often remarked upon shortage of men.[86] It is a circular argument whether an absence of prejudice enabled mixed marriage, or mixed marriage ensured low levels of inter-communal hostility. Nevertheless, if Dundonians were willing to marry Irish Catholics, notwithstanding the contradictions within human nature, it is likely these members of the host population at least, would have been tolerant of the immigrant community generally.[87] Mixed marriage also indicates that the Catholic community voluntarily integrated with the host population and the evidence suggests Catholic disunity may have facilitated their assimilation. For example, a letter in the press reported that the Home Rulers were heard 'declaiming against priests – ay, and denouncing them too - and refusing to pay contributions to the Catholic Churches in Dundee.' As a consequence the sacraments were refused 'to all Home Rulers who would not apologise to their priests,' presumably weakening the influence of the clergy, and splitting the Irish community.[88]

It is proposed that Dundee's unique circumstances must also account for the successful integration of the Irish. Ó'Tuathaigh refers to the 'cultural distance' separating the immigrant community from the native population in Britain being very difficult to bridge.[89] It is argued that in Dundee the gap was easier to close than elsewhere since the host and immigrant population were predominantly female. Secondly, the enervating conditions in the city throughout the period not only distracted members of both the adult Irish and host community from the differences between them but also necessitated neighbourliness and mutual aid. Thirdly, the shared factory and drink culture stimulated companionship between potentially the most disorderly elements of the Irish and host working class, notwithstanding the continued importance of separate customs to the immigrant population.

In 1871 there were nearly two Irish-born women in Dundee for every Irish-born man.[90] Female immigrants, Gallagher argues, may have been easier to absorb, as without the franchise they would not have shared the same preoccupation as their men folk with Ireland and nationalist politics. A preoccupation, he observes, that could antagonise sections of the host community.[91] The significance attributed to the lack of franchise is not only applicable to the Irish women however. According to a contemporary 'the

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[79] Bernard Aspinwall, 'Faith of Our Fathers Living Still … The Time Warp or Woof! Woof!' in T.M Devine (ed.), *Scotland's Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2000), pp. 108, 112.

[80] David Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester, 1997), p. 122.

[81] Louise Miskall, 'Irish Immigrants in Cornwall: The Camborne Experience, 1861-82' in Swift and Gilley (eds), *The Irish in Victorian Britain*, p. 40. Charles Booth also found Irish colonies in London in the same location they had been in fifty years earlier.

[82] *The Dundee Year Book*, 1888, p. 113.

[83] *The Dundee Trades and Professions Directory*.

[84] PJ Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism: A Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868-1939* (Liverpool, 1981), p. 7; Phil Cohen, 'Policing the Working-Class City', in Mike Fitzgerald and others (eds), *Crime and Society: Readings in History and Theory* (London, 1994), p. 119.

[85] Ó Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain', p. 167.

[86] *Dundee Year Book*, 1888, p. 113 referred to the 1881 census that had found there 'are fully eleven women to every nine men in Dundee'.

[87] Emory S. Bogardus, 'Measurement of Personal-Group Relations' in *Sociometry*, 10 (1947), pp. 308, 310; Nicholas Abercrombie and others, *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*, 4th edition (London, 2000).

[88] *Weekly News*, 27 August 1880.

[89] Ó'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain', p. 163.

[90] Brenda Collins, 'The Origins of Irish Immigration', p. 9.

[91] Gallagher, 'The Catholic Irish in Scotland', p. 27.

Orangemen ... [had] more votes than the whole of the Catholic community,'[92] and as Lennox observed four-fifths of the Irish in Dundee were Catholics; the Catholic (male) vote must have been small indeed.[93] The relative absence of racial and religious violence amongst Dundee's men perhaps is a reflection of a disinterest in politics caused by their failure to meet the franchise criteria. Female expatriates may also have been easier for the host community to absorb since they perhaps held a less elevated view of 'home.' As Dundonian domiciles women could be financially independent of men, whereas in rural Ireland females held a distinctly inferior position.[94]

It may be that the reason for the sharp contrast observed between expressions of anti-Irish sentiment in Dundee and Glasgow was allied to the fact that Dundee was a woman's town as much as Glasgow was a man's. Sixty per cent of the Dundonian population were female, and the women employed in the city's dominant jute trade outnumbered men by a ratio of three-to-one.[95] As modern sociologists have found men experience greater levels of prejudice and women are less likely to act out their intolerance, it is argued that Dundee's largely female labouring population was less bellicose than had men been in the majority.[96] Furthermore, although the reasons why remain undetermined, criminologists insist females are always and everywhere less likely than males to perpetrate criminal acts, and cross-disciplinary research suggests this gender difference has been considerably stable since at least the thirteenth century.[97] Indeed, Dundee's police statistics reveal that the men committed twice as many assaults and breaches of the peace as the women despite the city's demographic imbalance.[98]

Walker describes the labouring classes, which formed the preponderant element in Dundee's population, as 'singularly undifferentiated.'[99] For Kay, the homogeneity explains why prejudice never took hold.[100] In this one industry city of crowded streets,

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[92] *Weekly News*, 27 March 1880.
[93] Lennox, *Working Class Life in Dundee*, p. 151.
[94] Brenda Collins, 'The Origins of Irish Immigration', p. 12.
[95] William WJ Knox, *Lives of Scottish Women: Women and Scottish Society, 1800-1980* (Edinburgh, 2006), p. 205.
[96] Frank Wallis, 'Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian Britain' in *Journal of Religion and Society*, 7 (2005), pp. 3-4, 12.
[97] Allan Steffensmeier, Emilie Allan, 'Gender and Crime: Toward a Gendered Theory of Female Offending' in *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22 (1996), pp. 459, 481.
[98] *Dundee Annual Criminal Returns* 1876-1904.
[99] Walker, *Juteopolis*, p. 1.
[100] Kay, 'Dundee: An Introduction', p. 12.

shared stairs and backyards, the workforce experienced the dramatic swings of the textile economy in unison. Not only was jute the largest single employer of men, women and children, but the second biggest trade, engineering, was also dependent on the jute economy for its survival. It is for this reason that Lythe argues social conditions were 'grim even by the standards of comparable industrial towns.'[101] Given the parallel experience of dire poverty, and the community spirit tenement living is recognised to have fostered, it is not inconceivable that the hardship produced by the stagnation and decline of the textile industry in the period encouraged empathy within the city's female working classes. This is particularly the case given that Dundee's oral history indicates the existence of a 'culture of poverty;' where informal support networks between women were crucial to family survival.[102] Moreover, as other studies refer to camaraderie in situations of toil and deprivation being particularly notable among women, it is likely that work may also have softened inter-communal tension.[103] The jute preparing departments in the city's mills were described as 'a harbour of refuge' not only for 'emigrants from the Green Isle,' but also

> for destitute and distressed women ... from country districts who [were] too old for learning other work ... birds of passage from other towns; the failures at spinning and weaving; the unfortunates whom society disown[ed]; [and] the widows and wives of incorrigible loafers.[104]

In addition to the common experience of adversity, millwork encouraged companionship. The long working hours created a strong factory culture that included a convention of singing (which also dominated the women's street culture), and an impenetrable (to non-operatives) system of sign language - used to communicate notwithstanding the din of the machinery. The women's enthusiasm for the lightening strike, when they dressed up in comical hats and paraded through the city, may similarly have stimulated a sense of fellowship. Furthermore, the strikes would have increased cohesion by emphasising the women's mutual interdependence and their opposition to the employer.[105] The habit of large numbers of unemployed men of hanging around the city waiting for the pubs to open may have similarly encouraged a sense of solidarity amongst them.

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[101] Lythe, 'The Historical Background', p. 82.
[102] Bourke, *Working-Class Cultures*, pp. 137, 149.
[103] Jonathon Bell, 'Donegal Women as Migrant Workers in Scotland' in *Review of Scottish Culture*, 7 (1991), p. 79; White, *The Worst Street in North London*, pp. 4, 71-90.
[104] *The Dundee Year Book*, 1903, p. 154.
[105] John Benson (ed.), *The Working Class in England 1875-1914* (London, 1985), p. 105.

According to both contemporaries and historians drink was synonymous with significant sections of Britain's working class. Arguably the prejudice expressed by what the Victorians labelled as the 'non – respectable' element of the population was most likely to have manifested itself violently, and hence is the most likely to be preserved in the crime sources.[106] It is suggested in Dundee the drink culture shared by both the Scottish and immigrant members of this group helps to explain the latter's successful integration, why the expatriates were not made a scapegoat for the city's economic ills, and accordingly accounts for the dearth of incidents of racial violence in the archives. Burrowes observes of 'all the places in the world to which the Irish would be scattered in nowhere else but Scotland could the natives match them in that favourite pursuit of theirs – drinking.'[107] While Scotland is generally associated with the 'wee dram,' crucially Scots themselves have identified Dundee with bacchanalia. The city's Social Union recognised drinking was an important means of escape, and for the women alert to the gossip frequenting the pub provoked, the wash-house provided an alternative venue to drink and socialise.[108]

The dissipation of broad sections of the city's working class, which according to contemporaries was worse than anything seen in other manufacturing cities, may also account for the absence of anti-Irish prejudice amongst the Dundonian authorities.[109] For them whisky was 'the devil,' and while commentators elsewhere conveniently ignored the drunken violence of the indigenous population, this would have been impossible in Dundee.[110] Here the 'deplorable and humiliating sights' of drunkenness occurred 'not only on Saturday nights, but at almost anytime.'[111] Moreover, Paddy's dissipated stereotype, so frequently referred to elsewhere, could not account for the drunkenness of young Dundonian girls that was 'so common as to cause little comment.'[112]

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[106] David Woods, 'Community Violence' in Benson (ed.), *The Working Class in England* p.195, argues violence was the prerogative of this section of the working class.
[107] John Burrowes, *Irish: The Remarkable Saga of a Nation and a City* (Edinburgh, 2003), p. 205.
[108] *Dundee Social Union Report on Housing and Industrial Conditions in Dundee* (Dundee, 1905), p.xv.
[109] *The Dundee Year Book*, 1901, p. 204.
[110] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 412.
[111] Previous studies suggest that the Irish reputation for heavy drinking was confined to Saturday nights.
[112] *The Dundee Year Book*, 1901, p. 204.

There is not the opportunity to discuss the rivalries that existed amongst the city's Irish Protestants and Catholics. Nevertheless it is argued that the lack of serious sectarianism worked in the latter's favour. The Catholics would not have been so readily perceived as conforming to the disorderly Irish stereotype as in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham where hostility between 'the Orange' and 'the Green' was marked.[113] Moreover as was the case elsewhere, by encouraging the respectability of its flock, the Catholic Church in Dundee played a role in softening inter-communal relations.[114] That this aim was shared by the city's St Vincent de Paul Society, which worked tirelessly with offenders on parole and ex-prisoners, would have similarly helped to reduce prejudice amongst those responsible for law and order. More salient however for the lack of bigotry amongst Dundee's elite is the city's culture. Walker argues Dundonian 'endemic' liberalism would not counterbalance prejudice of the kind that was prejudice for prejudice sake.[115] Indeed, based on similar findings for Newcastle, there appears to be a direct correlation between the strength of liberalism in Dundee and the weakness of the city's Orange movement. [116] Conversely in Liverpool, where there was a voluble Orange community, liberalism was, according to Waller, a creature of 'stunted growth.'[117] Moreover, it is suggested that Dundee's relative geographical isolation, by reducing the frequency with which outside lecturers visited the city with their potentially divisive speeches, also encouraged liberalism to thrive.

In conclusion, the diversity of attitudes towards the Irish in Britain, as O'Day observes, ensures that the Irish experience cannot be encapsulated in a single concise description.[118] In Dundee the lack of evidence to the contrary suggests that there were exceptionally low levels of anti-Irish hostility amongst the working class community in the period 1865-1925. The widespread poverty created by the city's overwhelming reliance on its stagnating jute industry, the vibrant factory culture and common drinking tradition helped to bridge the gap between the Irish and host community; which was arguably narrower than elsewhere due to the female character of both the immigrant and indigenous population. Like the women, the city's men failed to meet the franchise criteria, thus removing politics as a reason for a fight. These factors, along with the disunity of the immigrant community, meant that the Irish integrated with relative ease. That there was nothing to differentiate between the bibulous behaviour of the Irish and Dundonian working classes, combined with the strong liberal tradition, probably explains the marked absence of anti-Irish hostility amongst the city's authorities. Nevertheless, the friendliness with which Dundee is now identified presumably also played a part in defining the immigrants' experience.

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[113] Lees, *Exiles of Erin*, p. 222.
[114] Swift, 'Heroes or Villains?', p. 419.
[115] Walker, *Juteopolis*, p.122.
[116] Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity*, p. 34.
[117] Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism*, p. 12.
[118] O'Day, 'Varieties of Anti-Irish Behaviour', p. 30.

Delaying division: Eoin MacNeill, John Redmond and the Irish Volunteers

Justin Dolan Stover

The Irish Volunteers, an organisation whose place in the nationalist mindscape has been copper fastened due to their participation in the Easter Rising, have been the subject of scholarship since their formation in 1913. Formed primarily to defend the parliamentary concessions of Home Rule and the various interpretations of liberty it provided, Volunteer ranks swelled in late summer of 1914. Despite its seemingly cohesive character, internal dissention within the Volunteers grew as a result of the various personalities which came to dominate the movement. Disagreement within the Volunteers was kept to a minimum due to the vague definitions of the movement's aims, and the all-encompassing nature of its recruiting. Nevertheless, base ideological division and the domination of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) would ultimately partition the movement along more easily distinguishable lines, allowing the more 'advanced' nationalists to be sifted from the various ingredients that had composed the Volunteers, furthering the polarisation of Irish political opinion.

The passing of the third Home Rule Bill in May 1914 occurred only months before the outbreak of the First World War. Not long after its initial introduction however, Home Rule faced severe opposition from what Eoin MacNeill referred to as the 'Ulster Triple Alliance' – a conglomerate of members of the 'Orange' industrial establishment, Protestant rural community, and remnants of the feudal aristocracy – all opposed to a native Irish parliament governed from Dublin.[1] The actions of the Unionists very much frustrated nationalists, particularly those who had supported the constitutional route and backed the IPP and its leader John Redmond. Home Rule legislation led Irish Party supporters to believe that their worship at the altar of British constitutionalism had finally brought salvation. Not to be intimidated out of their parliamentary concession, the Irish Volunteers were formed during a mass meeting in November 1913 to see that Home Rule would indeed be implemented.

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[1] Eoin MacNeill, 'The North Began' in F.X. Martin (ed), *The Irish Volunteers 1913-1915: recollections and documents* (Dublin, 1963), pp. 57-61.

The meeting was held in Dublin's Rotunda Rink and was massive; described as 'a regular staggerer [sic],' and attended by 'one of the most virile collections of animated humanity.'[2] The crowd was so thick that it spilled out onto the street, leading one 'joker' to observe that 'if Napoleon had been similarly circumstanced during his retreat from Moscow he wouldn't have felt the cold so much.'[3] The electric atmosphere and drew nationalists from all corners. Seán Milroy, a native of Tyrone who had witnessed the defiance of Sir Edward Carson and the Ulster Volunteers, could not contain his excitement: 'I feel tonight is the beginning of a history making movement ... The Volunteers have come to stay.'[4]

Despite the existence of rival militia in Ireland many onlookers and Volunteers themselves observed a sense of fraternal reverence. The Manifesto of the Irish Volunteers made special and specific reference to the ways in which the organisation would appeal to the 'widest basis,' with an appeal to 'all Ireland.' In fact, appeal for Volunteer recruits went out to many organisations and sought to be broadly national. Michael J. (The) O'Rahilly envisioned enlistment from the IPP, the United Irish League, the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Gaelic Athletic Association – all working 'to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland.'[5] Membership certainly reflected this vision. Of the thirty men selected to form the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, the majority were affiliated with other organisations; twelve belonged to the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), four were members of the Irish Party and United Irish League, and four members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.[6] As an outlet for nationalists wishing to express their support of Irish constitutional rights, the Irish Volunteers were the culmination of an integrative, if unintentional, trans-national movement.

Growth, recognition, and unity of the Volunteer movement were identified as premium, relaxing discrimination of political preference in favour of cooperation. A poster issued by the Volunteer Provisional Committee identified the duty of Irish

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[2] Milroy to de Roiste, 11 Dec. 1913 (Trinity College Dublin Archives [hereafter TCDA], Liam de Roiste papers, Ms 10,539/346).

[3] Milroy to de Roiste, 11 Dec. 1913 (TCDM, Liam de Roiste papers, Ms 10,539/346).

[4] Milroy to de Roiste, 25 Nov. 1913 (TCDM, Liam de Roiste papers, Ms 10,539/342).

[5] 'Manifesto of the Irish Volunteers' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 100.

[6] Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 30-1, 96-7; unknown to Redmond, 24 June 1914, National Library of Ireland Maynooth (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms 15,257/3).

Volunteers to 'secure the unity of all Irishmen on the ground of national liberty. "They will, therefore, discountenance all manifestations of ill-will between Irishmen."'[7] It was in fact the rhetoric of 'national liberty' that appealed to Home Rulers. The poetic nature of Volunteer objectives was of great utility to Redmond and the Irish Party, who felt their representation within the Provisional Committee of the Volunteers to be prerequisites in order for the organisation to reach national prominence.

Throughout 1914 the Irish Party tried and was successful in infiltrating both the ranks of the Volunteers and their Provisional Committee. By capitalising on the Volunteers' blurred definition of Irish rights and freedoms regarding the struggle for Home Rule, as well as its diverse membership, the IPP was able to re-interpret the rationale of the Volunteers towards their own ends. By bringing the growing movement under the control of IPP members, Redmond could display, both to London and Ireland, that the Volunteers were not an aggressive or disloyal force, but one that held true to its later motto of 'defence not defiance.'

Redmond had numerous advantages over MacNeill and others within the Provisional Committee regarding the role of leader or figurehead of the Volunteers; political legitimacy, non-violent aims, and name recognition all helped to secure his interests on the Committee. Many Party supporters professed their faith and admiration in letters to Redmond himself, noting the ways in which Redmond commanded the attention, respect and admiration of nationalist Ireland.[8] Loyalty to Redmond was, in theory, part of a larger loyalty to Home Rule and the forty year battle for self-government. To stand with Redmond and Home Rule, especially after the threat of Ulster Unionist opposition, was to support and defend the tradition of the struggle for Home Rule. Such a communal mentality among Home Rule supporters can be labelled a 'shared project,' one that establishes a vision or goal in the form of an object or ideal.[9] Prior to June 1914 Home Rule was the shared project of nationalists and Redmond was its leader. Regardless of the apolitical stance outlined in the Volunteer Manifesto, Redmond's influence was undeniable within Volunteer ranks and his exclusion impossible.

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[7] *Irish Independent*, 9 July 1914.

[8] Unknown to Redmond, 8 Apr. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms15,257/2); 'Gwynn', 1916 (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms 15,262/1).

[9] John Sabini and Maury Silver, *Emotion, character, and responsibility* (New York, Oxford University Press), p. 75.

Throughout May and June 1914 Eoin MacNeill attempted to negotiate the role that Redmond and the IPP would play within the Volunteer movement. The MacNeill-Redmond correspondence from the period reflects unease and distrust on the part of MacNeill and anxiety on the part of Redmond. By May 1914 the Home Rule Bill had passed the House of Commons but had yet to reach the statute books. Surveying this reality, the insubordination of the Ulster Unionists and the unwillingness of the government to confront the Ulster Volunteers, Redmond's political position in Westminster was weak. He required a trump card in order to display to both Carson and the Ulster Volunteers and the English Tories, that the Irish Party would not be bullied into altering the Home Rule Bill. Redmond realised that he had either to stand aside in the face of Unionists and English Tories, 'persuade the British army to impose Dublin rule on the protestant areas,' or raise an army of his own.[10] Having observed the 'rapid growth of the Irish Volunteers' who by May numbered nearly 75,000, Redmond recognised the Volunteers to be the vehicle with which to drive home his point.[11]

It is with little doubt that MacNeill also acknowledged these political realities, and feared for the autonomy of the movement if dominated by the Irish Party. Redmond ultimately justified MacNeill's fear by conveying to him that

> I am of the opinion that it would be a great misfortune if a disagreement [about appointments to the Provisional Committee] should result in the possible establishment of a second body of Irish Volunteers. It is clearly in the interests of the country that the Volunteer Movement should be a united one and under a single guidance. This, however, can only be brought about if we come to an understanding.[12]

This understanding, outlined by Redmond, was that the 'Nationalist Party' supporters should be confident that they have representation on the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers.[13] Preoccupation with appointing committee members of his own selection reflects not only the controlling nature of Redmond and the Party, due mostly to his belief that they were the Irish representatives, but also Redmond's own threatened sense of self-worth – he had become both envious and jealous of the instant popularity and support of the Irish Volunteers.[14]

Fearing a split within the movement to be a greater threat than the infiltration of Irish Party members, MacNeill assured Joseph Devlin that a selection of IPP members was favourable. To settle the issue, MacNeill stated that 'in selecting a prominent recognised supporter of Mr John Redmond, who will be identified by everybody with his policy, the nearer the person selected to Mr Redmond the better, so that there may be no doubt about the significance of the selection.'[15] The concession was MacNeill's first capitulation. He did so in what seemed to be a regretful manner, but one that he hoped would ensure the party 'that there will be no further ground for absence of complete confidences.'[16]

While certainly not a political savant, contemporary assessment of MacNeill illustrates just how out of place he was as a negotiator. The nationalist and historian Alice Stopford Green later wrote to Redmond conveying her observation

> This year I saw him [MacNeill] for the first time active in politics, and I have watched the matter very closely. I have seldom seen a man more unfitted for action, less fit to lead others in so difficult a crisis, and less wise in his judgement of men. ... Eoin MacNeill is meant for a scholar's life, and for that alone.[17]

Green's evaluation should not be interpreted as harsh; the Gaelic scholar himself felt out of place among Party leaders and longed to return to his studies

> Let nobody imagine that I have come forward through ambition to play a part in this crisis or to create a claim on the future for myself. My duty for the future lies in the line of study and teaching that I have adopted. I have been absolutely forced to the front in this Volunteer movement.[18]

Unsuitable as he may have been in negotiating, it must also be acknowledged that MacNeill's manoeuvrability within the Volunteer Provisional Committee was limited.[19] He was in truth faced with the threat of dissent within his own ranks – the seemingly cordial consideration to which he had paid the IPP did not help. In fact, MacNeill explained to Devlin that the position of the IRB was very difficult, but in the interest of the movement they remained distant from controversy.[20] 'I trust,' MacNeill relayed, 'that their straightforward and unselfish conduct will be generously received.'[21]

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[10] JJ Lee describes Redmond as a 'romantic Commonwealth man, too much a genuine Westminster parliamentarian' to resort to physical force. JJ Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985: politics and society* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 17-8.

[11] Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 227-8.

[12] Redmond to MacNeill, 16 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms 15,204).

[13] Ibid.

[14] Peter Salovey and Judith Rodin, 'Envy and jealousy in close relationships' in Clyde Hendrick (ed), *Close relationships* (California, 1989), p. 228; Gelbert, 'Mixed emotions' in *Transactional analysis journal*, no. 6, pp. 129-30.

[15] MacNeill to Devlin, 13 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).

[16] Ibid.

[17] Stopford Green to Redmond, 28 Oct. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,192/4).

[18] MacNeill to Gwynn, 20 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).

[19] Ibid.

MacNeill's preoccupation with acquiring and maintaining the trust and confidence of the IPP dominated his letters to Redmond and Devlin. Given MacNeill's idealistic belief in the Volunteers as a unified and apolitical body, who could question his unease? MacNeill's position within the Committee was truly weak. Taking into account their majority on the Committee and their physical force interpretation of Irish nationalism, the IRB knew it. This explains, to some degree, MacNeill's pleas for unity within the movement.[22] If Redmond were to abandon the Volunteers and establish his own volunteer body, it would allow the remaining Volunteers to further radicalise and 'assert themselves.'[23]

To what degree was this fear justified? Though intended to 'represent all shades of nationalist political opinion,' the IRB had come to dominate the Provisional Committee – making compromise towards Redmond's position somewhat difficult.[24] MacNeill reacted in a way that revealed more of his fear of the extreme members of the Volunteers than it did his distrust of the Irish Party. Of course an alternative body of Volunteers, a *de jure* split in the movement, would have amounted to what MacNeill labelled a 'condemnation' of his efforts to cooperate with the Irish Party, whose assurances would prove to be 'worthless.'[25] The real fear, however, was to do so 'would bring confusion and dissension into the National ranks, and would be regarded by friend and enemy as a certain sign of weakness, not of strength, in the Irish Party and the Irish cause.'[26] Suspicion, dissent, and division were all dangers MacNeill had attempted to avoid. 'For God's sake don't let fear or suspicion weaken us this time'[27], he warned; 'I will have no responsibility for a split.'[28]

Exasperated with Redmond and with his own inability to make an impression on Irish Party leaders, MacNeill informed Stephen Gywnn on 22 May that,

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[20] MacNeill to Devlin, 13 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms 15,204).
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Martin, 'The Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 96.
[25] MacNeill to Redmond, 19 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).
[26] Ibid.
[27] MacNeill to Devlin, 13 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).
[28] MacNeill to Gwynn, 20 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).

> It is clear to me that every trifle has been used to build up those suspicions which it has been my earnest desire to endeavour to avoid; all this in order that some persons might pose as faithful watchdogs of the Irish Party in the dangerous and hostile camp of the Volunteers. ... I warn you that all this poison of suspicion will have to be purged out, and that if it is not got rid of, it will surely do very great mischief ... my instinct tells me that action based on apprehensions and suspicions contains the germ of a rapidly consuming disease.[29]

It was not only the bullying of the Irish Party or the threat of IRB dissent that produced tension within the Irish Volunteer in the summer of 1914. MacNeill himself proved 'a most exasperating man to deal with,'[30] leading one observer to note that 'he is extremely muddle headed, *not* consciously inclined to make mischief, but hopelessly impractical and possessed with the idea that *he* ought to be trusted.'[31] Padraig Pearse noted MacNeill's contradictions

> He has the reputation of being 'tactful,' but his 'tact' consists in bowing to the will of the Redmonites every time. He never makes a fight except when they assail his personal honour, when he bridles up at once. ... He is in a very delicate position, and he is weak, hopelessly weak. I knew that all along.[32]

Redmond's frustrations with MacNeill were not based solely on his behaviour, but on his inconsistency. In late May, Redmond re-assured MacNeill that the question was 'not one of lack of confidence' but rather of proper representation, and reminded him that he, 'together with Sir Roger Casement and Mr TM Kettle waited upon me [Redmond] ... to consult with me as to the policy and conduct of the National Volunteer Movement.'[33] In addition, Redmond maintained that 'in order to secure this confidence and support of the people, it was absolutely essential that the Irish Parliamentary Party should have adequate representation' on the Provisional Committee.[34] He ultimately felt that 'if the heads of the new movement did not accede to his demands he was in a position to effectively compel them.'[35]

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[29] MacNeill to Gwynn, 22 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).
[30] Unknown to Redmond, 28 May 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,182/20). After two long interviews, author of note confirms that MacNeill has not consulted anyone on the Provisional Committee save Maurice Moore and The O'Rahilly.
[31] Unknown to Redmond [different letter], 28 May 1914 (NLIM, Redmond Papers, Ms 15,182/20).
[32] Seán Cronin, *The McGarrity papers: revelations of the Irish revolutionary movement in Ireland and America, 1900-1940* (Kerry, 1972), pp. 48-9.
[33] Redmond to MacNeill, 21 May 1914, (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,204).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Éoin P Ó'Caoimh, 'Redmond's Change of Policy, August-September, 1914' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 150.

The responsibility for approving Redmond's nominees rests with MacNeill alone. A great deal of confusion within the Volunteers in the addition of Redmond's nominees for the Provisional Committee can be attributed to the fact that MacNeill acted unilaterally in his parlance with Redmond. In fact, only five members of the Provisional Committee, Sean Fitzgibbon, Roger Casement, The O'Rahilly, Maurice Moore and Bulmer Hobson, even knew negotiations had taken place.[36]

Redmond's ultimatum to the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers came on 9 June 1914. He demanded that in order to integrate representatives from all parts of the country, the Committee accept twenty-five members nominated by himself; failure to do so would result in the creation of a 'rival authority' to the Volunteers.[37] The majority of the Provisional Committee was shocked at this announcement, having not been informed of the MacNeill-Redmond correspondence: 'It came on us like a bombshell,' declared Bulmer Hobson.[38]

In acting as an informal liaison between the Volunteers and the Irish Party, MacNeill had not only revealed to Redmond that there was the prospect of dissent within the Provisional Committee, but had also shown himself to be a weak leader, dependent on compromise in order to maintain unity. By June 1914 neither truth could be rescinded. Conceding that a divided Volunteer organisation would be 'useless to its friends and the laughing stock of its enemies'[39], the Provisional Committee capitulated to the demands of Redmond, choosing the 'lesser evil' of integration in the interest or preservation.[40] This agreement brought the wrath of the IRB supreme council down upon the heads of its members within the Provisional Committee. Hobson was labelled a betrayer, his explanations and excuses being unacceptable to Tom Clarke who queried: 'How much did the Castle pay you?'[41] The minority within the Volunteers that had opposed the integration of Redmond's nominees made their views public on 17 June, appealing to their adherents within the organisation and to the 'rank and file who are in agreement

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[36] Bulmer Hobson, 'Foundation and Growth of the Irish Volunteers, 1913-14' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 46.

[37] Hobson, 'A Short History of the Irish Volunteers', no date (NLIM, Bulmer Hobson Papers, Ms, 12,177); Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 141-2.

[38] Hobson, 'Foundation and Growth' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 45-6.

[39] Hobson, 'Irish Volunteers', no date (NLIM, Bulmer Hobson Papers, Ms, 12,177); Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 142.

[40] Ibid.; Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 143.

[41] Hobson, 'Foundation and Growth' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 50.

with us on this point to sink their personal feelings and persist in their efforts to make the Irish Volunteers an efficient armed force.'[42]

While the expansion and development of the Irish Volunteers remained relatively normal after the amalgamation, advanced nationalists such as Pearse, Ceannt, Colbert, MacDermott and Fitzgibbon kept a close watch on the new appointees. Pearse regarded their integration into the Committee as an advantage

> I do not regard the cause as lost – far from it. We all remain in the movement, and shall be watching to checkmate any attempt on Redmond's part to prevent us from arming. This is the real danger. The future of the movement depends on our remaining at our posts, to see that the Volunteers are a real army, not a stage army.[43]

Despite this hopeful spin, Pearse's frustrations with the newly appointed members were evident

> I personally have ceased to be any use on the Committee. I can never carry a single point. I am now scarcely allowed to speak. The moment I stand up there are cries of 'put the question,' etc – after the last meeting I had half determined to resign, but have decided to stick on a little longer in the hope of being useful in a later stage.[44]

Hobson's initial assessment of the integration of Redmond's nominees proved correct as the newly named National Committee devolved 'into a faction fight.'[45] Redmond's nominees also violated his initial pledge to put forward nominees to represent all of Ireland, suggested by John Gore on 24 June.[46] A letter to the editor of the *Irish Independent* observed

> [I]t appears that the most of his [Redmond's] nominees belong to the city of Dublin. Why are not the other counties of Leinster represented by some nominee? The Volunteers in Wexford, Carlow, and other adjoining counties are as enthusiastic and eager as those of any part of Ireland, and I think it is a slight to those counties and the men who are working day and night for the movement to have no representative on the Provisional Committee.[47]

Though still uncertain in August of 1914, Irish commitment to the British war effort would be interpreted by many as simply the price of Home Rule – loyalty in exchange for legislation – or as Roger Casement described, a promissory note 'payable after death.'[48] Redmond perceived the situation differently, regarding the Great War as 'the greatest opportunity that has ever occurred in the history of Ireland to win the Irish people to loyalty to the Empire.'[49] Redmond laid out his plan for the Volunteers in the House of Commons on 3 August. Highlighting the Volunteers of 1778 who sprang into existence 'at the end of the disastrous American War … when the shores of Ireland were threatened with foreign invasion'[50] he suggested to the House that the government withdraw its troop reserves from Ireland, allowing the island to be once again defended from invasion by 'her armed sons.' '[F]or this purpose,' remarked Redmond, 'armed Nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with the armed Protestant Ulstermen in the North.'[51] The prospect of unity with the Ulster Volunteers was indeed a positive one, and very much fit the Irish Volunteers original outlook – a unified movement in a unified Ireland. Many applauded Redmond's speech before the Commons as ushering in a political truce and militarily untied front,[52] transforming the political situation and isolating Carson and the Unionists.[53]

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[42] Hobson, 'Irish Volunteers', no date (NLIM, Bulmer Hobson Papers, Ms, 12,177); Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 143.

[43] Pearse to McGarrity, 19 June 1914, in Cronin, *The McGarrity Papers*, pp. 42-3.

[44] Cronin, *McGarrity Papers* (Kerry, 1972), pp. 48-9.

[45] Hobson, 'Foundation and Growth' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 50.

[46] Gore wrote to Redmond explaining that 'We all expect that you will not nominate any man who is not a Volunteer … Men from the Provinces would be most useful.' Gore to Redmond, 24 June 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,257/3).

[47] *Irish Independent*, 1 July 1914.

The Irish Volunteers as an organisation seemed safe in the hands of Redmond and his appointees. He was not a separatist and could thus be trusted by the British to oversee the Volunteers responsibly. He had even held firm to his outlook that 'The object of the Irish Volunteers is not to attack but to defend,'[54] and informed Sir Bryan Mahon, sent by the War Office to gauge the usefulness of the Irish Volunteers towards war effort, that the movement was to be 'employed in the defence of the shores of Ireland and were not to be drafted overseas.'[55] Regardless, Irish Volunteer enlistment in the British Army was very promising, and could boast nearly 10,350 recruits by December 1914. Volunteer loyalty to Redmond remained equally high in the early stages of the war. Posed with the question 'Are you going to join an Irish division in Lord Kitchener's New Army?,' many Volunteers responded: 'We'll do whatever Mr Redmond says.'[56]

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[48] Casement to unknown, 28 September 1914 (NLIM, Florence O'Donoghue papers, Ms 31,131).
[49] Redmond to Asquith, 5 Aug. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,520).
[50] *Irish Independent*, 4 Aug. 1914.
[51] Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, LXV (20th July-10th August, 1914).
[52] Lord Dunrave to Redmond, 10 Aug. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,187/2).
[53] Moore to Redmond, 4 Aug. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond papers, Ms 15,207/7).
[54] *Irish Independent*, 13 July 1914.
[55] Lewis Comyn, 'Redmond's double-refusal to Lord Kitchener, August, 1914' in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 147; *Irish Times*, 16 May 1956.
[56] Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, p. 147.

Redmond, his nominees on the Provisional Committee, and the 'interference' of the IPP have been assigned blame by historians for the formal split within Volunteer ranks that occurred in late September 1914. Having identified the disagreeable personalities and outlooks of leading members of the Provisional Committee this divergence is hardly shocking. But what was the deciding event which caused the fissure, and was there any positive aspect of the failure of the supposedly apolitical, all-encompassing Irish Volunteer movement?

While Redmond's language within the House of Commons at times suggested assurance of the Volunteers to the war effort, contemporary observers as well as subsequent scholars point to Redmond's speech at Woodenbridge on 20 September 1914 as the catalyst to the formal Volunteer split.[57] It was not a matter of what was said, but rather the interpretation of the speech among the advanced nationalists that prompted the division. In the speech Redmond said nothing of committing the Volunteers to the war effort. Instead, he made an appeal to the individual Irishmen to identify the war as a moral obligation and personal responsibility.

Despite Redmond's objective, the backlash was swift and definite. Only four days after the Woodenbridge speech, MacNeill, The O'Rahilly, MacDonagh, Plunkett and others issued a manifesto from their offices in Kildare Street. It explained that Redmond and his 'policy and programme' were 'fundamentally at variance with their own published and accepted aims and objects.'[58] The manifesto highlighted the exact misconception that has deceived scholars of the period, stating that

> He [Redmond] has declared it to be the duty of the Irish Volunteers to take foreign service under a Government which is not Irish. He has made this announcement without consulting the Provisional Committee, the Volunteers themselves, or the people of Ireland, to whose service alone they are devoted.[59]

In truth however Redmond had not committed the Volunteers and had no intentions of doing so at this time. Furthermore, his correspondence with members of the British Cabinet prior to his speech, notably Augustine Birrell and HH Asquith, do not evidence any pressure exerted upon him by the Cabinet to secure recruits from the ranks of the Volunteers. In fact, Redmond's willingness to recruit the Volunteers for the war effort was contingent upon the War Office's recognition of the Volunteers as a domestic defence force. Redmond's last letter to Birrell before Woodenbridge reiterated this point

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[57] See for example John Swift's recollection in Uinseann MacEoin, *survivors* (Dublin, 1980) pp 59-60.
[58] Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 152-4.
[59] 'Manifesto to the Irish Volunteers', 24 Sept. 1914, in Martin, *Irish Volunteers*, pp. 152-4.

> If the existing Volunteer organisation is ignored and sneered at and made little of, recruiting in the country will not go ahead. On the other hand, if the Volunteers are properly treated, I believe that recruiting will go ahead. Now, my suggestion is this: that an announcement should be made immediately that the War Office are taking steps to assist in the equipment and arming and instructing of a certain number of the Irish Volunteers for Home Defence, and that this will be done without interfering in any way with the character of organisation of the existing Volunteer force.[60]

Reacting to the manifesto and actions of the new breakaway committee, Redmond clarified his position regarding his speech in early October:

> An absurd and malicious rumour has been sent around Ireland by our enemies to the effect that I have entered into a bargain with the Government to compel – if you please – the Volunteers of Ireland as a body to go to France. Well, fellow-countrymen, that is a lie.[61]

Regardless of Redmond's intensions, the damage to his reputation had been done. Nationalist papers were quick to label Redmond a traitor and a betrayer to the Irish Nation. A 'ballad of European history' sang out 'J is for John Redmond and Judas as well, Betraying the Irish to Empire and Hell.'[62] These accusations were made on the basis that Home Rule had not been delivered, even after the IPP had been given a mandate by the electorate, but had in fact been postponed until the war's conclusion.

While losing the majority of Volunteers to the Redmond camp, MacNeill and others identified the split as beneficial to the movement and its overall objectives. Joseph McGarrity felt the influence of Redmond to have been 'a curse.' Writing from Philadelphia shortly after the split, he reassured MacNeill that

> The issue is now clear for the enemy or for Ireland. I would rather see your committee with 5000 adherents which were true to Ireland ... Men here in America can now work with clear consciences for the Volunteers. ... Irish of America a unit in pledging financial and moral support to volunteers under your leadership. Must be no surrender of original principles for Ireland only.[63]

Redmond supporters agreed that the split was beneficial, helping to clear the air and leaving no doubt 'in the popular mind' as to the direction of the movement. Painting the dissidents as 'cranks and soreheads' who misled a small minority of volunteers, an editorial from *The National Volunteer* still promoted unity

> Whilst the country strongly condemns the self-constituted Committee who precipitated a crisis in the Volunteers, it holds out the hand of friendship and brotherhood to those comrades in the ranks who are willing to resume their places in the army that is enrolled to secure, to safeguard, and to maintain Ireland's right to legislative independence.[64]

Disagreement and dissent within the Irish Volunteer movement should not been seen as an anomaly but as part of the evolving concept of Irish nationalism and the formation of a distinct political identity. The Irish Volunteers owed their very existence to political division regarding Home Rule, the reaction of the Ulster Unionists, and the rise of the Ulster Volunteer Force. Its non-homogenous membership and vague objectives meant that nationalist mentalities of every shade would eventually collide. The Irish Volunteers movement provides a unique case study of this phenomenon not only in a political or military context, but also in a personal context. Attachment and adherence to individuals and the ideals they upheld allows scholars to further analyse the history of the Irish Revolution in ways which challenge the established narrative by examining the personal lives and, in the case outlined above, communication of the individuals involved. What emerges is a unique perception which exposes the contrasting mentalities and characteristics of a seemingly unified movement. Throughout 1914 the intervention of the Irish Party, the appointment Redmond's nominees, and most importantly the outbreak of the Great War, was simply the hammer falling upon an already loaded cartridge.

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[60] Redmond to Birrell, 9 Sept. 1914 (NLIM, John Redmond Papers, Ms 15,169/4).

[61] James Creed Meredith to the editor of the *National Volunteer*, 12 Dec. 1914, quoting Redmond from 5 Oct. 1914.

[62] *A ballad of European history*, undated (NLIM, Barton scrapbook, Ms 5,637).

[63] McGarrity to MacNeill, 17 Oct. 1914 (NLIM, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Ms 17,620); McGarrity to MacNeill, 24 Oct. 1914 (NLIM, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Ms 17,620).

[64] *The National Volunteer*, 17 Oct. 1914.

Crime, police, and penal policy: European experiences 1750-1940

By Clive Emsley
Oxford University Press, 2007
ISBN: 9780199202850; €80

Clive Emsley appropriately begins the first core chapter of this recently published account of the evolution of policing and penal practices in Europe by revisiting a well-known and graphic execution scene in France in 1757 which itself marked the opening of Michel Foucault's influential book *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. The condemned man, Robert-Francois Damiens was accused of the attempted assassination of Louis XV of France. Emsley points out that the level of cruelty that was inflicted upon Damiens was already outdated and this execution marked the end of a form of penal barbarity that had in reality concluded over a century earlier. Emsley's far-reaching work, one of the most significant in its field in recent years, examines the evolution of policing and penal policy in Europe during the two centuries following the execution of Damiens.

From Scandinavia to the Mediterranean, one of the most striking aspects of this book is the author's obvious awareness of the justice systems of most of Europe's nation states during the period in question. One of the most important societal trends of nineteenth-century Europe was the way in which state governments began to exercise greater social control over their populations by introducing uniform systems of policing, punishment and incarceration. With a strong emphasis on developments that occurred in England and France the book untangles the complex relationships between monarchies, regional administrators and later between penal reformers, social thinkers and democratic governments. In this regard Emsley is largely successful in taking account of the many regional peculiarities the marked European society and he achieves this in an intelligent but altogether accessible manner.

Emsley approaches this ambitious exercise by interrogating recent and contemporary research on many aspects of European crime and policing during the period. The book highlights, for example, the arguments in favour of and against a reliance on crime statistics as a means of revealing the true extent of criminality. One of the features of European society, particularly in rural areas during the eighteenth century and beyond was the prevalence of violence arising out of traditions of male honour and respectability. Much of this activity was not reported to the authorities as a crime and so has not been included in any statistical measurement of criminal behaviour. Emsley highlights and to a large extent supports the notion that English crime statistics were equally unsafe. Official data represented the number of incidents that were reported and only reflected the amount of crime for which governments provided investigative resources. He points to high levels of infant mortality in Victorian England as a useful example. The deaths of many babies were not investigated because of a lack of adequate funding for the coroner service, as well as a general lack of professionalism among those working in that field.

In later chapters considerable attention is rightly drawn to the rise of scientific and 'medical men' in the formation of penal policy and treatment processes. Emsley seems to argue that though much of their research was pioneering it did not always have a sound basis. The discovery of the concept of kleptomania by a Swiss doctor, Andre Matthy in 1816 was followed by further refinements of this research during the nineteenth century. It was not until the growth of the department store in the later decades of the century that medical science and psychiatry found a way to explain the phenomenon. The answer, which Emsley appears to suggest was one that the 'medical men' were hoping for, was found in assumptions based upon female frailty and weakness. According to this theory, otherwise respectable and bourgeois women who did not have any want of material possessions stole from department stores because females were essentially driven by irregular menstrual cycles, difficult pregnancies, menopause, bad marriages and deceased husbands. In general terms, though these scientific influences grew in stature over the course of the nineteenth century and most practitioners were quite sincerely motivated, Emsley argues that the policeman, the magistrate and the penal administrator remained the dominant figures in the application of justice never fully surrendering their profession to science.

Historians of the late-nineteenth century European penal system may argue that this work devotes little or no attention to the role of certain individual penal administrators. The British prison system came under particular scrutiny in the 1890s forcing the decline of the harsh and discredited regime of prison commission chairman

Edmund DuCane. His highly-influential successor, Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise spearheaded a more enlightened regime which actively sought out the input of medical and scientific research in policy formation. That the book makes no reference to either individual is a particular drawback though when measured against its real achievements, not a fatal one. Emsley has accomplished an expertly-woven text that draws together two centuries of research that glides with ease from the political-legal structures of pre-Revolutionary France to the Soviet Gulags of the twentieth century. His meticulous analysis of two hundred years of research, coupled with an indisputable command of all of the key themes of this subject as well as his geographical awareness ensure that this work has earned its place as an essential secondary text for a generation of penal scholars.

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The Irish Militia 1793-1802: Ireland's forgotten army
By Ivan F. Nelson
Four Courts Press, 2007
ISBN: 9781846820373; €45

Following the bicentenary of the 1798 rebellion, there were many calls for new research into the momentous events that brought eighteenth-century Ireland to such a violent close. This excellent study by Dr. Nelson is based on scholarly research and is a welcome addition to the military aspects of the Irish militia in the years from 1793 until it was disembodied in 1802. Prior to the publication of this history, only one book, Sir Henry McAnally's *The Irish Militia 1793-18*16 was the major work available to students. Like McAnally, Dr Nelson had family involvement with military experience in the militia. He states in his preface that following a career in the British army he returned to Queen's University, Belfast as a mature student. With a keen interest in history, he chose for his doctoral dissertation the Irish Militia in its earlier years.

As he makes clear in his introduction, his aim was to produce a military history not a political or social one. In this, he has largely succeeded and he proceeds with a certain military precision to accomplish this objective. He challenges the view of the militia that it was a poorly led, undisciplined force of amateur soldiers. He deals excellently with the background of the military, the inadequacies of the militia bill, the riots, the officers and the men who were largely Roman Catholic. Their loyalty held firm when many doubted it and he claims the militia was the main force which defeated the rebels in 1798. With original research, he details the relative proportions of Roman Catholics and Protestants in the thirty-eight regiments, their training and progression from part-time force to full-time active service.

The attempts by the United Irishmen to win over Catholic militiamen failed and evidence is produced to show that following the official purge the loyalty of the men remained true. Whether their loyalty was genuine or forced will never be known but it is claimed that strong leadership, incentives like pay and good food played a part. More likely was the threat of instant execution for taking the United Oath and flogging. Dealing with discipline and flogging, Dr. Nelson makes the point that in the view of the commanding officer it was a useful deterrent and allowed the offender to return to duty rather than waste time in having good militiamen guard prisoners. One regiments' records are used to illustrate that over a three year period 20,000 lashes were handed down, of which 10,000 were actually administered.

In these days of friendship between orange and green, when a President can greet a First Minister it is not politically correct to visit old hatreds. To subtitle this book as Ireland's forgotten army is to remind us that the militia in this country will never be forgotten especially in Co. Wexford. It was there that the notorious Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) for North Cork known as "Tom the Devil" perfected the pitch cap torture. Their reign of terror, rape and murder carried out before the rebellion is not mentioned in this history. Instead the extraordinary claim is made by Dr. Nelson that militiamen committed very little rape or murder. This cannot go unchallenged. It is in direct contradiction with their own commanding officers view. Lt. General Sir Ralph Abercromby in his official order of February 1798 stated 'very disgraceful frequency of courts martial and many complaints of irregularities proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness which renders it formidable to everyone but the enemy.' The reputation of the militia is further confirmed in July 1798 when Cornwallis stated 'in short, murder appears to be their favourite pastime' who then is to be believed when those in highest authority gave such public views?

In his military analysis of the rebellion, Dr. Nelson largely gives a fair minded and balanced view of the conflict. However the claims the rebel reports of Thomas Cloney should be treated with caution. Similarly Miles Byrnes memoirs are considered 'boastful and bombastic' and since most of the evidence now available to researchers is of the government view these are now taken as being historically accurate.

In his conclusion Dr. Nelson makes a good case for the claim that the largely Catholic militia force was primarily responsible for the defeat of not only the Irish rebels but also for the regular French army. Statistics are shown that the militia constituted over 56% of the army in 1798 (Yeomanry of approximately 50,000 are not included). Inadequate as the militia may have been they were crucial to the success of Dublin Castles' counterinsurgency policy and after 1800 when allowed to volunteer to serve in line, they became in time, the backbone of the British army. This is a book that will challenge many historical assumptions and it is well worth reading. As a military history, it helps in our understanding of the militia, the United Irishmen and the complex story of the rebellion. While some of its conclusions are controversial, this study by a former professional soldier is well crafted and makes a valuable contribution to the military history of Ireland.

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The government and the people of Limerick: the history of Limerick Corporation / City Council 1197-2006
By Matthew Potter
Limerick City Council, 2006
ISBN: 9780905700137, €45

Matthew Potter's book *The government and the people of Limerick: The history of Limerick Corporation/City Council 1197-2006* is especially strong on context and does not presume that the reader has a detailed knowledge of local history. Potter successfully attempts to guide the reader through an extensive narrative by providing insightful explanation and detailed contextualisation. In each chapter, the story moves compellingly from the general to the specific. The author carefully explains the significance of events by consistently placing them within a local, national and, where necessary, an international setting. This makes the book eminently accessible to both a local and general readership. The comprehensive presentation on urban government is of great interest, not only to students and professional practitioners of history but also to Limerick people with merely a general knowledge of local affairs. Moreover, outsiders are not forced to struggle through an impenetrable tale relating to the obscure history of an unfamiliar city, but are guided on an enjoyable journey towards a destination of understanding, with the able assistance of significance, explanation and ample background information.

To illustrate the method, one needs only to examine the approach taken in chapter two, as representative of that adopted throughout the work. This chapter concentrates on the medieval origins of Limerick Corporation and, by placing it within an international backdrop of medieval European town creation and expansion, emphasises the great importance of the establishment of a corporation. Limerick was but one of a number of European cities which experienced dramatic growth in the medieval period. The author explores the development of urban ruling classes in expanding continental cities, arguing that the European trend was followed closely in Limerick. The ruling classes were dominated in European cities by local nobles, landowners and by an increasingly prominent merchant and manufacturing class. After analysing the European context, the author then investigates developments relating specifically to Limerick, always including reference to the wider significance of activities. He examines the founding of the city, the influence of the Vikings on the growth of the town, the coming of the Normans, their capture of the city in 1175 and their urban policy. Moving effortlessly from the general to the particular, he carefully examines the first grant of charter to the city by King John in 1197, includes the entire text and discusses the important implications of its provisions. Subsequent constitutional developments such as the establishment of the city council, the evolution of incorporation and elevation to county status, are also explored in a chapter which concludes with a presentation of second and subsequent charters, a definition of freedom and an exploration of constitution at the close of the middle ages. The most striking of Potter's many interesting conclusions is that from 1413 to 1603, the municipal corporation operated as an independent statelet whose government structures of mayor, common council and freemen were analogous to and sometimes compared with the English central government model of king, lords and commons.

Other chapters adopt a similarly contextualised approach. Chapter three concentrates on the functions of the medieval corporation, again clarifying any potentially confusing issues through reference to contemporary European, Irish and British municipal governments. The corporation under the Tudors and Stuarts form the subjects of the next two chapters.

The age of corruption in municipal authorities during the 'long eighteenth century' (1691-1841) and the struggle to reform Limerick Corporation from 1723 to 1841 are the themes of chapters six and seven. They are of particular relevance to my own research into Athlone Corporation during the same period. Comparable levels of municipal malpractice existed in the two corporations, which was condemned by both contemporary observers and subsequently by historians. Potter considers the criticisms at length, quoting in particular a local commentator who described the city as suffering 'from the long-standing exploitation and degradation by the criminal clique who had ruled the city for their own benefit.' The domination of Limerick Corporation by a small number of extremely powerful ascendancy families was reflected in the complete control exercised in Athlone by three Protestant families. Both Limerick and Athlone experienced a narrowing of municipal elites as the eighteenth century progressed, while neither of their ruling bodies admitted Catholics, even after the Catholic Relief Act of 1793. Potter explores the controlling influence enjoyed from 1715 by the 'corporation' Roches, arguing that it was assumed in 1761 by the Smyths and their relations the Verekers. They shared parliamentary representation from 1761 to 1800 with the Perys, the largest landowners in Limerick city and its liberties. A struggle for parliamentary representation ensued after 1800, between the Verekers and the Perys, with Charles Vereker, who held the seat for eighteen years, being unseated in 1820 by the reformist Thomas Spring Rice, an ally of the Perys. The author skilfully and concisely describes the political intrigue behind these power struggles. In Athlone, the St. George, Holmes and Handcock families exercised complete dominion over corporation affairs until 1731. From 1731 until 1800 the St. Georges and Handcocks shared control, while after union the Handcocks enjoyed complete dominion.

While the Municipal Corporations Act of 1841 brought much change to local government, Limerick, unlike many other smaller British and Irish towns, did not lose its corporation. The background to reform, along with necessary adjustments to the functions of the corporation, are dealt with in chapter eight. The author argues in the following two chapters, that the growth of democratic awareness in the late-nineteenth century, coupled with increased access to education both in Britain and Ireland, led to the creation of a literate, politically conscious general public utterly opposed to electoral structures which supplied unrepresentative, aristocratic governments. An age of municipal revolution was thus ushered in, to which Limerick Corporation was not immune. Changes heralded by the Local Government.(Ireland) Act of 1898, including the first democratic elections in 1899, in which a somewhat nationalist labour corporation came to power, are explored. The final two chapters deal in the twentieth century developments from 1934 to 2006. The Limerick City Management Act of 1934 radically transformed municipal government by placing the routine supervision of civic affairs into the hands of a full-time professional manager, who directed an increasingly professional, permanently employed bureaucracy.

This is an accomplished book whose 582 pages provide an interesting and entertaining read. It is effectively annotated and reproduces portraits, pictures and paintings, which are used judiciously to illustrate persons, places and buildings and compliment the narrative. A great reliance on secondary, rather than primary sources has facilitated the compilation of a substantial reading list, invaluable to the student of local history. Although the author's claim may be slightly overstated, that it represents the first scholarly account of the entire history of an Irish municipal authority and the first major work since John J Webb's *Municipal Government in Ireland* published in 1918, the work is nevertheless groundbreaking in that it represents a comprehensive history of municipal government in a large Irish city, Limerick. It therefore makes an important contribution to historiography in a neglected historical field, so one should not quibble with a little overstatement.

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The History Society was founded in 1997 and has grown to become one of the most active societies on the campus, having been repeatedly recognised with numerous clubs and societies awards. Its activities continue to include organising lectures, seminars, films and field trips and the committee has contributed greatly to the growth of interest in the study of history among the University of Limerick community. *History Studies* was first published in 1999 marking a significant development in the early years of the society. For information on joining the University of Limerick History Society contact ulhistorysociety@gmail.com

History Studies
University of Limerick History Society Journal

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The editors of *History Studies* invite the submission of papers for inclusion in volume nine.

History Studies is the journal of the University of Limerick History Society and is jointly produced with the Department of History, University of Limerick. The journal is refereed by a panel of distinguished historians and is an established periodical in the field of historical scholarship.

Papers can focus on any aspect of history and should be no more than 5,000 words in length. Papers can be posted as an email attachment or on a floppy disk to the addresses below.

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