A

MILLSTREET MISCELLANY

(4)

Aubane Historical Society

Back cover:

Extract from Charles Vallancey's Military Survey of Ireland, 1784.

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MISCELLANY
(4)

Edited
by
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INTRODUCTION

This is the hundredth publication by this society. This includes everything from books to pamphlets to leaflets and various editions of some publications.

We want to thank all those who have helped, and continue to help, with our work. We also appreciate the financial help given at the beginning by IRD Duhallow. This bit of 'pump priming' was in keeping with IRD's raison d'etre and I think we have justified their confidence in us.

Of course, we never expected to produce so much material and it may be useful to try to explain briefly why and how we did so.

First of all, the history of this area and North Cork generally has proved to be much more interesting and varied than we ever suspected.

Secondly, our publishing coincided with the flowering of the revisionist school of history which has now come to dominate academia and the media This type of history writing is negative towards our history - at best - and self-hating more often than not. We attract people with the very opposite inclinations. Almost inevitably therefore, we became a target for this new school and had to defend the history of the area as we saw it.

This made us deal with people and issues we never dreamt we would ever have had to concern ourselves with - such as Elizabeth Bowen and her espionage activities during WW II.

Thirdly and most importantly we have worked well because our work is not a commercial enterprise. All the work is done on a voluntary basis - apart from the printers. This makes us immune to financial concerns which is particularly useful in a recession. Neither have we made ourselves dependent on funding or sponsors on which so many other publishers seem to depend and without which they become paralysed.

We make as many as possible of our publication available free of charge on the internet and would like to make them all free eventually if we could cope with the technicalities of doing so.

No doubt some of our critics suspect that all this cannot be as it seems or as I have described it and that there are some ulterior means and motives behind us.

I would remind them of the story of Cresimus in Roman times. He was a small farmer who consistently outdid all his much larger neighbouring farmers in the quality and quantity of his produce.

They suspected he must have been indulging in some form of the black arts and accused him of sorcery, (it would probably be called corruption today), and they had him hauled before the court to defend himself.

To counter the charge he turned up with his fine strong daughter, his well kept agricultural tools, his sleek and well-fed oxen and explained:

"These are my magic arts, 0 Romans, but there are others which I cannot exhibit - my sleepless hours, my watchings and me sweats I have endured." He was acquitted.

We have had it much easier than Cresimus because we do not have to compete in the market place. We are simply indifferent to it.

All we do is a labour of love and our success may well have helped prove the old adage that love conquers all - as another Roman put it.

Jack Lane

October 2010

MORE TRAVELLERS THROUGH THE AREA

'Anthony Wingate', 1762

This was a fictional visitor, the creation of Max Peacock, who had his hero come from England to take over his inheritance in North Cork in the midst of Whiteboy resistance. With murder, lust, land and religious differences the book has all the ingredients of a historical soap opera. Our hero travels on horseback with a friend from Cork, via Macroom and towards North Cork over Mauma:

"After leaving Macroom they turned northwards along what doubtless passed for a road here in Ireland, though in England it would hardly have been be dignified by the name of a bridle-path. At first their way lay amidst green fields, but they soon left those behind and entered upon a stretch of rough moorland that sloped gradually up to a lofty range of hills beyond. As they went on, the hills began to close in on them, and the open moorland narrowed down into a mere pass through the range. It was a scene of rugged beauty, with a soft and gentle quality about its ruggedness that is to be found nowhere else but in Ireland. To all appearances there was not a human being within miles of them, and they rode on up the pass slowly and at their ease. Then, all at once they discovered that the waste was not as deserted as it seemed. The note of a hunting-horn suddenly rang out, and not more than two or three hundred yards from them....."

They are then checked out by a local Whiteboy on behalf of the others in the area and he helps them on their way.

"For the next three hours they rode on steadily, down the hill and across the valley, (Aubane, J.L.) through the village of Millstreet and over the Blackwater river - both very English names, Anthony thought - finally turning in a north-easterly direction towards the belt of trees that the man (the Mauma Whiteboy, J.L.) had pointed out to them ."

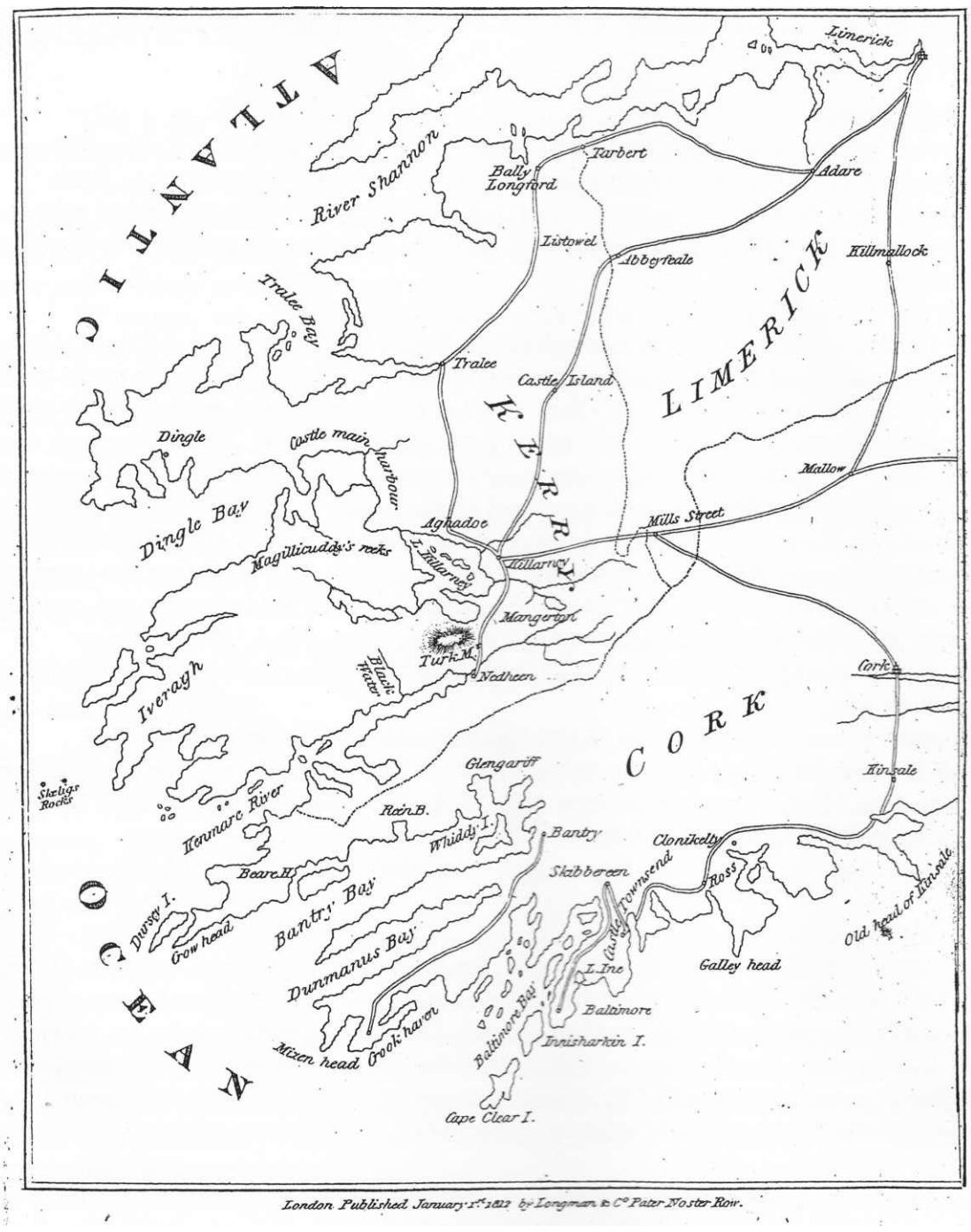
"Dark Rosaleen" by Max Peacock, 1955

Isaac Weld, 1800

Weld, (1774 - 1856) (J.P., F.G.S.D., M.R.I.A) was an Irish topographical writer, explorer, and artist. In 1800 he visited Killarney a number of times, navigated the lakes in a boat he made from compressed brown paper, and published an account. He is also well known for his drawings of American life and, in particular, the Niagara Falls. The following is an extract from his account of the visit to Killarney which has wonderfully evocative drawings of the lakes and the surrounding area and his book included the map below drawn by him of his routes between Cork and Killarney.

"From Mallow to Killarney, the road runs for some miles along the banks of the Blackwater, through country highly improved and well wooded; but, as it advances, the scenery becomes less interesting, and, in the vicinity of the village if Mill-street, about fifteen miles from Killarney, it enters a bleak and mountainous region. Mill-street is situated at the junction of the Cork and Mallow roads; and, being a place of great thoroughfare, it affords much business to a considerable inn, which has hitherto been one of the very best in the country. Hence to Killarney the road passes alternately over bogs and mountains, and the country affords little that is pleasing, until a view of the lake is discovered from the maintains at the distance of a few miles. From Cork to Mill-street the road is still more dreary, passing over mountains, where, for many miles, no human beings are seen but the drivers of the numerous horses which are employed in the transporting of butter from Kerry. Yet, bleak and dreary as the this country now appears, a century, it is said, has scarcely elapsed, since the whole of it was so thickly covered with wood, that, to use the expression of those from whom I received the account, a squirrel could go from Killarney to Cork by leaping from bough to bough. The road from Mill-street is the direct one from Cork to Killarney; but there are several others which are far more agreeable in point of scenery: as by Bandon, Bantry, &c."

"Illustrations of the scenery of Killarney and the surrounding country", 1807



London Published January 1st 1822 by Longman & Co Paternoster Row.

Nathaniel Hazeltine Carter, 1825

He was an American visitor who passed through in the mail coach from Cork to Killarney on the 5 July 1825. He gave a very good description of travelling by coach and the kind of experience it was.

"Macroom, Millstreet, and other places on the route are dirty villages, filled with a miserable population. We were glad to escape from the crowd of beggars who beset us, and whose distresses we could not relieve. The language of the mendicants wholly unintelligible, accompanied with all sorts of gesticulations, and tones the most importunate. Some miles from Killarney, the high hills of Kerry began to meet the eye...."

"Letters from Europe, by N. H. Carer", 1827, New York

James Norris Brewer, 1826

Brewer makes a brief reference to Millstreet in his book and then refers to the much recorded O'Leary who seems to have ruled the town in those years. (See Millstreet Miscellany, 3). In that period the town presented a very negative image, full of beggars and much poverty and the image painted reminds one of Patrick Pearse's statement that the history of Ireland in the 19th century was that of a mob desperately forming itself into a nation.

After describing O'Leary he goes on to describe another character of the area who had even a grander status than O'Leary:

"Mill-Street is a small and mean village, distant from Macromp twelve miles, on the road leading to Killarney. At this place are barracks for infantry.* At a short distance from Mill-Street, towards the north-east, is the parish of Clonmene, in which, according to Colgan, there was formerly a monastery for the Augustinian Friars, found by the family of O'Callaghan. Here was also a castle, ruined in the civil wars which commenced in 1641.

* We may also mention in this place, on the authority of a manuscript communicated to the author of this book by the late Mr. Beauford, the following particulars, relating to another gentleman residing in this part of the country a few years back, who retained more of the dignity appertaining to the antient Irish chief than the convivial personage noted above (i.e., O'Leary, J.L.). His name was McCarthy, and he was, in the language of our MS, titular king of Munster. He was descended from McCarthy Mor, king or prince of this province; and had in his possession, the crown, sceptre, and other regalia appertaining to his antient dignity and family. He possessed likewise, a cup, said to be made from the cranium of an ancestor of Brian Boru, whom the McCarthys had slain in battle. It was highly polished and had a lid of silver. It was a custom, writes Mr. Beauford, among the old Irish to decapitate their vanquished enemies, and also was a custom of the chiefs to form drinking-cups of their skulls, and to retain them as trophies. Numbers of such cups have been found under bogs, and several are still in possession of antient Irish families. Our readers will observe that we mention the above circumstances, entirely as extracts from the MS. of Mr. Beauford, which adds that many traces of antient manners may be discovered in this remote district. The very general name of the people is McCarthy. They are not, however, distinguished by that name in their native country, but by the place of their residence, or some other adventitious circumstance. Thus, John McCarthy does not bear that name among his neighbours, but is termed Long John, Short John,, Black John, White John. &c; or John of the Hill, John of the Glyn, &c; the name McCarthy being borne by the Chief alone. Beaufort MSS. Penes J.N. Brewer."

"The Beauties of Ireland, Vol.11" 1826

An anonymous German traveller 1832

Ireland attracted a number of German visitors in the early part of the 19th century. Ireland was interesting for them because it was clearly not settling down as part of the UK and they were curious to know why. They were also intrigued by the phenomenon of O'Connell. A growing popular political Catholic movement in the United Kingdom was something that needed explaining and a typical pattern for the visitors was to go to Kerry and Derrynane to behold the man in person among his own people and supporters.

One group passed through Millstreet on their return journey via Killarney and went on to Limerick from Millstreet:

"The journey to that wretched spot, Millstreet, a stretch of about 21 English miles, again brought us through that miserable region I'd partly got to know eight days earlier. Every time we paused to water our horses, we were surrounded by whole swarms of unfortunates, heart-breaking in their lamentable appearance.

The district continued to maintain the same sad appearance for some time until we turned further north and neared the fertile valley of the Blackwater. As is well known, this rises on the

Kerry border, cuts through the County of Cork from west to east, and flows out into the Bay of Youghal.

We noticed the first signs of the inhabitants being in a better condition on the lands of the since deceased Mr. Leader. He was for a while the Member of Parliament for Kilkenny but was afterwards rejected by the electorate — despite his Whig principles — because he refused to support O'Connell's call for Repeal. There is a fine Protestant Church near his country house. Like so many of its kind, it has been built largely by compulsory taxes on the surrounding Catholic inhabitants — the object certainly not being to meet the real needs of the surrounding community, but to bring "Protestant Ascendancy" to bear...

"Skizzen aus Hand" 1838, Stuttgart

Hand Book for travellers in Ireland, 1843

"The small town of Millstreet is the only stage between Mallow and Killarney. It is situated in the valley lying between the Bogra and Derrynasaggart Mountains, and watered by a small stream which falls into the Blackwater below the town. It consists principally of one street, and contains a small inn, where post-horses can be hired, a church and a Roman Catholic chapel, The gentlemen's seats around are *Drishane Castle,*———Wallis, Esq.; *Coomlagane,* J. McCarthy - O'Leary, Esq.; *Mount Leader,*———Leader, Esq.; *Coole House,* and *Coole. Drishane Castle* was erected by Dermot McCarthy in 1636; and the ruins of *Kilmeedy Castle,* another of the McCarthy structures, are in the vicinity of the town. The cultivated lands around Millstreet are limited; but the mountain scenery is wild, and in many places highly interesting."

"Hand Book for travellers in Ireland," James Fraser, 1843

Handbook for travellers in Ireland, 1864

"The most attractive point about Millstreet (Hotel: Wallis Arms) is its situation in an open wooded valley on the Finnow, surrounded by mountains, which at Cahirbarnagh to the S.W. attain a height of 2239 ft. In fact they are the advanced outposts of the Killarney group that has for some time past been looming in the distance. The scenery of Millstreet is enhanced by the woods of Drishane, Altamount (Rev. G. Morgan) Coomlagane (McCarthy-O'Leary Esq.), and Mount Leader, the residence of the Leader family, at the foot of Mount Clara."

"Handbook for travellers in Ireland", John Murray, 1864

Dr. Arnold von Lasaulx, 1877

Dr.Lasaulx was a German geologist who passed by train made the following observations:

"The train from Mallow continues along the Blackwater Valley. To the right lie the flattish coal-producing hills around Kanturk, which culminate in Mullaghereik Mountain (1,300 feet). Coal is mined in a few places here, but scarcely repays the cost of the labour, as the seams are poor and meagre.

We now see the outlying heights of Old Red Sandstone, first the Bochragh Mountains/which rise gradually to over 2,000 feet, and then, immediately to the west, the Derrynasaggart Mountains,* with their precipitous north-facing slopes. These form a border-wall between the Counties of Cork and Kerry.

High to the left of Millstreet Station, Caherbarnagh towers up to 2,239 feet, almost forming a portal to Ireland's high mountain range and the County of Kerry - which now opens out to us in a series of picturesque tableaux. But the aspect here is not bright and sunny: it is only rarely that the landscape appears untroubled. Light and dark colour tones alternate rapidly, and the many nuances of green and brown, with the strong shadows of multiform clouds, make for great variety - alternating gaiety and melancholy - with an extraordinarily stimulating effect.

The lakes of Killarney, the jewel of south-west Ireland, are so esteemed that they are sought out by strangers, and not just those with an interest in geology. They are much visited by English and Irish, mostly attracted by the fishing and hunting - "to sport awhile",** Americans also tend to

wend their way from Cork to Killarney, but visitors from the European Continent are few and far between.

Excellent hotels provide for an easy stay. A short, leafy walk leads directly to the Railway Hotel, most convenient for the passing traveller. Otherwise the hotels directly on the lake, situated in luxuriant parks have the advantage that the visitor does not have to spend half an hour finding a way between high walls to get a clear view of the beautiful landscape.

* *Derry:* oak; *saggart:* a corruption of *sacerdos;* thus 'the oaks of the priests'.

** [Phrase in English, JL.]

"Aus Irland - reiseskizzen und studien", Dr. Arnold von Lasaulx, Bonn, 1877

Katherine Everett, 18th August 1922

Ms. Everett was a minor Anglo-Irish literary figure of the mid 20th century. She was one of the Herbert family of Muckross House. She was asked by the owner of Macroom Castle, Lady Ardilaun, also one of the Herberts as well as one of the Guinness family to see what had happened to the Castle after it was taken over from the Crown Forces by the Republican Forces who used it as their Headquarters in the Macroom area after the Truce. She arrived to find out what had happened just as the Republicans were ousted by the Free Staters from the Castle in the war over the Treaty and they burned it on leaving. It was the fifth time in its history that the Castle had been burned. Katherine travelled by train to Limerick and then cycled to Macroom via Millstreet, Tullig, Aubane and over Mauma. She describes her experiences as follows:

"The next day I got as far as Limerick by train, but beyond that the line and bridges were damaged. It was two o'clock and I had sixty miles to go. Advised that all that country was in the hands of the IRA and a pass from them would be necessary. I applied reluctantly at their headquarters, and obtained one from a seedy-looking young man in a stained yellow mackintosh. A couple of men with a side-car also applied, and as they were going my way they offered me a lift.
"Hop up now, and we'll tie the bicycle behind."
"No, thank you all the same," I replied. "I'd sooner go on my own."

Off they started, and about two miles down the road I came up with them, the car on its side, the horse out of the shafts and a big hole in the bridge ahead of them, but there was room for me to pass. "You were not so foolish for all," they shouted as, waving to them, I went on my way.

It was a lovely soft day, and the country looked peaceful. After going for a couple of hours I came to a white cottage, and went in, asking if I could have a cup of tea. A woman, with bare feet, but with perfect manners, welcomed me, and while laying the table she asked me, was it far I was going, and when I told her my destination she exclaimed, "Holy mother! You'd never reach it this night."
"I might stop off in Millstreet, and go on in the morning, but the days are long and I might get there yet."
"I wouldn't be wishing you on the mountains and night falling, for terrible things do be doing; one of my boys is out this minute."
"With the IRA?"
"Indeed, yes; and I have another a Free Stater. My heart's scalded, for didn't I lose my eldest in the war."
"Which war?"
"In the English war with the Germans, of course. I'm heartsick with wars; all my three boys were good boys, but, God help me, with a great taste for fighting."

I thanked her for her excellent cup of strong tea and wished to pay for it.
"To take the price of a cup of tea after having a pleasant chat! No, indeed and I will not."

We parted with kindly feelings, and in the golden light of the late afternoon I pushed on, looking towards the mountains, which were violet in the distance, and the bogland that lay on either side, all so peaceful and quiet.

Close to the small town of Millstreet a man with a rifle stepped from the shadow of a thorn-tree and asked had I pass for the road. He examined my pass and said "Listen here. A battle is laid for the bridge beyond, and 'wouldn't do for yourself to be caught in it. Stay here in the ditch and hide your bicycle, and as soon as ever the fighting's over I'll be back and give you the all clear."

He was most helpful, getting turf and branches the conceal the bicycle. "Wouldn't it be the great temptation for one on the run in a hurry to see it shining before him, while he'd take not a bit of notice of any woman resting herself on the roadside. I'll be back then." And he went off at a loping run.

It seemed fantastic to be sitting in a leafy ditch looking at the setting sun and the empty, placid landscape while I calmly waited for a battle to be over. Soon a few shots rang out, and in under an hour my chivalrous friend came back and told me, "We had them easy beat without a bit of trouble, but there's one dead on the bridge, and I wouldn't have a lady see the like of that, so I'll take you by the stepping-stones You'll not have a bit of trouble, for the river's low." He carried my bicycle across and left me. (The location was the old Keale Bridge, J. L.) .

I went up the main street of the little town , which was thirty miles from the Castle (clearly wrong, probably a misprint, J.L.) and I knew I could not reach it that night. All doors and windows were closed, and no reply was forthcoming when I knocked at a door, nor was there any response from passers-by whom I asked if there was a room to be had. Everyone seemed unfriendly until, seeing a group of women, I went up to them and said, "Isn't there one who'd speak a word to an Irishwoman, and she one of the family?"

The change was startling. "To think of that!" they cried; " the word went you were an English policewoman."

"I've come from her ladyship to see if the castle is burnt."

"'Tis so; the Staters were for turning the Republicans out, so they fired it before they made off, and there's ne'er a bed you'll find in this place, for it's full up with them same boys."

"Would you be willing to come into my place? You could rest easy in the chair for the night." An old woman led me through a tiny shop to an even smaller sitting-room behind, where there was a peat fire, which she blew upon until the turf began to glow. "Wait till I put the kettle on for a cup of tea," she said; " and I have some soda bread, but before I do that I'll draw the curtains."

She went to a narrow slit of window, about a foot high, which had red flannel, such as they used to make country petticoats of, strung on a string over it.

"'Tis as well to be cautious," she added, " for these times they'd think no more of slitting out throats than they would a couple of ducks."

I dozed through the night in the chair by the fire, and before dawn made myself another cup of tea; then, leaving a little money under the teapot, I unlocked the shop door and crept out with my bicycle. It was dead quite and the mountain I had to cross showed dark against the sky.

It was a long, upward climb, with the world around changing every moment, the sky turning from grey to gold and the rising sun striking patches of vivid green on the mountain-side. Walking and riding and always thinking the top was at hand, I paused after an hour and a half to see another long rise ahead, all gold-bronze colour. It was completely lonely, no living thing was in sight, and I went on again until at last I reached the top and the road that led downwards.

What a view! Below was the valley framed in trees, and then ridge after ridge of distant hills, rosy on the sunlit side and fading away to violet and faintest blue. The road slipped away under the bicycle, and presently something else showed on the lovely landscape: a tall spiral of smoke, thin and fading at the top.

The Castle had always appeared to be solid deep green, from the ivy that clothed it, with great twisted stems as thick as a man's thigh. Now it was rust colour. All the village seemed gathered outside the Castle, where furniture, china, and pictures lay on the lawn or leaned against trees, while policemen prevented the onlookers from going too near the smoking ruin."

"Bricks and Flowers, Memoirs of Katherine Everett" , London 1949

'Thomas Sherwood,' a science fiction visitor, 1959

We began these items with a piece of historical fiction and we will end with a piece of science fiction! Sir Fred Hoyle was an English astronomer noted primarily for his contribution to the theory of stellar nucleosynthesis and his often controversial stance on other cosmological and scientific matters—in particular his rejection of the "Big Bang" theory, a term originally coined by him as a jocular, perhaps disparaging, name for the theory which was the main rival to his own.

He found the idea that the universe had a beginning to be philosophically troubling, as many argued that a beginning implies a cause. He argued for the universe as being in a "steady state". The theory tried to explain how the universe could be eternal and essentially unchanging while still having the galaxies we observe moving away from each other. The theory hinged on the creation of matter between galaxies over time, so that even though galaxies get further apart, new ones that develop between them fill the space they leave. The resulting universe is in a "steady state" in the same manner that a flowing river is - the individual water molecules are moving away but the overall river remains the same.

In addition to his work as an astronomer, Hoyle was a writer of science fiction. In 1959 he published "Ossian's Ride", a science fiction thriller, which was set in an Ireland of the future (1970) when it had become a very wealthy authoritarian police state. The wealth emanated from a secret and forbidden science zone occupying an area of the South-West based on a mysterious 'Industrial Corporation of Eire' which had produced a range of new technologies. Sherwood agrees to be sent as a spy to find out just what is going on. Not a bad yarn and I won't divulge the plot.

At one stage he travels with a friend Cathleen along the Ballyhoura Mountains towards "The Great Barrier" of the Corporation which passes between the Boggeraghs and Millstreet town (see map on page 33'):

"The mist stayed down, which was good. It enabled the fire to be kept going throughout the night, for one thing. For another it would now be vastly easier to sneak across the I.C.E. territory. I had abandoned my first idea of crossing during the night with Cathleen. This would be too strenuous. The mist gave us all the advantages of a night crossing anyway.

We pushed along steadily throughout the morning, choosing our route by compass the whole time. The ground rose steadily to a height approaching 2,000 feet, which was a sure indication that that we were on the crest of the Boggeragh Mountains. By lunch-time I was convinced we might be across the Barrier already. While we were eating ragged patches appeared in the mist. At first I did realise our incredible good fortune. It was only when the mist cleared for the second time that I noticed the huge turning aerials. They were about six miles to the west, mounted on a tongue of high ground to the south of the town of Millstreet. (Tullig, perhaps, J.L.). The binoculars taken from the Chevrolet revealed their nature and purpose.

I cursed myself for a fool not to have guessed that I.C.E. would guard its border by radar, in much the same way that the British guarded their island during the late war. Just as we had detected the entry of enemy aircraft, so I.C.E. were detecting the entry not simply of aircraft but of people too. Of course it was a much harder technical problem to pick out a slowly moving person from a mass of ground reflection, but it was problem that would easily be within the reach of this fantastic organisation.

"I'm sorry, my dear, but we have to turn back," I said to Cathleen. "We'll surely be caught if we go on."

When I had explained she said, "It's to work inside the Barrier that I'm going. I care not whether I am caught or no."

"But they'll simply throw you out again, instead of letting you stay and work."

"Knowing what I know, I don't think so."

Looking at her as she then looked, hair fluttering in the same breeze that had blown away the morning mists, I did not think so either. St. Peter may turn her away from the Gates of Heaven but I do not think so."

"Ossian's Ride" by Fred Hoyle, 1959

A VIEW FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Morning seen from a riverbank

A new day is about to be born, night finally runs out its course. The constellations reluctantly depart the sky and go their mysterious ways, leaving but the Morning Star as the last outpost of the night. But the world is not waiting passively. Everything is in a state of transition, change being the only constant.

Enter a pale glow on the eastern horizon, as the great eye of dawn is about to open and dispel the burthen of darkness that oppresses the earth. Here in the expectant stillness, only the lapping of the dark mysterious river water betrays its presence, but vegetation on the riverbank is rewarded with increasing brightness that pursues the fading night onto lonely barren places where damp hollows release misty vapours that arch up to redemptive brightness, then condense into white clouds that roam the skies once again.

As night departs steadily, so also does the approach of morning, so finely tuned they don't collide; a primeval expectancy of the awakening world renders an Eden in the morning emerging from the dormitory of the long night as awaiting the first footsteps of man. Lingering still in the morning air are faint echoes of those first footsteps setting out on a long and torturous journey, the undulations of his path, parallel those of the spirit, as yet bewildered, begging the elements an interpretation of the circumstance he finds himself in.

It is a paradox, that from the mystery he is emerging, his own appearance will now dispel absolute peace forever leaving but residual amounts that need to be continually and copiously elaborated upon, which implies that he carries within himself the elements of tragedy also.

Now on watching has own reflection in a water pool, sees himself for the first time in the reflection of his eyes staring back at him, realise the mystery within and in an optimistic moment concludes that the world he is looking at reflects his own mood and tenses.

What is finally seen is entirely through the mind's eye and the aspects that repels him engender fear and then fear of fear to be countered by recognising taboos and by the option to override the literal images and replace them as it moves him to see the world in terms of light or shade, see it a place of bondage or a palace of dreams.

But life being composed of moments and this particular moment nature is freely offering its morning riches together with the illusion that its entirely benevolent, replete in atheistic virtue though it s chief virtue proceeds from the response it evokes, that good begets good. Reciprocity is to be seen as the spiritual dimension with unlimited horizons, such is the moment of edification. A response to the austerity of morning suggests a displacement of values - water tastes as wine, watercress is bread for the soul, which dispense with the need to approach the tree of knowledge and search for its prohibited truth.

Touched by the depths of voluble silence is felt an affinity with the earth, threads of a web, as the attraction between the animate and the inanimate beauty on the face of a flower that holds itself up for admiration is an aspiration to bridge the gap that divides them as all attraction is but a circuitous effort to reconcile the bits and pieces of creation that presently travel separate but parallel paths, a movement towards articulate coherence. Such crossover or conjunction seems no longer possible; the bonds are become insuperably loosened, the drift apart has long since commenced the slow irrevocable drift to inertia, the ultimate end of all material things.

Witness the immobility of a leaf falling slowly downwards through the early morning air, sharing the exhaustion of all living things, the brief shadow cast in its brief passage earthwards, is the only record of its demise but nothing passes unnoticed.

A faded leaf enacts a sense of melancholy. Passing shadows, passing time, and passing life.

Morning seen from a motorway

It is morning and the last neon light is extinguished, expiring night is on the wane, visible only are the dim outlines of an awakening world still suspended in fitful slumber as it emerged from the dormitory of the long night waiting on the grey light of dawn that also heralds the onset of challenges which beset existence.

Deep silence is soon to be assailed by the shrill summons of alarm devices that bid the sleepers awake and exchange dreams for realities.

Tranquillity is further deposed of by a great dawn chorus of music and song plus news bulletins on the hour emitted by radio stations that never sleep.

As night is but an interlude in a great drama played out daily, the curtain is about to rise on the next act for which the cast is preparing to take its allotted part.

With a great roar automobile engines are forced into life, exhaust valves expel tempests of carbon that billow up to redemptive light, condense into black clouds that roam the skies again.

Morning light reveal several billboards and advertising hoardings, sentinels of commerce and the consumer society, assail the passing traffic in mute supplication, a welcome to the Promised Land, as the inanimate plead with the animate.

Shadows from the passing traffic weave erratic patterns across the whitening asphalt, a ribbon of motorway that extends to the perimeter of the city while occasional roadside vegetation is embroidered with pieces of plastic wrapping and shreds of yesterday's newspaper, already irrelevant but elevated now by the rush of the hurrying tyres, such is the urgency of morning.

Commuters in the daily tedium of getting to work, sit pensively, staring into space, seeing only the inner landscape with images of a past that is never past.

In retrospect, life seems now to have been a journey across latitudes of experiences and tides of emotions, never to be revoked but endured to become a history of the soul and subject to the weight of effects.

Other travellers of the morning defer to a questioning world into which comes a defining moment, like looking into another water pool, see themselves for the first time, ask now, who am I, why am I here? But is confronted by the inscrutable face of a universe itself condemned to endless motion as though subject to the dictates of some greater power.

From tiny seams in the face of the great enigma , enlightenment seeps out but grudgingly, in microscopic bits and pieces seemingly in some ratio commensurate to the breakthrough of enlightenment and the breakdown of matter.

In the lassitude accruing from travel and early rising other commuters sink deeper into their seats as though to the shelter of a lee shore, dispense with the fixed impersonal smile that serves as a shield from the dispassionate stare of an insincere world. Now with time on hold, commence a journey to a private sanctuary and there succumb to the solicitude of illusions, freed momentarily from fetters incurred in deserts of boredom and deserts within themselves, recreates life on terms disconnected to the routine and the endless repetitions encountered in daily life, as well as the vestigial residues they will forever be encumbered with.

Here in the space between ego and alter ego can be cultivated an alternative Garden of Eden whose fruits may also serve as bread for the soul. But it is dream only that dissipates in the morning mists with reminders everywhere to concentrate on the issues of the day ahead.

Morning is about to pass into day, the land of promise is no longer shrouded in mystery, a buzz of excitement presage the dreams of an different world where resolution and efforts are commensurate with success and every waking hour is stretched to extend a material empire whose tenants are to enjoy a tenure which is but ephermal in real terms.

But the morning editions scream of takeovers and acquisitions stoke the fuses of ambition and further effort.

Now broad daylight uncovers the scope and magnitude of this world to be conquered.

A network of winding roads and weaving rivers extend to the perimeter of the ocean to be heard again are echoes of the same familiar hurrying footsteps that now deflect the silence of hitherto

empty streets. They propel forward, hostages to the hazards of fortune or to sacrifices on the altar of success.

Some additional reflections.

The focus of human ambition as centred on a doctrine of self-interest which exemplifies the struggle for existence coupled with a search for a credible interpretation of its own destiny and a cause although the preoccupation and diligence applied to material issues, suggest a lack of belief in either a beginning or end to anything.

But such questions are trapped within the confines of the temporal life span, which entire duration, reconciled to cosmic values, is but a brief illumination in time, the impact of an instant only, an instant in immensity.

Conflicting ideologies on the purpose of human effort are overshadowed by the reflection that the corporate magnate and the beggar share a common bond - both are puppets in a mad dance of energy and both will share an anxiety that their own efforts weren't all for nothing and not without the fear also, that in some extra dimension, their own value may be put on a weighing scale and there to nourish the hope they will not be found wanting, for at this stage life will be the only thing they now possess.

Living is further burdened by concepts of accountability and atonement, something that sits uneasily on uncomfortable shoulders, already navigating a blurred line that separates the rational from the irrational, obsessed by conflicts of attitude between the real and the ideal and definitions of conscience, interspersed with dreams of peace, the ultimate refuge from reality.

Life is a tenant that effectively occupies a space, bounded by a horizon at either end, where memory begins and memory ends, though its remit cannot be confined by physical factors only surviving a long and difficult parthenogenesis from a rearrangement of energy and matter, an issue from the dissonance of a remote reaction, a progression.

In the breakdown of matter, an unravelling of the great enigma that is to lead finally to a foothold on a chromosome and absolutely to a mind whose dominions will be limitless.

Inevitably there will be contradictions as to the fulfilment of its destiny and of necessity forced to exist in a state of activity and unrest, a fate shared by the stars. Peace is to be a point only where opposing forces lose momentum, a momentary inertia - still water.

Michael Casey

THE GREAT DENIAL

Never again in the lives of young people will they be more vulnerable as when leaving the home and family life to enter school for the first time. Now they will meet a teacher for the first time and the relationships between teacher and pupil will be of paramount importance as it will initiate a meeting of minds but so wide is the gap between them that they proceed from positions of extremes.

And to compound the difficulty a meeting of temperaments to which adjustments will have to be made. Somehow all problems drift towards a solution zone and equalises by a balancing act, finding its own sea level, often a dead level of mediocrity.

Ideally the teacher's superior knowledge and experience is expected to raise the standard or up the ante. Consider the difficulty of the pupil trying to mesh with the system and the perplexities of life. Not least of these will be the perplexities of the teacher assigned to help them pursue a course of study while it will be necessary for the pupil to study the teacher also and watch out for storm clouds and other climate changes being reflected on the teacher's face - something the latter apparently forgets

School issues usually break down to the distemper of the teacher and the disposition of the pupil. In the past particularly such was the atmosphere of authority, and submission to it, that knowledge was transmitted through a climate of fear and a lack of sensitivity to the intellectual

capabilities of the pupil. Discipline and obedience was raised to the level of moral virtue and the spoils of the system went to the most receptive. Failing these criteria it was business a usual with the dominant character versus the weaker one and the effects of the conflict descended on both in turn.

There is ample evidence that quite often the recipient of fear becomes a replica of the person feared, which engenders the view of a certain reciprocity in the natural order - "what goes around comes around" - a levelling off to accommodate extremes.

The tragedy of conflict lies in the after-effects, and defenceless children carrying in their minds forever the burthen of unhappy school experiences of which it could be alleged, truly, you must dig very deep to bury your teacher.

Compulsory education goes back roughly six generations and until comparatively recently the majority education ever received, particularly in rural areas.

In assessing value and effort of that period and making a comparison to the Hedge era which preceded, it could not be argued that articulation or literacy levels were not improved upon significantly. Recollections from the National School era of the past are too often of an unhappy nature, though it must be conceded these are mostly anecdotal, due to the fact that material of an unpleasant content would find difficulty in getting published. The powers that be, the Church and State, who shared control of the classroom would deem it infamous and contrary to the common good.

An implacable combination this, in the face of any challenge to their authority, an opinion shared by the majority of the citizens who also confused freedom with independence and who were seemingly unaware that freedom should mean independence of mind.

The new establishment drew its inspiration from a model of Gaelic mythology, the ethos of an island of saints and scholars, though these latter must have been rather disappointed at our failure to implement the Gaelic tongue as a spoken language, a further indictment of teaching methods at the time.

Study in the rarefied air of college or university had one positive effect however, it entitled the bearer to be treated with deferential respect forever, a fact which must have pleased some of the gods at least, and expressions of humility being always an ingredient of human drama.

But in the perceived plebeian background of rural Ireland, learning continued to issue largely through the application of the cane considered a necessary stimulant to the unwilling. Knowledge the fruit of discipline and any wounds incurred, mental or otherwise consigned to the oblivion of hidden Ireland. Silence would always deny anything untoward happened. A system that conditioned successive generations to manual work in construction sites of England and America and girls for housework in the same destinations.

All accepted again with naive humility and not forgetful of traditional values that 'it pays to be honest', an abstraction that also eases the scruples of the establishment who also exported the poor and consequent humble walk in the path of rectitude.

It would be illogical to suppose all this to be their destiny; destiny is but an illusion that tries to explain the circumstance people find themselves in. There is a sadness to it also, that because of the brevity of life, one early chapter affects all of it, to leave a general sense of unfullfilment due mainly to teachers appointed by school managers totally unfitted for their duties.

The past cannot be altered now, but it can traversed in reverse, as it refuses to be silenced. The ghosts of hidden Ireland will rise up and in imagination at least can be heard over the sobbing wind, in the night air above the old National Schools of rural Ireland the disconsolate cries of confused children still animated by their desire to be restored to their birthright of dignity and equalisations with their peers.

It is our duty to bridge the gulf that separates them from us, a public avowal of sorrow would be a measure of reconciliatory restitution, redemption of a kind and that is the least they deserve.

Michael Casey

CANON GRIFFIN, 1830-99

Foreword

I am very pleased that Kevin O'Byrne is working on a biography of Canon Griffin and that he has agreed to publish an outline of his researches so far. I would ask anyone who has any information or ideas about Canon Griffin to give Kevin any help they can to pursue his research. Such a biography is long overdue.

Canon Griffin was a unique Parish Priest in the Ireland of his day in that he was totally opposed to the National Land League. The most typical situation at the time was that the local P.P. was chairman of the local Land League branch. What was happening in and around Millstreet at the time was not unusual as regards the contemporary land issue itself - which was essentially centred on countering evictions. But Canon Griffin's position of opposition to the National Land League did make the situation here very unusual. It became a national issue because of his determination to oppose the League at every opportunity. The Canon was well educated, well-connected, very articulate, very capable, very energetic and sincerely convinced that he was right.

He spread his message far and wide by every means possible. His reports to newspapers were sometimes blood-curling and re-issued as pamphlets by defenders of the landlord system. The result was that he helped define Millstreet in the public mind for a number of generations. Even though the events, personalities and the issues he engaged in go back to the century before last they still resonate even today. It is certainly time that he and his times were dealt with properly.

The cutting edge of the land issue in 19th century Ireland was evictions. This was the regular 'solution' by landlords to their problems. One estimate says that between 1849 - 1886 there were 524,000 families evicted and the number of people involved was 3,668,000. (M.G. Mulhall, *"50 years of National progress."*, 1887, 1971)

But of course the bald facts belie the dreadful misery, suffering and destruction of lives that was associated with evictions. By the late 1870s the tenant farmers as a class got themselves together and became determined to resist the continuation of this policy. They were determined to have security of tenure and other basic rights. Though the law was weighted against them they used all legal means and they developed the tactic of boycotting which was not illegal but outside the reach of the law. Officialdom saw the resistance to evictions and to the landlord system as a series of 'outrages' and they *were* outrages by their lights. But it was mixing up cause and effect for the press of the day to see the outrages as the cause of the trouble.

There was one aspect of evictions that was considered even more reprehensible than the evictions themselves and that was others taking advantage of them to enrich themselves. This was always done in a formally legal way, of course, but there was no necessary connection between law and justice in the Ireland of the time or for centuries previously. After all, the Penal Laws were also quite legal as the name implies.

In fact law and justice were mutually exclusive in Ireland for centuries. Neither would the sharp legal practices on evictions be highlighted in the press of the day but nobody needed newspapers to tell them what was happening. This was the background to the hostility that was evident against the other person who is always associated with Canon Griffin, Jerry Hegarty.

We are often told that Ireland was a priest-ridden country - especially in the countryside. The country was certainly as Catholic in the 19th century as in the 20th or 21st centuries yet when you read the events that occurred in the church here which Kevin outlines in his article you would have to agree that they do not indicate the behaviour of a priest-ridden people. The people never harmed a hair of Canon Griffin's head but they certainly made their feelings known to him in no uncertain terms when he interfered in what they considered none of his business.

There has been speculation as the why Canon Griffin acted as he did. There is a possibility that he was a convert - his full name would imply this. There is indeed an element of the zeal of the convert about him that would tend to conform that.

There is also an indication that he saw relations between landlords and tenants as simply a business and commercial one and that would be appropriate in an English context. He did not appreciate the moral divide between the two classes in Ireland - that the tenants saw the landlords as having no moral right to the social position they held as it was acquired by confiscation, terror and war and backed up by a foreign state. Without appreciating that dimension the land issue in 19th century Ireland it is not comprehensible and the Canon appears oblivious to this indicating that he came from the landlord side of the divide.

Kevin has a great knowledge Millstreet's history, based on a life-long interest, and he has also supplied material for previous publications.

Jack Lane

CANON GRIFFIN, 1830-99: NOTES TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY

(This article is a collection of some preliminary notes and themes that the author has put together in preparing a biography of Canon Griffin and is very much a case of work in progress.)

Chapter 1

The subject matter of this thesis is the life and times of Canon Arthur Sands Griffin, 1830-1899. He lived in turbulent times in Irish history and whilst nowadays he appears just as a footnote in history books, he strived to the best of his ability to champion the Catholic Church, especially Pope Leo XIII, even if it meant going against the hierarchy. Aligned with this were his concerns for the welfare of his parishioners, whom he wanted to steer away from acts of violence which he abhorred and detested. He carried out his mission in life by preaching and writing.

He was born in the year 1830 in the village of Molahiffe which lies midway in the main valley between Tralee and Killarney. His preliminary studies for the priesthood were made in the latter town in a classical school conducted by Fr. Fitzgerald, a Franciscan friar. From here he went to the Irish College, Paris, in 1849 where he became distinguished for his devotion and study and his strict observance of the college rules.

The Irish College (now the Centre Culturel Irlandais, 5, rue des Irlandais 75005 - Paris) was situated in the heart of the intellectual life of Paris close to the Sorbonne. Here he studied philosophy and theology as well as canon law and the usual branches of ecclesiastical sciences required of all candidates for the priesthood. It was not a very peaceful time to be in Paris.

It has been noted by Cardinal Tomas O'Fiaich that: "The most notorious row of the nineteenth century took place in the Irish College, Paris, in the 1850s. The rector was John Miley who had attended O'Connell on his deathbed in Genoa. But revolution was in the air in Paris since 1848..., but Miley succeeded for a few years in holding off students, who were described by the new Irish Primate, Dr. Cullen, after a visit on his way to Armagh in 1850 as 'rough old fellows...always talking about their rights. . . . Into the situation steps Fr. Pat Lavell, of the diocese of Tuam, the future friend of the Fenians who was appointed to the staff in October 1854. His appointment was resented by Miley from the beginning. When Lavell arrived at the gates he found himself locked out... Miley spoke of demonstrations against him of between fifteen and twenty students, of the hostility of two professors who used railroad whistles., shouted, kicked doors, broke bolts and threw a large bucket into his apartment." The Irish College produced many distinguished people including Archbishop Croke of Cashel. He was there from 1839-45, some years before Canon Griffin. In the later years they were to take opposing sides in the land agitation and Plan of Campaign. Another man who influenced Canon Griffin was David Moriarty, 1814-77, Bishop of Kerry from 1856-77. He was Professor of Theology at the Irish College, Paris from 1839-44.

Canon Griffin was ordained a priest in Tralee in 1854. After some years in Castleisland he was transferred to Killarney where Dr. Moriarty made him administrator. Here he was to spend the next 15 years or so and it is reasonable to assume that Dr. Moriarty must have had some influence over him. Before Dr. Moriarty became Bishop of Kerry he was President of All Hallows College in Dublin, a seminary for English speaking countries. While there he developed a friendship with Dr.

J. H. Newman and was to help Newman with the appointment of professors to the Catholic University. His high esteem for some of the personalities of the Young Ireland Movement is rather surprising in view of his later reputation.

He wrote to Newman: "I do not at all share in Dr. Cullen's distrust of those he calls the Young Irelanders. I hope his Grace will live to know them better." When Charles Gavan Duffy was on trial in 1849 for his part in the rebellion of the previous year, Moriarty testified in court on his behalf. To the end of his life he remained a friend of Gavan Duffy and because of his befriending the Young Irelanders he never entirely won the confidence of Archbishop Cullen. Indeed, but for the Young Ireland affair, Moriarty might well have been Archbishop Cullen's own choice as his successor to Newman at the Catholic University. He was an outstanding man of his own time; his Allocutions and Pastorals remain as a monument to a great bishop's ideals, but unfortunately it is his one harsh statement about Fenianism that is remembered.

Canon Griffin, writing to Cardinal Newman in October 1877 said that Dr. Moriarty was buried in St. Mary's cathedral before a huge congregation of laity, priests, bishops and many Protestants, the latter were there to pay tribute to his understanding of those who did not belong to his faith.

In a letter to *The Cork Examiner* on October 15th 1877, Canon Griffin asked the editor to publish a letter he had sent to the editor of *The Times* which refused to publish it, as it seems *The Times* had recently written misstatements about Bishop Moriarty who was now dead and could not reply. Canon Griffin defended the bishop's views on education. He claimed the bishop never advocated mixed education and accepted the national system because he beloved it preferable to little or no education. He demanded that the clergy visit the schools at least once a week. He asked Canon Griffin to keep the journal in which the Protestant bishop of the diocese warned his clergy about Protestant children attending Catholic schools, to show if necessity arose that Protestant prelates had the same view on the great question of education as he and the other Catholic Bishops of Ireland. Canon Griffin went on to say that in his presence, Bishop Moriarty refused parents permission to send their children to the Queens College. When Mr. Gladstone's statement on the University Bill appeared he said to Canon Griffin: "It will not be read a second time."

Before we leave education and Dr. Moriarty, it should be said that he alone of all the hierarchy gave full support to Newman as regards a Catholic University. In 1884 Canon Griffin along with J. Copped edited Dr. Moriarty's sermons and pastorals. He wrote to Newman in 1881 asking him to write an introduction but Newman declined saying Moriarty's sermons would stand on their own.

Chapter 2

In 1872 Canon Griffin was appointed to Millstreet and raised to a Canon of the diocese. Before discussing his involvement with the Land League, Plan of Campaign etc. I wish to discus his views on farming and social issues. Here I feel he was influenced by Dr. Moriarty. In a letter to *The Cork Examiner* of October 15th 1877 he says: "(Moriarty as a true friend of the tenant farmers of the country and in consequence of the great influence he possessed with the gentry, both Catholic and Protestant, he did them many services unknown to themselves and he maintained that 'mild remonstrances' produced better results than violent attacks on meetings or in the public journals..... he constantly advised the farmer not to be led astray against his Landlord by political adventurers. This modest line of conduct gained Dr. Moriarty the confidence and respect of all sensible men." This was very much the attitude adopted by Canon Griffin in his dealings with people.

On December 4th 1879 an article headed "How to avoid depression" appeared in *The Cork Constitution.* In fact it was a reprint of a long article written by Canon Griffin in a magazine called *The Farm.* He was so pleased with the articles in it that he wished it to be in the hands of every farmer. He felt many farmers were still tied to old fashioned ideas. He got new seeds of oats and potatoes from Messrs. McKenzie in the spring of 1788 and got such a wonderful crop that he took every opportunity to get farmers to change their seed. In some townlands they had not changed their seed for 20 years. He goes on to say that landlords and agents could do an immense amount of good

if they took an interest in the work of the farmers and encouraged them to read such publications as *The Farm.* He was also conscious that some farmers might not be able to read but they could get their children to read who he said were now getting a good education in the National Schools.

"Every exertion ought to be made at present to remedy the backward state of the country and this can only be done by educating the people to a better system of agriculture. It often strikes me that the landlord who takes no trouble about his estate except to get his rents at stated times, is his own greatest enemy. If he went amongst his people and entered into their affairs, gave them advice and if necessary helped them in procuring good seed from respectable merchants, the country would greatly benefit and a hand of friendship would be established which unfortunately does not exist in many cases"

He goes on to talk about the importance of draining the land, which if undertaken properly would not be too costly and would be of major benefit to the farmer and landlord. He criticises the landlords for not giving the farmers security of tenure. This is ironic when one considers that he is considered pro-landlord and against the people by later generations. He also urges landlords to introduce superior breeds of cattle and reminded them that poultry pays very well.

He told the farmers they should save and have a reserve fund for when times got tough. He says the high price being paid for fodder and cattle would not continue. He then says, and here we hear an echo of Dr. Moriarty, "That if there was not such wild agitation as there is at present, difficulties would be surmounted in a more peaceable and amicable way."

He believed the landlords realised that the desperation of tenants at the time would bring ruin on themselves. He feels that because of a few bad landlords, the rest should not be blamed. He tells them they should borrow money from the Board of Works in order to build more roads, to build comfortable houses for their tenants. He concludes that such improvements were carried out on the estate of Mr. Wallis of Drishane Castle without any loss of money. This was part of his parish.

In January 1880 at a meeting of the Millstreet Board of Guardians, Canon Griffin said he was sorry to see very few landlords had put themselves in conjunction with their tenants when they first heard of the loans available from the Commissioners of Public Works. Not a single landlord in the district except Mr. O'Leary had procured some loans for his tenants. During the past he had been employed almost every day writing appeals for tenants to their landlords praying that they might get some money to enable them to commence work on their land.

The Cork Examiner of October 8th 1880 reprinted another letter which Canon Griffin had written to *The Farm.* The portion of his letter deals with agricultural matters along the lines of his previous letter. He talks of the abundant harvest as a result of new seed. The money acquired from the Duchess of Marlborough and his Bishop amongst others was used to buy seed for labourers and small farmers. He then says how he wrote on behalf of a large number of farmers to several landlords asking them to apply for loans and they complied with his request.

But the main thrust of his letter was to denounce men who were trafficking on the outcry that had been caused against all the landlords of the country. These people he said were indoctrinated with 'dangerous dogmas', 'No rent for landlords' etc. He goes on to say: "I would sooner resign my Parish than mislead my people for passing popularity."

He reminds his readers that in his letter of the previous December he said good landlords ought to band themselves together and openly denounce acts of injustice, cruelty and evictions. But now he said some landlords are endeavouring to make a large profit on the tenants' labour and making them pay 5% for money which they got for 2%. He says this is tyrannical and illegal. These landlords are a curse to the country and he calls on the honourable landlords to raise their voices. He then criticises the Land League for telling farmers not to give evidence to the Land Commission. He concludes by reminding the farmers to read and study the letters of Mr. O'Neill Daunt and Mr. A.M. O'Sullivan.

On the same day *The Cork Examiner* carried a blistering attack on Canon Griffin by Fr. M. Mahon P. P. of Boherbue, a neighbouring parish. Fr. Mahon starts off by saying he is a member of the Land League and that they only object to impossible rents leading to starvation of the tenants. He says this is the view of Archbishop Croke of Cashel. Repudiation of just debts, in any shape or

form has no place in the programme of the Land League. The work the Land League engaged in is often constitutional and wholesome. They search for a lawful end by lawful means. They have restored to their houses many who were put out of them. They have stopped the progress of the crowbar. He says Canon Griffin will have a long wait before the landlords as a body will come to complain about the greedy members among them. However, he admits there are many excellent men among the landlords. He hopes that the recent branch of the Land League established in Millstreet will flourish in spite of what Canon Griffin might say. He concludes: "It is pleasant to find Canon Griffin standing on the same platform as A. M. O'Sullivan and O'Neill Daunt. When the views of these gentlemen on the Land Question are carried out and they never will but by the operations of the Land League, a settlement will be made which will lead ultimately to the stage that will leave nothing to be looked for - a consummation to be most devoutly wished for - and by no one more than your humble servant."

It is strange to see the two priests taking up opposing positions as in September 1879 the clergy of the Deanery of Millstreet passed a number of resolutions: 1) calling on the landlords of the Deanery to come to the relief of their tenants by a substantial adjustment of rent and 2) to give employment on their estates to labourers as the farmers cannot do so. The first signature was Canon Griffin P.P and further down was the signature of Fr. M. Mahon P.P.

Chapter 3

In this chapter we will discuss Millstreet in the 1880s and try to understand why on August 22nd 1881 *The Cork Examiner* said Millstreet was regarded as the most lawless town in the country. Canon Griffin was to the forefront in preaching and writing and did not hesitate to denounce in robust language those who he saw as the enemies of the people and the church.

At an election rally outside the church in Millstreet in February 1879 he addressed the crowd: "I am glad to see you assembled here today in such in such large crowds to fight the battle that is now waged against your faith and country. We shall show them that the faith of our fathers has not died in this generation. We must gird our loins and stand up manfully to defend our rights and our altars.... I say there are Bismarcks in the county of Cork as well as in Germany, let no consideration induce you to allow them sack the foundation stone of liberty laid by the great Daniel O'Connell and completed by the Act of Parliament which gives us the power of voting by ballot. Under this Act you record your vote secretly and no one can know from whom you did vote or question you after on the subject."

Other priests spoke. One of them a curate in Millstreet, Fr. D. O'Keeffe said:

"Too long we have borne the servile yoke
Too long the slavish chain
Too long in feeble accents spoke
And ever spoke in vain,
Our wealth has filled the spoilers' net
And gorged the Saxon crew
But still my friends we'll teach them yet
What Millstreet men can do." (Cork Examiner, 7/2/1879)

As well as entering into correspondence with many people he often wrote to the press. On August 2nd 1880 a branch of the Land league was set up in Millstreet and Canon Griffin was asked to chair the meeting. He refused to do so and in the correspondence which followed he maintained he had the welfare of his people at heart as much as any priest in Ireland:
"But I do not believe I will be furthering it (the welfare of the people, J.L.) in any way it by identifying myself with men whose principles have been denounced by illustrious prelates of the Church, such as His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin and the most Rev. Dr. Moran of Kilkenny as communistic and subversive of all law and order. "(Cork examiner, 2/8/1880).

He also forbade the local band to attend the meeting. In November 1880 during Mass in the village of Cullen (part of Millstreet parish) Canon Griffin again gave his reason for opposing the Land League. He pointed out that he had taken a deep personal interest in the temporal affairs of the farmers of his parish in the last eight years. He hoped that soon the government would regulate the tenure of land in the country: " I do not yield to any priest no matter how enthusiastic he may be, in my deep anxiety to see this burning question finally settled in order if possible that peace, happiness and contentment may reign throughout the land." *(Cork Examiner,* 17/11/1880).

He said the bishops of Cloyne and Cork refused to ally themselves to the Land League and he believed they were right. He then went on to criticise the landlords. This was something he did not hesitate to do at various times but tends to be overlooked. He pointed out that many landlords who were returned as MPs called for reform in the land laws but never introduced them on their own estates: "They said the people should be rooted to the soil, that they should have security of tenure at fair rents and the right to sale; that all the improvements should be compensated for in case he was disturbed but hey did not carry out these beneficial ideas in favour of their own tenants. If they thought and still think them right, why wait for an Act of Parliament to oblige them to do so. Wouldn't it be more gracious for them to put them in practice from their own free will?"

He then said that while Mr. Parnell denounces landlords, he himself laid down stringent clause against compensation on his own estate. For these reasons he cannot identify himself with the Land League or advise his parishioners to do so either.

Throughout the early 1880s 'outrages' were almost a daily occurrence. Both *The Cork Examiner* and *The Cork Constitution* carried details accounts throughout this time of outrages against people, property, dwelling houses and livestock. One name, above all others, stands out, Jeremiah Hegarty, a prosperous shopowner and farmer. He was the target of boycotting. In today's terms he was what is called a 'self-made' man. Canon Griffin supported him and denounced the boycotting. Placards were put up around the town and these were produced in court when the state tried prosecuting some of the individuals involved.

These read: "You are cautioned to have no dealings with Jerry Hegarty or his family, neither buy from nor sell anything to them; shun them as you would lepers; if you disobey these orders may the Lord have mercy on your soul." (Cork Constitution, 1/2/1881).

"Men of Drishane and Cullen, the time is now come for you to show to Ireland and the world that you have the cause of the fatherland at heart as well as any in Ireland, that you sympathise with their sufferings and are ready to redress her wrongs by banishing from the land and the sacred soil of Erin the polluting threat of landlords and by exterminating those barbarous hounds of discontents - land grabbers who pride in their programme of 3 Bs - barbarity, bribery and bigotry. We have one nefarious Sambo, who, like all others of his clan, is as mean as he is hateful, as merciless as he is abominable in the person of Jerry Hegarty, a man who has sprung from the lifebed of poverty and whose very name is one of obscurity, but thanks to Captain Boycott for giving us a constitutional remedy for purifying this little city of ours from such abhorrent wretches - Boycott him - let no man dare from this date forth have any dealings with him, let no man work for him, let him be shunned as if it occurred by the avenging spirit of St. Patrick and in doing this you will show your spirit of Irish nationality and your love for Ireland. Mark this man with the stigma of the bigot, then your work will be complete."

In an editorial in *The Cork Constitution* of March 28" 1881, the editor denounced the scandalous persecution directed against Mr. Hegarty. He went on to say that Mr. Hegarty: "Has incurred the envious spirit of his idle good-for-nothing neighbours. He started in life with no advantage whatever, very far behind those he has since so far distanced in the race for comfort and respectability. His land is held by the same tenure and the same terms as them. Why is it that he is comforted and they tormented? Simply because he threw intelligence, energy and perseverance in to his work and has earned his reward."

Another section of the paper of the same date carries further details of what he has done for the town - he constructed cottages for labourers in which he spent over £6,000. He also improved three extensive farms. On the previous Friday night his house was attacked by a mob - all the

windows were smashed. The thatch on the house of a nephew of Hegarty was set alight. The legs of a cow, the property of Canon Griffin, were broken (Cork Examiner 28/3/1881) because he sympathised with Mr. Hegarty and condemned the course of conduct pursued toward him. On the night of March 18th a party of ten men with blackened faces attacked several house and warned people not to vote for Hegarty in the Poor Law election but to vote for the Land League candidate. As a result of this intimidation Hegarty lost the election.

In a letter to the editor of The *Cork Examiner* on August 11th 1880 Hegarty explains how he became such a successful businessman. On December 28th 1880 *The Cork Examiner* carried a copy of a long letter Hegarty had sent to Michael Davitt asking why he was being persecuted.

On March 30th 1881, the Lord Lieutenant proclaimed the Barony of Duhallow. This was as a result of the outrages in Millstreet. However, this did not bring peace the town. At Good Friday service on April 15th 1881 a man named Reardon was on one of the galleries of the church. Only four people went to that gallery while over 500 were in the other gallery. A member of his family had given evidence against two prisoners at the Cork assizes. On Sunday April 25th 1881 Canon Griffin preached on the matter; he told the congregation that these outrages must stop. He had consulted the Bishop and read out the reply he had received from his Lordship. In it he says that the bishop says he gives full authority to Canon Griffin to "Excommunicate by name anyone that causes disturbances in the church." Canon Griffin concluded his sermon by reminding the people of the importance of observing the laws of God, especially the law of charity." ' ,

On Monday, April 25th 1881, placards appeared in many parts of the town calling on all parents not to send their children to the national school but to a private school which would be opened in opposition to the other school. The cause of this was that one of the assistant teachers in the national school was a relation of a witness who gave evidence at the Land League trials in Cork.

At Ballydaly, a few miles from Millstreet a labourer named James Keeffe, his wife and nine children were evicted by a farmer. A few nights later a band of 50 men, who were armed and disguised entered the farmer's house and forced him to his knees. They made him promise to take in the family he had evicted, to keep them in his house until a new one was built for them and if he refused he would be killed on the spot. Another member of the party had a shears in his hand and threatened to cut off his ears if he did not comply. He was compelled to kiss the book and sign an agreement. (Cork Examiner and Cork Constitution, 18/5/1881).

Another outrage took place at a place known as The Lane, Aubane where a farmer called Con Kelleher and his son were taken from their beds by a gang of 100 men. They put the old man into a sink hole and stuffed dung down his throat. It seems one of Kelleher's son was working for a member of the anti-League party. (Cork Examiner, 30/5/1881).

Demonstrations were taking place frequently in the town. Early in June a big demonstration was planned. The authorities drafted in a large force of police and soldiers. 250 men of the 107th Regiment came from Cork, 50 men of the 3rd Dragoon Guards from Ballincollig, 90 extra police came from both Waterford and Cork and 30 men of the Army Service Corps with ambulance wagons, (Cork Examiner, 13/6/1881). The Land league tried to erect a platform but were prevented. Instead they cut off branches of trees and used these to festoon all the houses in the town. A compromise was agreed between the curate Fr. C. O'Sullivan and Captain Stokes. A procession would be allowed to pass through the town and one speech allowed. Fifteen thousand people marched and after listening to a speech by Fr. O'Sullivan they dispersed. Members of the Cork Land League strongly condemned the compromise of Fr. O' Sullivan.

Nightly attacks took place at the end of June 1881. The house of Mr. T. Carroll was attacked by an armed party of approximately 11 men. Mr. Carroll made his escape by the rear of the house and ran barefoot for two miles to Rathmore Police Station. At one stage Mr. Carroll was President of the Knocknagree Land League but resigned. He alleged that the cause of the attack on him was for being on speaking terms with a Mr. O'Connor a relieving officer in the Millstreet Union who was opposed to the Land League from the beginning. A son of Mr. O'Connor was dragged out of the church while attending Mass and beaten by four men. While these outrages continued, *The Cork Constitution* was very critical of the people of Millstreet. On July 5th 1881, it said of the town:

which par excellence has established its character for being the seat of lawlessness and blackguardism of very description."

On August 2nd 1881 an eviction took place near Millstreet. The authorities expecting trouble brought in a large force of police and soldiers. As it was a fair day it was expected that an organised resistance to the law would be offered. *The Cork Constitution* went on to say: "Indeed this is only what one should expect in Millstreet, which has gained the unenviable reputation of being the most lawless town in Ireland."

The eviction passed off with just "fearful language" being directed against Dr. Thompson, the landlord. Also at this time, Mr French, head of the detective forces in Ireland came to Millstreet to see for himself what was going on.

I shall conclude this chapter by mentioning what took place in church on August 29th 1881. Canon Griffin preached on the parable of the Good Samaritan. He asked how the people of the district had observed the Divine command. He regretted to say that their conduct in this respect was anything but what it ought to be. He condemned the conduct of some people in the locality who were attempting to destroy the character and injure the business prospects of a neighbour. This was taken as referring to Mr. Hegarty. Once he said this a chorus of coughing began in the church. It got so loud and lasted for several minutes that Canon Griffin had to remain silent. After a considerable time, quite was restored to a certain extent. The Canon proceeded: "Let me ask, does this commotion refer to me or is ft meant to stop me? But I tell you I will not be stopped."

He then referred to the system of boycotting in the locality which he strongly condemned and denounced the outrages in the district. He mentioned the fact that some were in a secret society which went at night compelling people to swear to do what was unlawful. In this they were violating the law of God as well as of man. When the Canon finished his sermon the majority in the congregation got up and left the church.

Chapter 4

The Salisbury government set up a commission of inquiry into the Irish land question in mid-1886, known as the Cowper Commission . On Friday 12th November 1886, at the Railway Hotel, Killarney, Canon Griffin gave evidence. What he had to say took up five pages. He talked about aspects of life in Millstreet, the problems he saw and his view on how to deal with them. He maintained that much of the agitation was not caused by disputes between landlords and tenants but by trade jealousies. As a result of his negotiations with the landlords, considerable reductions in rent from 15-25% were achieved and in some case 30%. When asked how he dealt with those in the Land League he replied that he dealt with them as his parishioners and as individuals. As regards the landlords he had this to say: "I think the presence of educated men holding the position of gentlemen in districts and acting as grand jurors and magistrates and so on is of vast importance and especially when they are men that have always lived well with the people." Later he went on to say that the landlords were being driven out by the actions of agitators. This shows he was pro-landlord and his sympathies lay with them. Later we will see these same views expressed when he was giving evidence to the Parnell Commission.

With the depreciation of the price of cattle, butter and other products, farmers were not bringing in sufficient incomes to pay the rent and to give themselves a living. He gave the example of a farm with the grass of 6 to 10 cows; the rent was 30 shillings a year and it was sold for £460. He felt farmers were paying exorbitant prices considering the holding and the price of agricultural produce at the time.

When asked where the money was coming from, Canon Griffin replied it was from old savings and money they had made in America and Australia. He went on to say that many farms were over rented, for example £1 for an acre of land not worth more than 10 or 12 shillings. As a result of these high rates the farmer could not have any of the comforts of life or expect to educate his children properly. On being asked the type of people purchasing land, he said there were two types: 1) the industrious and thrifty man and 2) 'a class of man who no matter what is done him will never be worth anything.' He went on to say that one of the difficulties he saw was that some

men would not be able to cope once they purchased and that the thrifty people would purchase from them and would become a new race of landlords in the country. I wonder was he thinking of Famine times when a lot of cottiers were wiped out and the 'strong' farmer increased his holding?

When asked about boycotting he said it had been excessively practiced in his parish for the last five or six years. It was aimed against one shopkeeper, Jerry Hegarty, who was a large trader and extensive farmer. He described the manner of boycotting and said how it had ruined the man's business. Canon Griffin made no secret of his friendship with Jerry Hegarty. Two of the people involved in the boycotting were prosecuted and sent to jail for a year. One of the witnesses in the case was the schoolmaster and as a result the school was boycotted. A Land League school was set up and a man whom Canon Griffin had dismissed some time previously was appointed.

In reply to further questions, Canon Griffin said Jerry Hegarty was turning over £26,000 a year and making a profit of £1,000. He was a respectable member of his congregation and the boycotting extended to anybody who had anything to do with him. He - Jerry Hegarty - had written to Michael Davitt and Mr. Parnell explaining his situation and that the only thing they could find against him was his refusal to join the League. He got no reply to the letters. *The Cork Examiner* published the letter Jerry Hegarty sent to Mr. Davitt on 28th December 1880. Canon Griffin also stated the League tried to prevent people paying their dies and supporting the clergy of the Parish.

He then went on to talk of the crimes committed and that two members of the gang that was engaged in these crimes were murdered by their own companions. These murders took place in 1884. He said it was believed locally and he believed it himself that one of the men was murdered because he knew the identity of the people who had fired the shots at Jerry Hegarty. It was well know in the locality who carried out the murder but the police could not get evidence to convict. It was known when and where the crime took place. He denounced the murder at church. Some three weeks later the body of another man was found floating in a nearby lake and he had been beaten up.

Canon Griffin was then asked about the condition of labourers. He said they were living in dreadful conditions in small cabins and a little plot of ground they got from the farmers. They live on the potatoes they grow and they have to beg the farmers for milk which is often refused. We have to remember this was 1886 not 1847 and if what the Canon said was true it was an indictment of the farmers and indeed of the Land League. One has to ask the question was the Land League solely concerned with the farming class and not with the labourers and cottiers. Cano Griffin went on to say that the labourers were badly clad, especially the children. He said things could not get better for them until such time as they became independent of the farmers. Even though the Canon was pro-landlord and anti the League his concern was for all his parishioners and their welfare.

Before he ended giving evidence he asked if he could speak on another matter and was given permission to do so. The subject matter was butter. He said the price of butter had gone down in the past eighteen months. He felt that part of the problem was the treatment it received in the Cork market. He was told by one of the merchants in Cork that the butter was stored for two to three weeks in badly ventilated stores before being sent to England. This affected the price the farmer got for his product. He felt some means should be established to have the butter branded with a date and the exporter should be compelled to send the butter into the English market as soon as possible.

Here again we see the concern Canon Griffin had for his parishioners. As far as butter was concerned his views were ahead of his time. It is only in the last few years that Bord Bia are insisting that manufacturers date their products - over a century after his comments.

On page 1020 of the Cowper Commission is a paper handed in by Canon Griffin as a supplement to his evidence. The first part dealt with Lord Ashbourne's Act of 1885. The essence of the Act was that the government would provide five million pounds to enable tenants to borrow the whole of the purchase price. This would then be repaid by 4% annuities over a period of forty years. Canon Griffin wanted the term for repaying the purchase Loan extended to sixty five years as it would induce many farmers to a settlement with their landlords. He said the only solution to the present unsettled state of the country was compulsory purchase and sale.

As regards education he was ahead of his time, anticipating the vocational education Act of the 1930s. He said agricultural schools should be established in every country, where farmers' sons would get theoretical and practical instructions for two years and their daughters for six months in cookery and butter making.

In the 1940s Fr. Florence McCarthy, Chairman of County Cork Vocational education Committee, proposed that classes should be set up for farmers' wives to teach them the basics of carpentry, etc. His proposal was overruled. He said a Minister of Agriculture based on the French system would be of great advantage to Ireland. In the congested district along the sea coast deep sea fishing should be developed. The sea coasts along Cork and Kerry are a mine of wealth that have been untouched. He gave the example of Fr. Denis, the Parish Priest of Cape Clear and who founded the Baltimore fishing school.

Kevin O'Byrne

Reports on some of Canon Griffin's sermons

"A curious action for libel was tried to-day before Baron Down at Cork. The plaintiff, Mr. James Cooper, is a baker, carrying on business in Millstreet, County Cork, and the defendant (the Rev. Mr. Griffin) is parish priest. The cause of action arose out of a series of contested elections for the office of Poor Law Guardian, in which the plaintiff was an unsuccessful candidate, and was opposed by the defendant. On the 20th of March, after the result of the latest election was known, the plaintiff sent a bellman round the town to inform the people that he intended to reduce the price of bread, and that the weight would remain the same. This resolution annoyed the other bakers, and the defendant, who sympathised with them, referred to the matter in his sermon on Easter Sunday before a large congregation in terms which formed the subject of the action. The discourse - at least, so far as related to the case - appears to have been indeed extraordinary. He gave an account of the doings of King Coffee on the Gold Coast, and, drawing a ludicrous parallel, told them they had a little Ashantee war of their own - an active little King Coffee put the Union to considerable expense in contesting the election of the Poor Law Guardian for several divisions, and when he was defeated his conscience obliged him to make compensation for the expense he put the Union to. Accordingly, the little King published that he had reduced the price of bread, but his bread was like the Ashantee gold - a sham, for when it was weighed with other bread it was found lighter. The defendant denied the use of the words in the defamatory sense alleged, and also put in a plea of justification. The jury disagreed and were dismissed."

(The Times, London, 4t August 1874)

"As Canon Griffin was preaching yesterday in the Millstreet Catholic Church on the love which men owed to their neighbours, and was referring to the 'boycotting' in the district, which he considered as uncharitable and contrary to the laws of God, the rev. gentleman was interrupted by a deafening chorus of coughing from the congregation, which silenced him for several minutes. When the coughing ceased, the canon said he would not be stopped, and denounced the outrages that had been committed. At the conclusion of the rev. gentleman's address and before mass had concluded several of the congregation left."

(The Times, London, 30 August 1881)

"Disturbing A Congregation: - At Millstreet, County Cork, Petty Sessions yesterday a man named Riordan was charged with disturbing a congregation in Millstreet Church by shouting out that Canon Griffin, the officiating clergyman, was a liar. The rev. gentleman, at the time the offence was committed, was alluding to country dances as the cause of outrage and immorality. The accused was sentenced to two month's imprisonment with hard labour, and to a further fourteen days for assaulting the police on the same occasion."

(The Times, London, 7 April 1885)

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CANON GRIFFIN AT THE PARNELL COMMISSION

EVICTION POEMS

Druimin Donn Dflis
* (Oh, brown white-backed cow)

Oh! Druimin Donn Dilis! the landlord has come,
Like a foul blast of death has he swept o'er our home;
He has withered our roof-tree - beneath the cold sky,
Poor, houseless and homeless, to-night must we lie.

My heart is as cold as the white winter snow;
My brain is on fire, and my blood's in a glow.
Oh! Druimin Donn Dilis! 'tis hard to forgive
When a robber denies us the right we should live.

With my health and my strength, with hard labour and toil,
I dried the wet marsh and I tilled the hard soil;
I toiled the long day through, from morn till e'ven
And I thought in my heart I'd a foretaste of Heaven.

The Summer shone round us above and below,
The beautiful Summer that makes the flowers grow:
Oh! 'tis hard to forget it, and think I must bear
That strangers shall reap the reward of my care.

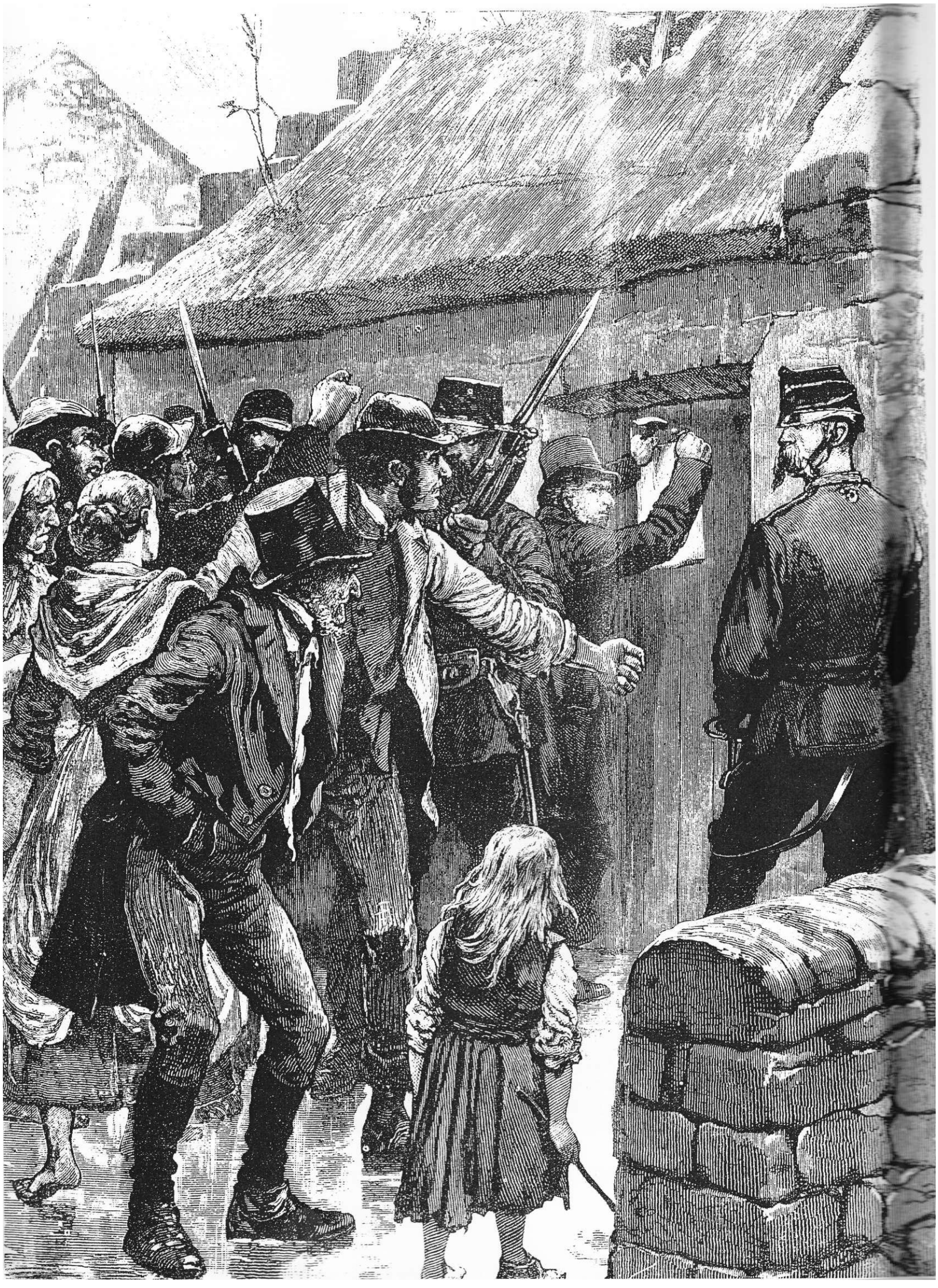
Your limbs they were plump then - your coat it was silk,
And never was wanted the mether of milk;
For freely it came in the calm Summer's noon,
While you munched to the time of the old milking croon.

How often you left the green side of the hill,
To stretch in the shade, and to drink in the rill!
And often I freed you before the grey dawn,
From your snug little pen at the edge of the bawn.

But they racked and they ground me with tax and with rent,
Till my heart it was sore, and my life-blood was spent:
To-day they have finished, and on the wide world,
With the mocking of fiends from my home was I hurled.

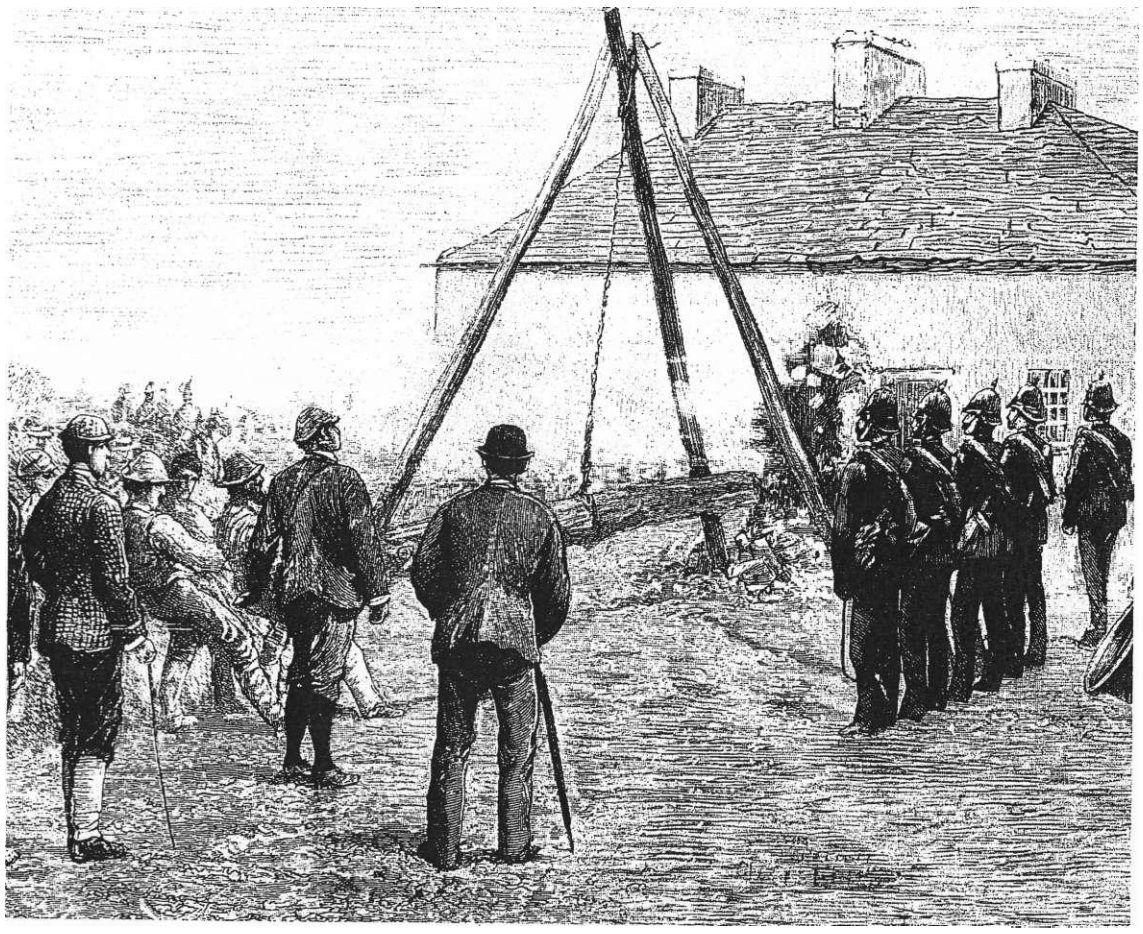
I knelt down three times for to utter a prayer,
But my heart it was seared, and the words were not there;
Oh! wild were the thoughts through my dizzy head came,
Like the rushing of wind through a forest of flame.

I bid you, old comrade, a long last farewell;
For the gaunt hand of famine has clutched us too well;
It severed the master and you, my good cow,
With a blight on his life, and a brand on his brow.



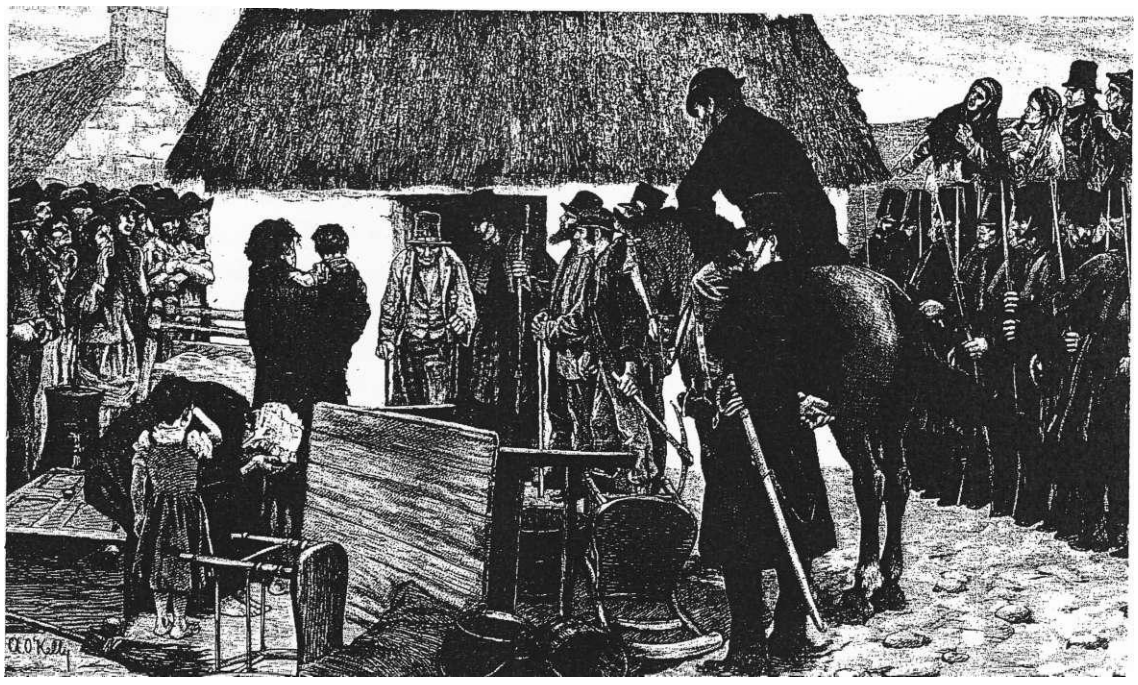
The bailiff pins up a notice of eviction (left)

EVICTION SCENES



A landlord and his henchmen watch imperturbably as a battering-ram thuds into the house of a tenant resisting eviction. The police stand by to prevent intervention by sympathizers.

The Anglo-Irish landlord



Watched by an anguished crowd, a British soldier brings out the last member of an evicted family and the sheriff on his horse prepares to order demolition by the crowbar brigade.

Lament of the evicted tenant

The night is dark and lonely,
A gra geal mo chroi! *
And the heart that loves you weary
A gra geal mo chroi!
For every hope is blighted,
That bloomed when first we plighted,
Our troth, and were united,
A gra geal mo chroi!

We had once a happy hearth
A gra geal mo chroi!
None happier on earth,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Thy loved smile made it so.
And toil caused our store's overflow,
Leaving something to bestow.
A gra geal mo chroi!

Oft when the biting blast,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Sent the stranger shivering past,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Would thy beaming eye flow o'er
As thy hand flung wide the door,
To bid welcome to the poor,
A gra geal mo chroi!

Still our homestead we behold,
A gra geal mo chroi!
But the cheerful hearth is cold,
A gra geal mo chroi!
And those around its glow,
Assembled long ago,
In the cold, cold earth lie low,
A gra geal mo chroi!

'Twas famine's wasting breath,
A gra geal mo chroi!
That wing'd the shaft of death,
A gra geal mo chroi!
And the landlord, lost to feeling,
Who drove us from our sheeling,
Though we prayed for mercy kneeling,
A gra geal mo chroi!

O! 'twas heartless from that floor,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Where our fathers dwelt of yore,
A gra geal mo chroi!

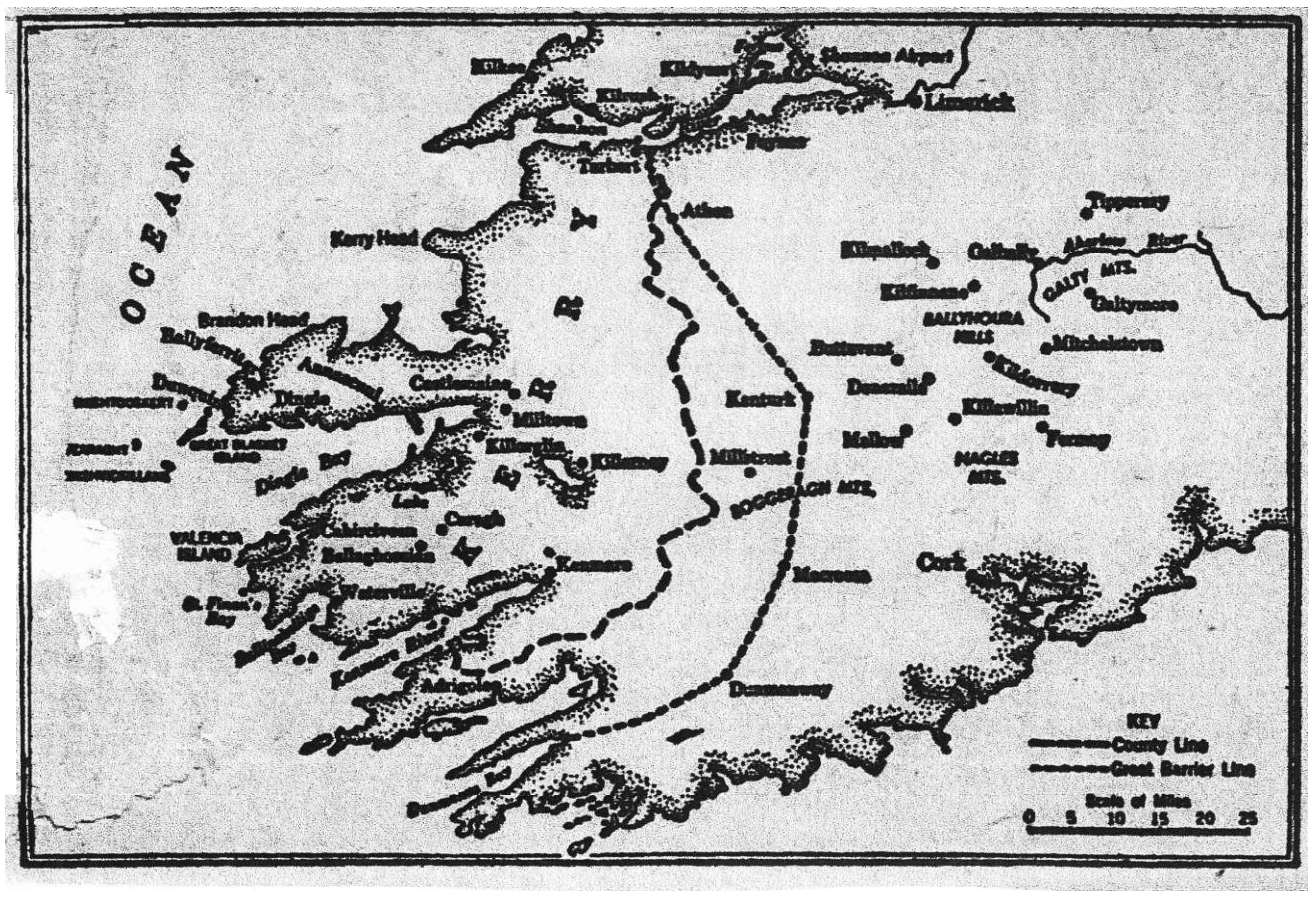
To fling our offspring - seven -
'Neath the wintry skies of heaven,
To perish on that e'ven,
A gra geal mo chroi!

But the sleety blast blows chill,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Let me press thee closer still,
A gra geal mo chroi!
To this scathed, bleeding heart,
Beloved as thou art,
For too soon - too soon we part
A gra geal mo chroi!

Oh! There's a God above,
A gra geal mo chroi!
Of mercy and of love,
A gra geal mo chroi!
May he look down this night,
From his heavenly throne of light,
On our sad forlorn plight,
A gra geal mo chroi!

*O *bright love of my heart!*

John Walsh (1835-1881)



FAMINE OR HOLOCAUST-HOW MANY DIED?

This is the text of a talk given for Feile Duthalla 2010, on 27 August in Kanturk.

Introduction

It may seem perverse and provocative, or even blasphemous to use the term holocaust in relation to the Famine but I think it is appropriate. A holocaust was traditionally a sacrifice by destruction of an animal, person, or a large number of people for a purpose, usually divine. In this case to denude Ireland of sufficient people to make it suitable for the untrammelled operation of free trade and market forces. It was deliberate because there was no shortage of food and it occurred at the centre of the most powerful state in the world which had the resources to prevent mass starvation if it so willed it. The country was full of food - corn and barley, meat and poultry, dairy produce of all sorts and every vegetable except potatoes so mass starvation was not inevitable. There was no Famine because there was no shortage of food and that is why the mass starvation is rightly called a holocaust. People were sacrificed. An American commentator has said that claiming the Irish starved because of lack of food would be like saying the Jews died for lack of oxygen in WWII.

For example, the amount of butter exported from the Cork Butter market increased during those years. In fact all food was exported as normal and the extensive army network used to enforce it. (See Annex 1, © Chris Fogarty).The blight affected other countries where famine was prevented.

Describing it as a holocaust is nothing new. It was first described as such at the time by the Cork Examiner:

"DEATHS IN BANTRY.

BANTRY is now as badly off as Skibbereen. Could we give a more fearful description? Impossible. We have only time, this post, to call attention to our report of *ten* inquests more in Bantry, and allow the following extract, hastily selected from a private letter, to speak the rest:—

"Each day brings with it its own horrors. The mind recoils from the contemplation of the scenes we are compelled to witness every hour. Ten inquests in Bantry- there should have been at least *two hundred* inquests. Each day— each hour produces its own victims— Holocausts offered at the shrine of political economy. Famine and pestilence are sweeping away hundreds— but they have *now* no terrors for the poor people. Their only regret seems to be that they are not relieved from their suffering and misery, by some process more speedy and less painful. *Since the inquests were held here on Monday, there have been not less than 24 DEATHS from starvation* and, if we can judge from appearances, before the termination of another week the number will be incredible.

As to holding any more inquests, it is mere nonsense. *The number of deaths is beyond counting.* Nineteen out of every twenty deaths that have occurred in this parish for the last two months were caused by starvation. I have known children in the remote districts of the parish, and in the neighbourhood of the town too— live some of them for two - some for three - and some of them even for *four days on water*. On the sea shore, or convenient to it, the people are more fortunate, as they can get *sea weed,* which, when boiled and mixed with a little Indian or Wheaten meal, they eat, and thank Providence for providing them with even that to allay the cravings of hunger." (The Cork Examiner, 22/1/1847)

(See http://adminstaff.vassar.edu/sttaytor/FAMINE/Examiner/Archives/Jan1847.html)

This is a perfectly accurate description of what was happening. Michael Davitt in 'The Fall of Feudalism' said that "responsibility ... for the holocaust of humanity ... must be shared between the political and spiritual governors of the Irish people in those years of measureless national shame."

And even the doyen of our revisionists, Roy Foster, in the first edition of his 'Modern Ireland' repeatedly described it as a holocaust. However, this description disappeared in later editions and was replaced by catastrophe - but then what is revisionism if not the revising of history.

Malthusianism was the political economy of the time. Economic progress depended on getting rid of surplus populations. If left unchecked food supply could not keep up with population growth so famines, diseases, etc were a necessity and therefore a blessing - if not exactly in disguise. But life has to succumb to the god of progress!

The man in charge of Ireland during the Famine, Charles Trevelyan, regarded it as a divinely inspired and was justified by the eventual benefits that would ensue! He explained that up till then: "The deep and inveterate root of social evil remained, and this has been laid bare by a direct stroke of an all-wise and all-merciful Providence, as if this part of the case were beyond the unassisted power of man. Innumerable had been the specifics which the wit of man had devised; but even the idea of the sharp but effectual remedy by which the cure is likely to be effected had never occurred to anyone. God grant that the generation to which this great opportunity has been offered may rightly perform its part, and that we may not relax our efforts until Ireland fully participates in the social health and physical prosperity of Great Britain, which will be the true consummation of their union!" (The Irish Crisis, 1848).

He was so certain that God was on his side, that it essentially was a truly divine holocaust, that he sent a copy of his book to the Pope! His response is not recorded.

How many died, officially?

The issue I want to concentrate on here is that of Ireland's population before the holocaust and how many died. This means first of all trying to estimate the population figure for Ireland in 1846 which has never been established conclusively. It does not even appear as an issue in the literature on the subject though it is a crucial fact to establish if one is interested in making any real assessment of the numbers who died. For some odd reason most seem satisfied with the official Census figures for 1841.

The figures for those who died are treated in the most arbitrary and flippant way. Varying estimates that sometimes differ by millions can appear in the same publication.

Those who died were not counted at the time. There was no civil registration of births and deaths and Church registers are no way adequate for this task and Catholic registers were particularly inadequate. The usual practice is to deduct the 1841 figure from the 1851 figures and accept that as sufficient. And when this is represented in graphs based on the cycle of 10 year census figures we can get the population beginning to decline in 1841! This graphical representation is inevitably misleading. See Annex 2 as an example.

We now have annual official Famine Commemorations and a report on this year's event says:

"The loss of two million Irish people through starvation and emigration is to be remembered in Mayo this week when the second National Famine Commemoration's programme opens today..... Almost 90 per cent of Mayo's population depended on the potato when blight hit crops from August 1845. An estimated one million people died and another million emigrated as a result of the 1845-50 famine, and Mayo's population dropped dramatically from almost 389,000 to just over 274,000 in the decade from 1841 to 1851." (Irish Times, 10 May 2010).

This view presents the 2 million figure as a given and appears to be the figure accepted by the official Government commemoration. I submit that nothing could be further from the truth and that these figures are wrong by several million. And the job any government that commemorates the event should be to get the basic facts right. Anything else is an insult to those who died. I will always use figures rounded to the nearest million in the usual way.

Previous Census figures

The following is a table of some of the accepted figures for Ireland's population up to 1841:

1603	Fynes Morrison	700,000
1652	Sir William Petty	850,000
1672	Sir William Petty	1,100,000

	The same corrected	1,320,000
1695	Captain South	1,034,102
1712	Thomas Dobbs	2,099,094
1718	"	2,169,048
1725	"	2,317,374
1726	"	2,309,106
1731	Established Clergy	2,010,221
1754	DeBurgho	2,372,634
1767	Hearth-money Rolls	2,544,276
1777	"	2,690,556
1778	Arthur Young	3,000,000
1785	"	2,845,932
1788	Gervais Parker Bushe	4,040,000
1791	Hearth-money Rolls	4,206,612
1792	Rev. Dr. Beaufort	4,086,226
1805	Tomas Newenham	5,395,456
1814	Incomplete census	5,937,856
1821	Census	6,801,827
1831	Census ,	7,767,401
1841	Census	8,175,124

Some of these have been revised but there is at least one clear conclusion from these figures that nobody queries which is that the rate of population growth was very high over the centuries and during the first decades of the 19th century (see diagram at Annex 2). This increase was one constant. In fact there is almost a tenfold increase over the period which is amazing.

Gaelic society and civilisation had been systematically and deliberately shattered by the English State during this period, in fact since Tudor times. The natural cultural and social constraints of what was a viable civilisation on a stable population growth were constantly weakened. There was no functioning and accepted moral authority, clerical or secular. One of the resulting 'freedoms' resulted in a rapid population growth that gave rise to an excessive reliance on the potato. An irresponsible land system resulting from the same source facilitated subletting to complement the reliance on the potato.

The potato had been available for over three centuries and by itself did not, and never would, suddenly give rise to such dependence. It was an effect not a cause - the potato is innocent!

Why an apparent decline in the rate of population growth?

What is clearly questionable from these figures is why the population growth rate apparently declines so dramatically in the 1830s and this needs explaining. There is every reason to believe that the rate should have remained essentially the same - if not actually increase - as there were no great changes in the society during those decades.

Cormac O Grada of UCD estimates that in the early decades of the 19th century the annual rate of growth was between 1.5 and 2% and this is accepted by L. A. Clarkson of QUB. Joe Lee of UCC implies a rate of 1.6%. (Goldstrom & Clarkson: *'Irish Population, Economy and Society'* 1981: Oxford). Joel Mokyr gives an annual population growth of 1.69% between 1821 and '41 *(Why Ireland Starved,* p.53, Joel Mokyr).

These estimates are perfectly credible and I think it safe to accept Lee's conservative estimate. But what is not credible is that this rate should have declined in the decades up to the holocaust.

The rate of population growth does not alter dramatically in any society without some very clear and obvious reason - war, sudden climatic changes, massive economic change, plagues, pandemics, invasions, nuclear attacks or whatever. Nothing like this happened in the period we are looking at. One natural disaster did occur - the 'big wind' of the night of 6-7 January 1839 that

killed hundreds and damaged a quarter of the houses in Dublin. This is embedded in folklore and any other disasters would be if such occurred.

Some basic points about demographics and counting populations

There are a few obvious and banal, but regularly ignored, facts to bear in mind when dealing with this issue of Irish population and census counting.

It is not always easy to count populations accurately. By comparison demographic trends are easy to identify, i.e., whether a population is going up or down. And inaccurate census figures are nothing new. In fact all censuses are notorious for their inaccuracy and are very prone to all sorts of errors for all sorts of reasons. For example, demographers reckon that the 1971 Irish census and the 1980 US census were both an undercount. I was an enumerator in the UK census of 1991 and it was quietly written off, for all practical purposes, as soon as it was completed. I know of whole streets in London that had a few dozen people recorded. Why? For seasons not very dissimilar to those that contributed to make census taking in Ireland inaccurate - taxes and fear of the state. Specifically, Margaret Thatcher and the Poll Tax in this case. A report on the 2001 UK Census notes that "In the last count, some 1.5 million households failed to fill in their forms. Also, figures produced for Manchester and Westminster, among other areas, were regarded as being grossly inaccurate from the off." (Irish Times 13 July 2010). This represents 1.5 million families which means several million people were not counted for! One consequence is that the census is going to be abandoned in the UK after the next one in 2011.

* Ireland was a country conducive to a high population. Its soil is very productive and its produce of a high quality with a wide variety of good food, has a benign climate with a cheap, extensive and accessible supply of fuel in turf. Culturally it was a child and family friendly society as testified regularly by visitors. For example, "The ties of family love are nowhere else in the world more strong than in an Irish cabin" (*Ireland,* by Leitch Ritchie, 1834). And it was very easy to get married and raise families as there was no need to consult church or state to do so.

* It is also a fact that poverty and oppression are also conducive to high population growth. One of the most oppressed areas of the world is the Occupied West Bank and Gaza but the following is the position there as regards population growth: "The Palestinian population's annual growth rate exceeds 3 percent in the West Bank and approaches 4 percent in the Gaza Strip. While the growth rate of Palestinians in Israel is 2.6 percent, it outstrips the Israeli Jewish growth rate of 1.5 percent, according to official statistics." (Palestinians on the Verge of a Majority: Population and Politics in Palestine-Israel in the *Palestine Centre Information Brief No. 162 (12 May 2008)*

* In 1834 a very competent agriculturalist, William Blacker, wrote one of many essays to the Agricultural Committee of the Royal Dublin Society outlining how Irish agriculture could be better managed. He accepted landlordism but thought the problem was simply one of mismanagement. He could not understand why there was rack-renting and applying horse sense, literally, he said "that as the horse which is overburdened will not draw so the tenant that is *so* overcharged.... will pay nothing." On the basis of the country's agriculture managed properly across the whole country as it was managed in the part of Armagh he knew he reckoned that the country would eventually support a population of well over 17,000,000 people! *(Prize Essay, addressed to the Agricultural Committee of the Royal Dublin Society. On the Management of landed Property in Ireland,* etc 1834).

His argument is accepted by a modern demographic expert, Joel Mokyr. Such population figures are fact not fantasy. Look at the situation in the Netherlands whose population is over 16 million with an area of less than half that of Ireland.

* While all common sense would accept that any miscounting is normally an underestimating of the figures we have the extraordinary instance of the Commissioners of the 1841 Irish census claiming that the census of 1831 was an overestimate as one of their arguments to try to prove that their figures for 1841 were accurate. This was an amazing claim and may be unique in the history of census taking. The tradition has been to find reasons for a declining rate of population in the 1820s and 1830s on the basis of accepting the official census figures as

automatically and incontrovertibly correct and then assuming things like emigration, disease etc as the reasons for the rate of decline but this has a self fulfilling connotation in the absence of any verifiable and convincing reasons for such a change.

* But probably the most crucial factor regarding census taking in 19th century Ireland is that it was not conducted by an Irish government and there was automatically a question of trust that must militate against full disclosure by the whole population because it was - to put as mildly as possibly - 'outsiders' counting the 'insiders.' Census taking is a personal and intrusive matter where trust is vital for accuracy. And in a situation of general mistrust all official statistics are inevitably and deeply flawed. This is a fact of life that is usually ignored in 19th century Ireland. In fact, census taking in any country at any time where there is widespread alienation between the state authority and large sections of the population is fraught with problems and the accuracy is suspect.

For example, I doubt that census returns in Franco's Spain, in Poland during the Soviet era or Apartheid South Africa were accurate for this same reason. And of course census taking is sometimes abandoned if the alienation of the population gets too much. There was not census here in 1921.

Joe Lee is the only Irish academic who seems to recognise some of this but does not follow up its full implications. He did a serious critical assessment of the 1821 census figures and the methodology used. He was probably provoked into doing his critical research after discovering that his native Chorcha Duibhne and other well known places like Castlegregory in Co. Kerry were not included in the 1821 census. They might as well not have existed.

1821 Census

This was, officially, the first proper census. But it cannot be accepted as a reliable census by any standard. The enumerators were drawn from the Ascendancy and the lumpen Ascendancy in particular. They were also predominantly tax-collectors. It does not take much imagination to realise that these types were not likely to be very successful in eliciting information from the mass of a population who rejected the moral basis of the Ascendancy itself and were literally at war with its members over land, political and social rights, taxes, and the most infamous tax of all - the tithes for the Established Church. In any society at any time tax collectors should not do this type of work - human nature being what it is.

Its accuracy, or rather its inaccuracy might be gauged from one pertinent fact - the returns of the enumerators accounted for 6.8 million acres which would mean that nobody lived in two-thirds of the country! Yet a third of the land area of the country had nearly 7 million people in 1821! The 1831 census used essentially the same methodology and there is no reason to accept that it produced any more reliable figures.

But even if we accept these figures and the accepted rate of growth continuing for the next 25 years we get a population of 12 million in 1846!

Fortunately, we have a firsthand contemporary account of the problems in counting the population and arriving at a more accurate figure from a very competent and inquisitive visitor in the year after the 1821 census.

Thomas Reid (1791-1825)

Thomas Reid was an Irish born naval surgeon. In 1822 he visited Ireland. He was a most serious and competent individual, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and much travelled. He was perplexed as to why Ireland was not benefiting from the virtues of the Union, after 20 years, and not becoming more like the rest of the UK. It was self-evident to him that this should be happening. He was a most inquisitive individual. He would go into cabins and hovels to find out what was going on. Often at some risk to himself.

One of the first things that struck him was how difficult it was to establish how many people actually lived in these places and the attitudes he came across would have existed until during the 1821, 1831 and 1841 censuses

"It would scarcely be imagined by anyone who has not tried the experiment, how difficult it is to ascertain the population of Ireland. There exists among the peasantry an unconquerable aversion to tell the exact number of which their families consist, and in nine cases out of ten they represent it under the truth. On what grounds this prejudice exists I am not able to explain; but I had ample experience of the fact." *(Travels in Ireland,* 1823)

He described his experience on entering eleven households in Cork city's lanes which was typical of the reception he got:

"Walked through some of the lanes, between six and seven o'clock, and visited several cabins after the families had risen. I was desirous of knowing how many persons had taken refuge in those places for the night, but I found the people very unwilling to gratify my curiosity, and in suffering their fears to be overcome, they intimated their expectation of 'a treat' for their civility. ...those cabins average a population of eighteen and a half to each; and even if they'd deceived me as to the persons belonging to them who were then absent, still those whom I myself numbered give an average of sixteen to each house; it should be remarked also, that all these persons were Catholics.

I inquired in each cabin how many had slept there the previous night, but could only obtain answers from two of them, namely, the second and the fifth; the question appeared to alarm and displease all the others; one man observed 'I suppose you are a Millstreet Peeler (the term applied to police-officers) come here to look after some of the *innocent blades,* but take my honest word for it, I have nothing to do with it, nor never *giv 'd* one of them a *mail's mait,* nor a bit of my blanket."

....I am well aware of how very difficult it is to arrive at anything near the truth in such an undertaking (an estimate of the whole population, J.L.), that, in fact, correctness is in most cases absolutely impracticable. When in the north of Ireland, some of my relations gave me the number and names of certain families, to whose house I afterwards went, and put the question 'How many of you are in family?' but in no instance was the answer correct, - it was always *under* the actual number. Whatever be the cause of this disposition to represent their families as being smaller than they really are, it is quite certain that it pervades all the lower, and even middle classes of the Catholics in every part of the country; and that the poorer order of Protestants are influenced by the same spirit, but in a much less degree.

I had visited Cork in January 1817, since which time, it appears greatly altered, and altered for the worse; several houses have been added, the population has wonderfully increased, and the distress has more than kept pace with them both." (ibid.)

We will ignore his naivety for the moment and respect his honest efforts. He was not to know that to the majority of the population at that time any person visiting them in a suit most likely meant danger, trouble and/or a threat of some sort. Reid could not be expected to appreciate this. Being oblivious to this situation and the type of man not to be defeated by such a task he embarked on a project to count the population in 1822. He set up an extensive project with relations and friends to do it and published it with a breakdown by county, number of houses and number of Catholics and Protestants. It came to 7, 855,606. About a million more than the official census of 1821. Mr Reid published this but he did not believe it. Being a gentleman he would not contradict his friends and be seen to rubbish their hard work. But he was quite certain they were wrong. He said:

"..it is feared the statement is far from correct. Had I trusted entirely to my own observations, the result would have been considerably greater.. I am quite certain that the view here given is much below what it should be; indeed I had many opportunities of proving it; but deference for those who kindly interested themselves in the inquiry... has induced me to adopt their calculation." (ibid.)

He went on to give a concrete example of the levels of underestimation that could exist and the efficiency of the census enumerators in those days. He quotes from:

"A Mr Hardiman in his History of Galway, page 192, says, 'The return of the inhabitants of the town and liberties, after the census act of 1812 amounted to 24,284; but those to whom the

enumeration was entrusted were, according to their own subsequent accusations of each other, guilty of gross neglect and omission in the execution of that duty. The general and most probable opinion is, that the population amounts at, present (1820) to 40,000, which comprehends a vast number of daily increasing poor, without trade, manufacture, or adequate employment.' In 1814 before a Committee of the House of Commons , the population of Galway was stated to be 50,000. I regret to say that the charge of 'gross neglect and commission' set forth in the preceding note, is fully borne out by my own observations in a great many parts of the country. Desirous of having some conversation with the 'enumerators' I made my inquiries about them, but did not happen to pass through any district where anyone appeared to know or even to have heard anything at all of such a person." (ibid.).

What possible credence could be given to census figures from such a background. It confirms the total inadequacy of the 1821 census which was a crude and corrupt affair and cannot be taken seriously. It is a great pity Mr. Reid did not give us his own estimate but we can definitely, and conservatively, say he would reckon it was well over 8 million.

This would give rise to a population of just under 12 million by 1846 at an annual increase of 1.6%

Cesar Moreau, 1827

A few years later another attempt was made by a rather amazing statistician, Cesar Moreau, a Frenchman resident in London who specialised in trade statistics. (Moreau, 1791-1860, was Director of the French Statistical Society, French Vice Consul in London, Member of Royal Institution and of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland and of the London Western Scientific & Literary Institute, a Foreign Member of the Board of Agriculture & the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures & Commerce in the British Empire, Corresponding Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Arts & Belles Lettres of Marseilles, Rouen, Dijon etc. etc.)

In 1827 he produced *"The Past and Present Statistical State of lrelande established in a series of tables constructed on a New Plan and principally derived from official documents and the best sources"* It provided thousands of statistics on every conceivable subject relating to Ireland including its history, geography, industries, trade, products, politics, administration and of course population and it sold for 30/-. It was a stunning piece of work and all done in the neatest of handwriting.

He calculated the population in 1827 and also provided detailed breakdowns of the main towns by sex, occupations and houses, inhabited and uninhabited. My sample test for his figures was the town of Millstreet and they ring true and accurate as they correspond with other contemporary accounts and if anything his figures are low but they are quite credible.
Based on the information he put together with the help of others he came to a number of estimates for the overall population with the highest being 9,050,000 (he emphasised quite rightly that these were not official figures). But of course there were no credible official figures available at the time. This figure would complement the assumption that Thomas Reid had about the figure of over 8 million five years earlier.

Moreau's, as with Reid's figures would also give rise to just under 12 million by 1846 at an annual growth rate of 1.6%.

There is no evidence that these two, Reid and Moreau, ever knew of each other's existence and they would have arrived at their estimates independent of each other and this adds to the credibility of their figures. They are a test of each other's calculations. Yet, I have yet to see a reference to them by *anyone* who has done work on this issue.

1841 Census and the Commissioners' Report

This is the most important census of the period. It is always quoted as gospel and the people who did it were very proud of their work. Everyone knows of the official figure for the 1841 census of 8,173,124. What is not often noted is that this figure was not even credible to the Census Commissioners themselves (led by Thomas Larcom) and it was revised upwards by them in the

official report to the Lord Lieutenant in 1843. They added on 572,464 and gave a new figure of 8,747,588 which is rarely quoted. What is even less often noted is the reasons they gave for making the revision. The Census Commissioners did not believe their own figures!

When they had put their figures together for the 1841 Census returns they noted something very, very odd. These figures meant that the population increase during the ten years of the 1830s was 5.25 % but the increase during the previous decade of the 1820s was 14.5%. Why did the rate decrease so dramatically during the 1830s?

In Britain the overall increase in the two decades was 15% and 14% respectively confirming that population growth does not alter dramatically all - other things being equal. Anyone who knew anything about Ireland would not have appreciated why such a drastic decline should have occurred. Quite the contrary, in fact. Disraeli said that Ireland was the most densely populated country in the world - more so than China, for example.

So the Commissioners set about giving explanations. They pointed out that the army and navy recruits were excluded from the 1831 census but this amounted to very little, relatively speaking, about 39,000. They mentioned cholera outbreaks but then said that this amounted to little if any change. Then they claimed that in 1831 there was some payment in some situations to the enumerators according to the size of population counted. (This has been refuted by Joe Lee). So they claim the census of 1821 were also inadequate, being too low, which up until then would have been vehemently denied as 1821 was purportedly the first proper census. So 1821 was too low and that of 1831 too high. They could not be wrong themselves! Perish the thought!

The great issue to fall back was emigration. This was used to explain the fall. But then they find it very difficult to quantify this. Temporary migration back and forth and immigration are barely acknowledged and not really allowed for. Movements of people were not accounted for properly at the time and they arrive at an emigration figure by counting whatever official records exist of emigration from Irish ports during the 1830s and then add on the Irish emigration from Liverpool.

Then they allow for "estimated additions" and "probable increases" and they can only account for 104,814 actual emigrants in England during this period and 214, 047 going to the colonies from Irish ports. It is interesting to see how they arrive at the emigrants in England. The Census in Britain showed a total of 419,256 Irish born living there and as this included people who were born in Ireland across three generations at least they simply divided it by four to calculate the number settling there during the 1830s.

The fact is that emigration as opposed to migratory seasonal labour was not a prominent feature of Irish life at this time. It was the relatively well off who emigrated, and particularly from Ulster, not the poor who were later most affected by the holocaust. There had to be 'assisted emigration', people had to be paid to encourage them to emigrate, in many cases during this period. People were not starving and they had no problem with their own culture and society. Cecil Woodham-Smith came to the same conclusion about the low rate of emigration at that time relative to later trends.

The Report is full of reservations about their calculations, particularly on emigration such as "we trust that these calculations though in a degree hypothetical will not be thought wholly irrelevant" and "we cannot take upon ourselves to pronounce with certainty the extent to which any of these may vary from the truth." It is a very defensive document of special pleading with quite arbitrary assumptions and huge blind spots. There is absolutely no way all the factors and figures they utilise could convincingly explain the apparent dramatic rate of population decrease because they are impossible to quantify and verify and are unconvincing.

Their view of the 1821 census is also worth noting for the typical magisterial understatement that the 1841 Report is prone to: "that it (1821 census) was probably effected with less perfect machinery. We may perhaps therefore assume that it was rather below than above the truth." A census with returns that omitted two thirds of the country is indeed very likely to be rather far below the truth.

The Commissioners Report concludes by saying that:

"Injustice to ourselves we venture to add, that a Census is, in the light we have considered it, of such a nature, that a department framed suddenly for its execution, must be subject to considerable disadvantages, both as to the time consumed and the labour employed to ensure correctness." (14/8/1843). Which is a whinge rather than a ringing endorsement of their work and which has the air of pre-empting any criticism of it.

Why is the 1841 census wrong?

So why was the 1841 census unreliable? In their report on 1841 the Commissioners unwittingly do give a very good reason why the rate and the figures looked so odd and so wrong. They are at great pains to explain that their Census was carried out for the first time by "a highly disciplined body of men" i.e., the Royal Irish Constabulary. Thereby condemning the methods of the tax collectors of earlier attempts. They were no doubt accepted as the 'perfect machinery' for the task by the Commissioners. As well as the "very efficient exertions of the constabulary" they also claimed to have the "general goodwill of the people" and that was next major factor in its favour! This was wishful thinking.

The Commissioners believed the involvement of the RIC was a plus, in fact the key to its accuracy. Anyone who knew anything of the real attitude of the vast majority of the population towards the RIC would appreciate that their involvement meant a distinct disadvantage to any such accuracy.

So what the Commissioners considered was the Census's great strength was in fact its greatest weaknesses. The RIC and their predecessors were historically and currently associated with implementing evictions, enforcing the tithes and other taxes, arresting, imprisoning and if necessary executing political opponents of the government, etc etc. There had been an actual long war over the tithes up to a few years previously with the military and RIC to the fore in that war. They were engaged in the spate of evictions in the 1830s as a consequence of the 'consolidation' of tenancies by the landlords.

The RIC were consequently alienated from the population and regarded quiet rightly as the para military police and intelligence arm of a foreign government that had no accepted moral authority as a police force for the population as a whole. They were the last people in the world that the population would have been willing to give personal information.

The RIC subsequently ran the census right down to 1911 and always treated it quite blatantly as an intelligence gathering exercise. The 1861 and 1871 census were destroyed by order of the British government, once statistics had been extracted, on grounds of "confidentiality". The 1881 and 1891 census records were further destroyed by order of the British government during the First World War on grounds of wartime "paper shortages".

Other problems with the census of 1841

There were of course many other factors that made the figures questionable - apart from the RIC involvement.

* Levels of literacy and language differences were crucial as the return had to be completed by household heads for the first time. The language difference is a glass ceiling and not mentioned at all as an issue though the majority of heads of households would not be literate in English. No provision was made for translations.
* There was also the fact that it was held on a Sunday which was the day for visiting (rambling or scoraiochting), travelling and being anywhere but in your own home. This betrayed the severe Protestant view of the Sabbath held by the Commissioners as opposed to the weekly diversion of a festival for sport and entertainment as it was regarded by Catholics. Form-filling for the RIC would have been a very low priority for them on that day of all days.
* There were other assumptions that mitigated against accuracy. The census was based on the family but what was a family in the Irish circumstances of the time? Irish family life was very robust and was so because it was flexible and ambiguous as regards definitions. For example, fosterage was normal and informal and people moved around families quite easily. There was

typically at least three generations in every family. The nuclear family was not the norm, nor was it always definable simply as a collection of nuclear families. It was more a community that merged with other family communities and defied any strict modern definition. Typically it was more like a mini-clan than a family.

But the head of the household and others would have had to get their heads round the following to complete the census:

> "the family was to be understood either one which being independently in a house or part of a house on his or her own means of support, or several individuals related to each other, with the addition of servants or visitors living together in the same house or part of a house upon one common means of support."

This would certainly need translating into English for the majority of people to help them get their heads round it.

* Even the very concept of defining a house was problematic. When the 'house' in question for at least 40% of the population was a one roomed cabin of an extended and ever changing family how could one cope with the above definition. How could such communal living be reshaped to fit into a strict modern bourgeois, nuclear family definition?
* And how could one satisfactorily define a servant or visitor in the Ireland of the time? The countryside was swarming with people. Some rambled around permanently, staying where the fancy took them and how could the tinkers, beggars, evicted tenants, pedlars, gypsies, spailpins, itinerant entertainers (poets, musicians, story tellers) and odd job men be counted? There were quite a few always 'on the run.' None of these were on intimate terms with the RIC, except in a very negative sense!
* The Freeman's Journal reported about the large number of people 'taking to the hills' while the census was being held for fear of it being used to question or even arrest them. This included any Whiteboys, Ribbonmen, Rockites, Starlighters, Shanavests etc. as well as members of the Repeal Association. Were any of these groups or their friends likely to 'report to the police' to be accounted for? Not in a million years.
* Ordinary people were frightened by the very idea of a census. A Dublin middle class lady, Elizabeth Smith recorded in her diary:

"June 7
Busy filling in the Census papers which are very complete as to information, the use I don't exactly know, the poor people here are all terrified that they were to have been kidnapped or pressed or murdered on the night of the 6th. Half of them were not to go to bed & had barricaded their doors."
(The Irish Journals of Elizabeth Smith1840-1850, 1980)

This gives some idea of the feeling surrounding the census and how unlikely it was that the mass of the people co-operated sufficiently to make it a fair representation of the population.

* The Commissioners pointed to some results that they admitted they could not explain. The population of Clare grew by 10.9% and Carlow by only 5.2% though there was no obvious social differences. The population of Cork city actually fell but they did seem to even notice that peculiar fact.
* Anyway, the Commissioners decided to add an arbitrary figure of just over half a million. This was clearly not a satisfactory census and even if credible it was still 6 years before the holocaust really struck. So the official figures for 1841 are inadequate for several reasons in assessing the number of victims.
* Another problem is that there are only snippets of the actual census returns extant - just for a few townlands in Killashandra in Cavan. This lack of original documentation applies to all the previous (and some later) census documents as well with the result that there is no real basis for cross checking even samples of the population with other sources in any of these censuses.

A middle class view of the census

It is worthwhile to look at the Census from a completely different angle - that of the middle classes who had no problem with the RIC. But many of them were provoked to protest at how

Dublin Castle had manipulated the census for their own ends, extending the questions and doubling the penalties. If they were upset by the Castle's behaviour, intrusions and threats, imagine how the 'peasantry' so-called, were likely to be.

The following are samples of indignant letters published in the Freeman's Journal:

"6 Fitzwilliam Square East, Dublin.
May 28, 1841
To the Editor of the Freeman's Journal
Sir - .... the method adopted by the Irish Government is one hundred times more inquisitorial and is not only without any authority from, but in direct contravention of the (Census) Act. Enumerators are sent round to our houses *before* the 7th of June. These enumerators, not content with asking questions about our persons, ask questions about our property also, without any authority derived from the act, either directly or indirectly. Further, they leave schedules to be filled up by us, although the act neither mentions or alludes to schedules, except with reference to England, Wales and Scotland. Still further, these schedules contain questions relating to our private affairs, totally unauthorised by the act, and unconnected with its purposes.... I beg to ask by what authority these steps are taken, in violation of the act of Parliament under which the census is held. And I further ask if these steps are taken, as I believe they are, without the authority of Parliament, will the people of Ireland submit to them?
I am, Sir, your obedient servant
James Henry.

"Glenageary Cottage
Kingstown
1 June 1841
Sir - A police-constable this day intruded himself into the most private parts of my house, and asked many question respecting my property, such as how many cattle, sheep, goats, goats, pigs, poultry, &c. I possess, how many windows, stories, &c. in my house, whether the walls are really built of brick and stone, as they appear to be, or only of mud, covered with plaster, &c? He also left several schedules to be filled up and verified before a magistrate, which schedules containing very many inquiries as to the private affairs of myself and family, and state that these queries must be fully answered, under penalty of ten pounds. I have carefully examined the acts if parliament..... and find no authority given by them to inquire into any other matters than the age, sex, occupation, and place of birth of each individual, and the number of houses inhabited, uninhabited, and building; there is no mention of schedules except for England, Scotland and Wales... that the penalty., is only five pounds. I have, in consequence, declined answering any question relative to the census until the time specified by the act...
I have to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
Thomas Elder Henry

To the Most Noble the Marquis of Normandy
Dublin, Thursday, 2 June 1841
Most Noble Marquis -I have the honour to enclose a paper left at my house yesterday by a policeman, The manner in which I have filled the paper will best show the feelings I have on the subject. By being obliged to fill in and sign this paper under a penalty, the modest privacy of my family is broken into. An unconstitutional act, only fit for the meridian of Algiers, or the city of Paris in the days of Robespierre, or the city of Dublin in the year 1798, when the ever to be abhorred and detestable act of union was carried through a corrupt and profligate parliament. There can be no correct census taken under the impertinent machinery of this act,

I am, my Lord Marquis, your lordship's most obedient and very humble servant.

James D. Shanly

What was the population reality in 1846?

When the blight first appeared and relief efforts were made it soon became apparent to those on the ground that the accepted population figures were totally misleading and were therefore a positive hindrance to providing real help. Cecil Woodham-Smith noted:

"How many people died in the famine will never precisely be known. It is almost certain that, owing to geographical difficulties and the unwillingness of the people to be registered, the census of 1841 gave a total smaller than the population in fact was. Officers engaged in relief work put the population as much as 25 per cent higher; landlords distributing relief were horrified when providing, as they imagined, for 60 persons, to find more than 400 'start from the ground!'"

This latter phrase rings very true. In the 1840s in West Clare there was a very conscientious Inspecting Officer called Captain. E. Wynne who sent regular and detailed reports to Dublin castle. On the 5th September, 1846 he reported as follows to Thomas Lorcam:

"The census of 1841 being pronounced universally to be no fair criterion of the present population and consequent destitution, I tested the matter in the parish of Clondagad, Barony of Islands, where I found the present population more than a third greater than that of 1841. This I believe to be the case in all the districts along the coast." (Irish National Archives, CSORP/1846/1391).

Wynne's estimate would therefore, again, give a figure of up to 12 million in 1846 and that's assuming the 1841 Census figures are correct, as Wynne does, which is a very big assumption given what I have described above.

What this means is that three independent, unrelated, unconnected sources from three different countries - Captain Wynne, Thomas Reid and Cesar Moreau, would confirm a figure of up to a possible 12 million people in 1846.

I submit that these unofficial figures and assumption are more consistent and more reliable than the official figures as they were not operating under the inevitable handicaps associated with official counting of the population in the period.

A typical town

Another way to give a realistic assessment of the rate of population growth in this period is to take the growth of a typical rural market town. This is more manageable than taking the country as a whole and far easier than assessing the countryside.

I looked at the local town of Millstreet. As the RIC were based right in the middle of the town we can assume they got the figures in the town around them pretty well correct - as did the tax inspectors in 1821. After all, they did not necessarily have to rely on what people actually told them as they would have had to do in places such as the distant mountainy historic centre of culture and learning from time immemorial - the townland of Aubane - which did not even officially exist for them, as it does not down to the present day..

Fortunately we have figures for the town during the previous decades:

1,564 in 1821 census
1,680 in 1825 (Samuel Leigh)
1,935 in 1837 (Samuel Lewis and Rev. G. Hansbrow).
2,162 in 1841 census

This is an increase of over 38% and no doubt by 1846 it would have increased by at least 40% in the 25 year period. The question is - could there have been a freakish increase in a typical town if, by F, the overall population hardly changed at all? It simply does not make sense.

It could be argued that its growth was caused by migration from the countryside to the town but I don't think this was the case as the town was not industrialising which is the normal reason for such migration. It had one industry, the mill, after which the town is named. It consisted essentially of services by artisans, pubs and shopkeepers passed down through the same families in the town to service its hinterland and the travellers and traders passing through. In fact there was a strong

tradition for those who had 'made their pile' in the town to acquire land outside the town as it was seen as the only real wealth.

Ruan O'Donnell

Another interesting figure was provided in the *"" O''Brien Pocket History of the Irish Famine"* by Ruan O'Donnell (The O'Brien Press, 2008, ISBN 9781847170194). The book is a welcome addition to the studies of the period. He says that "The precise number of Famine dead in Ireland will never be known owing to the inability of Government to derive an accurate census from their enquiries in 1841" (p.129).

Ruan gives a figure in the context of discussing elections and the electorate before and after the holocaust that is very revealing and refers to the only counting of people that was actually done during the holocaust. That group which were counted as accurately as any group is likely to be was the actual electorate of the time. This had to be done as there was an election in the middle of the holocaust which was the single most important political event of the period. These people (males, of course) were a relatively privileged group, the £10 freeholders, and can be assumed to be substantial property owning people who were well able to 'look after themselves' and more so than most of the population..

Yet their numbers declined from 122,000 before to 45,000 afterwards - a decline of over 60%. There may be many factors involved in this specific case but even so they are true figures and indicate the actual magnitude of the disaster when this category of people were so devastated. O'Donnell shows how the Government and it's apologists who claimed inability to be able to organise adequate food supplies suddenly became extremely efficient when it came to countering the minuscule Young Ireland rebellion in 1848 and no manpower or expense was spared to deal with it. Indeed, he also shows that none was spared during the holocaust in ensuring the safe and unhindered export of food. And of course no money was spared in compensating slave-owners at this time or in finding money for the Crimean war shortly after wards.

Though Ruan's book gives a good account of the holocaust and he uses the sources available well, what strikes one when reading it are the inherent limitations that any historian has to cope with when dealing with the subject. What are available are some sporadic, written glimpses of what went on, tips of proverbial icebergs. There were no civil servants, reporters or anyone else monitoring the millions of cabins, fields and ditches throughout the countryside where the vast majority of the victims were to be found. And those who lived through this and survived were too traumatised and ashamed to talk to anyone about it. A full assessment must rely on other than the standard methodologies.

1851 Census

The other issue that needs to be examined (outside the scope of this essay) is the accuracy of the 1851 census because they are likely to have been inaccurate in the very opposite direction to the earlier censuses in being too high. The trauma and shock of the holocaust had encouraged people to 'overcount' themselves in the hope of attracting any assistance that might be available. The overcounting may have balanced out an undercounting and the final figure of just over 6 million may therefore be fairly accurate

One of its undoubtedly accurate observations was:

"But no pen has ever recorded the numbers of the forlorn and starving who perished by the wayside or in the ditches, or in the mournful groups, sometimes of whole families who lay down and died, one after another, upon the floor of their miserable cabins and so remained uncoffined and unburied till chance unveiled the appalling scene."

However, the Commissioners' Report is infamous for its conclusion on how the country had 'advanced' and benefited because of the holocaust:

"In conclusion, we feel it will be gratifying to your Excellency to find that although the population has been diminished in so remarkable a manner by famine, disease and emigration

between 1841 and 1851, and has been since decreasing, the results of the Irish census of 1851 are, on the whole, satisfactory, demonstrating as they do the general advancement of the country."

Millions of dead was a price well worth paying to satisfy the god of progress!

How many million victims?

So with the possibility of there being up to 12 million in 1846 and perhaps less than 6 million after 1847 we are left with the uncanny figure of a possible 6 million victims of the holocaust between those who died and those who emigrated. Can this be possibly true in view of the about 1 million dead and 1 million emigrants that are regularly bandied about? Surely there cannot be such a discrepancy? Emigrants are of course a totally wrong description - these people were refugees.

The Times newspaper took a close interest in the country and being totally confident in their prejudices could deal with the situation quite bluntly and could never be accused of exaggerating the tragedy of the situation. It said editorially:

> "The workhouses are full and only hold 100,000 while 4,000,000 are starving. The workhouses are mere charnel-houses. In one there is an average mortality of a death an hour, day and night." (15 March 1847, p. 4. col.3)

They also put it more euphemistically in its editorial of 3rd Jan 1848 when it said that 4 million people had been 'battling with death' in 1847.

The figure of 4 million starving remains a constant figure for the paper during the whole period. It was not contradicted and was used regularly to embarrass the Irish Parliamentary Party into being grateful for the assistance being given and challenging them to deny it and come up with an alternative. They could not as they were also committed to free-trade and Liberalism.

This figure of 4 million was logical as about 5 million people were directly dependent on the potato and this is not disputed. Obviously some more millions were indirectly dependent on the potato as it was used as animal feed as well as for human consumption. And of course there was the massive amount of deaths from a variety of diseases that accompanied the starvation caused by the blight.

What happened to those four million who were starving in March 1847? How many lost the battle with death?

Is it not most likely that the majority and probably all of these 4 million died as in the middle of 1847 the main official "Famine" relief was ended and the new Liberal free trade government were quite prepared for the consequences. Even workhouses were allowed go bankrupt when local rates could not support them. And the blight returned for at least two more years in '48 and '49 in various degrees. With the clear ideological conviction of the new Liberal government this was now a golden opportunity to solve the Irish 'problem' once and for all. Like all competent politicians they saw a problem as an opportunity. The starving and dying consequently increased.

Also, the starving did not necessarily emigrate. This is usually overlooked. The well known sculpture in Dublin docks is misleading. Only relatively healthy people, who had the strength and money to get to a port and purchase ship passage, were likely to survive by emigration. That would have been a small percentage. Steerage fare to Liverpool for one person was ten shillings, two week's or a month's wages; equivalent to, say, one month's subsistence for one person. Survival by this means was not to be expected of starving people who hadn't the resources for a day's subsistence. Fares to the US were ten times that amount. In other words - starving people did not emigrate because they could not, financially or physically.

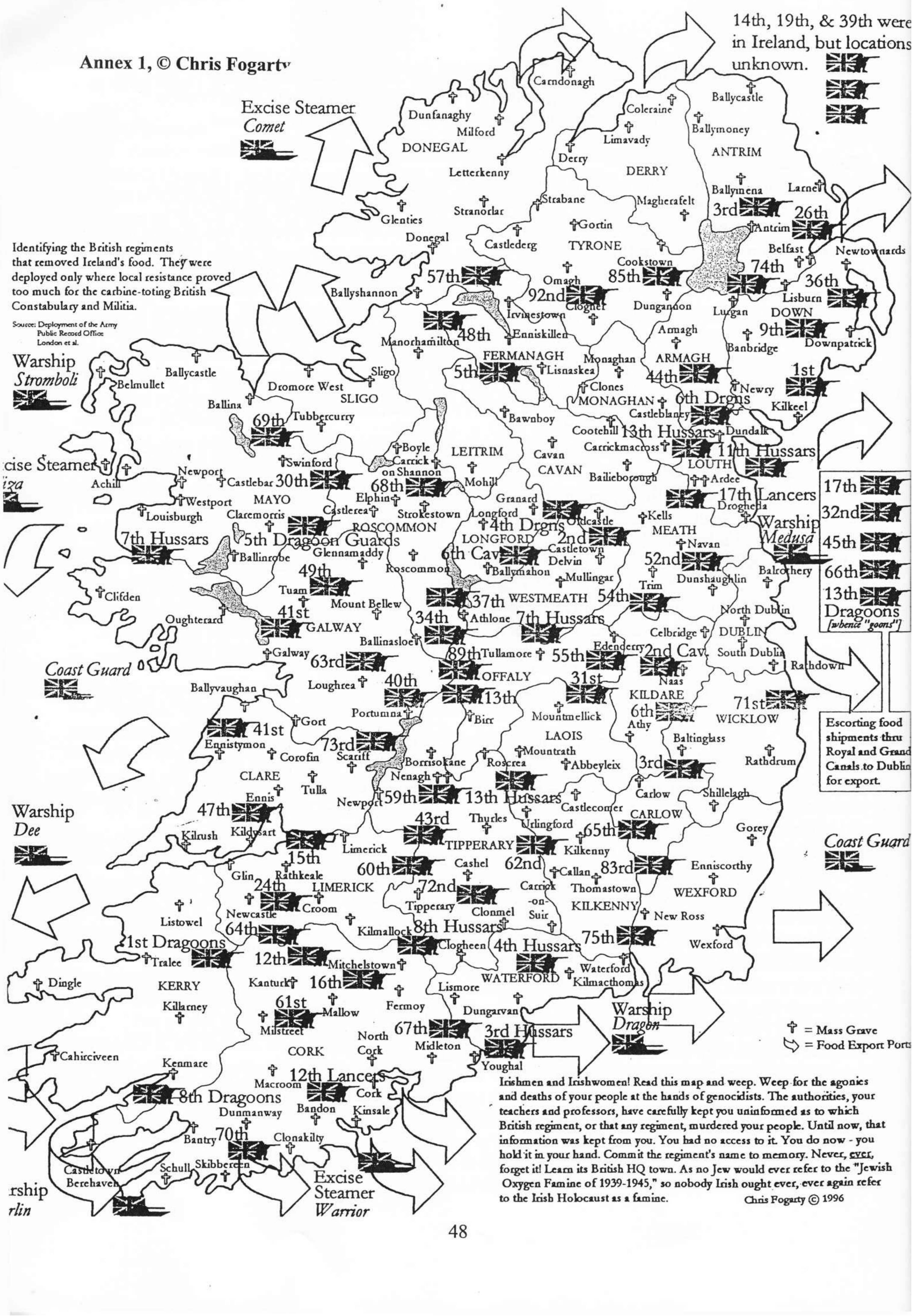
So what happened to those of The Times' starving four million in March 1847, and those added after March '47 who could not emigrate as conditions deteriorated further? And if we add the victims of all sorts of diseases as well, which has been estimated at over a million. I think the answer is obvious. 1 million approximately went to Liverpool and another 1 million to North America and elsewhere in the next three years, 1848-50. Therefore, probably, at least 5 million direct victims, I submit, and I would welcome a refutation.

Jack Lane

Annex 1, © Chris Fogarty

Identifying the British regiments that removed Ireland's food. They were deployed only where local resistance proved too much for the carbine-toting British Constabulary and Militia.

Source: Deployment of the Army
Public Record Office
London et al.



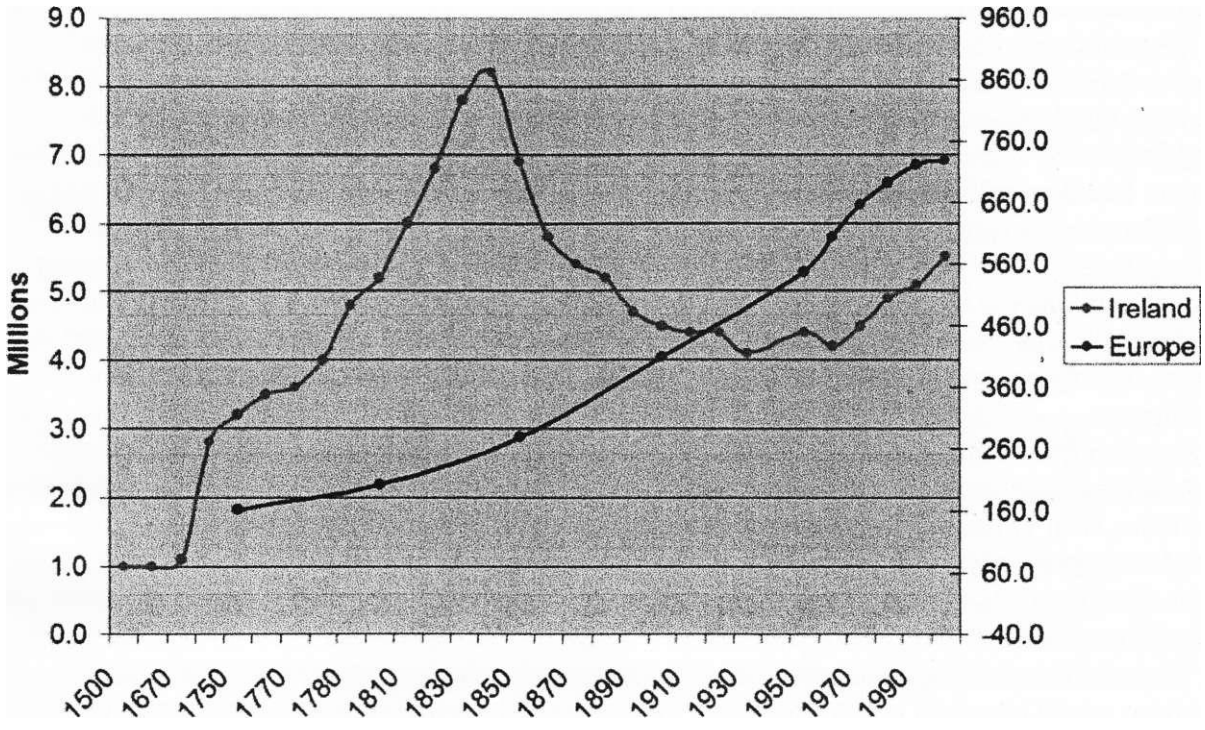
Irishmen and Irishwomen! Read this map and weep. Weep for the agonies and deaths of your people at the hands of genocidists. The authorities, your teachers and professors, have carefully kept you uninformed as to which British regiment, or that any regiment, murdered your people. Until now, that information was kept from you. You had no access to it. You do now - you hold it in your hand. Commit the regiment's name to memory. Never, ever, forget it! Learn its British HQ town. As no Jew would ever refer to the "Jewish Oxygen Famine of 1939-1945," so nobody Irish ought ever, ever again refer to the Irish Holocaust as a famine.

Annex 2

File:IrelandEuropePopulation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

- File
- File history
- File links
- Global file usage



Sean Moylan
-was he a rebel?

A review of Aideen Carroll's
Sean Moylan- rebel leader

by

Jack lane
Aubane Historical Society

BOOK REVIEW - *"THE MUNSTER REPUBLIC:THE CIVIL WAR IN NORTH CORK"* BY MICHAEL HARRINGTON

"They had spent two years on the run fighting the might of the British army... The vast majority of the Volunteers were young men plucked from working on the land or from employment as clerks in offices or shops. Some of the officers had second-level education, few had third-level qualifications, and the education of most of the Volunteers would have ended at primary-school level. Their understanding of national freedom was narrow; in essence it meant the ejection from the country of British troops and the British system of government, and its replacement with a form of government that they believed was free and fundamentally Irish. Consequently, the vast majority of the Volunteers did not have the opportunity to consider the concept of republicanism in any depth, let alone the implications of democracy.

"Republicanism for the Volunteers was shorthand for anti-British nationalism, combined with traditional insurrectionism. Republicanism was an expression of Irish identity, and the cry of "Up the Republic" was hurled provocatively at the hated occupying forces. It did not have any philosophical basis. Nor did it imply any future structure of government beyond a native Irish government based on self-determination."

These were the preconditions of the 'Civil War' according to a book called *The Munster Republic: The Civil War In North Cork* by Michael Harrington published in 2009 by the Mercier Press. The book *"started out as a thesis"*. It is the *"third level qualification"* view of the War of Independence: it was fought by ignoramuses who did not know what they were fighting for, did not know what republicanism was, or what democracy was, and who therefore did not know when to stop fighting.

But who *"plucked"* them from their labour in the farms and the offices, gave them a few war-cries to utter, and put them fighting without a *"philosophical basis* "? Surely it was in England that was done, with virtual conscription followed by actual conscription! Or in Redmondite Ireland, which siphoned people into the British Army with crude shibboleths.
But never mind the facts. Learn to feel the feelings of our new quality education which aspires to comprehensive thought control.

What did the plucking is not material. The story is that the ignorant lower classes were plucked from useful labour in farms and shops—what, no tradesmen! were they Poles even then?—and put fighting in the IRA without knowing what they were fighting about.

"In post-First World War Ireland, democracy was sometimes interpreted in different ways. Universal suffrage among males was in its infancy, women did not have the right to vote [!!!], and the implications of full civil rights for all had not been addressed. Some people believed that a democratic government based on the will of all the people... was appropriate. But many others believed that government decisions should be based on general collective will demonstrated over several generations of Irish people, and that doctrines embedded in this general will should influence decision-making in government, even if the expressed will of the majority of the people at a certain point was otherwise. Hence the view that the majority did not have the right to do wrong... In this way republicans could justify taking up arms against the majority of the country because the will of earlier generations had been a complete break from, not the reaching of an accommodation with, Britain..." (p137).

Now this is puzzling. The ignorant Volunteers plucked from the farms and shops had an understanding of things drawn from the most philosophical of all modern political theorists, Edmund Burke, who held that the present generation had no right to do as they pleased, but were bound to preserve the inheritance of past generations and transmit it to future generations. And C.C. O'Brien told us we should revere Burke, did he not?

Harrington's quite short Bibliography includes two books by Peter Hart (who of course interviews the dead) and three by Tom Garvin. He seems to have been much influenced by the view of things expounded in Garvin's *1922: The Birth Of Irish Democracy*.
Garvin in *1922* puts one in mind of Nietzsche on the immoral history of morality and the taming by violence of human impulse in the cause of civilisation. The 'Civil War' brought us to our senses—or it tortured our senses into the bourgeois/capitalist mould. The 'Civil War' was about forcing a wild society—a society made wild by its newly established independence gained in a surge of unrealistic expectations—into the narrow constraints of bourgeois life under capitalism.

Garvin does not accept that a genuine will to independence was expressed in 1918. He says that the Election, though policed by the British apparatus of state, was rigged by a small minority of Republican intimidators. (He says that in some places and says something else in other places, but that is the sense of his account of the 'Civil war'.)

By means of skilfully directed terrorism the small, active minority, obliged the populace to behave as if they had willed independence and fought for it against the Imperialistic intransigence of the British Democracy. Because the people had not willed what they fought for they did not know when they had gained it. Britain conceded independence with the Treaty, but it did not live up to the unrealistic expectations of those who had been excited by the fighting. Therefore they did not want what they had won, and it had to be imposed on them by superior force by an active authoritarian element which knew what freedom meant if it was to be functional. Viable democracy emerged from the purposeful infliction of pain on the idealists by the authoritarians.

Garvin etc. make a point of seeing Ireland post-1918 in what they think is an international context. They mean that what happened in Ireland was of a kind with what was happening elsewhere.

It is not at all impossible that a people should fight for independence with anarchic assumptions about what independence would be like, and should then be hammered into shape by purposeful authoritarians. Something like that happened even in Italy, which disrupted itself through its Irredentist war on Austria (egged on by Britain and the Redmondites). It emerged from the War in the *"exalted"* condition attributed to the Irish by Garvin, Foster etc., and then had to be battered back into shape by Mussolini.

That is not what happened in Ireland. Some of the Treatyites, who did not feel it was appropriate to defend the Treaty as a submission to irresistible Imperialist force with a view to fighting another day, believed or pretended that it was what happened. The difference between pretence and belief is not easy to pin down in a case like this. One easily becomes the other. (See Pascal.) And some of the Treatyites lived out that pretence/belief very earnestly in the 1930s when they became Fascists for the purpose of suppressing the anarchy within which Irish Bolshevism was lurking.

But the Irish disorder of 1922 was not the disorder of independence won with anarchist expectations. Nationalist Ireland was well adapted to the bourgeois/capitalist order of things long before 1918. The land agitation parted company with anarchic Utopianism, or Millenarianism (which revisionists love to find in nooks and crannies) about 1850 when Gavan Duffy launched the Tenant Leagues on the assumptions of bourgeois political economy—and on that ground made common cause with the Ulster Protestant farmers. And, half a century later, Canon Sheehan and William O'Brien, in active alliance with the Orangemen, got rid of the landlord system strictly within the order of bourgeois political economy. And then Sheehan and O'Brien made a serious bid to consolidate the gains of 1903 within a coherent capitalist order of things, and to sweep aside the sectarian grievance-mongering being peddled by the Redmondites. And they succeeded in County Cork and adjacent areas—which is where the War of Independence was fought in the main.

The Dail Government policed the country in 1919-21 in accordance with the bourgeois-capitalist order of things. The capitalist order of property was held sacred by it, as well as by the society which elected it, leaving aside a residue of problematic forms of landed property in the Midlands. The country did not need to be tortured into capitalist ways in 1922. That torturing had been done generations earlier. And what had been sought by the great agitations launched by Duffy

and completed by Sheehan and O'Brien was not some unrealisable Utopia, but access to the capitalist way.

There were elements of Utopian phrasemongering in Redmondism to the end. But Sinn Fein was bourgeois from the start. (Griffith's guide in these matters was the political economist of national-capitalist development, Frederick List.) And the Sinn Fein Party as reconstructed after 1916 was the bourgeois party of a society which had settled down into bourgeois ways. Garvin prefers to ignore that development, as does Harrington.

If the British Democracy had recognised Irish independence when it was asserted in January 1919, I can see no reason to think that anything but bourgeois social order would have followed. Such disorder as occurred in 1919-21 was the result of the British military attempt to prevent the elected Irish Government from governing. And the disorder of 1922 resulted from the success of the British Democracy in breaking up the Irish Democracy and obliging it to make war on itself.

According to Harrington: *"The Civil War did not happen overnight—it was at least one full year in gestation..."* (p15). This accords with the academic view of recent decades, often asserted but never demonstrated, that it was the outcome of basic differences within the Sinn Fein party of 1918-21.

"When the Civil War finally began, it seemed that the republicans had the advantage... Yet within two months Provisional Government forces controlled the towns and cities..." (p16).

I doubt if it seemed to De Valera in late June 1922 that the anti-Treatyites had the advantage. About 40 years ago I read the papers for the first six months of 1922. It seemed to me that the Treatyite leaders had prepared for war from the moment they became the Provisional Government on Whitehall authority. They strong along the Anti-Treatyites while they built up a heavily armed mercenary (paid) army with British support. When they struck, they did so with organised force against a disorganised enemy that had made no real preparation for war.

The Anti-Treatyites were strung along by means of juggling with the Dail Government, with its Sinn Fein party and Volunteer Army, and the Provisional Government and its professional Army. Griffith and Collins played a double act, with Griffith running the Dail and Collins the Provisional Government. But it was Griffith who pressed for war and Collins who delayed. Then Collins struck from a position of strength, and in a little over a month it was all over but for the mopping up of pockets of guerilla resistance in Munster.

When I was satisfied that I knew what was the case in January-June 1922 I thought no more about it for over twenty years. I was trying to deal with the Northern situation, and Northern nationalism tended to be pro-Treaty. When I was asked to give a talk at Newmarket about the Civil War, I merely said it was fought over Crown sovereignty and created the party system of the 26 Counties. It was fortunate that I had not gone into the matter any further as I was told at the end of the meeting that it was the first public discussion of the Civil War in North Cork since it ended, and people were on tenterhooks about it.

Anyhow, forty years ago I thought I knew what had gone on between the Treaty and the War but suspended judgment on it until I was finished with Belfast politics.

Harrington says: *"The delegates, unsurprisingly believed themselves to be full plenipotentiaries"*. They made a Treaty, as they were entitled to do. The Dail ratified the Treaty. De Valera, who used to be a democrat, rejected the Treaty, either out of pique at not being obeyed, as some suggest, or out of rivalry with Collins for the leadership as Ryle Dwyer suggests. He became ambivalent about democracy and made speeches which can only be understood as incitement against the democracy. The democracy acted to defend itself. That seems to be more or less Harrington's story.

I remember much talk about *"plenipotentiaries"* from when I was very young and was surprised to see it being recycled. A plenipotentiary is a diplomat on whom the power of state is conferred for the purpose of making arrangements with another state. He is a creature of a bygone era when travel was slow and there were no telephones.

Whatever the Dail delegates were, they were not in fact plenipotentiaries. They did not present their credentials as authorised representatives of a foreign state at the Court of St. James and

have them accepted. The Dail was not recognised by Britain as having any legitimate authority. It was a bunch of rebels. Britain would be willing to make a deal with some of these rebels and set them up in subordinate authority. After much haggling it put its final offer on the table and demanded that it be signed at once by the rebels. The Prime Minister had two letters in his hands. One of them meant peace, the other war. If the rebels signed it would be peace, and they would be set up in authority. If they did not all sign immediately it would be war. Mr. Shakespeare was waiting to see which of the letters he would rush off to Belfast with. The rebels signed and made themselves the Provisional Government of Southern Ireland.

The delegates were rebels in London but, until that moment, they had taken themselves to be representatives of the sovereign authority in Ireland. They were under instruction to sign nothing without the approval of the Dail Government. But they could not consult their Government because Mr. Shakespeare was waiting. And anyway weren't they plenipotentiaries?

Argument about Mr. Shakespeare was part of my childhood. Later on I thought of looking him up. He turned out to be a member of an influential Baptist family at a time when Nonconformists were entering the ruling elite as a matter of course. In 1921 he became a member of Lloyd George's Secretariat. About 30 years later he published his memoirs, and described the Treaty' signing: /

"About seven-thirty Lloyd George delivered his famous ultimatum. The Irish delegates, he said, were plenipotentiaries and they must sign now. If they refused to sign, war would follow immediately...

'I have sometimes wondered since whether Lloyd George was right in presenting that ultimatum. I am convinced on mature reflection that but for the ultimatum we might have had no treaty. Supposing the Irish delegates had not signed that night; that the negotiations had terminated inconclusively; that the final decision was left over to the Republican atmosphere in Dublin, which had a few days previously rejected Dominion status. Would the treaty have emerged intact? I doubt it. As it was, here were the five Irish delegates committed before the world by their signatures to the approval of the treaty and going before the Irish Cabinet and the Dail to recommend its acceptance. Even so, the treaty survived only by the narrow margin of seven votes in the Dail...

"If, then, Lloyd George was right in attaching the utmost importance to the *fait accompli* and to the Irish signing that night, he was entitled to use the most potent weapon in his armoury. The delegates to whom the ultimatum was delivered had been in prison, had been hunted, had seen their comrades executed or shot, their homesteads razed to the ground. Savage guerilla warfare had ravaged their homeland. The ultimatum conjured up before their eyes further years of bloodshed and reprisals on a vaster scale.

"I have, however, never understood why the Irish accepted the ultimatum at its face value. Why did they not call the bluff? Lloyd George stated over and over again that he had promised to let Sir James Craig know next day (Tuesday, December 6) one way or the other. Supposing Arthur Griffith had said: "What is sacrosanct about Tuesday? We have waited hundreds of years for a settlement... Are you really going to break the truce and plunge Ireland again into war without giving the Irish Cabinet the chance of discussing your latest proposals?" How could Lloyd George have persisted with the ultimatum if Arthur Griffith had argued like this.

"But the Irish delegation did not counter the ultimatum with logic. They bowed to it and signed.

"I am nevertheless puzzled to find the reason. Was it that Arthur Griffith, having won the substance of Irish independence, signed because he, too, thought it would be more difficult for the Dail to repudiate it?

"Perhaps, as so often is the case, the simplest explanation is the true one. In the debate in the Dail on the treaty Barton said: "The English Prime Minister, with all the solemnity and the power of conviction he alone of all men I have ever met can impart by word and gesture, declared that unless the delegation signed war would follow immediately." Lloyd George had reached the

limit of his patience. He threatened war, he looked war, and he intended war, unless they signed. No one could doubt his sincerity when his word "imparted conviction", his eyes flashed lighting. How dare they question the ultimatum? They were awed and they signed...

"I dined with Lloyd George that night alone. He was in a mood of suppressed excitement. "I have delivered my ultimatum", he said. I am not giving his exact words, but this was the effect of them: "We have offered full Dominion status. Either they sign now or negotiations are off. If there is a break we will put into Ireland a large force and restore order. I told them as much and it is now up to them to choose between peace and war." Estimates of the size of the force needed to hold down Southern Ireland varied, but the highest figure mentioned was 250,000 men.

"One significant remark made by Lloyd George as he was leaving I shall always remember: "If only Michael Collins", he said, "has as much moral courage as he has physical courage, we shall get a settlement. But moral courage is a much higher quality than physical courage, and it is a quality that brave men often lack"..." (Sir Geoffrey Shakespeare. *Let Candles Be Brought In*, 1949, p87-9).

So the Irish delegates were hustled, bluffed, intimidated, and over-awed. They forgot what they were and became rebels against their own government. Collins denied in the Dail that he had signed under the impact of the threat of immediate war, and there is evidence that his decision was made beforehand. In that case the persuading was not all done by Lloyd George. Collins and Griffith were party to the final hustling of the other delegates. But Griffith seems to have had little talent for negotiation or for the handling of power. His mind ran on a short-circuit and he had little influence. It was Collins who counted. And it was Collins who took the crucial decision to make a settlement without consulting the Dail Government.

What matters is not whether the British position was final, but Collins's decision not to make the Dail Government deal with his conclusion that it was final and that it must either settle for it or prepare for war. He pre-empted the Dail Government, knowing that the immense British propaganda apparatus would be immediately activated in support of him, and that the situation when he came back to Dublin after signing would be utterly different from what it would have been if he had come back before signing to put it to the Dail Government that the final position had been reached, and obliging it to deal with his own ultimatum within the structure of confidence of Dail legitimacy.

In the *realpolitik* of the situation, Collins took the game into his own hands with that decision and he acted as if he knew it. He became the Provisional Government on British authority and built a new army with British support. The obvious purpose of his new army was to make war on the IRA, and he must have had that in mind if he said that by signing the Treaty he also signed his own death warrant. But he also seems to have thought that he could handle not only the IRA and the Dail, but also Whitehall. And that was where it all broke down. In the event he was Whitehall's man. Whitehall was jubilant when it got him fighting the IRA.

It now seems to be agreed in official circles that the Anti-Treaty position in 1922 was undemocratic. I have learned to be careful about using the word 'democracy'. In 1969 I made myself widely hated by pointing out that Partition was socially based. Then, around 1970, I wrote something about the Northern Ireland state being democratically valid. That was nonsense. Northern Ireland was not a state and it had always been excluded from the democracy of the State of which it was part. But, hated though I was, nobody refuted me by pointing this out. I had to refute myself. And that taught me to be careful about democracy.

In January 1922 a Provisional Government was set up by Collins on British authority. Those who set it up might have had a small majority of Dail members for what they did, but it was not the Dail that set it up. Britain did not recognise the Dail as a sovereign authority after the Treaty any more than before it. The Provisional Government was established on British authority both *de jure* and *de facto.* And those in the Dail who supported it had to meet as the Parliament of Southern Ireland under the 1920 Act in order to set it up.

That Dail had been returned without a vote in the Summer of 1921. The Home Rule movement had withered away after its defeat in 1918, and no other party or individual contested the independence issue with Sinn Fein.

After the Treaty it was agreed that another election should be held quickly. In May 1922 an agreement was made that the election should not be contested between the Treaty and Anti-Treaty faction of Sinn Fein. The aim was to reproduce the existing balance of forces in the new Dail and establish a Coalition Government with a Treatyite majority. The Dail ratified this Agreement. Collins was summoned to London and ordered to break it, which he did in ambiguous terms two days before the election.

The election had been delayed so that a Constitution for the Free State should be published for the information of the electorate. Collins tried to nudge it towards republicanism but this was vetoed by Whitehall. The draft Constitution acceptable to Whitehall was published on the morning of the election.

The Election Agreement ratified by the Dail was broken by Collins, sort of, but not quite. A substantial part of the voting was done on the assumption that it held. The Agreement provided for a Treatyite majority in any case, so the Treatyite majority was no surprise. The voting was not on a referendum proposal. It was the election of a Parliament to form a Government.

The Civil War was launched a few days after the Election. It was not launched on the authority of the Dail that had just been elected. If that Dail had met and the matter had been put to it, it is very unlikely that there would have been war.

The war was launched by the Provisional Government in response to yet another Whitehall ultimatum, threatening that the British Army would go into action if the Treatyite Army did not act promptly. The newly elected Dail did not meet until September, by which time the Free State Army was in command, the war was won, and all that remained to be done was the atrocities designed to burn the spirit of defeat into the souls of the defeated.

The most interesting book I know of about the war is by another Harrington, Niall C, the son of a Redmondite MP, who qualified as a chemist, joined the IRA, then joined the Medical Corps of the Treatyite Army and was present with it in Kerry in the Autumn of 1922. The book is *Kerry Landing,* published in 1992, and it tells how the Munster Republic was taken in the rear by means of a naval landing in Kerry. Harrington then had a long career in the Army before becoming the Organiser of the Federated Union of Employers in 1959. He died in 1981.

Leaving aside ideology about democracy, the book confirms the conclusions I came to forty years ago, so how could I not think it good! : e.g.—

"The Provisional Government had been in existence for almost six months... In that time, despite the toing and froing of opposing political and military heads, it was able to build resources and make emergency plans. It could keep its 'front' busy in talks, arguments and disagreements about maintaining the IRA as the nation's volunteer army, while building and strengthening the new regular army. It had the means of doing what it wished to do, while observing very closely the growing aggressiveness of an opposition which spent its time thinking and talking, without agreeing on what was to be done or how to go about doing it. That was where the line of demarcation lay..." (p33)

On the constitutional situation brought about by the Treaty:

"Two Irish governments now functioned side by side... : the Dail Eireann Government... and the Provisional Government...

"In that confused and emotive period... not only were there two national governments...; there were also two national armies..., each giving allegiance to a republic, one to the "existing republic" proclaimed on Easter Monday 1916 and ratified by Dail Eireann..., the other to a republic to be achieved in time by the "stepping stone" of the Treaty..." (p7).

"Richard Mulcahy... was insisting that enlistment in the new army being formed by the Provisional Government was an engagement to serve in the "Regular Forces of the Republican Army". This was illusory, of course; de facto it was the army of the Provisional Government that was being

recruited; in other words, it was the Free State Army. The IRA who were against the Treaty... could claim that theirs was the true Republican Army, and so they did claim..." (p 10).

In an Appendix, from *"unpublished documents"*, Harrington gives a document by the "Chief of the General Staff", apparently drawn up in early August 1922, which makes the following comment on the war and the Constitution:

"It is too early to say yet whether we could so establish ourselves [in "certain principal points" in Munster, BC] in time to have Parliament meet on 12th (August). I feel that we shall have to have another postponement...

"I consider that if Parliament did not meet until 24th our military position would be very favourable; we would have occupied sufficient additional posts in the South to dominate entirely the position there, and would be able to indicate so definitely our ability to deal with the military problem there that no parliamentary criticism of any kind could seriously interfere with our ability" (pl64).

This was the parliament elected in June, that constituted the foundation of'democracy' in 1922, but which had never met while democratic order was being imposed.

Brendan Clifford

EPILOGUE TO A DYNASTY

There is a road leading from Millstreet that climbs over a series of hills finally disappearing over the far horizon into the great wide world beyond. At a bend near the foot of the road not far from Millstreet town, the traveller would notice a neat cottage with a fine specimen of monkey puzzle in the garden.

Here in utmost peace lived a man known as Charlie Keeffe, gentle and mild mannered who could be described as one of nature's gentlemen, possessed of no other claim to fame than being regarded locally as the last lineal descendant of the great O'Keeffes, self-styled Lords of Duhallow, a barony north of Millstreet and lying on the left bank of the river Blackwater.

A council worker by trade repairing the local roads, he could be seen constantly driving to and from work his chariot now a donkey and cart and wearing a wide brimmed hat over a white aquiline face and high domed forehead, residues of past power and authority.

Probably the most notable distinction attributed to him, was yet to come. Because of his lineage his death would, according to local folklore, be attended by a large pack of hunting dogs but high up in the sky, coming up from the South over a pass in the hills, barking and crying like puppies. An accolade accorded to every O'Keeffe of direct descent when death was imminent - like their own private Banshee. Even hardened sceptics must acknowledge that such experiences were accommodated by all ancient cultures, apparently to satisfy some dark need, a ritual mourning and to fill a depression caused by the passing of a family member and consequent redemption through death, though the alleged appearances not unnaturally inspired fear throughout the neighbourhood.

Many claims, spurious and otherwise have been recorded from many O'Keeffe families but local funeral watchers and dog watchers were firmly of the opinion that only a lineal descendant would qualify for the honour. In the newer, and prevailing more puritanical ether, cases of sketchy pedigree or any suspicion of impropriety in the family tree would rule them out - hardly moral indeed.

The legend began when the O'Keeffes due to confiscations and the like were confined to a small area of Duhallow, but still managed to live riotously, continually hunting and shooting along with various other distractions but they yet exercised a certain power locally so much that the priest could not even begin Mass until they arrived.

One Sunday morning after being out hunting as usual they were arrogant enough to bring their pack of dogs into the church in Cullen with them where the long suffering priest soundly

denounced them and prophesised that never again in this life or the next would they separated from their dogs; a covenant which according to local tradition was to be faithfully carried out.

A common curiosity as to their place of origin settles on an elevation overlooking the forest which once covered the plain a little west of the present Cork - Kerry border. Dame Fortune, whose whims elevates or casts down, individuals or entire families, was waiting though popular opinion says it favours the brave only.

So it must be, in this instance of a young chief with a particularly auspicious beginning to his career. An encounter with the daughter of a Druid who tried to repel his advances by biting off his ear earning him the nickname Oliol O Lum meaning the crop eared. When this earthly tumult took place in the foothills above present day Rathmore Christianity had not yet come to Ireland, the British Empire was unheard of and the eagle which marked the site of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital, was not yet hatched.

Here in the atmosphere of history and mystery the stone walled enclosure of what is now called the City is still to be seen. Echoes of the past still tremble in the mountain air and the twin peaks of the Goddess Dana, like a Sphinx with a secret as ever looks on seductively in the background

In such places time seems suspended, because of its association with human drama; events become links in a chain of social development relevant only to a particular time and place understood by the participants in their own time and in terms of feudal values.

The fame of Oliol O Lum seems to have survived also as over half of all Irish families proudly claim descent from him and from some of the foregoing, the figures may be correct.
In his own time he went on to conquer half the country which he ruled from the Rock of Cashel.

Later, fortune ceased to smile and some of his descendants had to retrace their steps backwards almost to where they started; in a reversal of fortunes, the O'Keeffes were back again in Duhallow.

It was a long road and the final turning appeared to come at the now familiar bend on the Tullig road with the monkey puzzle in the nearby garden. Here Charlie passed away without issue and whether it was due to a disturbed atmosphere occasioned by a great struggle for control of the skies known as the Battle of Britain with which it coincided, but not a dog, nor a bark, nor pup nor whimper was seen or heard to mark the final passing of the last lineal descendant of a branch of the oldest family in Europe - or was he?

Michael Casey

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