

British Association for Irish Studies New Letter

ISSUE NO. 16 OCTOBER 1998



CONCILIATION-RECONCILIATION

1798

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JIM O'HARA

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RUSKIN '98

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EDITORIAL

As promised we are including a long feature about our one-day Conference at Ruskin College *Irish Revolutionaries and British Radicals* which was held on Saturday 12 September 1998. At the beginning of the afternoon session, I invited all the participants to send me a selection of ideas from their papers. I am very grateful to all those who responded so quickly and hope that my edited *Reflections* fairly represents each one of them.

At present we have two BAIS projects at the development stage: the proposed offer of Bursaries to postgraduate students and the preparation already beginning for the 1999 BAIS conference at Bath Spa University with the call for papers. The Noticeboard contains calls for other Conference papers, all of which promise exciting times ahead for Irish Studies.

At the Ruskin Conference I met Christy Evans, a very enthusiastic teacher of Irish Studies at Shenfield High School, who has kindly written in the Newsletter about his work. I am also indebted to Jim O'Hara, one of the authors of *Drawing Conclusions* about political cartoons, for a very lively Focus Interview.

I am still waiting hopefully for voluntary correspondents to send in reports of Irish Studies events and activities. I would also welcome suggestions for future Focus Interview subjects.

Copy and/or discs (Word6/95) for No. 17 should be sent to Jerry Nolan, 8 Antrobus Road, Chiswick, London W4 5HY by 11 January 1999.

Jerry Nolan (Editor)

SPECIAL NOTICE BOARD: CALL FOR BAIS CONFERENCE PAPERS 1999

BAIS in association with Bath Spa University and *History Ireland*, invites proposals for a conference on 10-12 September 1999: MARGIN, MAINSTREAMS AND MOVING FRONTIERS.

Papers from ALL DISCIPLINES are welcome. The sessions will range widely in focus and may include some of the following topics:

The 'Celtic Tiger' Phenomenon * Emigration * Women * the Churches * Dissident Sexualities * Queer Theory * Travellers * Writers * the Peace Process * Emergency Legislation * Abortion * Literature * Cinema * Theoretical Perspectives * Post-Colonialism and the Irish * Post-Modernism * Empiricism * Quantitative/Qualitative Analysis *.....

Participants are urged to make presentations of 15 minutes duration to allow time for questions and discussions.

The Editors of ISR will consider publishing a selection of conference papers. Proposals (250 words maximum) should be sent by 11 January 1999 to Dr Neil Sammells (tel: 01225-875662; e-mail n.sammells@bathspa.ac.uk) or Margaret Ward (tel: 01225-875592; e-mail m.ward@bathspa.ac.uk) Humanities Faculty, Bath Spa University, Newton Park Bath BA2 9BN

FOCUS INTERVIEW: JIM O'HARA

Roy Douglas, Liam Harte & Jim O'Hara, *Drawing Conclusions: A Cartoon History of Anglo-Irish Relations 1798-1998* (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1998) is the first major study of Anglo-Irish relations to use political cartoons as the primary source for historical and cultural analysis. Over 200 cartoons from British, Irish, European and American sources are reproduced; in the case of each cartoon, there is included a description of historical context and an analysis of the nuance of Anglo-Irish relations being projected. One of the authors, Jim O'Hara, agreed to discuss with the Newsletter editor some of the issues raised in this fascinating book.

JN: You suggest in the book that political cartoonists can be either for or against the government in power. Do cartoonists on the side of the establishment lose a certain cutting edge?

JO'H: Great political cartoonists have sided with establishments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The work of James Gilray, perhaps the greatest of all English caricaturists, was a case in point. A Gilray cartoon depicted the United Irishmen of 1798 as ape-like figures bent only on pillage and destruction. Such an image gave national currency to the idea that the Irish were an inherently inferior race and fundamentally unsuited to self-government. The equation of militant Irish nationalism and a rampaging bestial nature achieved fullest expression in Punch cartoons such as Leech's depiction of the British Lion and the Irish Monkey (John Mitchell) in 1848 and in Tenniel's version of the Irish Caliban (Rory of the Hills) in 1870. But for most of the time throughout the period 1798-1998, the instinct of the political cartoonists has been to become the iconoclast who challenges orthodoxies, exposes hypocrisies, mocks absurdities. In many cartoons in our book, the emperor has no clothes or is being stripped of his clothes. Usually the best political cartoonist upends the world and calls out: 'Hey, have you thought of looking at it my way?' As a result, a person's perception of a politician or a political crisis may be changed utterly.

JN: You write about the great degree of freedom of expression permitted to political cartoonists in democracies. Of course, some modern politicians collect and treasure the work of their tormentors. Did your research show how the cartoonists react to being turned into court jesters by some very thick-skinned operators?

JO'H: I agree that in an age of mass publicity, successful politicians tend to think that any publicity is good publicity, even in the case of a mocking cartoon. I would question the success of the cartoon if I found the original on wall display in a politician's office or study. I cannot envisage John Major embracing many of Steve Bell's John Majors or Ian Paisley hanging on his walls Ian Knox's Ian Paisleys, nor can I see Margaret Thatcher treasuring, say, Martin Turner's 'As Solid as the Rock of Gibraltar'. The best cartoonists are particularly skilful at exposing mercilessly bad political policies and bad political decisions. The cartoonists I've met and talked to work in a private way on their cartoons and have a healthy scepticism of all establishments, left and right. I happen to believe that a political cartoonist can be consistently creative only when he's a free spirit who can be detached from all power groups. If he's good at his job, the political cartoonist will ever eschew the role of court jester.

JN: You state that your selection of any one cartoon was dictated primarily not by its degree of artistic merit but by the relevance of its message. Did you find that there was often a disjunction between art and message?

JO'H: Our research was very extensive – we must have considered over a thousand cartoons under the heading of our chosen theme. I came away from the whole experience with a great admiration for the art of the cartoonist in terms of the drawing skills, the sheer variety of conceptions, the often surprising ingenuity of graphic detail. People like Gilray and Cruikshank occupy the artistic heights. But I experienced great aesthetic pleasure from sifting through the long run of Punch cartoons from the 1840s to the 1920s which revealed a consistent

degree of artistic merit on many themes over some eighty years of contributing cartoonists. Our chosen theme of Anglo-Irish relations had to dictate our selection and many of the cartoons have high artistic merit. I would sum up the essential art of our best cartoonists as the ability to concentrate into a single eye-catching image an incisive understanding of a complex political situation in order to provoke an immediate popular reaction.

JN: How does the modern political cartoonist capture public attention in an age of an ever watchful political correctness and of endless political spinning? Where's the cartoonist's best public pitch now, in the newspapers or in the specialist satirical magazines?

JO'H: The practice of political spin through sound bite and catch phrase exists at the opposite pole to the art of the political cartoonist. Indeed the social function of the political cartoon's to alert the public to all forms of spinning including political correctness. In fact, spin doctors give the cartoonists a great opportunity. The cartoonist, a little like the spin doctor of words, reduces his message to an incisive and memorable image. Where the image scores over the words is in the range and variety of imagery possible in a cartoon which can encompass horror, shocks, humour, pathos, outrage, daring, compassion, understanding, contempt. The place for the cartoonist nowadays ought to be in national publications, newspaper dailies and weeklies. Such publications provide the cartoonist with the steady income necessary for professional survival. Also these newspapers provide the best arena in the battle for public opinion.

JN: One of the most interesting sections of the book is where you deal with the emergence of the Irish political cartoonists towards the end of the nineteenth century who were determined to reverse the harsh Irish stereotypes of the British comic weeklies. What were the main stereotypes in vogue and just how effective were the alternatives?

JO'H: There are three main stereotypes of Ireland and the Irish to be found in our range of political cartoons. The first is the Irish as stupid, lazy, idle, unreliable, amusing, childlike. The

second is the Irish as violent, threatening, dangerous, monstrous, uncivilised, sub-human. Finally there is Hibernia or Erin as pure, loving, gentle, beautiful. The stereotypes recurred often and can still pop up in modern versions depending on the political temperature. Child-like Paddy has appeared during periods when it has seemed right to pity and patronise the Irish. The monstrous Irish rebel has appeared during periods of nationalist revolutionary violence when Ireland has needed to be crushed and taught a lesson. Hibernia has floated as the platonic idea of beauty, meant to inspire during grand celebrations of things Celtic. The Irish alternative images in *Pat* and *Lepracaun* were generally images of aggressive and violent Irish landlords and of Pat (not Paddy) the tenant farmer who was honest, well-dressed, respectable, courteous, kind, family-loving – in other words, another potentially misleading stereotype. The alternative Ireland in *Pat* and *Lepracaun* excluded images of urban workers or landless farm labourers. The only imagery which the British and Irish shared was the occasional drawing of Hibernia as a melancholic figure wearing the shamrock.

JN: You note that there was a paucity of cartoons on Anglo-Irish relations during the years between 1922 and 1970 but that before 1922 and after 1970 there has been a superfluity of material to choose from. What's the cultural significance of this strange gap?

JO'H: I was surprised to find only about fourteen or so cartoons Irish cartoons in *Punch* between 1922 and 1942. There were just a handful about Irish neutrality during the second world war. British interest in Ireland declined after the Treaty of 1921. The Treaty had proposed a solution to the Irish Question which seemed to be working with one parliament in Belfast and another in Dublin. To a large extent, the communities within the North and the South became inward-looking and deeply conservative societies. An atmosphere of defensiveness and insecurity coloured the Catholic/Protestant relationship in a partitioned Ireland. *Dublin Opinion* provided a limited outlet in the South for some political cartoons but the opportunities taken never developed beyond mild satire being poked at the snobberies of the rising middle class and the declining gentry class. Only when

political violence once more erupted at the end of the 1960s did the political cartoonists resume business as usual – the Irish Question had not been solved after all.

JN: You argue strongly that some recent political cartoonists have sided with the establishment and have helped only to encourage British ignorance and misunderstanding of the complex nature of the Irish Question. On the whole, have most recent cartoons helped to promote mutual understanding in Anglo-Irish relations?

JO'H: In the early 1970s there resurfaced in Britain the stereotype of the violent Irish. For example, in Cummings' 'How marvellous it would be...' (published in the Daily Express on 12 August 1970) both sides in the Northern conflict were drawn as warring savage tribes with some peace-loving British soldiers keeping them apart. One of the most offensive cartoons, recalling the anti-Irish racism of the Victorian era, was Jak's 'The Irish' in the Evening Standard on 29 October 1982: Jak showed a man walking nervously past a poster advertising the latest X-rated film from 'Emerald Isle Snuff Movies' featuring a cast of degenerative nationalist and loyalist paramilitaries. Such a deeply offensive racist attack on the Irish would not have appeared in words in an *Evening Standard* editorial but was published as a cartoon with the approval of the Press Council who rejected all complaints, including a very strong one from the GLC. Fortunately political cartoonists like Steve Bell in the *Guardian* and Martin Turner in the *Irish Times*, among others, have produced a range of brilliant cartoons which again and again contribute useful perspectives to Anglo-Irish conflict as the world media now pays attention to what goes on. I think that the political cartoonist has as much influence, and sometimes more influence, on public opinion, in comparison with other correspondents on the story.

JN: There are no women cartoonists among your selection. How do you explain this absence? Are women so bad at political cartooning? By the way, why did you exclude the work of the great Irish caricaturist Grace Gifford Plunkett?

JO'H: We did look at Grace Gifford but decided that her work fell outside the terms of our selection. Women have just not produced political cartoons. Throughout most of our period, there were few women political journalists working on newspapers. I've come across examples of political cartoons by French women but not on the Anglo-Irish theme. It remains to be seen how soon effective women political cartoonists will come to the fore in Britain and Ireland. Just how different their cartoons will be is anybody's guess. We must await developments.

JN: The cartoon on the cover of this Newsletter is the famous 1798 Conciliation-Reconciliation one. The handshake has to be one of the most significant preoccupations in any cartoon history of Anglo-Irish relations. What should the image say to a modern audience about relations in 1998? Has the image a relevant message for 1998? Do you think that the style of a cartoon like this seems far too dated to interest most people nowadays?

JO'H: The cartoon appeared a few weeks after the collapse of the United Irish rebellion. The image shows John Bull extending the hand of friendship to Brother Paddy in a war-torn landscape. The Irishman here appears uncertain and frightened, obviously a misguided victim of the recent rebellion. An armed John Bull bristles with confidence in full military dress. As the Act of Union was soon to prove, the form of conciliation-reconciliation between John and Paddy was not going to be one of equals. The underlying message is by no means dated and gains in relevance as an undoubted fact of history. The handshake has featured in British cartoons about Ireland, and the handshake remains a powerful symbol in Anglo-Irish relations as the Downing Street Agreement and the Good Friday agreement have demonstrated. A most interesting modern version of the theme can be seen in Phelim Connolly's cartoon in the *Irish Independent* on 11 December 1997 – the one which shows Blair and Adams as they shake hands simultaneously recalling Collins, IRA leader turned statesman. The cartoon is suggesting to Irish readers that they should remember that Collins' handshake with Lloyd George was the prelude to a disastrous civil war

in which Collins himself was assassinated. Once more a cartoonist is raising a question about an Anglo-Irish handshake at a provocative level of awareness which no leader writer

would be prepared to acknowledge so dramatically. I'm glad that cartoonists like Connolly can and do ask the awkward in such a memorable image.



THE MODERN SISYPHUS.

"Sisyphus is said to be doomed for ever to roll to the top of a great mountain a stone, which continually falls down again."

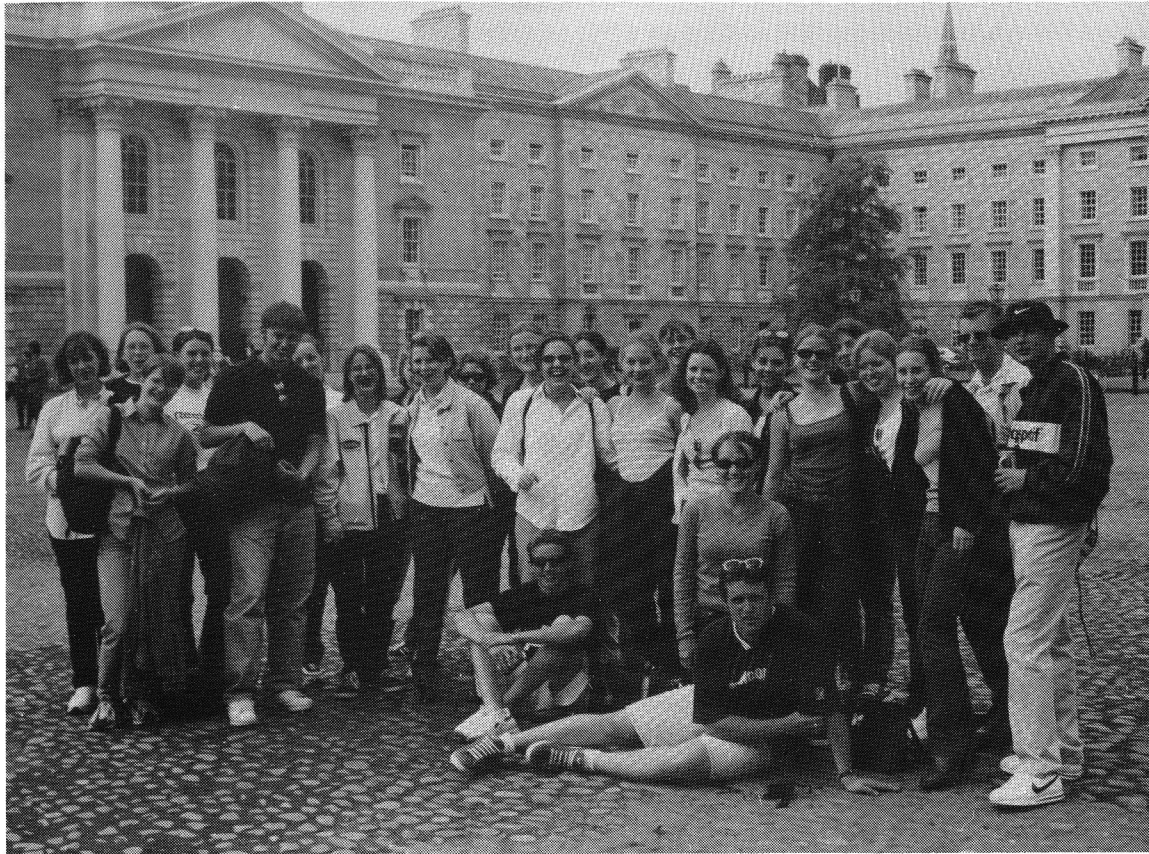
SISYPHUS . . . SIR R. P—L. THE STONE . . . D. O'C—L. THE FURIES . . . LORD J. R—L, S—L, &c.

From: *Drawing Conclusions* p. 40

This cartoon of Robert Peel pushing uphill 'Ireland' was an early recognition that the Irish question would be a recurring problem for the British Government. Later Prime Ministers were represented as Sisyphus- Lloyd George pushing uphill 'Irish Government Bill' in 1920 (*Punch*) and Ted Heath pushing uphill 'Ireland' in 1971 (*Sunday Express*). In 1996 John Hume is Sisyphus pushing uphill 'Peace' (*Guardian*).

MORE IN THE BOOK!

IRISH STUDIES AT SHENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



Irish Studies Students from Shenfield High School visit Trinity College Dublin

Since becoming a teacher three years ago, I have co-ordinated Irish Studies at Shenfield High School in Essex. During that time, the school has launched Irish language classes, organised school visits across Ireland and put Irish literature and culture at the centre of 'A' Level Studies. These developments have been prompted partly by the ignorant and dismissive attitudes of my pupils who as young children had absorbed prejudices against the Irish long-rooted in historical conditions. Our course in Irish Studies challenges these prejudices whilst linking a study of Irish culture with academic success.

Our first trip to Ireland took place in 1997 and was an encouraging success for our 'A' Level students. Extensive displays around the school raised the profile of 'the Irish trip' and it is now an established event in the school year. Since then, we have introduced the study of Yeats and Friel, celebrated Bloomsday and have written articles for *Saol* – the Irish language newspaper.

All this has been achieved in an unlikely setting. Shenfield is a wealthy suburban settlement, twenty minutes journeying time from Liverpool Street. The City of London and Ford UK at Dagenham are the chief employers. The area is overwhelmingly white and the Irish community, much reduced since the 1960s, is largely invisible.

Future initiatives include trips to the Aran Islands and Radio na Gaeltachta in Connemara, as well as Kilkenny, Gleann da loch and Kilmainham Goal.

The subtle re-appraisal of Ireland throughout the wider school community grows slowly because schools are conservative places where any misgivings of some parents and colleagues have to be soothed away gradually.

Christy Evans

REFLECTIONS FROM RUSKIN '98

1. RADICALISM AND NATIONALISM IN 1790s SCOTLAND

In 1794 five radicals were transported from Scotland for sedition; the last was a London merchant, Maurice Margarot. Draconian laws, biased judges, packed juries, unjust sentences. If we carry over expectations from Ireland, we would expect the politics to be clear. A colonial regime is repressing a struggle for national freedom. But at Margarot's trial it seemed as nationalism was on the bench, and unionism in the dock.

The defendant was reminded several times that he was a 'stranger in this country'. His English witnesses were refused on the grounds that it was not possible to summon people from another country. During the Convention he had moved that, 'a committee be set up to consider of the means, and draw up an outline of a proper plan for a general union between the two nations.' The trial contradicts the notion that late eighteenth century Radicalism in Scotland was nationalist. But we should not leap to a simplistic unionist interpretation either. Whigs perceived

Scottish society before the 1707 Union as barbaric, and the form taken by self-determination in the 1790s was an attempt to remake the Union. Scotland's junior partnership in the UK offered Scots the possibility of creating a new, enlightened, Britain.

It was, however, the strategy of an educated elite, and the popular base of Radicalism saw the union and the upper classes as two facets of the same problem. And one demand of the 1790s was irrevocably national – an end to patronage in the Church of Scotland. That led to the Disruption of 1843; and the Free Kirk which set the most energetic Presbyterians against the Scottish Tory oligarchy. Westminster's failure to deal fairly with non-established Presbyterians in the nineteenth century, broke down Whig unionism. Only in the twentieth century did Scottish Radicals become nationalist in a more recognisable way.

Bob Purdie (Ruskin College)

2. 1898 COMMEMORATION OF 1798

By the centenary of 1798, Theobald Wolfe Tone's place in Irish republicanism was well established; indeed it could be said that it was his life, and death, that was being commemorated. The key event in the centenary calendar was the laying of the foundation stone for a Wolfe Tone memorial in St. Stephen's Green in Dublin (15 August 1898). This together with the earlier gathering at Bodenstown for the 135th anniversary of Tone's birth proved two of the largest centenary gatherings. Tone was the ideal figure-head for the centenary because he could be all things to all people. Constitutional nationalists identified with him as a pragmatist who had started his career as a party activist; republicans identified with his republicanism, although they generally refrained from defining what this actually meant. Furthermore, his call for an union of Irishmen provided a resonant theme at a time when Irish nationalism was still suffering from the division and demoralisation caused by the Parnell split.

Alice Milligan published a short biography of Wolfe Tone in 1898, priced at 6d. In Milligan's book, Tone is presented as a republican, and as a revolutionary. He was not, she insisted, 'a reformer, but a revolutionist. He aimed not at mending Grattan's Parliament, but at overthrowing its authority. He sought not justice from England, but a foreign ally for Ireland, and he found one in the Republic of France'.

Tone is presented as die-hard separatist republican rather than someone who came to this position by way of more moderate whiggish opinions. The arguments over Tone's life that were taking place in the 1890s are still being conducted today among historians like Marianne Elliott and Tom Bartlett: the issue of his republicanism, the extent of his radicalism, and his role within the United Irish movement. Perhaps the weakest part of Milligan's analysis was her failure to explore the impact of sectarian divisions, either in relation to 1798 or 1898.

Like the United Irishmen themselves, she appears to have believed that achieving a union of Catholics and Protestants was simply a matter of demonstrating to the Protestants that a republic was in their own interests, a view which

conveniently overlooked social and political realities.

Virginia Crossman (Staffordshire University)

3. THE NORTHERN STAR

Four pages in length, appearing twice a week and initially costing two pence, the *Northern Star* was published in Belfast under the guidance of Samuel Neilson, between January 1792 and May 1797. The *Northern Star* was the most successful paper of its time. With an average print run of over 4,000 copies it soon eclipsed its main rival the *Belfast News-Letter*, which had at the height of its popularity a print run of 2,750. Neilson estimated that for every copy sold, the people had access to learning of the contents of the paper, while more conservative estimates indicated that six people would be aware of the news contained in each issue. Using these figures, up to 40,000 and at least 24,000 people had direct and regular access to the outpourings of the *Northern Star*.

The *Northern Star* was a unique paper. It succeeded in developing an efficient and far reaching distribution system. It had the largest circulation of any newspaper of its era and it

was the only official and regular publication of the Society of United Irishmen. A study of the newspaper is also a study of the impact of United Irish propaganda on the newly developing political nation. An examination of the *Northern Star* emphasises, not only the impact of the United Irishmen but also the rapidly expanding and maturing industry of the newspaper press which was responsible for the circulation of news on a mass scale. Newspapers guaranteed that political debate was no longer confined to urban centres but was spread throughout the country. The purchase of a political newspaper gave a subscriber a sense of being a part of the political world. In late eighteenth-century Ireland the purchase of the *Northern Star* was as potent a symbol of freethinking, independent citizenship as bearing arms.

Gillian O'Brien (Institute of Irish Studies, Liverpool)

4. 1798 REVOLUTIONS IN IRELAND AND MALTA

The United Irishmen rebelled against Britain during May-June 1798. The Maltese rebelled against the French in September 1798. The two island revolutions had some very striking parallels and similarities. There were, though, other respects in which the revolutions were opposite. The United Irishmen failed; the Maltese rebels at least partly succeeded. The Irish revolt against British misrule called on French aid and many participants pinned their hopes on the coming of a French invasion fleet. The Maltese, rebelling against French conquest, called on British assistance – and the eventual result was that Malta became a British colony and remained one until 1964. Many United Irishmen were secularists and proclaimed themselves Jacobins. In the Maltese case,

conversely, a major stimulus to revolt was the French assault on the position of the Church, and among the revolution's slogans was 'morte a Giacobini!' (Death to the Jacobins!) The British domination of Ireland had lasted, depending how one counts, anything between 200 and 600 years by 1798. French rule in Malta, by contrast, was a matter only of a few months before it was destroyed as tempestuously as it had been imposed. Malta's population in 1798 was only around 100,000, as against Ireland's six million. Both island revolutions were part of the great ambient series of imperial, territorial, national and ideological conflicts unleashed by the French Revolution. Within that nexus, both Ireland and Malta were caught up in the long contest between Britain and France.

There are even certain striking similarities between the Maltese historiographical debate over 1798 and the Irish one. The major thrust of recent Irish writing, centred around the bicentenary itself, has been to urge the coherent nationwide organisation, sophistication of ideology and tactics, and forward-looking nonsectarianism, of the United Irishmen; but a reaction against this alleged idealisation is itself already discernible, from historians as diverse as Tom Dunne, Ian MacBride and Brendan Simms. In the Maltese case too the division has been

between those who emphasise evidence of clear organisation and nationalist objectives among the rebels, and those who stress a combination of spontaneity, localism, elite manipulation and traditionalism. Both countries ask the same questions about 1798. Was there a revolution? Was it nationalism and/or republicanism? If so, whose revolution, whose nationalism, whose republicanism?

Stephen Howe (Ruskin College)

5. BRITISH POSITIVISTS AND IRISH NATIONALISM

Interpretations of the 1798 United Irish rebellion featured in late nineteenth century discussion in Britain of Anglo-Irish relations, especially among the British followers of the Positivism of Auguste Comte – an interesting group, not because of their numbers (which were few), but because they took a startlingly radical attitude to Ireland in contemporary terms, and advocated self-government for the country long before any other influential group of Britons. As sectarian divisions were so prominent a theme of the late nineteenth-century Irish political landscape, the Positivists had to support their argument for Irish self-government with evidence of the Irish people's potential to transcend sectarian differences and the ability to build a stable political community. At first 1798 featured prominently in Positivists' discussion of Irish politics because it seemed to them a time when political movements in Ireland showed strong evidence of just this potential.

image. As well as being a time of political optimism, it was a time of turbulence, political violence, and when Irish republicans allied with Britain's war-time French enemies – in short, it was a time when Irish republicans had declared war on the British establishment. The Positivists, who had been ultimately nurtured and protected by the same British establishment, began to feel ambiguous sympathy towards the political traditions of 1798 in Ireland. These tensions were perhaps most clearly expressed in the life of the Irish Positivist John Kells Ingram. Ingram was the author of the most famous poem ever written about the Irish Revolution, 'Who Fears to Speak of '98', a paean of praise for the United Irishmen; was a product and life-long employee of the Unionist-dominated Trinity College Dublin and ultimately settled for being an unionist in his own political sympathies.

G.K. Peatling (Oxford University)

However, in the minds of most British observers, 1798 in Ireland conjured up a very different

6. CARLOW 1798

Until the rediscovery of the Jackson Collection of British State, judicial and military records in 1985, students of the period complained of the 'dearth of material' for 1798 in Carlow. This year will see the publication of a previously unknown document compiled by the Under-Sheriff of the county, Dudley Hill, in which he emphasises his 'own great trouble and expense'; it was discovered among the family papers of a General Henniker of East Anglia. The Henniker

Manuscript contains the document, 'A translation of the several letters of directions and orders given by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and Major General Sir Charles Asgill in the district of Carlow'. The opportunity is now available for historians to study in depth Carlow of this period and to discern something of the nature and structure of the United Irishmen within the county down to the level of individual townlands. The document includes the orders sent to Carlow prior to the fatal attack on

the town on the 25 May and an alphabetical list of 389 pardoned rebels with brief details of their part in the rebellion. Sometimes the details include the names of their sergeants and captains and the weapons they carried. The letters include information about the return of arms surrendered before the outbreak of the rebellion and about the effectiveness of Government intelligence.

7. A REPUBLICAN REVISION OF THE 1798 RISING?

The 1798 Rising has remained a potent symbol for republicans but its meaning and significance is changing in line with the current republican leadership's peace strategy. Shiftings of ground raise the issue of continuity and discontinuity in the Irish republican tradition and the fundamental question as to what extent the ideology of the Irish republican movement can now remain historically conditioned.

Nobody doubts the traumatic impact on Irish republicans of the way in which the northern conflict has developed in recent years. We have seen the transformation of an insurrectionary movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s from the cult of martyrs into a bureaucratic political party in a democracy of competing political parties. Recently we have seen the pragmatism of republican participation in the

8. 'CROPPIES RISE UP!'

My own research on Leicestershire and the Great Rebellion of 1798 arose from more general research into the Irish in nineteenth-century Leicester. In the best tradition of the 'squirrel' approach to research, I dutifully stored away all the nuts gathered – even the momentarily irrelevant ones – and gradually but perceptibly a pattern of development began to emerge around Leicestershire's involvement in the Irish 1789 Rising. The involvement was military – what became clear gradually was the serious, central and long-term participation of two local military units in crushing the Rising and in enforcing subsequent 'pacification' processes. By going back to Musgrave (1801), Maxwell (1848) and Bishop Stock's narrative *Diary* (1798-9), confirmation was obtained of data extracted from local records in local archives. These latter centred on military records, diaries, correspondence and newspaper accounts. In

Further research has revealed that the Battle of Carlow was not the completely one-sided affair as previously thought and that the Government forces also sustained casualties. The Carlow material is one example of the wealth of Irish material in English Archives.

Anthony M Breen (University of East Anglia)

institutions established by the Good Friday Agreement. All this could be interpreted as a form of post-republicanism. In fact, there has been a fresh republican analysis of 1798: the language of conflict resolution and the politics of accommodation have started being used. Wolfe Tone's historic call for the revolutionary unity of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter is being understood in terms of historic compromise and dialogue with Unionists.

Undoubtedly the celebration of the legacy of 1798 still remains at the heart of the Irish republican movement during this year of the bicentenary.

Kevin Bean (Institute of Irish Studies, Liverpool)

particular, they give a much fuller picture of the participation of both local Militia and Fencibles in the Western campaign during August and October 1798 and the massacre of some 650 Irish after the Battle of Ballinamuck.

So enthralled did I become that (looking back to the example of 'Oh, What a Lovely War') I consulted with a group of colleagues about the possibilities of a theatrical version of the extraordinary story. As a result of our enthusiasm, 'Croppies Rise Up!', the musical, was rehearsed and produced on four consecutive nights in Leicester's Guildhall, a location quite close to the spot from which the Militia set off on 5 September 1798. The cast consisted of teenagers who were of either Irish or Asian descent. The show is based entirely on primary sources and will be touring for two weeks, either side of St. Patrick's Day in 1999. An attractive

illustrated pamphlet telling the story of Leicester's involvement in 1798 will be available from the end of November 1998. The main message in our programme for 'Croppies Rise Up!' is 'We hope you enjoy tonight's production and recognise within it our passionate hope for peace in this troubled world'. Thus the

story of the human tragedy of the events which befell the United Irishmen at the hands of the Leicester Militia, two hundred years ago, can have a message for today.

Nessan Danaher (Soar Valley College)

NOTICEBOARD

SOCIETY OF THE STUDY OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRELAND

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 1999 CONFERENCE - IRELAND AND THE UNION: QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY At the Irish Studies Centre, Bath Spa University, 9-11 April 1999

The conference aims to explore the effects of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland upon Irish identity in the nineteenth century. This is a key area for understanding nineteenth-century Ireland, as the tensions – political, creative, cultural, religious – resulting from the dynamics of the British-Irish relationship manifested itself in a wide variety of ways throughout the period. Suggested topics include:

Attitudes to the Empire * The Irish Literary Revival * The Churches and the Union * The Diaspora and Irishness * Home Rule/Unionism * The Anglo-Irish and their Identity * Federalism * Irishness in Literature * Catholic Unionism * Protestant Nationalism * Artistic Representations of Ireland and/or Irishness * Irishness in Nineteenth-Century History Writing * The Irish in the British Armed Forces *

Please send abstracts of papers (c.200 words maximum) by 31 December 1998 to:

Dr. Brian Griffin, Irish Studies Centre, Faculty of Humanities, Bath Spa University College, Newton Park, Bath BA2 9BN Tel: 01225-875529 (inside UK) +0044-1225-875529 (outside UK) Fax: 01225-875503 Email: b.griffin@bathspa.ac.uk & isc@bathspa.ac.uk

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR ONE-DAY INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE 17 APRIL 1999 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK

WHITE WOMEN? ('Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?') Community * Suffrage * Motherhood * Identity * Equal Opportunities * Family* Femininity * Gender * Economics * Feminism * Social Class * Why Study Whiteness? * Nationality * Work * Cyberspace * Mythologies * Spaces * Texts * What is a white woman? * Representation * Imperialism * Colonialism * OVER TO YOU

Send abstracts (c.250 words) for papers, workshops, presentations by 16 November 1998 to White Women's Conference Ann Kaloski & Heloise Brown, Centre for Women's Studies University of York YO10 5DD Fax: (OO 44) 1904 433670 email eakn1@york.ac.uk or hjb104@york.ac.uk

SUMMONS TO APPEAR AT THE 7TH ANNUAL WERRC CONFERENCE

CURT na mBAN: A CONFERENCE CELEBRATING IRISH WOMEN'S WRITING

At University College Dublin 26-29 May 1999

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

WERRC is to convene a special sitting of international academics, scholars, writers and critics to discuss and celebrate the work of Irish women writers. Modelled on Parliament na mBan and the *Midnight Court*, this conference will be like no other. We aim to gather scholars and critics from both hemispheres and every time zone in one venue to testify to their own work, together with contemporary Irish women writers. We will compile, in effect, a book of evidence on Irish women's writing. *Cuirt na mBan* will take the form of lectures and parallel sessions, together with readings and performances of contemporary work; discussions between writers and critics and public dialogues between Irish women writers and visual artists.

Areas of interest: **Canon formation and deformation * national subjects and notional objectives * bodies and theories * publicity and secrets * regulations and genres * popular politics and personal witness * writing lives and dying cultures * states, instatement and testament * religion, normalcy and the paranormal * regions, margins, mainstreams, borders, limits, thresholds and boundaries * subversion, perversion, inversion, transgression, proliferation and affirmation.**

Please submit proposals – not more than 750 words – to WERRC by 30 November 1998 to Conference organisers: Lia Mills, Katherine O'Donnell, Ailbhe Smyth, Katherine O'Donnell WEERC Arts Building, University College Dublin Ireland Tel: 353-1-706-8571 Fax: 353-1-706-1195

WOMEN AND IRELAND NETWORK

AGM and STUDY 5 DECEMBER 1998 at Bath Spa University College

Morning Session: Women and the diaspora * travel writers in Ireland * representations of Ireland – interdisciplinary dialogues and AGM OF THE WOMEN ON IRELAND NETWORK

Afternoon Session: How to get published – a panel discussion.

The Study Day is an opportunity for discussing research and current interests. Women are invited to present any work in progress that has a relationship to the suggested topics. We particularly welcome contributions that engage with other disciplines. We would prefer short, 10 minute presentations rather than long papers. Sessions will be in a workshop style rather than more formal panels and we hope this will encourage those whose work is in its early stages to speak on their research. A panel discussion, chaired by Louise Ryan, will consider positive suggestions on tackling the hurdles involved in approaching publishers and journals.

For further details contact: Margaret Ward, Humanities Faculty, BSUC, Newton Park, Bath, BA2 9BN Tel: 01225-875592 email: m.ward@bathspa.ac.uk

THE THIRD GALWAY CONFERENCE ON COLONIALISM

At University College Galway 17-20 June 1999

CALL FOR PAPERS ON CONFERENCE THEME: DEFINING COLONIES

Papers might address the question of how colonies have been defined, politically, economically, socially, culturally. What are the roles of ethnicity, race, gender, and social class in different colonial dispensations? A central strand of the Conference will address the question 'Was Ireland a Colony?' Papers should be no longer than 20 minutes. Please send abstract of not more than 300 words, preferably by email, to Conference Organisers, Department of English, NUI, Galway, Ireland. email: colony@bodkin.ucg.ie Tel: 353 (0) 91 524411 Fax: 353 (0) 524102. Consult our World Web Site for further information: <http://www.ucg.ie/enl/colony/conference.htm>

BAIS BURSARIES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE: John Brannigan, University of Luton(Convenor); Mervyn Busted, University of Manchester; Roy Foster, Hertford College, Oxford; Sarah Morgan(for Mary Hickman), University of North London; Richard Kirkland, University of Keele; Neil Sammells, Bath Spa University College; Lance Pettitt, St.Mary's University College; Conor McCarthy, University of Liverpool.

BAIS has established a scheme to support postgraduate research in Britain on topics of Irish interest. The Association will award four bursaries of £1000 each to postgraduate students, based in a university in Great Britain, conducting research on any aspect of Irish Studies. The aim of the awards is to further research in Great Britain in the subject area of Irish Studies. This will be done by providing assistance to take advantage of opportunities which would enhance a pupil's research project, or to alleviate financial hardship, which would otherwise hinder the pursuit of a pupil's studies. Students may use the bursaries for travel expenses, payment of fees, subsistence expenses or other expenses related to the completion of a research project.

Applicants must be registered for a postgraduate degree in a higher education institution in Great Britain. The research project on which the applicant is working must be within the subject of Irish Studies. Applicants should provide ten copies of the following information on no more than three sides of A4:

- personal details (full name, contact details, date of birth)
- an outline of the research project, in no more than 500 words
- details of the specific purposes for which they would require research funding, and when the money will be spent
- details of educational background, qualifications and postgraduate registration
- information regarding any other sources of funding which the applicant has received or has applied for
- the contact details of two referees, who should be asked by the applicant to send their references directly to the secretary

All applications must be received by 1st March 1999. The bursary winners will be announced in May 1999; successful candidates will be required to provide a report on how the funds have been spent. Applications and references should be sent to: Mervyn Busted, Honorary Secretary, BAIS, School of Geography, Mansfield Cooper Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

Criteria for the Allocation of Bursaries:

A panel of Irish Studies academics, covering a wide range of disciplines, will judge the submissions and select four bursary winners according to the following criteria:

- that the research will make a significant contribution to Irish Studies
- that the purposes for which funding is required are necessary, or at least of substantial benefit, to the research project
- preference may be given to applicants who are not in receipt of other funding for this specific project

BAIS NATIONAL COUNCIL

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Fax: 01225-875503

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Mary Doran, Modern Irish Collections, The British Library, 69 Euston Road London NW1 2DB
Tel: 0171-41277538

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Cait Thompson, 17 Mill Close, Braunston. Northants NN11 7HY Tel: 01788-891494

DATE FOR BAIS COUNCIL MEETING SATURDAY 07.11.98

BENEFITS OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:

- 3 issues of Irish Studies Review and BAIS Newsletter posted to you
- Network of nearly 300 members with Irish Studies interests.

ADVICE TO APPLICANTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

All overseas applications should include a £2-00 supplement to cover postage costs. Overseas remittances should be sent in the form of a Sterling Money Order only. For further information about subscription rates please see application form on the next page. Membership runs for twelve months. Members will receive a reminder of renewal prior to membership lapsing. **IF NOT ALREADY A MEMBER FILL UP THE APPLICATION FORM NOW.**

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TEL: 01245-237590**