

IRISH STUDIES


IN BRITAIN

75p

AUTUMN/WINTER 1988

No. 13

ISSN 0270-8154



HOMELESS IRISH — THE FORGOTTEN IMMIGRANTS

INSIDE:
Irish Nationalism versus
British Labour
Irish Women in Britain
The Irish in Liverpool

**ILEA Breakthrough?
Directory of Irish Classes
in London**



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THE GUINNESS WORD AND THE HARP DEVICE ARE REGISTERED TRADE MARKS

IRISH STUDIES IN BRITAIN

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Irish Studies in Britain promotes and publicises the development of all aspects of Irish Studies in this Country. It is published regularly (usually twice a year — Spring and Autumn) and is available from selected bookshops or in the case of difficulty from the address below. Price 75p (£1.00 including postage); 80p Republic of Ireland (including postage £1.10).

Subscription (2 issues): UK £2.00; Republic of Ireland £2.20; USA (surface mail) \$4.00.

Orders of 10 and over: 25% discount.

All cheques made payable to 'Addison Press'.

Designed and published by
Addison Press
14 Tremaine Close
Brockley
London SE4

Printed by Noel Murphy
1 Lower Crescent, Belfast 7
N.Ireland.

Edited by Jonathan Moore
Addison Press 1988

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EDITORIAL

The events in Northern Ireland in the last nine months have moved the issue of the troubles once again onto the centre stage of political debate in this country. Enniskillen, Stalker, Birmingham, Gibraltar and the present IRA campaign against British military personnel have shown that the great hopes that many had for the Anglo—Irish accord were misplaced. What has Irish studies to do with all of this? Well, teachers of the subject in Britain must surely have some relevance. Above all there is a need for those of us who teach Irish history and politics to reach out and to start reaching a British audience. Traditionally Irish studies is a vehicle for the teaching of the Irish about themselves. Thus a typical evening class is attended by first and second generation Irish. There is, of course, nothing wrong with this, but what about the British. Anyone who speaks to a British person, whether they be on the Clapham omnibus or even in public life is likely to find a total void when it comes to knowledge of the history and politics of Ireland. Anyone who studies the totality of Anglo—Irish relations will know that misunderstanding and ignorance has been in abundance on all sides. Over here we must push in some small way for Irish studies to be used to create a better understanding of Ireland amongst the British. Of course it would make life more difficult for us tutors. Teaching in order to provide cultural reinforcement is far easier than reaching out to a new audience, but it would be worthwhile. Now, it would be a foolishly optimistic person who argued that this will solve the tragic problems which beset the relations between Britain and Ireland, but it would be a small step towards creating the atmosphere for the more informed and balanced debate that we agree is necessary if these two islands are ever ultimately to live in peace together.

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NEWS

British Association for Irish Studies

The BAIS has appointed an executive secretary, Sean Hutton, the distinguished Irish language poet. (See *ISIB* No. 12 for a review of his work). They have also moved into new offices at 9 Poland Street, London W1. (01 439 3043) Of great interest is their publication "A Survey of Irish Studies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland." This is an invaluable source book which lists teachers and researchers in Irish Studies at all levels of the education structure. It has been meticulously compiled by Dr. David Cairns of North Staffordshire Polytechnic and can be obtained for £5.00 plus p&p from the BAIS.

Institute of Irish Studies, University of Liverpool

The Institute is launching a major study of the Irish in Britain. The study will be led by Ullrich Kockel, the distinguished German academic who taught previously at University College Dublin and has closely studied the informal economy of the west of Ireland. Initially the study will look at the employment, income and conditions of the Irish in Britain. The Institute has also recently organised two major conferences. In March there was a most successful day school on the place of Irish studies in the education of 8 to 13 year olds (see page 17). At the beginning of this month there was a fascinating conference dedicated to the work of that great Irish poet, Louis Macneice. A report on this will appear in the next *ISIB*.

North London Polytechnic

The degree programme in Irish studies gets under way in October. Students are being offered a BA with Irish studies forming part of a combined degree programme. Application forms can be obtained from the Irish Studies Centre, Polytechnic of North London, Marlborough Building, 383 Holloway Road, London N7 0RN. (01 607 2789). The first publications from the Irish in Britain Research forum have also been produced. There are three titles available: 1. The Housing of the Irish in London by Christopher Bennett. 2. Smalltown Boys and Girls by Seamus Taylor. 3. Irish migration to London by Anne O'Grady.

The papers are attractively produced and reasonably priced at £4.00. They fill a vital gap in the literature on the Irish in Britain and are essential reading. They can all be obtained from the Irish Studies Centre.

Ireland Resources Centre in Sheffield

Some resources on Ireland have recently been developed by the political education group in the Adult Education Service in Sheffield. These include books, magazines, documents, videos, slides and photographs. They are housed at the Philadelphia Centre, West Don Street, S6. If you are interested in seeing the collection, please ring Steve Bond on 320216.

Irish in Manchester History Group

The Group and Manchester IBRG are working in conjunction with Cornerhouse — Manchester's cinema/arts centre — to present an Irish film festival in November. It will be a wide ranging event featuring films and videos from the commercial and sector. History, music and

politics will be just three of the themes covered. The full programme will be available in late September. Further details from Sandra Hebron, Cornerhouse, 70 Oxford Street, Manchester M1. Telephone 061 228 7621.

Political Studies Association of Ireland

The PSAI are holding their annual conference in Limerick on 14–16 October. The theme is Politics in Ireland: local national and international dimensions. If anyone is interested, they should contact John Coakley or John Stapelton, College of Humanities, National Institute of Higher Education, Limerick.

Ideas and Production

The above magazine which deals with the history of ideas has decided to produce a special Irish issue on the theme of culture and politics in Northern Ireland from the 1960's. The editor, Eamonn Hughes, would like to hear from anyone who is interested in submitting an article for this special issue. Such articles should be 5,000 to 6,000 words long and the deadline for submission is June 1989. For further details contact Eamonn Hughes, 49 Elvington Road, Leicester LE2 1QC.

Luton College of Higher Education

The college recently organised a seminar on Irish studies with the hope of introducing a programme of studies at the College in the near future. Anyone interested in hearing more should contact Seamus McDowell, Irish Studies Co-ordinator, Faculty of Business, Luton College of Higher Education, Luton LU1 3JU. Telephone Luton 34111 ext. 284.

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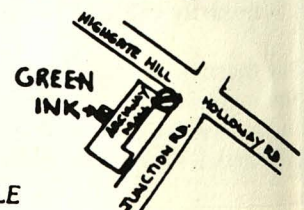
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Pictured at the launch of the CARA Report on Irish Homelessness at the Cavendish Conference Centre in London on July 12th. L to R: The Irish Ambassador Andrew O'Rourke, Clive Soley M.P., Gearoid O'Meachair of CARA and Cardinal Basil Hume.

THE IRISH: BRITAIN'S FORGOTTEN IMMIGRANTS*

Gearoid O'Meachair

It began as simply and as dramatically as Newton's apple; I was a community worker in a social services team which covered Finsbury Park in north London. The park, like many of its residents in their occasional moments of anecdotal conversation, is sprinkled with a colour reflective of past glories on holiday weekends. Familiarity with the area brought an insistent question; why were so many Irish men and women sleeping rough in and around the park? Was this simply an example of the Irish trait of refusal to conform to British expectations, or did it perhaps reflect a *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* scenario, with the implied compliance with stereotypical role models masking a view to other freedoms?

My concern sent me scurrying to the social policy sections of the local libraries, where I was shocked and surprised by the dearth of material on single homelessness, and at what pitifully little attention had been given to the Irish within this social phenomenon. Nevertheless, my examination of the works available revealed a few deeply concerning facts, stark in the absence of any analysis: one in every three occupants of hostels for the homeless in inner London is Irish; one in every four occupants of outer London hostels is Irish; in 1985 38 per cent of the casual users of DHSS Resettlement Units were Irish and two out of every seven people who sleep rough in central London are Irish.

One of the few dependable sources of statistics on Irish

homelessness derive from the 1981 census material, now dated but still revealing (see tables).

The private rented sector is often characterised by high rents, disrepair and landlord disregard for the tenants' rights to privacy and security. The decline in the private rented sector, and lack of access to alternative accommodation for single people on low incomes is well known. The traditional emphasis by local authorities on the provision of housing for families with children and for the elderly has tended to restrict access for single people below 65. As a result hostels and lodging houses cater for this section of the population, with the inevitable consequence of housing stress and homelessness.

It would be facetious in the face of the above evidence, to claim that the Irish are not disadvantaged, or that their needs have been properly addressed. Being white, and one of the oldest ethnic minority communities in this country, the Irish suffer from a British over-familiarity. Even while being perplexed by the scale of disenfranchisement, the Irish are too often overlooked by those with some understanding of the disadvantages experienced by ethnic minorities.

The Irish were one of the first immigrant communities in Britain, and remain the largest. The 1981 census material shows a heavy concentration in the South-east, with many settling in north London. Most came to Britain to escape the ravages of unemployment and the destitution of a static

rural economy. The Irish are the most economically active of any ethnic minority, especially Irish women, whose rate of employment in 1981 was nearly double the national average. The majority of these women are involved in the so-called caring professions, which increasingly mean, regardless of professional status, low pay and exploitation.

Why the Irish endure some of the worst housing conditions can in part be explained by the initial plans for, and circumstances of emigration which have, by and large remained unaltered over the years: the urgent need for remittances to be sent home to support the family; the intention to stay away for only a short period, returning home with money to buy a farm or small business; the proximity of the islands and ease of access producing for some little incentive to sink deep roots; and the recruitment practices of British firms, with their offer of quick money and available accommodation which too often meant transit-van mobile cheap labour, rooming houses and the pub-culture.

Their situation can also be explained by an examination of the experiences since emigration of that older generation, and a look at the circumstances facing young Irish people arriving in Britain today.

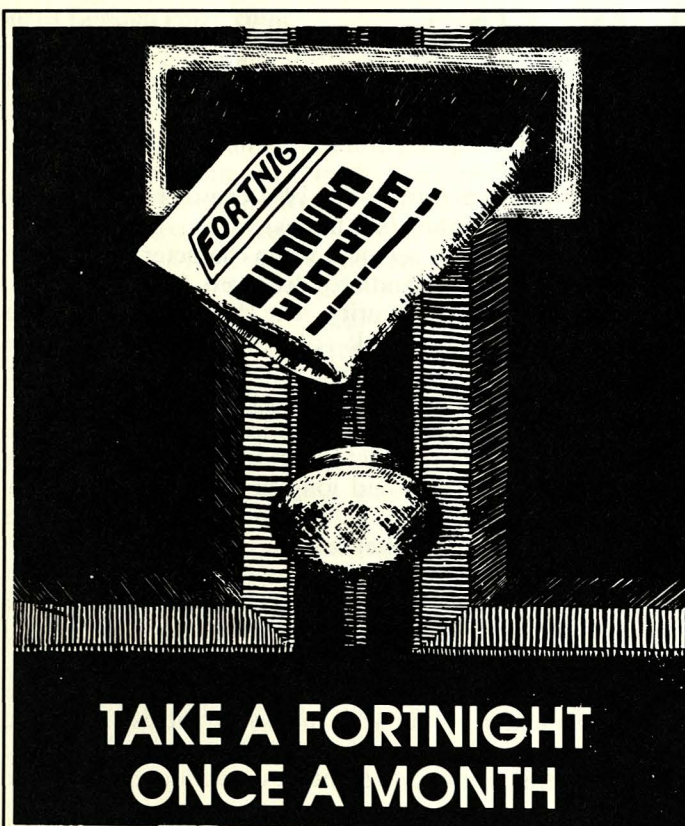
The Irish population is an ageing one; figures from the 1981 census show that 58 per cent are over 45 and 22 per cent are of pensionable age, compared with figures of 37 per cent and 17 per cent for the host population. The census data also shows that 16 per cent of Irish males and 12 per cent of Irish females over 45 are unmarried, compared with a British national average.

Middle-aged and elderly Irish people in London tend to

be those who emigrated to the UK in the 1940s and 1950s. Most have been successful in their careers and have made valuable contributions to British society. But many of the men in this age group worked in the building industry doing strenuous physical work, which has left a high proportion in bad health. The decline of the construction industry has left many unemployed. It is these single Irish people who tend to live in insecure private rented housing, leading lives of isolation and alienation with little community support. This isolation can lead to depression. Anti-Irish racism in the host community has led many Irish to experience feelings of low self-esteem and lack of personal control over their circumstances. This may leave folk vulnerable to alcohol abuse and mental illness.

Research carried out in the late 1970s by Professor Cochrane of Birmingham University has shown that Irish people in Britain are disproportionately represented in admissions to mental hospitals. The Irish are more likely than members of the host community or other ethnic communities, to be diagnosed as suffering from schizophrenia or alcohol-related psychosis. This has less to do with an Irish propensity towards mental illness than with inadequate understanding of emigration by the host society, compounded by dubious referral and diagnostic practices.

In the late 1980s we are witnessing a huge increase in youth emigration from Ireland. There are no reliable statistics on the numbers but informed sources suggest that between 30,000-50,000 Irish people under the age of 26 left Ireland last year to go to jobs on the Continent, USA and Britain. This new wave needs to be looked at in terms of the different circumstances facing these young people than



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those met by their forbears.

In the 1950s, although standards of accommodation were questionable, and racist attitudes openly expressed in the "No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs" signs which were common in the windows of boarding houses there was a plentiful supply of private rooms to be let.

Family links were strong, often brothers and sisters went to extraordinary lengths to ensure the well being of their kin. Many of the jobs available at the time, particularly for women, had tied accommodation, in hospitals, hotels and domestic work. The massive building programme in post-war Britain enabled many Irish people to gain employment, and to earn better wages than they could in Ireland. The building programme also meant that more Irish people gained access to public sector housing.

The areas surrounding the different termini where Irish people arrived facilitated the development of an Irish community. Most who came in the 1950s were very much aware of the fundamental differences between the lifestyles and culture of the Irish and British. Because of this there was a conscious preparation for the experience of living and working in Britain. This was not necessarily done in any organised manner, but relatives writing home would tell would-be emigrants of the kind of life they could expect.

There were three principal support mechanisms for Irish immigrants: the family; the county associations supplemented by parish associations; and the church, which especially through Irish Chaplaincy Scheme, enabled Irish people to express solidarity and a sense of community. Much of its activities has a widespread and deep effect, not necessarily always wholesome. The strong sense of self-help and community spirit persists within that generation. In the event of an accident on a building site the community will often hold a charity dance to ease the financial pressure on the family of the person concerned.

In part because of the educational opportunities available in Ireland, young emigrants in the 1980's have very different expectations of their role and of the contribution they can make. There are also sharp contrasts in the availability of employment and housing.

The private rented sector has shrunk enormously, and with a growing crisis in priority homelessness, Irish youth have little or no chance of getting access to the public housing sector. With over three million unemployed, the prospects for less well qualified young emigrants, even in the South-east, are poor.

Many of the support mechanisms developed by those arriving in the 1950s are not as vibrant as they were, or are

perceived as being of little relevance by young Irish people. Because of the common assumption that the urban culture of Ireland is the same as that in Britain there is little or no preparation on the part of new arrivals for the massive culture shock they will experience. Although there are similarities in attitudes and shared fashions and music, the first experience of anti-Irish racism, often in a very crude form, and the realisation of being different and alien, comes as an unexpected jolt to the new arrival.

With limited support structures, the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse are heightened, and with employment opportunities and access to housing restricted, there is the added risk of young people becoming involved in petty crime and in prostitution. A common resort for those in need of housing is squatting, which immediately 'criminalises' the young person, and is not the start many would think desirable. Folk from Northern Ireland have added difficulties, while not officially acknowledged as emigrants, and, for some, contrary to their own expectations, they nevertheless experience the same anti-Irish racism and sense of culture shock as young emigrants from the south.

That then is a brief picture of the experience and circumstances which lie behind the grim statistics of Irish single homelessness. Life in England, and London in particular, represents an enormous contrast with the value systems and social traditions which operate in Ireland. The failure of the host community to recognise the different ethnic identity of the Irish, while it continues to stereotype them as stupid and violent, creates and exacerbates a whole range of problems for immigrants attempting to settle in London.

In recent years, a growing sense of frustration at the failure of statutory services to respond to the Irish experience, has produced a number of valuable community initiatives. My early research in north London led to the establishment of Cara Irish Homeless Project, a voluntary agency providing supported housing within a culturally sensitive ethos, to single homeless Irish people. The agency also carries out research to develop information on the nature of Irish homelessness.

This type of community project must not be seen as a substitute for the need for statutory service providers to review their provision and practice with regards to the Irish. Such a view must include an examination of the whole range of service provision, management and staffing policies. It should also include a development of links with facilities specifically targeted towards Irish needs.

TABLE 1

HOUSING TENURE IN ENGLAND AND WALES BY BIRTHPLACE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Tenure	All UK	Irish Rep.	Carib.	Med.	NC	NC/Pakistan	%
Owner Occupier	58	58	44	43	61	59	61
Local Authority etc Rental	29	29	38	45	25	26	24
Other Rental— mostly private	13	13	18	12	14	15	15

TABLE 2

LACK OF AMENITIES AND OVERCROWDING IN PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

	All UK	Irish Rep.	Carib.	Med.	NC	NC/Pakistan
Lacking Bath	7.3	7.9	6.2	2.7	3.6	2.6
Lacking Inside WC	8.5	9.2	5.4	2.0	3.1	2.4
Overcrowding at more than 1.5 persons per room	1.2	0.9	2.9	3.8	4.2	7.6

(Source: 1981 Census 'Housing and Households' volume)



Irish on Liverpool Docks 1897

THE IRISH IN LIVERPOOL

Stephen J. Henders

The geographical proximity of Liverpool to Ireland, particularly its two major cities, Belfast and Dublin, to which shipping routes have existed for over 400 years, had been a major factor influencing the choice of the migratory Irish to choose Liverpool as the gateway to Britain. An Irish community in Liverpool was well established by the late 18th Century and both the Catholic and Protestant Irish were represented within certain areas of the city; these areas corresponding roughly to the central and northern parts of the city, Scotland Road, Exchange, Kirkdale and Netherfield Road. The famines and evictions throughout the 19th Century drove many thousands of peasant Irish to seek passage to Liverpool, from where the major passenger services to the New World embarked, and chance of new life and new opportunity beckoned. The great famine in Ireland, 1845—1847, saw a massive influx as impoverished and starving Irish men, women and children arrived in droves onto the Liverpool waterfront, many in advanced states of malnutrition, fever and disease. Here, wrote Melville,

“Want and woe stagger arm in arm.”

Indeed in the six months June to December 1847 nearly 300,000 Irish immigrants landed in Liverpool. Many sought passage and in the ten years, 1845—1855, 1,717,850 Irish emigrants to North America and the British Colonies left from Liverpool on Liverpool registered ships. Meanwhile the poorer, sick and unseaworthy and those with large families could only take their flight from hunger, blight and pestilence as far as this major sea port where the possibility of casual work offered the chance to secure the necessities for survival.

The population of Irish born in Liverpool rose from 24,000 in 1825 to nearly 84,000 in 1851. Homeless and destitute, many seeking whatever succour and shelter they could, inhabited the cellars, courts and slums which had been deemed unfit and a risk to health by progressive City Commissioners. Their arrival was viewed by many in this respect as a social disaster as they overwhelmed pioneering efforts of planners to improve sanitation and housing. Nevertheless their arrival coincided with an expansion of the trade and commerce of Liverpool reaping the benefits of the industrial mill towns of Lancashire, and they were to be an integral factor in the building of docks, canals and railways, laying down the infrastructure for capitalist and industrial expansion. Thousands more provided the casual labour especially on the docks, which was the mode of work symptomatic of the stop start nature of trade.

At the time of the great famine Liverpool handled 90% of all Ireland's commerce. Ships arrived daily from Dublin, twice weekly from Drogheda, Youghal, Sligo, Cork, Waterford and Belfast. The irony occurred that many ships laden with ‘people cargo’ crammed starving on the decks during the blight carried cattle and crops from the Ascendancy farms destined to feed the ever expanding populations of cities and towns in England. The Irish peasants had been forced to live on one crop, the potato, susceptible to blight it had in 1845 failed completely leaving millions in an appalling predicament. Passenger services to and from the port became a very lucrative business but it was the support services which were rife with swindle and corruption. Shipping companies and hotels employed ‘runners’ to entice bewildered, illiterate emigrants into signing away much of their money and savings for passage

on ships that did not exist or were greatly exaggerated as to their size and facilities. Some companies displayed a loaf of bread in their windows deluding the would-be passengers that their ticket included being fed while at sea. Runners were also employed by the hotels to seize the luggage of the arrivals and compel them to stop over in crowded filthy tenements while being charged exorbitant rates.

By 1861 London had the largest Irish population of all the English cities but that population constituted only 5% of the total. In Liverpool the Irish were 25% of the population. The majority were from rural backgrounds and they entered a more rigid and ordered way of life epitomised by the back-to-back slum dwellings. This induced an alienation and a separateness of identity which was further estranged by racist and sectarian prejudices. These prejudices were accentuated by the fact that many brought with them diseases which reached epidemic proportions in the overcrowded slum conditions where they were forced to live which in turn posed health risks for the whole population. They competed for the low paid casual employment forcing down the bargaining power of other workers by flooding the labour market with surplus labour. Their environment became increasingly hostile as the deprivation of their living standards forced many into drunkenness and petty crime as a panacea against the brutality of their existence. Others however viewed them as responsible for their condition and in this respect they were scapegoats for all social and economic malaise. The increase in drunkenness and crime became synonymous with the hordes of Irish settlers seeking out some meagre way to relieve the hunger of their families or shutting out their plight in an alcoholic haze. Growing resentment fuelled by religious differences and the stultifying effect casual Irish labour was having on wages (wages didn't increase in real terms between the years 1850—1875 in Liverpool) led to skirmishes and rowdiness especially after pub closing hours adding to an overall derogatory impression of the Irish immigrant. Punch magazine typified this creature in 1862 by describing the Irish as,

“A creature manifestly between gorilla and Negro and is to be met within some of the lowest districts in London and Liverpool by adventurous explorers.”

The city was to a large extent left to sort out its own problems in this respect without Government help. This laissez-faire attitude led to the Liverpool authorities adopting measures such as assisted passage to increase emigration to Africa or even to another part of Britain. The religious problem played a major role in adding to the unease of the city rulers. Liverpool was a High Church Anglican city and so the influx of increasing numbers of Irish Roman Catholics was viewed with trepidation for the religious and political consequences. The situation in Liverpool mirrored to some extent the situation in Belfast with the Irish Protestants adhering themselves to the Anglican hierarchy not least through the Orange Caucus set up in 1807 and perhaps more significantly to the Tory administration. Meanwhile the Catholic Irish backed the Liberal ticket. The influence of the religious factor on politics towards the end of the 19th Century in Liverpool cannot be understated and while Gladstone's Home Rule Bill coloured political allegiances more clearly the Irish Nationalist Party had elected their own M.P., T.P. O'Connor, in 1885 for the Scotland Road ward in the city. The tide of nationalism can also be illustrated by the support in the city in 1867 for the Fenian rising in Ireland when 15,000 were considered on stand-by. In contrast in 1924 William Grant, the Unionist M.P., enrolled three

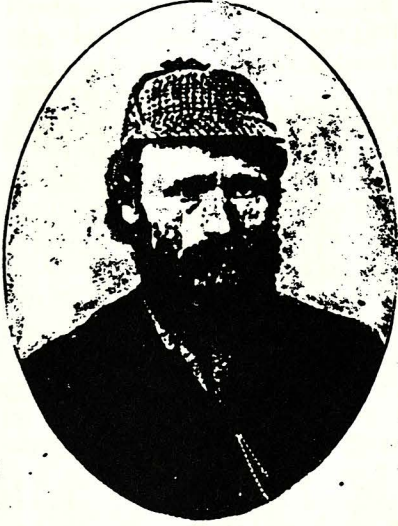
battalions of men into the Ulster Volunteer Force from Liverpool in readiness to defend the six county border.

It was between the aforementioned dates that sectarian clashes reached their zenith. This was especially so after the turn of the century. George Wise, a Protestant crusader, virulently anti-Catholic, roused the militant Protestant sections with stirring speeches and organised attacks on the Catholic Easter marches (most notably the Diamond Jubilee of the Holy Cross Church which attracted 150,000 to the procession); counter attacks were made on Protestant marches in return. Enforced segregation occurred with 157 Catholic families fleeing the mainly Protestant Netherfield Road area and 110 Protestant families climbing the hill away from Scotland Road, the Catholic territory. The conflicts escalated throughout the summer.

In an amazing turnaround the rise of organised labour and socialist groups, which highlighted the poor status, working conditions and low pay of the casual workers, in the main dock labour, helped to unite the workers to strive as one against the excesses of the employers in 1911. When thousands massed on Lime Street, during a strike by the T.G.W.U., police batons charged the assembly. The army was called in and the Riot Act was read. In further unrest two men were shot dead and gunboats sailed up the Mersey almost prophetic of the gunboat Helgas' fatal trip up the Liffey four years later in Liverpool's opposite port Dublin. The First World War intervened and stifled the momentum of social and political change. Partition, which gave Free State status to the major part of Ireland, eroded the basis for the Irish Nationalist Party support in Liverpool and it was assimilated into the Labour Party.

The years since the First World War have seen a gradual decline and diffusion in the Irish population in Liverpool. Their decline is a commentary on the decline of a great port and commercial city. Traditions of migration took them to the Midlands and South East where lighter manufacturing and engineering industries offered more chance of employment. The cyclic ups and downs of Liverpool's trade had meant an insecure future for the dock workers and related trades whose large Irish contingent might have preferred to stay in proximity to their native land. The German Luftwaffe during the Second World War had systematically bombed the docklands of Liverpool and those communities living in the rows of terraces closest had been forced in many cases to evacuate. Many in fact were made homeless or fled the city altogether. However the massive slum clearance programme of the 1960's dispersed more of Liverpool's Irish population than ever did any of Hitler's bombs. Irish, those of Irish parentage and Irish descendants were moved out wholesale to outlying areas like Kirkby and Norris Green and as O'Riabhaigh has noted in a previous *Irish Studies in Britain* issue (Autumn 1985) the prejudices and bad conditions went with them. Nevertheless the Irish centre still plays host to a culture which is still vibrantly evident in the city today. It is situated next to the space age Catholic Cathedral referred to by locals both affectionately and derogatorily as 'Paddy's Wigwam'; this was once the sight of the biggest workhouse in Europe whose occupants were over 80% Irish. Nearly 50% of Liverpool's people can trace their origins to Irish parentage and this is as much a legacy as the monotonous Orange drum which still accompanies dwindling numbers of Orange marachers as they make their annual outing to Southport through Liverpool's streets every July 12th.

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KEIR HARDIE.

IRISH NATIONALISM VERSUS BRITISH LABOUR

J. Dunleavy

"Our people have for good or evil gone bodily into the Labour Party in all parts of Great Britain, and I have not the power or the desire to interfere with that movement."

Thus Thomas Power O'Connor, long-time leader of the Irish organisation in Britain, wrote in 1924 to John Dillon, his former Parliamentary chief. Dillon, by now living in retirement in Ireland, was not well disposed towards Labour, but felt they had no alternative but to accept the situation, telling O'Connor he regarded Labour as "the natural party" for the Irish in Britain. Yet the equanimity displayed by these two veteran campaigners was in marked contrast to the sustained campaign they had waged for more than thirty years to organise and utilise the Irish vote in Britain for the cause of Ireland. During this lengthy "war", the Irish immigrant organised in the League directed by O'Connor, appeared to some to be indifferent, to others even hostile, to the political and social aspirations of the wage earner as they came to be symbolised by the emergent Labour movement.

It was in 1888 that a former miner, James Keir Hardie, broke with the Liberals and made a bid to enter Parliament as a Labour member. Directing his appeal to the wage earners at Mid-Lanark, Hardie found it incomprehensible that Irish exiles, at the bidding of the Irish National League, appeared willing to give their vote to a barrister of Welsh origin domiciled in England. To the League, the strategy was a continuation of that adopted in 1886, an alliance with Gladstone's Liberal Party, now committed to granting Home Rule to Ireland. This arrangement, the

'union of hearts', was endorsed at the highest level by Charles Stewart Parnell, and by T.P. O'Connor, his first lieutenant in Britain. Yet Hardie got some Nationalist support, notably from Michael Davitt, the founder of the Land League, and John Ferguson of Glasgow. But these were exceptions, and in this and subsequent electoral contests, the Irish Party and its auxiliary in Britain, the National League, insisted on maintaining the alliance with the Liberals. Because Home Rule came first, "bread and butter" issues, as perceived by Hardie and other Labour men had to take second place.

The quarter century before 1906 saw the Labour Party come into being: it follows that the Irish settlers in Britain did not play as large a role in helping the movement in its formative stages as might have been expected. Hence, the Social Democratic Federation and the Fabian Society were both established in 1884, the Scottish Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party, and the Labour Representation Committee, in 1888, 1893, and 1900, respectively: throughout this period the Irish National League was studiously seeking to minimise Irish involvement in what it considered to be British domestic issues.

Labour first put forward a significant number of candidates in the 1906 election. As usual, T.P. O'Connor sent out endorsements on behalf of his organisation, now styling itself the United Irish League. Liberal candidates



THOMAS POWER O'CONNOR, M.P. represented the Scotland Division of Liverpool 1885 to 1929.

were the chief beneficiaries, though twenty Labour men appeared on the approved list. The League's attitude created some curious situations: at Jarrow Irishmen were urged to vote Liberal, overlooking the claims of Labour's Peter Curran. At Burnley, Michael Davitt, ignoring the policy of the League, gave his personal support to Henry Myers Hyndman, the Social Democrat leader, an old friend of the Irish cause. Yet the fact remains, even though most Labour men were Home Rulers, the League – regarding the Liberals as a more credible force in politics than Labour could even hope to be – threw its weight behind the Liberals in the elections of 1906 and 1910.

Among the Labour M.P.s elected in 1906 were Robert Clynes and James O'Grady, a symptom of that movement from Nationalism to Labour already under way, and which was to become something of a stampede by 1918. Evidence of the increasing absorption in economic issues was noticeable with the appearance of Irishmen in municipal politics: Manchester, for instance, had Daniel McCabe as Lord Mayor in 1913. Trade union membership grew apace in the period before the first world war, and again Irish names were frequently to be found among the leaders, both Clynes and Curran making their mark as union activists before entering Parliament. Yet the sense of Nationalism remained strong, as Labour found on numerous occasions. James Connolly, for one, deplored the influence of the League in British politics, arguing it was retarding the development of a political labour movement.

With Home Rule on the Statute Book in 1914 – albeit suspended until World War I was over – the league became a recruiting agency for the British Army. Some Branches closed completely, the remainder continued to function with difficulty. By the time of the 1918 election the movement was only a shadow of its former self, yet with the

extension of the franchise to all adults the need for organisation had never been greater. O'Connor and his colleagues had to face reality, and the League contented itself with approving a list of fifty-three candidates (thirty-eight of whom were Labour), nearly all located in the north-west of England. Many of the voters were still in the forces when the election took place, but O'Connor was astute enough to realise that sympathies among the Irish were now decidedly pro-Labour: he remarked "Labour seems to be sweeping all before it. Besides being a policy it is a new cult – like Christian Science or a Welsh revival or Sinn Fein."

Labour had been transformed in its policies and structure by the war's end. The party of Keir Hardie saw itself as a workers' pressure group operating in a forum dominated by Conservatives and Liberals; with its new constitution and programme, Labour now proclaimed itself to be a national party making a bid for power in order to change the economic and social structure of Britain. Although not able to contest every seat in 1918, Labour emerged as an alternative to the government of Lloyd George, a remarkable achievement.

Meanwhile in Ireland, the bloody suppression of the Easter Rising led to the rise of Sinn Fein and the decimation of the Irish Parliamentary Party at the 1918 election. The striking electoral success of Sinn Fein in Ireland had repercussions on the United Irish League of Great Britain as well. In this country the auxiliary of Sinn Fein styled itself the Irish Self-determination League, which attracted the support of numerous exiles and others of Irish descent, and contributed further to the decline of O'Connor's organisation.

Although Labour made some gains in the 1918 election, it was not until 1922 that it managed to secure a sizeable proportion of seats in the Commons. In 1924 Labour actually formed a minority government, and Irish-born John Wheatley, one of Glasgow's M.P.s, became Minister of Health. O'Connor, by now father of the Commons, was made a Privy Councillor. Rumours that he might enter the Lords and possibly lead the handful of Labour peers proved to be groundless.

O'Connor reached the age of seventy-five in 1923 and he attempted to revive the old organisation with a convention at Leeds. The delegates resolved to rename their agency the Irish Democratic League, its aim being primarily to promote the social welfare of the Irish in this country. O'Connor still insisted there was a need for a distinctive Irish movement, and he resisted calls for a merger with Labour. On certain matters, he maintained, in particular that of education, Catholics were likely to encounter opposition in the Labour Party: the preservation and improvement of the schools occupied a prominent position in the League's aims. Yet as a force in politics the League's influence, by no means negligible prior to 1914, had clearly gone for ever. When O'Connor (still M.P. for the Scotland division of Liverpool) died in 1929, the organisation seems to have dwindled to a network of clubs confined mainly to the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Labour, on the other hand, had come close to winning an outright majority in the recent election and had once again formed a minority government.

Irish voters in Britain, at one time apparently ready to accept advice as to how to vote from the League, demonstrated after 1918 they preferred to make their own choice, and the evidence suggests by 1929 their preference was decidedly for Labour.

IRISH STUDIES IN LONDON

A DIRECTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES 1988/9

1. GENERAL IRISH STUDIES COURSES (history; politics; Irish in Britain etc.)

LONDON UNIVERSITY: BIRKBECK COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF EXTRA MURAL STUDIES

Irish Studies: Diploma course as part of Urban Community Studies

Mondays beginning 26 September at 6.15 for 30 meetings
Working Mens College, Crowndale Road, London N1
Fee £120.

The course will cover the Irish in Britain, race and ethnicity; the role of colonialism, religion and gender in the Irish experience, nationalism and unionism, the media, political violence and emigration. The course is examined through assessed essays.

Tutors: Ann Rossitter and Jonathan Moore

Northern Ireland — A Divided Society

Thursdays beginning 22 September at 7.30 for 20 meetings
Friends House, Cedar Road, Sutton.
Fee £37

This course examines all aspects of the current crisis and looks at the issues behind the headlines. It will provide a historical and political background and examine Northern Ireland society in terms of class, religion, education, economics and literature.

Tutor: Alan Parkinson

Issues in Irish Studies

Wednesdays beginning 21 September at 7.15 for 12 meetings
Hotham School, Charlwood Road, Putney, London SW15
Fee £22

The course will act as an introduction to the various facets of Irish studies: nationalism, unionism, the church, emigration and literature.

Tutor: Jonathan Moore

Issues in Irish Studies

Tuesdays from January for 12 weeks
Westminster School, Penfold Street, London NW1
Fee £22

Tutor: Jonathan Moore

INNER LONDON EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Fee 50 per per hour

Modern Ireland

Tuesdays beginning 20 September at 7.00 for 13 meetings
Hammersmith and North Kensington AEI, Addison School, Addison Gardens, W14.

The course will analyse the main areas of political, social and economic debate in modern Ireland. There will be particular emphasis on the similarities and dissimilarities

on the peoples divided by partition. By looking at the role of economics, politics, law, gender and religion, it is hoped to achieve a real insight into life in contemporary Ireland.

Tutor: Jonathan Moore

Irish Aspects

Tuesdays beginning 20 September at 7.00 for 3 terms
Southwark AEI, Tabard Branch, Hunter Close, SE1.

Tutor: To be appointed

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Irish Studies — Royal Society of Arts certificated Course
Thursday evenings beginning at 6.30, September 22
Kilburn Polytechnic, Priory Park Road, London NW6
Fee £40

The course will cover a wide spectrum of Irish studies, focusing on the Irish in Britain, literature, gender, religion, imperialism, unionism, nationalism and political violence. The course is examined through the medium of essays, an oral presentation and an exam.

Tutors: Ann Rossitter, Noel O'Connell and Jonathan Moore

2. IRISH LANGUAGE COURSES

INNER LONDON EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Fees 50p per hour for ILEA residents

Morley College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1

Beginners, Thursdays beginning 22 September at 6.00
Stage 2, Thursdays beginning 22 September at 7.30

Workshop Mondays beginning 22 September at 1.30

Tutor: Siobhan O'Neill

Hackney AEI, Woodberry Down Branch, Woodberry Grove, Manor House, London N4

Irish Conversation and Drama

Mondays beginning 19 September at 7.15

You can use the Irish you have and extend your knowledge through poems, songs and drama

Tutor: Siobhan O'Neill

Central AEI, Westminster City School, Palace Street, London SW1

Stage 1 and 2 Irish Gaelic

Tuesdays starting 20 September at 6.15 for two terms

Tutor: Padraig O'Conchuir

Islington AEI, Hugh Myddleton Centre, Sans Walk, Clerkenwell Walk, London EC1

Stage 1 — 6.15, Stage 2 — 7.30, Wednesdays beginning 21 September

Tutor: Siobhan O'Neill

University of London Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, London SE14
 Grade 1 (preliminary)
 Mondays starting 3 October for three terms at 6.45
 Fee £60
 Grade 1 (consolidation)
 Tuesdays starting 4 October for three terms at 6.45
 Fees £60

Tutor: Siobhan O'Neill

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Aylestone School, Aylestone Avenue, London NW5
 Beginners — Mondays 7.00 starting October 3
 O Level — Tuesdays 7.00 starting October 4
 A Level — Tuesdays 7.00 starting October 4
 A level Thursdays 7.00 starting October 6
 Fee £15 per term

Tutors: Miss D.M. Walsh and others

Kilburn Polytechnic, Priory Park Road, NW6
 Stage 1 — Wednesdays 7.00 starting September 21
 Stage 2 — Wednesdays 8.15 starting September 21
 Fee £27

Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, NW1
 Beginners — Tuesdays 7.00 starting September 20 for 3 terms
 Fee £33

Tutor: Sean O'Cearnaigh

Intermediary — Fridays 7.00 starting 23 September for 3 terms
 Fee £33

Tutor: Sean O'Cearnaigh

Advanced workshop — Thursdays 7.00 starting September 22 for 3 terms
 Fee £39

Tutor: To be appointed

3. LITERATURE AND DRAMA

London University, Birkbeck College Department of Extra Mural Studies

The Irish Contribution to English Letters

Tuesdays beginning 20 September at 10.00 a.m. for 24 weeks
 Friends Meeting House, Richmond
 £45

Tutor: Marguerite Alexander

George Bernard Shaw and Drama

Thursdays beginning 29 September at 9.45 a.m. for 24 weeks
 The Haunt, Coopers Hill, Ongar
 Fee £45

Tutor: Jonathan Miles

Restoring The Woman's Part — Images of Women in Irish Literature

Mondays beginning September 26 at 7.00 for 20 weeks
 Irish Women's Centre, Church Street, N16
 Fee £37

The course will look at how Irish women are represented in literature and society. We will contrast the image of women by male writers with challenges by women writers past and present.

Tutor: Moy McCrory

INNER LONDON EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Fees 50p per hour

Irish Women's Writing Group

Tuesdays beginning 20 September at 10.30 a.m.
 Hackney AEI, Irish Women's Centre, Church Street, N16.

Tutor: Moy McCrory

'Londerin' Irish Drama Group

Wednesdays beginning 21 September at 8.00
 Hammersmith and North Kensington Holland Park Branch, Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill Road, W8.

This is a performance group for young people of Irish background between the ages of 16 and 30 although anyone interested in performing plays with an Irish theme may join.

4. DANCE AND MUSIC

INNER LONDON ADULT EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Fees 50p per hour

Irish Music

Tuesdays beginning 20 September at 7.00
 Hackney AEI Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8
 Bring along an instrument!

Tutor: Marion McCarthy

Ceili Dancing

Fridays beginning September 23 R & .8%
 Camden AEI, Irish Centre, 52 Camden Square, Murray Street, NW1.

Tutor: Eamon Herlihy

Irish Music

Wednesdays beginning 21 September at 7.00
 Hammersmith and North Kensington AEI, Brackenbury Branch, Brackenbury Road, W6.

Tutor: M. Malloy

Irish Dancing

Mondays beginning 19 September at 7.30
 Islington AEI, Caxton Centre, Archway, N19.

IRISH WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Finally, a book that breaks the silence

Ann Rossiter



Two of the many different faces of Irish women in Britain. On the left Dublin born Catherine Ridgeway who has worked in London for sixty years and on the right a woman singing at a social commemorating the Hunger Strikers in London 1983.

It has become almost a cliché to say that women everywhere have been 'written out' of history. Nevertheless, it is something of a shock to realise that the first book on Irish women in Britain has only just appeared, almost a century and a half since female immigrants began to settle here in significant numbers. *Across the Water, Irish Women's Lives in Britain* from Virago Press in London, edited by Mary Lennon, Marie McAdam and the photographer, Joanne O'Brien, has finally broken the silence. Through a series of wonderfully evocative visual images and the oral testimony of a group of Irish women immigrants, the themes of childbirth, sexuality, education, work, marriage, family, religion, culture and politics are explored. Central to this exploration is the question of identity — how Irish women perceive themselves and are generally perceived (if at all) in the Irish community and British society at large.

The women whose voices we hear are many and varied. They are civil servants, musicians, schoolteachers, nuns, factory workers, travellers and trade unionists. They are working class and middle class, Jewish, Protestant and Catholic, first and second generation. They are old and young, single and married, lesbian and heterosexual, Black and white. The stereotypical image of Irish woman as passive victim of male oppression or unthinking recipient

of clerical influence is at once exploded on listening to these women's life stories. Destroyed too is the myth that the male experience and the male representation of history can cross the gender line.

The window on the mental and physical world of Irish women immigrants afforded us in *Across the Water* must be seen as a beginning. It would be all too easy for the Irish Studies movement to feel complacent now that one title, however excellent, has appeared. There needs to be positive and continuous encouragement of writers and researchers to look at the many areas which this work opens up. For example, an important issue, and one which some of the interviewees comment upon, is the relationship between national identity and religion. Over the past decade we have seen a considerable amount of research into the role of religion in the formation of national, state and culture within Ireland itself, as well as a smaller body of work on the religious component of Irish identity in Britain. It is disappointing, though hardly surprising, that these studies should have almost nothing to say about women. Even the most basic facts about sex ratios in Irish church membership and participation in 19th and 20th century Britain are unknown. At a more private and domestic level, we need to acknowledge and understand women's role within the family in the transmission of an

Irish — and more significantly — a Catholic culture in what is generally a secular society. Equally, within the general framework of such a society, would it not be important to understand how Irish Catholic women internalise the central paradox or tension between religion as the embodiment of ideological and institutional sexism, and religion as a shelter, a consolation, an escape and an inspiration?

While *Across the Water* is unique in the sense that it is wide-ranging documentation of one half of the Irish diaspora, it should be pointed out that a small trickle of more modest writings and pieces of research are now becoming available. Happily for us, one of the last reports produced by the London Strategic Policy Unit before its demise this year was a demographic, employment and housing profile of Irish women in London in the 1980s. Based principally on Census data and the 1983 Labour Force Survey, the report contains a mine of statistical information which complements and points up some of the observations made in *Across the Water*. One such is the way in which the restrictive elements of religion, and particularly Catholicism, are reflected in certain material aspects of women's lives.

We know that in the 26 Counties church and state have actively opposed married women working outside the home through ideological and legal prohibitions. So effective have these been that the meagre 6% of married women recorded as employed in 1926 had remained virtually unchanged until the 1960s. Even by 1983 this figure had increased to only 19%. In Northern Ireland by comparison, 43% of married women were working in 1981. A depressed economy and a lack of manufacturing

jobs might once have explained this disparity between North and South, but it can hardly account for the contemporary period. Furthermore, as clearly emerges from the London Strategic Policy Unit's report, Irish-born, predominantly Southern, married women tend to drop out of employment in the child-bearing years between 16 and 29 at a greater rate than in other groups analysed in the report — 'white UK', 'Afro-Caribbean' and 'Asian'. From this we can probably conclude that the exclusively familial role ascribed to mothers by the Catholic Church in Ireland can survive in a different economic and social environment.

Survival in a different and more positive context, such as Irish women's strength to come through the experience of living in an alien and often hostile society, their sense of purpose and enterprise in ensuring that their children will know their Irish heritage, is also portrayed in the pages of a book which must find a place on all Irish Studies courses in Britain. As an historical testament, *Across the Water* stands alone at the present time, except for such fictional works as Moy McCrory's *The Water's Edge* and Maude Casey's *Over the Water*. Let us hope that this work will not continue to remain unique!

1. published in 1988, price £6.95
2. Irish Women in London, a London Strategic Policy Unit Report by Bronwen Walter, 1988
3. "Women on the Edge of Time: Part-time work in Ireland, North and South" by Ursula Barry and Pauline Jackson, in *Women, Equality and Europe*, eds. M. Buckley and M. Anderson, Macmillan, London 1988

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IRISH STUDIES AT KILBURN POLYTECHNIC

The Royal Society of Arts Certificate in Irish Studies

Gerry Lander

Kilburn Polytechnic, in Brent in North—West London, is a College of Further Education serving a community with a very high proportion of Irish people and people of Irish descent. Since April 1986, we have run short courses in Irish Studies; courses in Irish Language, for beginners and for those with some knowledge of Irish have been run since September 1986. These courses were planned in conjunction with the London Irish Commission for Culture and Education (LICCE) and the Brent Community and Cultural Association (BICCA).

Origins of RSA Certificate in Irish Studies

Research during 1986/7 showed that people attending the short courses, on aspects of history, literature and politics would be interested in undertaking a longer course, if the course led to a qualification, particularly one which would give access to higher education. We consulted widely with organisations devoted to the promotion of Irish Studies, and working in conjunction with BICCA and LICCE drew up plans for a year long course of study in aspects of Irish culture and history. Our aim was to provide an anti—racist education for people with an interest in Ireland for two main groups, those who wished to deepen their understanding of Ireland out of general interest and those who wished to take the subject further to degree level.

The RSA Centre—Assessed Scheme

The Royal Society of Arts was approached because their Centre—Assessed Non—Standard Scheme, 'Type C', gave the scope to plan the course most appropriate to local interest. Lynette Murphy—O'Dwyer of the RSA was most helpful in advising us throughout. An educational institution, on the payment of a registration fee of £80 (1987) puts forward a scheme of work. The submission should give the aims and the target population of the scheme; the reasons for needing a special provision and the type of certification required (a certificate or profile certificate is available).

The Assessor may:

- 1) Recommend unconditional acceptance
- 2) Recommend acceptance subject to modification
- 3) Recommend that the proposals are not appropriate for validation by the RSA

No. 2 is the most likely.

Link with the Polytechnic of North London Irish Studies Centre

We were fortunate that our plans coincided with the establishment of the Irish Studies Centre at PNL. PNL is planning to offer courses in Irish Studies in its modular degree scheme, starting in October 1988. Thus, an added attraction for prospective students was that those who gained the Certificate would be able to proceed to this higher level of study. Mary Hickman of the Centre, has offered us valuable advice throughout.

Course Content

The overall objective of the course is to study Ireland, its relationship with Great Britain and the experience of Irish people and people of Irish descent in the UK. The concentration of the course is on the last 100 years, taking the Great Famine as a starting point. These issues are addressed through an examination of Irish history and culture, focusing on three themes which provide the organising scheme to structure the course. The themes are:

- 1) Language, Culture and Nationalism
- 2) Patterns of Migration
- 3) The Irish in Britain

We saw an inter—disciplinary approach as essential, Kilburn was fortunate in having three people with very different kinds of expertise to plan and teach this course. Jonathan Moore, Noel O'Connell and Ann Rossiter, all well known in the field of Irish Studies, had all contributed to the previous Kilburn programmes. Two essential emphases were agreed; the undertaking of socio—political and cultural developments through a study of Ireland's richest vein — her literature and the necessity to redress the balance of much historical study which has marginalised the contribution of women to both cultural and political activity.

Formes of Assessment

To obtain a Certificate course members need to reach a satisfactory standard in the following three elements:

- a) three course work essays of 2,000 words, one on each of the themes
- b) a three hour examination
- c) an oral presentation of a piece of research (people are encouraged to undertake research of local interest)

The course also emphasises the importance of Study Skills. Though there is an entry test, there are no formal qualifications required.

A Possible Model for the Future?

It is too early to judge how successful the outcome of the course will be. However, it was very oversubscribed and is well attended with lively debates taking place weekly. We consider that such a scheme could be of interest nationwide for two reasons: firstly, if Irish Studies are to make impact on main stream British education, the status which comes with a qualification is significant; secondly, such a scheme could be of interest nationally as it lends itself to local needs and interests.

If enough centres were interested, it might be possible to evolve a standardised syllabus in Irish Studies with diversified local options.

Comments welcome to Gerry Lander, Kilburn Polytechnic, Priory Park Rd., London NW6 (700 words approx.)

REPORT

IRISH STUDIES 8 – 13 YEAR OLDS

MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Patrick Buckland

A one-day conference on Irish Studies in the middle years of schooling (8–13 years) was held at Liverpool University on 12 July 1988. The conference was part of the Joint Education Programme being developed by the Institute of Irish Studies at Liverpool University and the British Association for Irish Studies to raise the profile and status of Irish Studies in schools in Great Britain. It was organised in conjunction with the In-Service Unit of the Education Department of the university in order to outline an agenda for the teaching of Irish Studies in such critical years of education.

The conference was attended by teachers and others from all parts of England and the main speakers and leaders of discussion groups all had extensive experience of promoting the study of Ireland in primary, junior and secondary schools, especially in the context of multi-cultural education. Tom Arkell, University of Warwick, talked of the challenges posed to cross-curricular developments by the advent of a national curriculum. Les Hankin of Manchester Education Development Service and Clem Morrison, Deputy Head of Cheetwood Primary School, Manchester, described the role Irish Studies played in Manchester's multi-cultural policy and the way in which the study of Ireland was used in Cheetwood School both to encourage understanding of different cultures and to develop basic educational skills, not least the three

"R's". Nesson Danaher, Co-ordinator of the Irish Studies Centre at Leicester's Soar Valley College, urged all those interested in the study of Ireland to co-operate in developing Irish Studies in schools, particularly by producing exciting teaching materials and exchanging ideas and information.

In wide-ranging and lively discussion a number of important questions were raised, including the impact of the national curriculum upon area or multi-disciplinary studies; the contribution of the study of Ireland to the general educational development of young people; definitions of "Irishness"; the positive and negative effects of using the study of Ireland to promote multi-cultural education; the relative importance of schooling and other influences (such as home and the media) in shaping attitudes; the assessment of the effects of multi-cultural education; and the best strategies to promote the study of Ireland and multi-culturalism in the middle years of schooling.

It was concluded that many of these questions could be resolved, if at all, only by producing teaching materials and strategies and assessing them in action. Further meetings will, therefore, be held in the next academic year at the Institute of Irish Studies to develop teaching materials on, for example, the Great Famine and Irish migration to Great Britain.

Dr. Patrick Buckland is Director of the Institute of Irish Studies at Liverpool University.

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IRISH CULTURAL STUDIES — A NEW TEACHING PACK

Tom Arkell

This teaching pack is the direct product of two small EEC—funded projects, which were run jointly by the University of Warwick in association with the Coventry LEA and were described in earlier numbers of *'Irish Studies in Britain'*.

The first project in 1981—2 explored those Irish themes which appeared most suitable for teaching 9—11 year—old children in English schools within their normal curriculum. The second in 1983—4 attempted to produce a well—balanced package of readily accessible teaching materials for these themes that could be used very flexibly by teachers of this age range. Subsequently these materials were tried out in a wide range of schools and have now been revised in the light of the many constructive and thoughtful comments received from those teachers who undertook these trials. Although the pack was planned initially for older junior pupils, it has become apparent that most of the material can be used equally well with children of lower—secondary age.

The pack has not been designed as a self—contained course on Irish studies, but rather as a starter or resource pack from which teachers can make very different selections to use either on their own or with other materials, possibly in comparison with selected aspects of different cultures. Those teachers who are satisfied with the pack's themes and balance should find almost enough material for a class to work on an Irish topic or project for up to half a term.

The pack consists of fifteen booklets, including a Guide for Teachers, which contains many ideas and strategies for teaching Irish studies based on the experience of numerous teachers. The others are divided into the following three sections:

A. FINDING OUT ABOUT IRELAND TODAY

Ireland Today

B. IRISH CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Celts in Ireland

Early Christian Ireland

The Vikings in Ireland

Irish Poems and Stories

Finn in the Kingdom of the Big Men

Irish Music, Song and Dance

C. IRISH MIGRATION

Irish Emigration Songs

Irish Migration

The Great Hunger (1845—50)

Michael Davitt in Haslingden

The Irish in Britain — Five Life Stories

Popular Irish Surnames

Popular Irish Personal Names

From this list it can be seen that the emphasis in this pack has been placed deliberately on the Irish cultural experience and identity of the Irish migrants and their descendants. The political dimension of Ireland's relationship with Britain has been ignored almost entirely, not because the Irish cultural heritage would appear to be diminished and distorted as if it were to be presented to children in England as predominantly a negative one generating political conflict with Britain. Such an approach would also appear to be inappropriate for younger children. Instead it is assumed that this material will help prepare them for a study of the political and constitutional problems of Northern Ireland later, when they will be better informed about Ireland and more capable of understanding its political complexities.

Because the Irish are one of the least liked of the immigrant groups in Britain today and are often saddled with contemptuous 'Paddy' stereotypes, many children of Irish descent in British schools still disguise their origins in order to avoid derision. By tracing back this hostility from the present day and by promoting a positive self—identity among second and third generation Irish children, it is intended that teachers will be enabled to counter such racial prejudice and to develop their pupils' understanding of the experiences of various other ethnic groups.

'Irish Cultural Studies — a teaching pack'
is available at £16 post free from
Trentham Books Ltd., 151 Etruria Road,
Stoke—on—Trent, ST1 5NS.

THE IRISH LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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REPORT OF THE ILEA WORKING PARTY ON IRISH AFFAIRS

It is recommended that:

1. The report of the ILEA working party on Irish Affairs be received and the thanks and appreciation of the Authority be recorded.
2. At an appropriate time, copies of the report be forwarded to the new local education authorities in inner London.
3. The Sherbrooke Teachers' Centre (DO1, Hammersmith and Fulham) develop its role as a resource centre for Irish studies.
4. The opportunity be afforded to a teacher above authorised numbers for whom no alternative placement has been found to undertake, for up to or above one year, the task of promoting and facilitating an Irish dimension into the education curriculum within schools, colleges and other institutions which wish to undertake such work. The situation to be reviewed at the end of the year.
5. Irish be recognised as an ethnic minority and the definition "persons who come from, or whose forebears originate in Ireland and who consider themselves to be Irish" be adopted.
6. The personnel department within the framework of its budget use the Irish press in this country when advertising vacancies externally.
7. The teaching pack (Britain and Ireland) in preparation at the Learning Resources Branch be processed to publication.
8. The Authority's representatives on the ALA and AMA raise in appropriate sub-committee, the needs of homeless youth, many of whom are Irish.

Introduction

1. In December 1986, Members agreed to establish a working party which would bring together majority and minority Members, a teacher member of the education committee and representatives of a number of groups who are working with the Irish communities in inner London. They were given the task of reviewing at policy level the handling of Irish issues across the Authority's service provision, to make recommendations.

The working party has now completed its task and has submitted its report, which is attached as an appendix.

2. The central conclusion of the working party is that, whilst much interesting and important work has been done in developing the Irish perspective of the Authority's equal opportunities policies, it has lacked cohesiveness. They have made recommendations which would enable, in their judgement, a coherent policy to be developed.

Transfer of responsibility for the education service in inner London

3. Between the decision by the Education Committee to give detailed consideration to the educational needs of the Irish in inner London and the publication of the working party's report, has come the almost certain decision by Parliament to devolve responsibility for the education

service to the inner London boroughs in April 1990. Given the very limited time scale and the other pressures arising from transfer which the Authority faces, I have to advise Members that priority should not be given to the implementation of the working party's major recommendations. I consider that it is simply unrealistic to achieve their implementation. It would probably also raise hopes and expectations in other communities such as the Turkish and Greek ones which the Authority will not be able to meet. That is not to say that no progress can be made nor that the working party's report should be shelved.

Recommendations

4. The Authority will be offering advice to the boroughs about its policies and I recommend that copies of the working party's report be sent to the boroughs with an explanation that, whilst the Authority had established the group, its conclusions would more appropriately be considered by the new local education authorities.

5. The working party make the recommendation that the Authority recognise the Irish as an ethnic minority group and adopt as a definition "persons who come from, or whose forebears originate in, Ireland and who consider themselves Irish". This definition would be used, for example, in any survey where the Irish need to be distinguished from other groups.

6. The Authority already uses for advertising purposes newspapers which are targeted at particular ethnic groups and I recommend that the group's proposal that this, within the existing budget, be extended to those papers aimed at the Irish in Britain.

7. Mention is made of the teaching pack on Britain and Ireland. This pack has been prepared within Learning Resources Branch and is, currently, being amended in the light of suggestions made by an eminent University historian. Great care is obviously being taken to make sure that the pack meets the standards set by the Chief Inspector in his guidelines on teaching controversial issues. It is expected that the pack will be ready for publication in the near future and I can therefore support acceptance of the working party's recommendations on this issue.

9. As the report makes clear, much valuable work is being done and it will be helpful, in my judgement, if one particular teachers' centre could provide a focus for this work. The Sherbrooke Teachers' Centre in Division 1 already performs such a role in a somewhat limited way and, with Members' agreement, I will undertake to discuss with the warden how that role might be developed though it will have to be within existing resources. The schools, colleges and other institutions, like the Authority as a whole, face a period of some uncertainty and will be subject to a whole range of pressures. They will have to define very clearly what their priorities will be and participation in projects to develop an Irish dimension to their curriculum must be on an entirely voluntary basis. Not to make this crystal clear will cause considerable resentment.

10. In its recommendations to the Staff Committee, the

report (recommendation V) proposes that a person be identified 'to promote and facilitate the incorporation of an Irish dimension into the education curriculum at all levels'. Such a person would have to be either a teacher or an inspector. There are no resources identified in this year's budget and that would rule out (unless resources were to be transferred which I cannot recommend) the latter.

A number of secondary teachers have been identified as being above authorised numbers. Whilst priority must be given to bringing staffing establishments down to authorised levels by means of the various measures in the redeployment package, it may be that some teachers will wish to remain with the Authority for whom no suitable placement can be found in the academic year 1988/89. If that were the case, the opportunity could be afforded to one of them to undertake the tasks outlined in recommendation V. The teacher would be subject to redeployment for the following school year. The post would, therefore, be open only to teachers above authorised numbers for whom no alternative opportunity has been agreed and would be for one year.

Equal Opportunities

1. The Authority's policy for race equality (Race Sex

Class vol.3) makes explicit its commitment to combating all forms of racism experienced by black and ethnic minority groups, including the Irish community in inner London, and to promoting equality of opportunity for all users of the education service and Authority employees.

The proposals for a teacher to undertake promotional work and for the development of a resource centre as a focus for Irish Studies will go some way towards remedying the lack of a cohesive approach to Irish perspectives in the Authority's initiatives on anti-racist multicultural education.

Conclusions

12. It must obviously be disappointing to a group who have given freely of their time that their report has to be considered within the context of a major upheaval to inner London education which precludes the sort of consideration to their conclusions which the Authority would normally have wished to give. Nonetheless, their report does help the Authority to make admittedly limited progress and will provide the new I.e.a.s with useful guidelines. I am sure Members will wish to record their thanks and appreciation to the working party.

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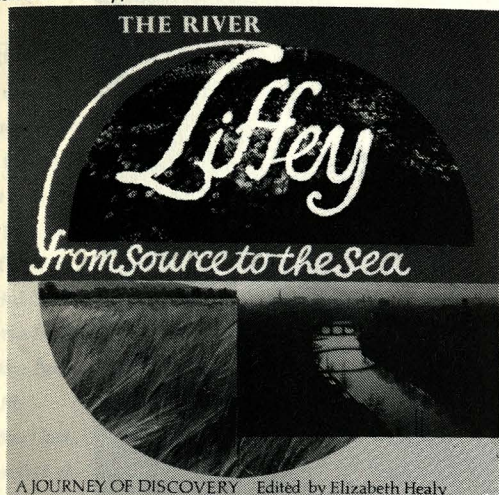
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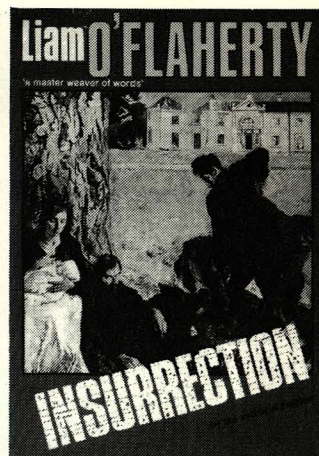
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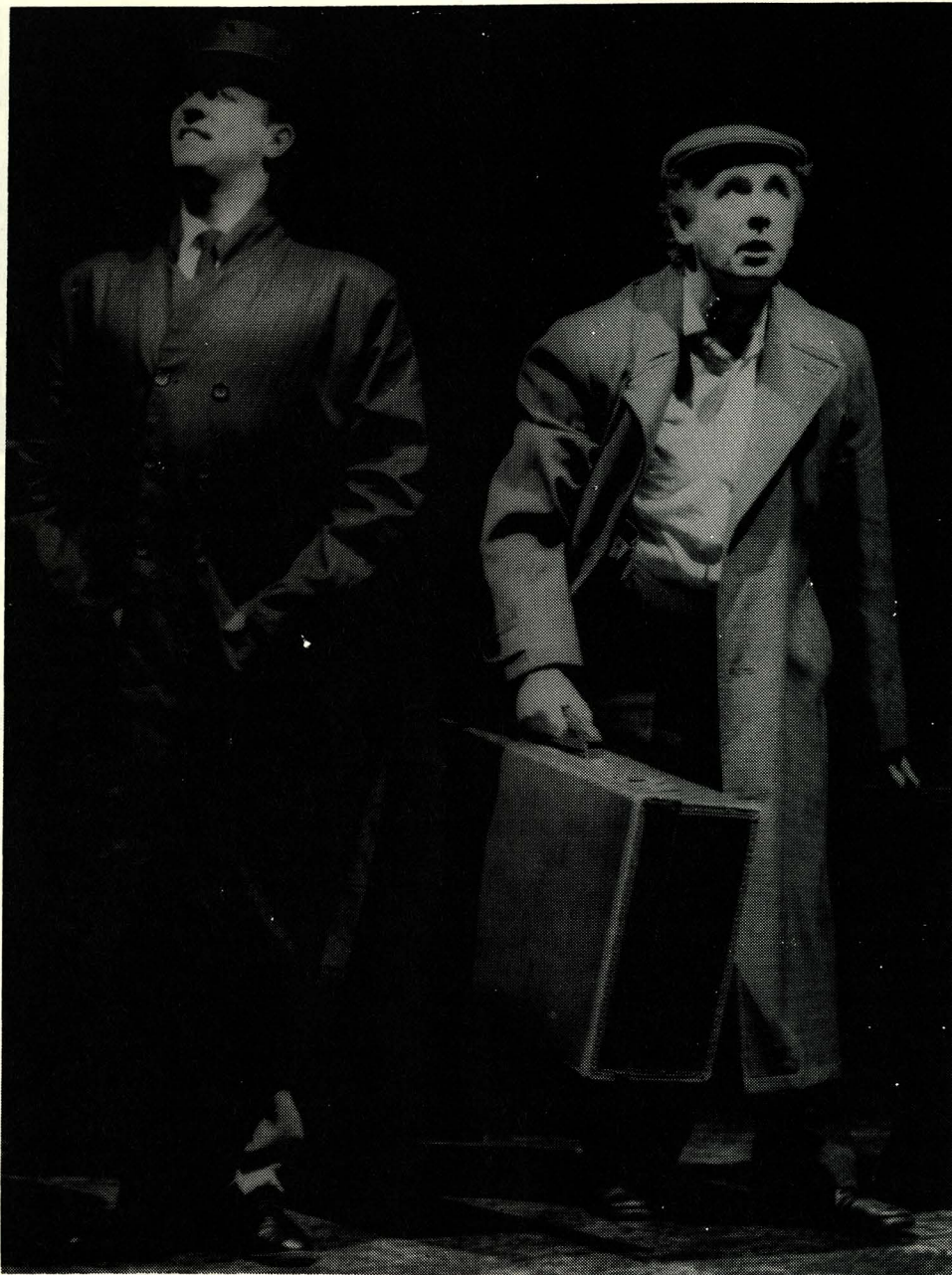


Photo: Jenny Beaumont

IRISH NIGHT — the 1988 tour

Philip Judge, a suitcase, and Brendan Ellis, three of the 1987 cast of *IRISH NIGHT*. The first tour of *IRISH NIGHT*, the Garry Lyons/Patrick O'Sullivan play based on Patrick O'Sullivan's research (see ISIB 12), was very successful, with audiences and critics. "A careful but vivacious examination of what it's like to be Irish in England now ..." "True to life and enormously strong in content." "Played with great insight ... by a superb cast."

The 1988 tour of *IRISH NIGHT* has substantially the same cast, if Philip Judge can free himself briefly from Morris Minor and the Majors, and Stutter Rap. The tour begins in Bradford on October 19th. The play then goes to Northampton, Wakefield, Stockton-on-Tees, St. Helens, Gloucester and Basildon. The London run this

year is three weeks at the Battersea Arts Centre, beginning on November 30th.

The play begins in a pub in Kilburn (an extraordinarily naturalistic set), then steps out through story—telling, song, dance and music, to explore the maps and dreams of the Irish in England. It is a highly entertaining, and thought—provoking night out. The cast and the playwrights see discussion with the audience as part of the project, and discussion can be fierce. What, asks Brendan Ellis, is the difference between a stereotype and an archetype? To Irish people the play seems to value and validate their experiences: English people feel like eavesdroppers.

Patrick O'Sullivan

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Ná lig don Bhéarla dallamullóg a chur oraibh le na fhuaire agus a shaobhnósmhaireacht cainte. Aimridíonn an Béarla caint na ndaoine. Sí an Ghaeilge teanga na mothúcháin, b'fhéidir amannaí go bhfuil sí neambhblabh ach ní chuireann sí púicín ar na smaointe is doimhne a mbíonn ag duine in ainm na míníneachta agus galántachta. Ar shiúl leis an bhréagrioct, níl sé nadúrtha ag éirí a bheith níos suasógaí ná do chomhghleacaí.

Cuireann sin i gcumhne dom na cóisirí foirmiúla a mbíodh in oifigí ar ocaidí a bhíodh chomh bréagach tuirsiúil gur scríobh mé dán fada darbh ainm “Cur thart na ceapirí cularáin (cúcamar)” le scigmhagadh a dhéanamh ar chóras “chur i gcéill.”

Ba mhaith liom moladh a thabhairt do fhile a thuigeann an dearcadh seo, sí Nuala ní Dhomhnaill, feiceann sí níos mó sa domhan ná sliotinnill agus tomhaltóireachas, agus gur féidir mothúcháin a léiriú níos furasta in Gaeilge. Cá bhfuil na ríomhairí scéalta anois fiú amháin sa Ghaeltacht, tá siad gann go leor? B'fhearr le daoine ráiméis na teilifíse ná scéalta cruthaitheacha. Ach go minic téann eagar a tí amach chuig an teach tabhairne le scéal a chloisteáil, nó i ndiadh deoch nó, dhó cheann fhéin a chruthú. Is maith leis na hÉireannaigh comhrá bríomhar.

Ní thuigfeadh duine an soiscéal roimh i bhfad nuair a deir sé: “Tugaigí faoi deara lili an bháin mar a fhásann siad, ní dhéanann siad saothar ná sníomh. Ach deirim libh nach raibh ar Sholamh féin, dá mhéid a ghlóir, cóir éadaigh mar atá ar cheann díobh seo.” Agus amharc tá na lusanna fiáine ar bhealach a ndíothaithe ag creachadóirí na tuaithe — na Filistínigh santacha seargthacha. Ba cheart áit ar leith bheith ann don fhilíocht.

Tagann bláthanna isteach san amhrán chlasaiceach “Úna Bhán” agus feiceann tú neart an ghrá ag an fhile.

A Úna bhán, a bhláth na ndlaoi ómrach

Tar éis do bháis de bharr droch chomhairle
Féach, a ghrá ciaca b'fhearr den dá chomhairle
A éin i gcliabhán is mé in Átha na Donóige.

A Úna bhán, ba rós i ngairdín thú

'S ba choinneoir óir ar bhord na banríona thú,
Ba cheileabhar 's ba cheolmhar ag gabháil an bhealaigh
seo romham thú.

'S é mo chreach maidne brónach nar pósadh liom thú.

A Úna bhán, 's tú mhearaigh mo chiall

A Úna is tú a chuaigh go dlúth idir mé s Dia
A Úna an chraobh chumra, a lúibín casta na gciabh
Narbh fhearr domhsa bheith gan súile ná d'fheiceáil
'riamh.

Seo cuid eile de na téarmaí ceana: Mo chuach, mo laoch geal, mo thaisge, mo théagar, mo chuidín, mo sheod, a ghrá mo chleith. Is féidir úsáid a bhaint asta i litreacha chomh maith le caint. Ádh mór oraibh!

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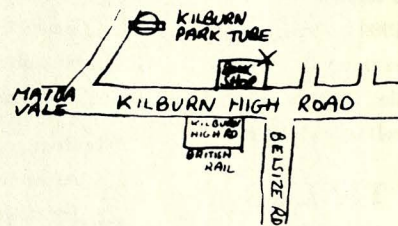
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LETTERS

News From Down Under

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the Spring/Summer issue of *ISIB*. Among other things, I am interested to hear of the Institute of Irish Studies to be opened at the University of Liverpool and wish it every success. Sydney University here has introduced a degree course in Celtic Studies and other Australian universities are including at least a lecture course on Ireland. In Canberra, at the end of August, the fourth Ireland—Australia conference was held. It was preceded by Ireland—Australia conferences at Kilkenny in 1983, Canberra in 1985 and Dublin in 1987. At the Dublin conference I presented a paper on Irish emigration to Queensland, the topic of my MA dissertation at the University of Queensland.

Thanking you and wishing your publication every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Sr Rosa MacGinley,
Institute of Religious Studies,
P.O. Box 2040,
Leichardt,
Australia.

Reply To Bernard Canavan's Reply!

Dear Sir,

I would like to thank Mr. Bernard Canavan (*ISIB No. 11*) for his generous reply to my letter. There are, however, certain points which still, I feel, require further clarification. The figure of 27% which Mr. Canavan offers in place of his original 37% as the Protestant proportion of the Irish population is still too high. Setting aside the manipulation of the census figures for political ends there are, as I pointed out (*ISIB No. 10*) at most 900,000 Protestants in the Six Counties, although in a very important discussion of this matter Padraig O Snodaigh puts the figures as low as 788,028 (see *Carn 47+48*). Added to the Protestant population of the '26 Counties', we are — to repeat myself — talking of a little over one million people — out of an all Ireland population of five million: a little over twenty per cent — but not 27%.

In answering my remarks about the contributions of various settlers to the genetic pool of the Irish population Mr. C. refers to the '700 Norman earthworks spread over two thirds of the country' as indicating that the 'balance of population was very different'. Two points require clarification here. Firstly, these earthworks belong to an extended historical time phase: they do not belong to the initial phase of settlement to which I was referring (paragraph 8 *ISIB 10*). Secondly, can we really believe that these Norman settlements were populated by a wholly intrusive population? I think not.

These Norman earthworks do not tell us that they were all inhabited at the same time; indeed the study of settlement in any period would contradict such an interpretation. If historians assert that they are all contemporary then we would be equally justified in asserting that the forty thousand 'Gaelic' earthworks (raths, cissels, etc.) were also contemporary — a line of argument

that would lead us to conclude that the population of pre—Norman Ireland ran into several millions (depending of course on what set of arbitrary figures we chose as the average population of these settlements). This would, of course, all be proposterous. My contention, then, is that just as the forty thousand pre—Norman raths etc. do not indicate a native Irish population of millions, neither do seven hundred Norman earthworks indicate some massive influx of settlers.

Further to this, I would point out that in referring to the contributions of later settlers to the genetic pool, I qualified my remark by saying that OUTSIDE ULSTER the contributions were small. Thus the 24,000 settlers of the Munster Plantation are a small addition to the native Irish population of at least one million, possible one and a quarter million. Similarly, although the Cromwellian conquest reduced the Irish population from (according to some estimates) near one and a half million to a little over 600,000, the 8,000 colonists who moved in were still greatly outnumbered. Up to this period the successive invaders became, to use the hackneyed phrase, 'more Irish than the Irish'. One reason for this process was intermarriage — and the absorption into the 'Gaelic blood—stream' which this implies. This absorption is in turn a reflection of numbers.

In my previous letter I did not address myself to the matter of the cumulative effect of these influxes: as each wave — Norman, Elizabethan, Cromwellian — was in turn absorbed, culturally and racially into the host community.

Turning now to the fifty thousand Williamite colonists they too were of small numerical strength compared to the two million native Irish among whom they settled (a ratio of 20:1). Neither should it be overlooked at this point that these newcomers held aloof from that healthy habit of earlier times — intermarriage. For this reason, at least, their contribution to the genetic pool was less than it might otherwise have been. By the time these Williamites, the 'Protestant Ascendancy', had reached a stage where intermarriage began to become significant, the native population, 'the mere Irish', had grown to be several millions in number — meaning that those of settler stock who did intermarry were 'easily' absorbed into the mainstream Irish population.

As the greater part of the colonist population in Ulster still object to being classed as Irish (only 20% according to at least one survey) can we really speak of their contributions to the 'genetic pool' or (more importantly) to an Irish nationality that they reject? It is, certainly, the case that many of this group have individually contributed to both these things — and in the future hopefully, we will be able to discuss this contribution in collective terms.

To return, finally, to the Celtic origins of the Irish nation, since my first letter Professor Colin Renfrew has advanced the theory that the Celtic language evolved in these islands — and in Western Europe — from an early form of Indo—European brought by the earliest farmers during the neolithic. This is not the time to enter into argument over its acceptability but if he is correct than we have to reject the current fashion for seeing the Celts as an incoming minority (there are, of course, other reasons for doing so) and accept that the basic stock of these islands is Celtic! What this actually means is another matter.

Beyond all this I must agree with Bernard Canavan of the need to challenge stereotypes and thank him for taking time to reply to my letter.

Yours sincerely, Kevin Collins

OBITUARIES

Robin Dudley Edwards, 1909–1988

Robin Dudley Edwards, the grand old man of Irish historians, died on 5 June, one day after his 79th birthday.

'Dudley', as he was always known to friends and to generations of students, was both an austere scholar and a famous Dublin character.

He was passionately devoted to history. His early education included a year as a student in St. Enda's, renowned for its association with Patrick Pearse and the Easter Rising. He subsequently studied in University College, Dublin, and King's College, London. In 1936 he founded the Irish Historical Society. He was appointed Professor of Modern Irish History in UCD in 1945, and until his retirement 34 years later he was an influential figure both inside and outside the college.

In 1938 he and T.W. Moody of Trinity founded *Irish Historical Studies*. This journal did much to transform the study of Irish history by imposing rigorous standards and by rescuing the past from the contamination of both nationalist and unionist propaganda. He remained joint editor for two decades.

His last public appearance, a fortnight before his death, was at a conference to celebrate *IHS's* fiftieth anniversary. Although frail he was still able to display his characteristic mixture of courtesy, outrageous behaviour and commitment to the study of history.

His publications include *Church and State in Tudor Ireland* and *A New History of Ireland*. The range of his knowledge was legendary, and his writings covered aspects of virtually every century of Irish history from the twelfth to the twentieth.

Dudley's lectures, although often obscure and even oracular, revealed vast erudition. In his dealings with students he could be formidable and even terrifying, but he was always devoted to the cause of sharing with them his knowledge and enthusiasm. As a research supervisor he trained and influenced many younger historians.

Towards the end of his university career he acquired a new passion: the preservation and organisation of Irish historical records. He founded and directed the Department of Archives in UCD.

Dudley was one of Dublin's best-known personalities. He was a larger than life figure, tall and erect with a mane of white hair flowing behind him. From his earliest years when, in his pram, he waved a banner inscribed 'votes for women', he was engaged in controversy. Friends and strangers alike would be accosted with the ominous and even threatening remark, 'there are two things you should know about yourself'; fortunately he often forgot the second. He loved to shock the priggish. His escapades with colleagues, barmen and taxidivers engendered a repertoire of stories which acquired the status of folklore. Dudley's company was stimulating and scandalous; it was never dull.

Of the various pubs which he frequented Hartigan's in Leeson Street was his undoubted favourite. He and Desmond Williams used its tiny snug as their centre of operations, and for many years it was regarded as the alternative or informal location of the History Department. Yet all Dudley's 'off-duty' activities, however colourful they might be, never diminished his commitment to teaching and scholarship.

His wife Sheila, a noted scholar of the Irish language, died three years ago. Two of his children have followed their father's example and have themselves become distinguished historians, Owen being Reader in Modern History at Edinburgh, and Ruth the biographer of Patrick Pearse and Victor Gollancz.

Michael Laffan
University College, Dublin.

This is a revised version of an appreciation which first appeared in *The Guardian*.

C. Desmond Greaves

As we were going to press, the sad death of the distinguished historian and Connolly Association activist Desmond Greaves was announced. A full obituary will appear in the next issue.

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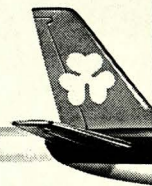
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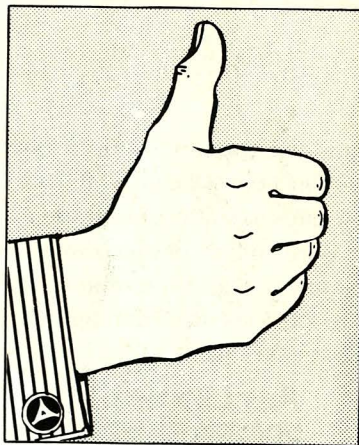
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