

# IRISH STUDIES IN BRITAIN

SPRING-SUMMER 1985

ISSN 0260-8154

No 7

50p



**TEACHING IRISH HISTORY: EXPERIENCES AND PROBLEMS**  
**FIRST BA IN IRISH STUDIES?**

**UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF IRISH IN BRITISH JOB MARKET**

**MICHAEL DAVITT'S UNIQUE MEMORIAL**

**EDUCATION AND THE IRISH 'COMMUNITY'**

**HAMLET AGUS AN PRIONSA IN EASNAMH?**

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# IRISH STUDIES

## IN BRITAIN

No.7 Spring-Summer 1985

ISSN 0260-8154

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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 case of difficulty from the address below. Price 50p UK (70p including postage); 70p Republic of Ireland (90p including postage).

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We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the Cultural Relations Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin, in the production of this publication.

## EDITORIAL

This issue of 'Irish Studies in Britain' once again highlights the extraordinary variety of opinion inside the Irish community as to what exactly constitutes that community and in what direction it is going.

It is indeed salutary to note that the Irish community in this country is in such a state of flux that even since the publication of the article 'The Changing Face of the Irish in Britain' in our last issue with its statement that Irish migration to Britain had, according to the census figures, largely dried up we are getting alarming reports of the revival of the emigrant boats. Will it be maintained and if Irish migration to Britain has started again in earnest what will this mean to the social composition of the Irish community here, traditionally portrayed as a fast-aging and declining one? Will fresh additions to the numbers of Irish in this country affect the growing tendency of the Irish community to move out of the ghettos and into the suburbs? Is it a fair assumption that the Irish are an upwardly mobile (because long-established) community? Certainly without comprehensive statistical information it is impossible to present an overall picture. However, on the face of it, the article in this issue on the under-achievement of the Irish in the British job market in one London borough - Hackney, backed as it is with comprehensive statistical research, would tend to undermine the view that the Irish in Britain are becoming a self-satisfied, complacent bourgeois community. What do our readers think? How typical is Hackney?

Noel O'Connell in his article 'Education and the Irish "Community" - A Personal View' questions the whole assumption that there is a cohesive and united 850,000 strong Irish community in this country. Donall Mac Amhlaigh, in a highly perceptive and provocative article in the *Sunday Press* recently writing on the effects of the Prevention of Terrorism Act on the Irish community in Britain, was of the opinion that not more than half of the Irish here can in any meaningful sense of the word be said to belong to the Irish community. He goes on to say that a very high percentage of the Irish here are scarcely aware that the Prevention of Terrorism Act exists.

Most readers of this magazine would probably vehemently disagree with what Donall Mac Amhlaigh says in this respect. But surely if you are reading this you are convinced of your Irishness or are sympathetic towards Ireland and Irish culture? What about those members of the Irish community - the vast majority? - who do not perceive themselves as members of that community?

Is there sense in Donall Mac Amhlaigh's arguments. Should we be getting things in more perspective? And if what he says is true and an awful lot of Irish people are ignorant of the PTA and its effects does that mean they are so assimilated that they are unaware of their Irish cultural heritage? And isn't this always the achilles heel when it comes to getting an Irish component into multi-cultural and anti-racist education developments? Again we would like to hear from readers on this topic and hope to publish a selection of letters in the next issue.

This issue of *Irish Studies in Britain* contains, we believe, in addition to those already mentioned, an interesting mixture of articles. Mary Fitzgerald writes about attempts to set up what would be the first full-time BA Irish Studies degree in this country. Whether it comes to anything remains to be seen; we wish it well. There is another article on the opportunities offered, and difficulties faced, in teaching Irish History, this time in a school in SE London. Pdraig Ó Conchúir writes on the importance of Irish in any development in Irish Studies while John Dunleavy

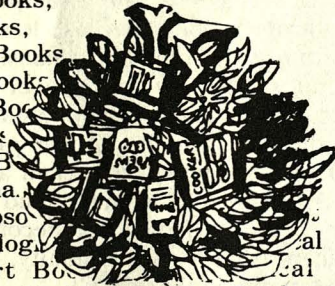


introduces us to the new Michael Davitt museum in Co. Mayo. Finally we have an article on the objectives and programme of the GLC-funded Irish Commission for Education and Culture, London, the successor to the trail-blazing Irish Cultural Activities London. Add all these to our usual comprehensive coverage of news, developments, books and information on teaching materials and we believe we have a wide-ranging issue of interest to all those involved in Irish Studies in this country. We hope you agree. If you do (and especially if you don't) write to us and let us know. and don't forget the £1 discount voucher off any Appletree Press Irish book. This is an offer only open to *Irish Studies in Britain* readers!

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#### BACK ISSUES

Issues 1, 2 and 3 are now sold out. There are some copies of issues 4, 5 and 6 remaining. Issue 4 contained items on Studying Northern Ireland in West London; Building Up a History of the Irish in Britain; Irish Studies in Lancashire and a profile of students attending Irish language evening classes in London 1981-82. Issue 5 featured the Irish in Bradford 1830-1920; an interview with Steve Brennan, the GLCs Irish Liaison Officer; the Irish Video Project and 'Mad Micks and Englishmen - anti-Irish racism in Britain.' Issue 6 has a full report on the 1984 Leicester Irish Studies Conference and articles on teaching Irish to children; the future of the Celtic languages, the Changing Face of the Irish in Britain; Irish Studies in Coventry and teaching Celtic archaeology in Leicester.

Send £2 (sterling) to the publishers for copies of all three issues or 70p for each.

#### ADVERTISING

*Irish Studies in Britain* has a readership of over 2,500. Subscribers include university, college and municipal libraries in Britain, Ireland, the USA and Europe. This is a ready market for your service or product as our readers are avidly interested in all aspects of Irish Studies.

Our rates are extremely attractive (£50 sterling full page (A4); £30 half page; £20 quarter page; £15 eighth page). Contact the publishers for further details.

#### CORRECTION

An error crept into the article 'The Changing Face of the Irish in Britain' in issue 6. There are of course 850,000 Irish-born people living in Britain not 350,000 as stated in the article. Apologies for any confusion caused.

# IRISH STUDIES IN BRITAIN

is available at the following:

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## LETTERS

### Lack of Irish

A chara,

Although I find *Irish Studies in Britain* an extremely informative and worthwhile magazine I am concerned at the lack of articles written in Irish. The articles by Micheál O Domhnaill and Maire Bean Uí Dhomhnaill in issue no. 6 were a step in the right direction and were very valuable but I do feel that by neglecting the Irish language you are neglecting an important part of the Irish cultural heritage. When are we going to see some articles in Irish?

Is meas

Seosamh MacAonghusa  
London NW6

— as soon as the above writer (and others) send us some articles in Irish. 'ISIB' policy is to act as a forum for all developments in Irish Studies. To date we have not received one article written in Irish. — eds.

### Anti-racism not multi-culturalism

Dear 'ISIB'

Why do many of the developments in Irish Studies in this country as publicised in your magazine skate around the issue of racism? I accept that a lot of the multi-cultural work being undertaken is pioneering (viz 'Irish Studies in Coventry' ISIB no 6) but surely it is now time to move on and adopt a clear-cut anti-racist strategy in Irish Studies rather than continually flirting with a hackneyed and discredited 'multi-cultural' approach. It is about time that those involved in Irish Studies in this country recognised that the basic problem is anti-Irish racism stemming from the British occupation of Ireland. No amount of comparing styles of dress, food, music etc (which is what multi-culturalism is all about) can obscure this basic fact. We should be making common cause with other ethnic minorities suffering from exactly the same racism as us. It is all one struggle.

Yours sincerely

R. Doherty  
Manchester

### Irish not an ethnic minority

Dear Sir,

Having been an avid 'ISIB' reader since the first issue I felt I must write and say how informative and invaluable I find the magazine. It is particularly useful for people like me who don't live amongst a large Irish population and sometimes feel under pressure from our English neighbours as regards their attitude to Ireland. It is good to be able to present a more positive view of Ireland to them in order to counter the often negative view we get in the media.

However, I cannot agree with the growing trend amongst Irish people towards regarding the Irish in Britain as an 'ethnic minority'. Most of my Irish friends believe that, despite their differences, they have far more in common with English people than they do with immigrants, especially those from the New Commonwealth. It is difficult enough getting Irish people in this country interested in their heritage without scaring them away with all this talk of 'racism' and 'ethnic minorities'.

Yours sincerely

Carmel O'Sullivan  
Exeter, Devon

### Irish in London

Dear Ivan Gibbons,

Battersea & Wandsworth Irish Committee is preparing a pamphlet on the Irish in London. The pamphlet will focus on Irish life in London from the nineteenth century till the present. Above all the pamphlet will seek to be a peoples history, popular and accessible to those who under normal circumstances might rarely pick up a history book. The pamphlet should be of interest not only to Irish people in general, but also to many amongst the 'host' population and within other ethnic minority communities in Britain.

In addition to recounting the trials and tribulations of London's large Irish population we will seek to illustrate the positive contribution made by Irish people to London life. Issues covered in the pamphlet should include the following (though this is by no means an extensive list):

- \* Why the Irish came to Britain? Emigration is rarely a question of 'free choice'. We will seek to examine the pressures which made Irish people the country's leading export.
- \* Where subsequent generations of Irish people have settled in London and the reasons for such 'settlements'.
- \* The profound impact of anti-Irish racism. How the 'host' population have viewed and treated the Irish in London.
- \* The position of Irish people on the housing and labour markets. The part played by Irish labour in the industrial and geographical expansion of London.
- \* The affect of Irish Nationalism on the political life of the capital. The influence on the political self-organisation of the Irish in London, and the influence on the labour movement.
- \* The particular problems faced by Irish Women bearing the brunt of racist and sexist attitudes and discrimination.
- \* The Irish identity. What is it? What shapes it? The factors which lead variously to a re-affirmation or a distancing of/from ones 'Irishness'.

Again, these are just some of the issues and themes which will be covered in the pamphlet. I'd hereby like to appeal to those readers who may have material, such as old letters, memorabilia, old diaries, photographs, news cuttings etc which might be of use to this project. It may be that you can recount valuable experiences that could be recorded in the pamphlet; the treatment of Irish people in various jobs, problems faced in obtaining work and accommodation and the way Irish people have been viewed by the 'host' population and in the media, plus of course, particular events which featured a significant Irish input. These are just some of the issues we will seek to cover. Perhaps letters and memorabilia passed down the generations through your family and sitting in your attic might contain material that could give us a valuable insight into the lives of past and present generations of Irish people in London.

While publication of material cannot be guaranteed, we will ensure that all material sent is acknowledged and looked after. Material can be returned if this is requested, though ideally we would like to copy material sent and store it alongside other archive material presently being collected on the Irish in London.

The address to send material or to write for further information is:

Brian Parsons  
Battersea & Wandsworth Irish Committee  
177 Lavender Hill  
London SW 11

Yours sincerely  
Brian Parsons



## NEWS

### Multi-culturalism and Catholic Education

A working party set up by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales has recently released its report entitled 'Learning from Diversity: A Challenge for Catholic Education'. Given that a large number of children in Catholic schools in this country come from an Irish background and given that many educationalists as well as members of the Irish community have complained about the church's apparent unwillingness to recognise the Irish cultural tradition when it comes to Catholic education this report should prove particularly interesting.

The report argues that the church needs to recognise the 'actual diversity of contemporary Britain' which has implications, it says, for both the content and style of Catholic education. It argues that racism can influence attitudes and affect behaviour quite unconsciously and recommends that awareness of and experience in multi-cultural education should be one of the criteria used in the selection of staff at all levels of Catholic education.

As regards the Irish component the report suggests that the study of Irish history and culture could therefore be an integral part of any approach to education for a diverse society and is particularly appropriate in Catholic schools. However it is against the inclusion of separate Irish Studies courses for children of Irish origin in favour of an Irish perspective being integrated into different parts of the curriculum taught to all children. In this way children of Irish origin would be helped to discover their own roots while other children would be given the opportunity to learn about different cultural experiences which in varying ways parallel or contrast with their own.

In compiling the report, the working party visited 50 schools, the vast majority of which had between 20% and 50% of their children from Irish backgrounds. In a sobering comment the report states that the head teacher who replied 'My parents were Irish but I don't set much store by it' spoke for the prevailing attitude. The working party came across almost no evidence of the use of Irish literature, music or drama in the curriculum; Irish history was rarely taught and there was a reluctance to deal with Irish issues because of the political controversy surrounding Northern Ireland.

The report concludes that there had been little attempt to help children reflect on the prejudice encountered by the Irish community in the past, or to explore how this experience might assist the Irish community to understand and support the black communities now facing similar problems. It ends with the depressing note that even schools which were aware of the need to educate their pupils for life in a diverse society and which had taken some steps towards implementing such a policy, had not yet considered this in relation to their pupils of Irish origin and were largely unaware of the resources and assistance available in this field.

(For copies of the report contact Richard Zipfel, Secretary of the Working Party, on 01 800 6148 or 01 834 8692, or write to The Catholic Association for Racial Justice, 5 Henry Road, London N4).

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### Rare Books from Mayo

Eamonn de Búrca was a policeman in Birmingham before he returned to his native Castlebar to found De Búrca Rare Books the fastest-growing Irish-interest mail-order books firm in the world. The firm specialises in Irish books, maps, manuscripts and prints and their latest catalogue containing over 1,100 items is available from De Búrca Rare Books, Mount Gordon, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, Ireland.

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### Linen Hall Library

In the previous issue we made reference to the *Linen Hall Review* – the quarterly journal of the Linen Hall Library in Belfast. Issues 2, 3 and 4 have just come into our hands and we are happy to be able to report that the excellent standard set in issue 1 has been maintained.

If readers in Britain want in depth analysis of cultural life in Northern Ireland (and let's face it how many of us can claim to really know much about the place?) they could do no better than to take out a years subscription (£3) to the *Linen Hall Review*. It covers developments in literature, local history, politics, music and theatre as well as having a comprehensive books section.

The Linen Hall Library is one of the last survivors in the British Isles of the great subscription library movement which swept through Europe in the late 18th/early 19th century. In an attempt to provide funds to ensure its survival into the next century the Library has prepared a selection of prints and publications available for sale to the public. These include modern prints of Belfast; prints of the work of the painter William Conor who bequeathed his works to the Library, as well as reproduction prints of old Belfast and Derry and maps of Ireland. Further information on the Linen Hall Library and its publications is available from John Gray, Librarian, Linen Hall Library, 17 Donegall Square North, Belfast 1.

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### Stratford's 'An Nuachtán'

'An Nuachtán' is the monthly newsletter of the Stratford Irish Community Association in East London and is an object lesson to other Irish associations on how to promote themselves and keep their members informed of developments. There is full information on the work of the welfare and social committees and details of various cultural activities organised by the Association including Irish dancing and language lessons as well as an Irish literature and drama group and history, music and cultural classes. The magazine also contains interesting items and articles on such diverse topics as tracing your Irish ancestors, the origin of Irish placenames and surnames, The Gaelic Leagues View of anti-Irish racism; Ireland as portrayed in the media; Giraldus Cambrensis' view of the Irish as well as songs, poems and a lively letters page. We're not sure if there is a charge for 'An Nuachtán' but you can find out more by writing to Ian Olley, 48 Capel Road, London E7. The magazine should be of interest to any reader involved in Irish community activities and not only in the East London area either.

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**Irish Studies Library in Monaco**

A Library of Irish Studies was officially opened last November in, of all places, the Principality of Monaco. The connection is of course, the late Princess Grace and her Irish ancestral background. The kernel of the collection is the late princesses own private library of Irish books, folk music scores and other Hiberniana. Other items include rare books from the 'Archives et Bibliothèque du Palais de Monaco', including many collectors' items over three hundred years old.

The library also intends to organise play-readings and lectures as well as Irish music evenings with harp accompaniment. In addition there is to be a three-day seminar on James Joyce from 24 to 26 May 1985. This will be followed by seminars on Yeats, Wilde, Bernard Shaw and Beckett as well as weekends on Irish Theatre, Irish Music, Modern Irish Short Stories and Contemporary Irish Poetry. There are also plans for exhibitions of Irish photography, painting and sculpture. For inclusion on the library's mailing list write to the Princess Grace Irish Library, 9 Rue Princess Marie de Lorraine, Principality of Monaco.

The only question we have to ask is would this have happened in Britain if Princess Grace had married into the British Royal Family!

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## IRISH TEXTS SOCIETY

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The Irish Texts Society, founded in 1898, is established to advance public education by promoting the study of Irish Literature, and as ancillary thereto to publish texts in the Irish language, accompanied by such introductions. English translations, glossaries and notes as may be deemed desirable.

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All communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Irish Texts Society, c/o Williams and Glyn's Bank, 22 Whitehall, London SW1

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**Defunct Diploma**

Readers of issue 5 will remember the controversy caused by the Inner London Education Authority refusing to fund a proposed two-year part-time Diploma in Irish Studies at the Polytechnic of North London. This caused quite a furore, including resolutions being passed at the GLC Irish Conference in May 1983 urging that the ILEA should make the necessary funding available if their commitment to the Irish component in multi-cultural/anti-racist education was to be seen to be more than theoretical. As yet no funding has been made available and there is still no Diploma in Irish Studies. Depressing isn't it?

★★★★★

**Commemorating Collins**

We have just received a copy of the first issue of *Historical Review*, the journal of the newly-founded Michael Collins Association in this country. The Association's aim is to promote an awareness of the personality and life of Collins as well as fostering the recognition of his contribution to modern Irish history. It plans to organise meetings and seminars to further these ends and invites all those who share these aspirations to join the Association. Annual Membership is £10 a year which includes a subscription to the journal. For non-members the journal costs £2.60 annual subscription for 4 issues. Issue 1 largely consists of reprinted articles on Collins' vision for an independent Ireland and an obituary by Kevin O'Higgins as well as book reviews and news on the campaign to erect a blue plaque to Collins' memory in West London.

Further information on both the journal and the Association is available from the Secretary, 'Mayfield', Grove Avenue, Pinner, Middlesex.

★★★★★

**Irish Studies in Milton Keynes**

Dick Hunter, Irish Studies course co-ordinator at Milton Keynes Workers' Educational Association branch has sent us the programme for his 8 week Irish Studies course currently running on Thursday evenings in the Seckloe Building, Woughton Campus, Milton Keynes. From reading the course outline this seems one of the most innovative Irish Studies adult education classes ever. Most of the sessions deal with Northern Ireland while the remainder look at aspects of the Irish in Britain.

Topics covered include anti-Irish racism, women's lives in Northern Ireland (a talk by Melanie McFadyean, co-author of *Only the Rivers Run Free*); an evening with Jack MacGoughan, a retired trade union official looking back at the labour movement in Britain and Ireland over the past 50 years; the loyalists of Northern Ireland and also a session on media coverage of Northern Ireland. There are also plans to undertake a short study tour of the province.

Dick also asks us to bring to the attention of 'ISIB' readers and Irish Studies students, in Britain the fact that the Ulster People's College - NI's independent, non-sectarian adult education centre - is under financial threat. He suggests that Irish Studies students on this side of the water should write to the Minister in the Northern Ireland Office and tell us that the Milton Keynes WEA branch has done just that.

Dick can be contacted at 10 Spencer Street, New Bradwell, Milton Keynes for further information on either the course or the threat to the Ulster People's College.

★★★★★



**Prose in Plankton**

*Plankton* is a new magazine of contemporary Irish fiction. The first issue contains a short story by Northampton Irish writer Domhnall Mac Amhlaigh; a centre page picture spread on the making of 'The Company of Wolves' by Irish writer/director Neil Jordan and assorted short stories and poems from up-and-coming Irish writers.

*Plankton* is unusual in that it is published in tabloid newspaper form. It certainly is a brave venture by Wolfhound Press, the publishers and it will be interesting to see how successful it is. The first issue costs 75p from Irish Bookhandling Ltd, North Richmond Street, Dublin 1.

★★★★★

**Birmingham Irish Studies Conference**

David Ruddell of the City of Birmingham Education Department Multi-cultural Support Service tells us that they are organising a one-day conference entitled 'Multi-cultural Education – The Irish Dimension' at Bishop Challoner School, King's Heath, Birmingham on Saturday 2 March (10.00 am – 4.00 pm). Further details from David at the MCSS, Bordesley Centre, Camp Hill, Stratford Road, Birmingham 11 (tel: 021772 7676)

Even if you are reading 'ISIB' after this date drop him a line to find out what happened (and to show that people do actually read the magazine!).

★★★★★

**Recognition at last**

We make no apologies for including in 'ISIB' the following review of 'ISIB' which first appeared in the *Irish Times* 'Tuarascail' column on October 3 1984. Thanks to Seán Ó Dónalláin of London Conradh na Gaeilge who brought it to our attention and asks, tongue-in-cheek, is a review in Irish better than no review at all?! The review was written by Eibhlín Ní Bhriain:

**I Londain**

*An Fearr an deis atá ag muintir Londain an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim ná ag Eireannaigh ina dtír fhéin? Is cosúil gur fearr. Is fíor – spéisiúil an iris Irish Studies in Britain (Addison Press, 83 Frithville Gardens, London W12; £1.70 sa bPoblacht no £1.25 sa Ríocht Aontaithe ar dhá eagrán). Tá cúrsaí teangan le fáil ar fud Londain agus tá neart cúrsaí i stair, i litríocht agus i gceol na hEireann. Tig le páistí óga an teanga a fhoghlaim gach maidin Sathairn, ach tá na Gaeil abhfad taobh thiar de na Breathnaigh a bhfuil bunscóil lán-Bhreatnaise acu i Londain le fada.*

*Deir ball de Chonradh na Gaeilge i Londain, Máire Uí Dhomhalláin, go mbíonn dá chineál páiste ag freastal ar ranganna an tSathairn iad sin a bhfuil súil ag a dtuismitheoirí fileadh ar Eirinn gan mhoill agus ar doigh leo go mba mhíbhuntáiste dá gclainn bheith ar easpa Gaeilge; agus na páistí a bheartaigh máistreacht a fháil ar a dteangain féin. Paisti a rugadh i Londain ach a airíonn gur Gaeil iad. Tá siad seo an-dhiograsach, an-da ríre. Deir Bean Uí Dhomhnalláin nach mór scoil lánainmsireach a sholáthar.*

*Tá tuairisc san iris ar thaispeántas san Ollscoil Thoir Thuaidh i mBoston faoi iomhá na hEireannach agus na bhfear ngorm. Sé an buanchruth céanna a buaileadh ar an dá chine.*

*Tá cuntas freisin ar thurgnamh i ndá scoil i Coventry. Chuireadar chun oibre ar ghnéithe éagsúla de chultúr na hEireann agus nascadh iad le dhá scoil i mBaile Atha Cliath. Ba léar gur mhór an misneach a thug an nasc seo do pháistí*

*Coventry. Malartaíodh múinteoirí i dtosach agus ansin muinteoirí agus daltáí araon. Chuaigh ocht bpáiste déag go Sasana agus chuir futhu i dtithe a gcomrádaí i gCoventry; ansin tháinig gasuir Coventry ar cuairt orthusan abhus.*

*Cuireadh an scéim seo chun cinn mar chuid de chlár iolchultúrtha sa mBreatain. O tharla gurb iad na Gaeil an dream inimearcach is mó sa mBreatain níor chiallmhar a bpáistí sin a fhagáil lasmuigh den gcorás a bunaíodh i scoileanna na Breataine do inimirceigh óga eile.*

Go raibh maith agat, a Eibhlín

★★★★★

**1985 Leicester Irish Studies Conference**

The second annual IBRG Irish Studies Conference took place at Soar Valley Community College, Gleneagles Avenue, Leicester 4 on Saturday, 16 February. The theme this year was 'Irish Dimensions in British Education' particularly in the education of second generation Irish schoolchildren. A full report will appear in the next issue of *Irish Studies in Britain* but if you want to know more contact the conference organiser, IBRG Education Officer, Nessian Danaher at the College.

**Grant for Irish Societies in Britain**

Ambassador Dorr (centre) presenting cheque to officers of the Federation.

The Irish Ambassador in Britain, Mr Noel Dorr, recently presented, on behalf of the Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland, a cheque for Stg£1,600 to the Federation of Irish Societies to support their first summer school project in Dublin. The summer school is being organised by the Federation in conjunction with the traditional Irish music body, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, with the objective of training people involved in Irish organisations in Britain and in the promotion of Irish cultural activities and interests. The course in Dublin will last one week and will include lectures and visits to cultural bodies. The grant represents almost the entire cost of the summer school and was awarded by the Cultural Relations Committee in recognition of the project's particular value and importance.



## THE 'INVISIBLE' IRISH

Steifóin O Brennán

While many would deny it, there is, throughout every level of English Society, a prejudice against Irish people. So deeply is this ingrained that many English dictionaries give 'Irish' as a term for stupid or irrational behaviour. The commonly held stereotype of the Irish is of a drunken, violent and above all stupid race. This image is constantly reinforced in English newspapers, television and literature, not a week can go by without of the above adding to the mire of anti Irish racism. The commonest and most iniquitous form of behaviour produced by this 'conditioning' is the telling of Irish jokes or rather anti-Irish jokes. The general theme of these jokes is the stupidity, dirtiness or ignorance of 'Paddy'. It is all about 'Paddy's' inferiority when compared to the British. It is no coincidence that anti-Irish propaganda of this type usually increases when Irish people demonstrate their disapproval of English interference in their affairs by, for instance, returning IRA prisoners as MPs in elections or refusing to endorse British foreign policy as in the Falklands/Malvinas war.

The Irish person working in an English environment realises from the start that it is potentially hostile. Any reaction they may have to the insulting behaviour of colleagues telling 'Irish' jokes is usually suppressed. Occasionally there are Irish people who take a stand against this. The invariable reply from their tormentor(s) is to say 'you can't take a joke'. Most find it totally incomprehensible that the Irish resent being labelled as stupid, dirty and irrationally violent. Any person working with a group of people wants to be accepted, for Irish people the price paid for this acceptance is often a denial of cultural and political identity.

Irish people understand the reason for the prevalence of anti-Irish sentiment and jokes. For eight hundred years Irish people have taken up arms to rid Ireland of English domination every generation has produced its heroes and martyrs. To the British state these people have been rebels, traitors and latterly criminals and this is the perception given to the British people.

Since the start of the current phase in the war in Northern Ireland the IRA have attacked British soldiers and bombed English cities. This has caused successive waves of hysteria in the media.

The Irish person in the workplace is usually asked an opinion on whatever has taken place. This is a problem. Most Irish people want a united Ireland and a sizeable number support the IRA. However, to say this can have adverse results, imprisonment without trial or deportation under the PTA. That apart, the Irish person is aware of English ignorance of Anglo-Irish history and is unlikely to antagonise colleagues or jeopardise promotion prospects by pointing that ignorance out. The result is nothing said, no discussion, no progress and until the question of Ireland is taken out into the open it will remain that way.

Is there any evidence to support this grim picture of the Irish under economic seige? Sadly there is. While until recently little attention had been paid to the problems of

racism against the Irish it was recognised, in the Race Relations Act of 1972, that Irish people could be racially discriminated against. Thanks to this circumstance we have access to all manner of statistics pertinent to the Irish community. In this case the document in question is entitled 'The Labour Force Survey' 1981.

Recently analysed by a London Irish group, this survey provides some useful information. Perhaps it is not really surprising to find that 52% of the economically active Irish (16-65) are employed in manual employment. But it is surprising that 21% of the same are in unskilled manual labour. We all know the large numbers of skilled Irish manual workers in London. Even those Irish in office work (72%) find themselves in clerical or 'junior' work. Moreover self-employment, the dream of so many Irish immigrants only accounts for a mere 7% of economically active Irish. Equally, of the large numbers of Irish working in manufacturing, retail distribution, the National Health and other services, only 7% are in managerial positions. It is possible to list many other examples, however, the point should now be clear - the Irish do not do well economically in London.

It may be contested that if the Irish are discriminated against it is because of the 'colour of the tongue': Irish accents combined with some of the events dealt with at the beginning of this article. If this is the case discrimination should not affect 'second generation' Irish.

The London Borough of Hackney has an extremely effective system of self-categorisation for ethnic minorities. The Irish category is defined as 'persons who originate or whose forbears originate in Ireland and who consider themselves Irish'. This clearly covers the 'second, or third generation Irish'. The report on 'Ethnic composition of the Workforce' by the above borough presents a similar picture to the first document referred to. Of those Irish employed by Hackney 75% are in manual employment. Of these less Irish 'tradespeople' are employed than any other group. In the rest of the survey the Irish indicate similar employment patterns to Black employees. It has been long accepted that Black people suffer from massive racism. Surely it is sobering to find ourselves in the same position.

In concluding I would like to pose some questions.

If the Hackney figures are broadly representative, is there little or no chance of social mobility amongst the Irish, regardless of generation, in London?

Given the length of time the Irish have been in London - a conservative four hundred years - surely this should not be the case; surely we are now 'acceptable'?

Is it the case that, with the exception of a very able or lucky few, Irish people will be denied advancement until they cease to be at all recognizably Irish? And if this is so, does the root of the problem lie in a racism so vile and deeply embedded in this society that all deny its existence?

Finally, if all this is so, what are we, the Irish in Britain, going to do about it?



# FIRST B.A. IN IRISH STUDIES ?

Mary Fitzgerald

The following is the text of a submission to the Department of Education which if approved will result in the first BA in Irish Studies in this country.

The fostering of English understanding of Ireland is obviously of vital importance, and the educational system does little at present to meet this need. Irish material is studied on English literature courses throughout the country, and some special subject courses on Irish history and politics are offered, but while American Studies and French Studies programmes flourish, there is no undergraduate degree in Irish Studies in this country, and an area where understanding would seem to be particularly vital is not addressed. Further, the relations between literature, history, and politics in Ireland are unusual to the European tradition, and provide an interesting opportunity to study the dynamics of a culture which has been at the receiving end of the western imperialist tradition, and yet remains firmly within that tradition.

We propose to set up an Institute of Irish Studies, to be run and staffed jointly by Crew-Alsager College of Higher Education, Keele University, and North Staffordshire Polytechnic, offering a BA degree in Irish Studies. Courses in the programme will be available to students in other programmes in the host institutions; similarly, Irish Studies students will take courses validated in other programmes. We intend to establish a postgraduate programme when the BA degree is running.

The draft programme which follows represents the first thoughts of interested parties in the three institutions.

## Programme Structure

The course will cover the period from the late sixteenth century to the present day. The disciplines principally involved in the programme are history, literary study, politics and sociology. We also have special staffing strengths in economics and human geography and these disciplines will make significant contributions to the programme. All students will also take a range of interdisciplinary courses and an intensive language course. In the first year all students will take foundation courses in each of the principal disciplines; subsequently the student may choose to specialise or to maintain a balance between the disciplines.

The academic year will consist of three terms. In the first year students will take four courses per term for the first two terms of the year; in the second and third year students will take three courses per term for the first two terms. Twice a term in each year tutors and students in the year group will meet for a review seminar: these sessions will be used to evaluate course materials and procedures, and to present reports on individual or collective investigations of topics central to the programme as a whole. The third term of each year will be used for language courses and project work. Intensive language courses will be available in the final term of each year, and students will take at least one such course. Project work will consist of, e.g., research exercises, field trips, or placement with other academic institutions or organisations such as museums, commercial firms, newspapers, etc.

## Year 1

Term 1: History Foundation Course	Literature Foundation Course	Politics/Sociology Foundation Course	British Images of Ireland in Popular Culture
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Term 2: 16th & 17th Century History	Introduction to Irish Literature	Introduction to the Irish Political System (South)	Country and City in Ireland
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## Year 2:

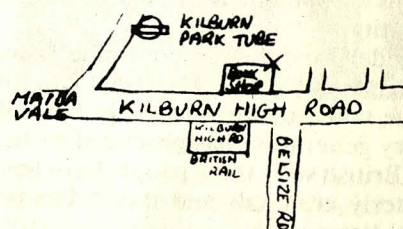
(3 courses per term, including 1 interdisciplinary course)

**History courses:** Nationalism in Ireland; Anglo-Irish Relations, 1800–1949; 18th and 19th Century Economic History; Religion, Land and Politics in 19th Century Ireland.

**Literature courses:** Swift and 18th Century Literature; 19th Century Literature; Irish Theatre in the 19th & Early 20th Centuries; Northern Writing.

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**Politics/Sociology courses:** Church and State in Ireland; Politics of Partition and Divided Societies; Politics of Northern Ireland.

**Interdisciplinary courses:** Irish Political Rhetoric; Arts and Society in Ireland; Irish Street Culture, North and South; Culture, Territory, Ethnicity.

**Year 3:**

**(2 interdisciplinary courses, 3 other courses and a dissertation)**

**History courses:** The Wars of Irish Independence, 1912–1923; Unionism in the 19th & 20th Century; Irish Economic History, 1922–Present; The Historiography of the Ulster Conflicts, 1868–Present.

**Literature courses:** Yeats and Joyce; Colonial Literary Cultures; Fiction since Joyce; Poetry since the 1930s; Irish Drama: O'Casey & After.

**Politics/Sociology courses:** The Irish Diaspora; Irish Demography; Media Coverage of Northern Ireland, 1969–Present.

**Interdisciplinary courses:** The Language Question; Literature and Insurrection; Anglo-Irish Historiography.

**Course descriptions**

The disciplinary foundation courses may be those already validated in the host institutions, and will not be specific to Irish Studies; each will contain some Irish material.

**History Courses**

**16th & 17th Century Irish History:** an introduction to the process of conquest, confiscation and plantation during the late 16th and the 17th century with particular reference to modern Irish historiographical contributions to the debate on this period.

**Religion, Land and Politics in 19th Century Ireland:** an analysis of the politically significant structures of Irish society (especially rural society) in the pre- and post-famine period, and an assessment of the function of politics within them.

**Nationalism in Ireland:** the origins and nature of Irish nationalism from the late 18th to the 20th century, analysed through a study of major writers and movements.

**Anglo-Irish Relations 1800–1949:** a study of the history and development of political and diplomatic relations.

**18th and 19th Century Economic History:** a consideration of the consequences for the Irish economy of its changing status vis-a-vis the wider British economy, in relation to employment, development and structure.

**The Wars of Irish Independence 1912–1923:** this course uses the full range of available printed sources and some primary ones (eg the CO904 series now being issued in microfilm by Harvester).

**Unionism in the 19th & 20th Century:** an examination of the ideology and bases of unionism, with particular reference to the different concerns of southern and northern unionists before partition, the accommodations made by southern unionists after 1922, and the responses of Ulster unionists to the formation of the northern state.

**Irish Economic History 1922–Present:** an analysis of the economies of contemporary Ireland, North and South, since partition through the perspectives of economic and human geography.

**The Historiography of the Ulster Conflicts 1868–Present:** a consideration of the treatment of Ulster unionism and the Northern Ireland state in the work of historians, using primary source material where appropriate.

**Literature Courses**

**Introduction to Irish Literature:** an introduction to the characteristic concerns and procedures of Irish literature, through a study of a range of texts from different periods and different genres, including some Irish language material in translation, e.g., Kinsella's translation of the *Tain*.

**Swift and 18th Century Literature:** a comparative course examining Swift and other Irish writers such as Goldsmith, Sheridan, and Sterne in the context of contemporary English literature.

**19th Century Literature:** a survey course covering such topics as realist and gothic fiction, the poetic tradition, and 19th century Irish writers and their audience.

**Irish Theatre in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries:** a study of the rise of the Irish theatre, with an examination of the formation of audiences and special studies of the work of some major dramatists.

**Northern Writing:** this course will examine the Northern literary response to environment, history and politics through an exploration of recent poetry, prose and drama.

**Yeats and Joyce:** a detailed examination of the work of two Irish figures who dominate the international literary landscape of the 20th century, and a consideration of the relation between their work and the political and social context within which it was produced.

**Colonial Literary Culture:** a comparative study of attempts to establish self-sustaining literary cultures in Ireland, the USA and Africa.



The Irish Ambassador, Mr Noel Dorr, presenting a cheque and a donation of books on Ireland to the Warden of the Working Men's College, London, which offers courses in Irish studies.



**Fiction Since Joyce:** negotiating a Joycean heritage: Beckett, Flann O'Brien, Banville and others.

**Poetry Since the Thirties:** a study of the contemporary tradition in Irish poetry, its social and political context, and its relation to its audience.

**Irish Drama: O'Casey & After:** an examination of developments in drama and interactions between drama and society in independent Ireland.

#### Politics/Sociology Courses

**Introduction to the Irish political System (South):** a survey course addressing such topics as political and electoral structures, the civil war and the development of the Irish party political system, political culture in Ireland.

**Church and State in Ireland:** a study of the role of the church in Irish society, its legal status, its access to power, its involvement in the major issues of Irish society.

**Politics of Partition and Divided Societies:** a comparative study of religious, ethnic and linguistic conflicts, as they have been managed in Ireland and in other societies, and an examination of partition as a political technique for resolving these problems in contemporary history.

**Politics of Northern Ireland:** a study of the political development of Northern Ireland, its political and legal structures, and the political crisis in the North.

**The Irish Diaspora:** an examination of the factors involved in Irish emigration in the 19th and 20th centuries; a study of the problems of assimilation and acculturation of immigrants in urban communities; a sociological, political and cultural study of Irish communities in America and elsewhere, and a special study of the north eastern states of the USA.

**Irish Demography:** an examination of changing population patterns in Ireland and their social, economic and political implications.

**Media Coverage of Northern Ireland, 1969 to the Present:** a comparative study of information on events in Northern Ireland presented to Southern Irish, Northern nationalist, Unionist, English, and international communities.

#### Interdisciplinary Courses

**British Images of Ireland in Popular Culture:** This course is designed to show how images of Ireland are structures in film, television, the press and popular fiction. These views of the nation are seldom transparent but work actively to construct an attitude towards Ireland and the Irish. Using some of the techniques of contemporary cultural analysis, the course will show the interests which determine these views of Ireland at different historical moments.

**Irish Political Rhetoric:** This course will address itself to the aesthetics of political culture in Ireland. It will examine the vocabulary and tropes of Irish political rhetoric and their history through a study of the rhetorical tradition from Burke and Emmet to DeValera and John A. Costello and it will use this study as a basis for investigating the rhetoric of contemporary Irish politics, North and South.

**Arts and Society in Ireland:** an examination of political and social issues as they appear within the arts in Ireland, and of the arts as they intervene in the Irish political and social world.

**Irish Street Culture, North and South:** a sociological and anthropological study of Irish street culture North and South: the protocol of marches, demonstrations and meetings; oral and visual culture: songs and music, wall-painting and graffiti; alternative cultural traditions as they are presented and explored in the public world of the street.

**Culture, Territory, Ethnicity:** a study of the issue of national identity in Ireland, with a special consideration of the significance of cultural and linguistic differentiae in the

construction of communities.

**Country and City in Ireland:** a study of the urban/rural divide as a social, economic and cultural issue.

**The Language Question:** a sociological, political, cultural and linguistic study of the language question in Ireland, and the role which that question has played in the history of the Irish state, and a special study of the Gaeltacht.

**Literature and Insurrection:** an examination of the relation between the Irish 'Literary Revival' and the 1916 Rising, and a study of this central moment in Irish political mythology as it is presented and explored in politics and in literature.

**Anglo-Irish Historiography:** a study of the accounts of Irish and English histories and relations as mediated to each society by its educational system.

#### Staffing

We have at present, between the three institutions, staff competent to teach all listed courses other than politics courses. These staff are, however, already teaching full-time on other courses, and further teaching support would be required to free them to teach on this programme. A politics appointment would be required.

#### Student Numbers

The programme will take 25 students into each year.

#### Teaching Hours

There will be two hours contact time per week for each course, with the possibility of an additional hour's seminar time where required. Staff will be available for consultation at fixed hours over and above this timetable.

(Mary Fitzgerald is a lecturer in English Literature at Crewe and Alsager College of Higher Education, Cheshire).

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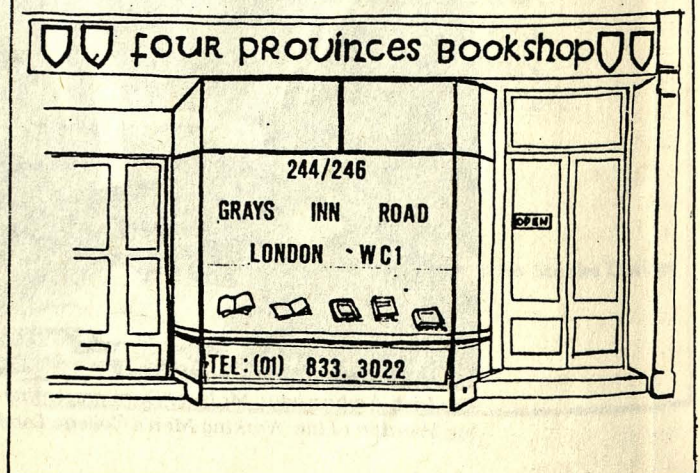
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## EDUCATION AND THE IRISH 'COMMUNITY': A PERSONAL VIEW

Noel O'Connell

Although Irish emigration to England is long established, Irish institutions here are comparatively recent. Discounting the rather special case of 'The Honourable, The Irish Society' dating from 1609, few of our present, varied societies are more than a hundred years old. There remain in the North of England clubs and societies dating from the time of Davitt and Parnell, and in London a number of sports clubs and cultural societies date from the turn of the century.

These were all at a low ebb during the War and benefited from the massive emigration of the 'fifties which led to a wide network of new clubs, societies and associations. Given the problems of rebuilding society after the War, we were in many ways the envy of our neighbours, with vigorous spheres of activity and mutual help that offset, to a degree, the loneliness and penalty of emigration. Work was plentiful and it is greatly to the credit of the emigrants of the 'fifties that they soon settled themselves firmly and attempted to maintain the values to which they had been brought up. There was the prevailing climate of 'you never had it so good' and all seemed set fair as British Prime Ministers even sought invitations to Irish events as, 'red' or 'blue', they could not risk alienating us.

It is common to attribute all our subsequent problems to 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland since 1969, when the British Army 'went in'. They were there all the time, of course, since 1920.

These thoughts that follow are based on the conviction that the situation is misunderstood by ourselves because there never has been the Irish 'Community' so frequently referred to and in whose name so many people have spoken.

Attempts to pin down the 'Community' are as futile as trying to pick up mercury, as the desired object slips away just when we think we have it - as we thought back in 1968. Time and time again I meet people who ought to be part of the Irish 'Community' but have steered well clear of it.

The reasons vary, but since the pattern was set long before 1969, it cannot be anything to do with the violence of the North. I believe that very many emigrants actually enjoyed the combination of privacy and modest affluence that the 'sixties provided and, without in any way regarding Ireland the less, realized they had to be individually self sufficient. We seem frequently to overlook the very large number of intermarriages which diluted the 'Community' and which had a remarkably good and generally ignored influence on Anglo-Irish relations on a person to person basis. There was created a reservoir of goodwill to which I attribute in part the relative lack of retaliation against the Irish in Britain in the aftermath of spasmodic acts of violence carried out allegedly on our behalf.

This is not to say that there isn't a mammoth task facing the Irish in Britain who have responded in recent years by a plethora of new societies, some local, some national. My

experience is that they share intense frustration at the present position but I fear they may possibly be tilting at windmills if they do not identify the common foundation on which we should stand. I am not optimistic that pressure groups will greatly dent the homogenous paper wall that has been wrapped around Ireland for centuries until we ourselves stand back and clearly restate what it is precisely that the Irish offer, not just to England but to Europe. The vast majority of our 'fifties emigrants were forced to leave Ireland with a primary education, great courage and inevitably a limited view of Ireland, despite which they have been a credit to their country. Of all the challenges to be met now at the height of the Northern crisis, I feel strongly it is time to do as England did in the middle of the War, in 1944, and concentrate on obtaining changes in Education in its widest implications and to the highest possible standards, from primary through secondary and on to third level courses. Then I think we may attract back into the Irish 'Community' those who have preferred to have no part of it and whose loss is grievous to the totality of our effort. If others come too, so much the better.

The scope of the educational challenge is vast but the effect will be to widen the sphere of goodwill and create a climate where mutual understanding will prevail. In the meantime, mutual misunderstandings are almost inevitable when we try to bridge the gap between the traditional Anglo-Saxon rigidity and certainty on the one hand, and the flexible, open-ended nature of Celtic thinking on the other.

Hence, our very foundation should be on Irish language and literature, an interpretation of which to the Anglo-Saxons is a positive obligation resting on us. After these, history and politics may be found to fit more easily into place.

Our efforts are in a strange way doubly difficult because we speak English-(mostly). The most recent race relations initiatives on the presence of ethnic minorities in the Civil Service unashamedly accept ethnic as black or coloured. Most of the Irish who are not 'community' involved seemed to hold the same stance. Likewise black people with whom I have worked in housing aid centres laugh at us and scorn when we complain of discrimination. They see us as 'Uncle Toms' rather than pathfinders.

The prospect is of course long term, but I cannot anticipate great changes in the short term. The task is unequal but there is nothing new in that: as Sean O'Casey put it succinctly, 'Us with sticks and stones and them with guns and bullets and they say fight fair.' But beginnings have been made in many different places.

*(Noel O'Connell is chairman of the GLC-funded Irish Commission for Culture and Education London, and is Hon. Secretary of the Irish Texts Society).*



# TEACHING IRISH HISTORY: EXPERIENCES AND PROBLEMS

Colin Carr and Val Davis

Two years ago, on arriving at Deptford Green, Val and I introduced Irish history into the third year. We regard the experience as being valuable to both students and ourselves and the problems not as insurmountable as they might at first appear. Indeed we could not have been coerced into going into print if we did not feel very strongly that as many schools as possible should have the confidence to take up this much neglected area and teach Irish history.

## Why Teach Irish History

Like most of our colleagues our curriculum justification is based on a precarious balance between principles and pragmatism, but our argument is very much that Ireland cries out for study from almost any criterion you may wish to choose:

## History ends with Oliver Cromwell

This has been the experience of many students following a traditional chronological British history syllabus who do not take history beyond the third year. By studying Irish history it almost seems to start from Cromwell. Students have the opportunity to study modern history without necessarily duplicating an upper school examination course.

## Ireland is Popular History

Whilst last year it may have been the Falklands War or the *Mary Rose*, no other historical issue has dominated the news so consistently in recent years, but has suffered so badly from the lack of explanation that history can provide. Do we walk away from 'media history' for professional reasons or because of its politically controversial nature or do we make use of the enormous energy and interest it generates in our students?

Almost all students have opinions they are keen to offer on the events in Ireland, and as many of these opinions reflect the thinking of the more popular press we have a professional responsibility not to let them go unchallenged by default.

## Irish History is British History

The study of Irish history offers a colonial perspective of Britain. It offers an almost unique insight into the problems and consequences of imperialism and Britain's imperial heritage. Irish history can be seen as a logical consequence of a commitment to a multi-ethnic curriculum in the lower school. We do not see it as a substitute for the Afro-Caribbean and Asian history, which is part of school curriculum in the first two years, but as a valuable complement to it. It offers an opportunity to examine racism and cultural stereotyping outside of the black-white racism more typical of our students' experience.

## The Irish Question

If history teachers are to encourage study skills concerning identification of bias, assessment and evaluation of evidence what richer area could they find than the history of modern Ireland? The materials developed by the Schools Council History Project, although aimed at fourth year students, offer valuable documentary evidence which is readily adaptable and supports the 'What is history?' approach.

## What we chose to teach

Initially, filled with uncharacteristic zeal, we chose to cover too wide an area of subject material. We started with a chronological approach as most history is taught on a 'patch' scheme. This, however, soon developed into a more concentrated study of three or four major topics: the Famine and Emigration, Nationalism and the Easter Rising, Troubles in the North.

In this way we have found more time to use evidence based materials, and build up an empathetic response without, we hope, losing sight of the development of modern Ireland. We have quite knowingly committed sins of omission. We have neglected a proper appreciation of Irish culture and a study of modern Common Market Eire. We have concentrated on the more dramatic history of conflict.

## Problems

### a. Lack of Resources

Most materials are produced for adults rather than school students and least of all third year school students. We relied initially on the 'Irish Question' packs produced by Avon, but the solution lies with a lot of school produced materials.

### b. The Racist Response

The confidence with which many students express racist stereotyping about Irish people soon became prime justification for the whole course. We do not however, have any illusions about our capacity to eliminate prejudice, and coming to terms with that is the problem.

### c. Conceptual Complexities

Understanding basic concepts like Republicanism and Unionism obviously creates problems for third year students in mixed ability groups, but then this would also have been a difficulty when studying the English civil war in a traditional third year syllabus.

On balance our experience has been that the main problem is one of confidence and that having decided on the need to take up Irish history the other problems can be overcome.

Our feeling about the course has been very positive and encouraging. It contains nothing very earth-shattering but it does give the opportunity to ask questions and threaten popular misconceptions. Even if it offers no easy answers for the future it shows the value of history as a tool for understanding the present.

## The Experience in the Classrooms

Irish history, with the possible exception of Home Rule, has been neglected in the curriculum. In partnership with previous introductions of Caribbean/African/Asian history it may appear 'unusual', or worse met with disbelief by many pupils. To some extent, our multi-cultural liberal studies course in the lower school counteracts such a response from our pupils.

The Irish history course can be controversial, especially when considering contemporary events and the teacher must be prepared for a wide range of opinions. This is one of the reasons that the unit is introduced in the summer term when teaching and personal relationship have been established.

Limitation of space does not permit a detailed analysis of all the topics and issues that arise during the course. I will



illustrate some observations from parts of my first and last lessons which capture some of the essence of our Irish history course in the summer of 1982.

### We are going to study Irish History

Pupils are misinformed and often have racist ideas about Irish people and the situation in Northern Ireland. It is to be expected that prejudices will surface throughout the course and I endeavour to raise some of these issues in the first session. Pupils are asked for their knowledge and ideas about Irish history. All of the responses are written up on the blackboard/OHP. Initially pupils may say 'whiskey' '... it's across the water' and always 'jokes Miss, Irish jokes'. The list increases as pupils demonstrate other aspects of their knowledge 'Catholics', 'Protestants', 'Bobby Sands', 'Ian Paisley', 'British soldiers', 'war', 'bombs', 'youths throwing stones at the soldiers', and 'Irish people live in England'.

The pupils are given the opportunity to explain their particular response, sources of information and to contribute further comments. The class is encouraged to support, criticise and question each other, including me, a practice established in previous lessons. This discussion may last between 15-30 minutes depending on the abilities and interest of the class; a flexible approach is essential. A written exercise follows to extend opinions and knowledge gained from the discussion. A brief outline of possible approaches to this exercise is given to help structure the writing for those that require it in our mixed ability class.

Many pupils move on to the next exercise - Ireland: an introduction. I find this introductory exercise useful for several reasons:

1. We start from the pupils' knowledge and perceptions of Ireland and Irish history.
2. All of the pupils can contribute to the lesson.
3. It raises some issues of prejudice and myth about Ireland.
4. It can help to reinforce our aim of a critical approach to history at our school.

### Irish jokes

One of the responses is always about the term 'Irish jokes', accompanied with attempts to whisper a particular 'joke'. Such 'humour' quickly subsides as the pupil is asked to explain the term or meaning behind his/her 'joke'. I would like to make it absolutely clear that a joke session is not encouraged. It is the notion of jokes that is discussed, admonitions from me to 'be quiet', or 'don't be silly' would limit the pupils' willingness to make possible controversial responses and reinforce the irrationality of such jokes.

Irish stereotypes and 'jokes' have been one channel of justifying to and gaining approval from the working class for the rule of Ireland from Westminster. In the same way images of the 'childlike' African, the 'docile' Indian and the 'noble, but savage' American Indian was used to justify slavery and colonialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Racist and sexist jokes cannot be funny unless the individual/group accepts, consciously or unconsciously, the believed assumptions of inferiority towards the subject. I comment in detail on this aspect of Irish caricature because it is in such areas of 'popular' culture that 'common sense' notions of racism reflect institutionalised racism.

Racism does not have a basis in logic and young people can be sensitively critical of such an approach. Aspects of racism and sexism are discussed in the humanities courses of the school and I draw parallels with such stereotypes that would be unacceptable in our multiethnic and educational school.

Quite often the pupils will make this connection:

**Richard:** Yes, I don't like people making jokes about Black people, calling me names and all that. . . why should Irish people like it?

Pupils of Irish origin may also criticise the stereotypes:

**Darron:** My parents are Irish and I get fed up with your jokes. You don't know anything about Ireland, but I know about you!

Some teachers may be apprehensive about such an approach as it requires previous consideration of these issues. However, if it is our aim as educators to explore possibilities, alternative analyses and choices about historical and current events then self-criticism and consciousness-raising is essential. I want our pupils to reappraise and extend their knowledge about Ireland and Irish history; indoctrination is not contemplated. To attempt this would be to replace one disservice with another and be resisted by the pupils.

Young people are perceptive and in a school in which emphasis is placed on personal relationships and individual worth, the pupils will ask, 'What do you think Miss?' An honest and deeply considered answer must be given.

When we select teaching materials we are in fact, making a comment. In this sense we must endeavour to provide a wide range of primary and secondary sources which encourage pupils to make an informed choice and assessment.

In my experience pupils often maintain such initial responses as, 'Keep the troops in Ireland', 'The Protestants should remain British', 'Catholics should have control of their own country' and 'It's best to unite the two parts of Ireland and let the people sort it out for themselves'. However, by the end of this course many do realise that the issues are multi-dimensional and that simple answers and explanations are not available to them as pupils or to the people in Ireland:

**Anna:** I never thought about it much before. Everyone thinks that the Falklands is the only war, but the war in Ireland has been going on a long time. It's just across the sea. It's going on this very minute.

It is absolutely essential to discuss racist myths and preconceived notions that our pupils may have learnt from their peers, the media and the society in which they live. I cannot claim to change these ideas, to imagine that this is possible in a short course is to misunderstand and elevate the role of the teacher. Nevertheless, we must be positive and aim for a rethinking of ideas and the introduction of

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materials which assist young people to recognise bias in historical and contemporary sources.

Initially lessons and discussions are teacher-directed with detailed input. As the course progresses pupils criticise and support each other with increasing expertise:

**Dean:** Miss, why don't they just stop it? They must like it, all this trouble.

**Paula:** No they don't. People don't like wars or death. . . It isn't funny to see your family or friends killed you know. It's not that easy to sort out.

This discussion continued for several minutes, as others listened or joined in the debate. It took place in the middle of the course during a lesson on the Civil Rights Movement. Pupils were able to relate information from previous lessons in support of their arguments.

Explosions in Hyde Park and Regents Park occurred on 20th July. On the following day I had my last lesson and the pupils were anxious to discuss the bombings. Many of their responses were highly emotional and it seemed as if the rationality of previous lessons was forgotten.

**Peter:** Kill the families of the IRA men!

**Maxine:** Put nail bombs in with the prisoners!

**Steven:** Kill the detainees. Let them go on hunger strike, don't feed them!

The spontaneous discussion continued, directed for some time by Lorna. Thomas made the point that the class were expressing 'revenge', an emotion that may have prompted the park bombings. Other pupils were concerned about the deaths of innocent people and also questioned the term 'innocent'.

**Michael:** People don't complain in Britain about the deaths of innocent people in Ireland. They don't care about the deaths of children. . . shot by rubber bullets.

Many thought that such deaths would be avoided if it was like a 'real war' with armies fighting each other.

**Lloyd:** The IRA is not recognised as an army. Maybe that's why this war is different from other wars.

Several members of the class had copies of the 'popular' press and we acquired further copies and a 'liberal' newspaper from the staffroom. The class divided into groups and began to compare headlines, sub-titles, opening paragraphs and photographs. Variations in 'facts' were noted and all deplored the emphasis on animal death and injury rather than on the deaths of people. This discussion and work lasted for the whole lesson and continued into the break. Some of the pupils began to write about the explosions and followed it through for homework. Without exception all of the pupils were involved in this lesson.

Two months later I spoke to eight of those pupils about the explosions and their responses as expressed in that last lesson. Only one of the eight pupils maintained the view that revenge was justifiable. Another pupil, Denise, remarked that if such revengful response were made then more people and soldiers would be killed. Mandy said that her previous response was 'emotional' and 'aggressive'. She now proposed negotiation and 'peaceful talks'. While Paul wondered if the IRA could be considered as ' . . . soldiers fighting for their Freedom.

Some observations about the pupils' written work

1. It often reflects their desire to understand a complex situation.
2. Deep emotion and perception is expressed. One girl wrote six pages full of possible solutions to the troubles in Northern Ireland for her homework assignment.
3. Pupils' ideas may be contradictory within the same piece of writing, especially in their understanding/criticism or approval of the Gaelic revival, Unionism, British troops and the use of violence to achieve political aims. Comparisons with the use of violence in the Falklands war was made.

4. Pupils often equate the Irish with the IRA.
5. Pupils are frustrated by the fact that an immediate answer is not available.
6. The use of outside agencies such as the United Nations was considered.

#### Evaluation of the course

1. Reduce the number of topics and vary the materials studied throughout the course.
2. Concentrate on specific and well documented events such as The Easter Rising and Bloody Sunday.
3. Reconsider the strategies for touching the concepts of Fenianism, and Unionism.
4. Make explicit connections between earlier and contemporary historical events.
5. Clarify the differences/similarities amongst religious, political and economic factors in Ireland.
6. Make greater use of visual aids and films. Films shown at the Imperial War Museum stimulated much discussion.
7. Invite speakers and Irish parents to relate their experiences, these could be taped.
8. Introduce primary/secondary sources of poetry, writing and information from children in Ireland.
9. Emphasise group and team work for specific topics.
10. Use role play and a tape recorder for class/group discussions.

#### Some Examples of Pupils' Written Work

##### The Great Famine

The famine would not affect the richer Protestant farmers as much as the poor Catholic farmers because the rich farmer could grow crops. He would also get help from the Government because they were also Protestants. Poor Catholic farmers could only grow potatoes and got no help. . .

Many people were very poor with nowhere to live. Some had an acre to live on and grow potatoes. The Famine had 'killed' all the potatoes and people were begging for food. Many people had to emigrate.

Paul - 26.5.82

##### The Easter Rising

I'm in the IRB I'm in the Jacobs biscuit factory. We've broken all of the windows and barricaded all the stairs. We are all prepared for what might happen, as there are rumours of an uprising.

I look out of the window and see rioting and looting. You can see young girls with coats and jewellery. Other people are smashing things up and we sit here waiting for the English soldiers to come. We are ready and we are not going to give up. We are a bit nervous but we've got to do this.

Janet 9.6.82

##### How Do You Think The Troubles In Northern Ireland Can Be Ended? - (Homework)

It is very difficult to say how the problems in Northern Ireland can be ended but I think we should go to the base of the problem. England took over Northern Ireland to become a part of Britain. The rest of Ireland does not want this.

I think that Northern Ireland should be given its independence from Britain and become part of the Republic of Ireland and make Ireland a whole country again.

Many people may not agree with me on this, but this is what I really believe. All these bombings and killings in Northern Ireland would end if this union happened.

If Northern Ireland was given its independence I don't



think it would cause much economic problems to England and Britain. You would expect political problems but I don't think you can put politics before freedom of the nation.

Paul - 12.7.82

No Protestant or Catholic knows what religion she or he is until they are told, so what right have they got to say I don't like them. They could get on altogether, people from their own religion might be horrible. . . I think that no other country should poke their noses into Ireland. They have to sort it out themselves. They don't need any help. People who live in other countries who travelled from Ireland hundreds of years ago should keep out of it them (the Irish) work it out, it's their country nobody else's.

Karen - 7.6.82

#### The London Bombings (Class work)

Yesterday's bombings in Hyde Park and Regents Park were shocking. At first I was confused and couldn't believe it. I first heard of it on the BBC nine o'clock news. . .

This may have been done for many reasons. One reason may have been for the 10 years imprisonment of Gerald Tuit for bomb making in Greenwich, London. He was tried

in the Republic of Ireland, the first time ever this was done. Another reason may have been to attract attention back to Northern Ireland after the Falklands affair. Also another reason may have been because of the coming election in Northern Ireland - to show that they want Northern Ireland to be ruled in Northern Ireland, not from Westminster.

Paul - 21.7.82

I found out about it on the radio this morning. My initial reaction was one of shock. I think it is pointless to plant bombs in London because it will not make the British government any less determined to stay in Northern Ireland. If anything it will make them even more determined to stay. . .

In some ways the IRA may be right but that doesn't give them the right to plant bombs in London and take innocent, civilian lives. (her emphasis)

Paula - 21.7.82

(Colin Carr is head of history and Val Davis is co-ordinator of Liberal Studies at Deptford Green School, London. This article first appeared in ILEA's *Multiethnic Education Review*.)

## PATRICK MACGILL - Irish Navy Poet

Over the past few years there has been a revival of interest in the writings of Patrick MacGill, perhaps the foremost chronicler of the life and experience of Irish emigrants.

MacGill was born in Glenties, Co. Donegal in 1889 and went to Scotland as a potato-picker in his teens. His first book *Children of the Dead End* was published in 1914 when the author was only 24. It is highly autobiographical and its wry criticism of the local Donegal clergy and the gombeen man allied to its strong socialist commitment which MacGill learnt during his time in Scotland soon earned the book a reputation for anti-clericalism which forced the author once more out of his native Donegal.

In 1915 MacGill, back in Britain, joined the London Irish Rifles and began at once to make notes of his army experiences in the trenches *The Red Horizon* describes preparations for one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War. Written from the trenches of Flanders the book initiates the reader into one of the most moving and harrowing descriptions of war ever to have come from one of its participants. MacGill's war writing was unique in that it reflected the experience of the ordinary soldier, but was filtered through the pen of a man who had learnt to write through his early socialist auto-biographical novels *Children of the Dead End* and *The Rat Pit*.

*The Red Horizon* was a preparation for the sequel *The Great Push*, MacGill's great masterpiece of war writing. The title was a reference to the assault on the village of Loos in September 1915 and MacGill wrote nearly all of the book in the scene of action. It is MacGill's great war classic and rivals in stature *Children of the Dead End*. *The Great Push* was hailed as a minor masterpiece of war writing when it was first published in 1916. It is a ferocious and passionate tour-de-force rivalling the greatest of all war literature.

MacGill was shortly afterwards invalided out of the army and returned to England where his books were bestsellers. He emigrated to the USA, where his health, his output and his success rapidly declined. He never returned to Ireland and died in Massachusetts in 1963. Paradoxically it was the success of *Children of the Dead End* that led to his effective expulsion from Ireland never to return.

Patrick MacGill is still known in Ireland, Scotland and northern England as the Navy Poet. This is also the title of the book of his collected poetry. For the first time all of MacGill's poetry is collected in one volume, covering his childhood in Ireland (*Songs of Donegal*), his life as a navy in Scotland (*Songs of the Dead End*) and his experiences in Flanders (*Soldier Songs*). Undoubtedly MacGill was one of the first and finest of the socialist poets and his poems will be of interest not only to those who take pleasure in poetry for its own sake but also those who wish to understand the writings and life of one of Ireland's most important socialist writers.

Until quite recently MacGill was largely forgotten and his work out of print. This has now been rectified by an enterprising publishing company, Caliban Books who, together with Brandon Books, Dingle, Co. Kerry, have acquired the rights to all of MacGill's 23 books and plan to relaunch all of them. So far available are *Children of the Dead End* (£10 hardback; £3.95 paperback); *The Navy Poet* (£12 hb; £3.95 pb); *The Red Horizon* and *The Great Push* £9 each (hardback). *Lanty Hanlon*, *Moleskin Joe* and *Glenmornan* £3.95 each (paperback).

Further details on all Patrick MacGill's works can be had from Caliban Books, 25 Nassington Road, London NW3 (tel. 01 435 0222).



## MICHAEL DAVITT'S UNIQUE MEMORIAL

John Dunleavy

Teachers and students of Irish history will welcome the news of the opening of the Michael Davitt National Memorial Museum at Straide, Co. Mayo. This unique memorial is much more than a museum with display cases and documents, for it consists of a large assembly hall, a number of smaller rooms, and the usual utility rooms. The building can be used for recreational, social, or educational purposes. The site has been well chosen, being a few yards from Davitt's last resting place and in the shadow of the ruined Dominican abbey.

The museum is open during the months of June, July, and August, and displays documents, illustrations, and personal mementos of Michael Davitt (1846–1906). Inevitably, much of the data concerns Davitt and the eventful period of the Land War: yet Davitt deserves to be remembered for being more than the founder of the Land League. He was, after all, a cosmopolitan figure in his outlook and associates, utilising his pen and voice to champion the cause of the low paid, the Boers in South Africa, the persecuted Jews in Russia, and women's rights.

That Mayo's most famous son deserves to be regarded as more than a land agitator is borne out by the wide range of honours and distinctions conferred on him in his later life, many of which are now in the possession of the museum. The visitor, for instance, is reminded that Davitt was a member of the British Parliament for nine years, and that he spent his boyhood and youth in the English industrial town of Haslingden.

Since opening last May, many additions have been made to the collections: only recently Judge Cahir Davitt presented yet another set of personal possessions of his late father consisting of post cards to the Davitt family, newspaper cuttings, his rosary beads, and other religious items.

The enterprising promoters of the museum, who have already raised most of the £100,000 needed for the building, appreciate that access to the museum – open for three months in the year, and located some distance from the main centres of population – may prove difficult for some. For this reason it is hoped to make part of the collection available for loan to schools, colleges, libraries, and museums, at other times.

For those unable to take advantage of this projected service, the museum has published a brief life of Davitt. Written by Bernard O'Hara, *Michael Davitt Remembered* not only provides the reader with a concise study of Davitt's career, but contains many illustrations of the museum's exhibits, as well as a number of family portraits.

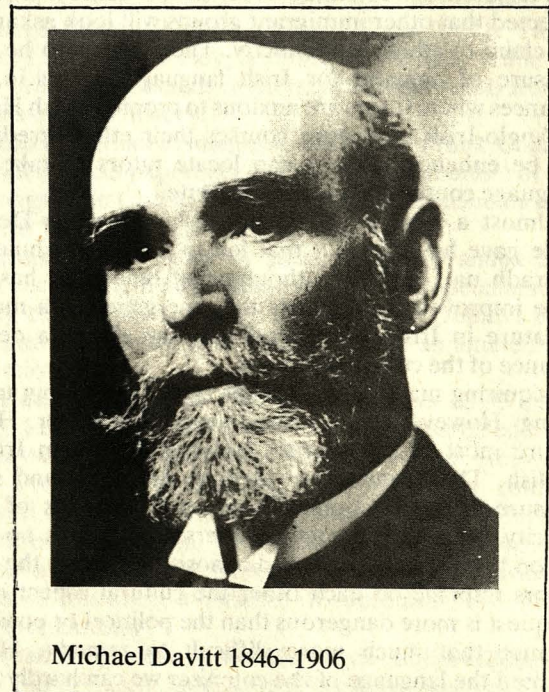
From the educational point of view, some of the documents would be of greater value if they could be reproduced in their original format, possibly as part of a 'study pack' for use in the classroom. Lecturers and teachers these days make extensive use of slides; this visual aid would enable a much wider audience to benefit from the museum's rich mine of information. These might be

supplemented by tapes of Davitt's more memorable speeches, not just from the Land War years, but his Parliamentary contributions (reported verbatim by *Hansard*) especially his laudatory welcome of the second Home Rule Bill in 1893; and his anguished resignation speech of six years later.

Visitors to Straide will be rewarded with more than a purely educational experience provided by the museum; they cannot but fail to be impressed (as the writer was) by the enterprise and faith displayed by Ireland's western counties at a time of recession. A social centre on this scale is no mean achievement for a small community such as Straide. Vacation expeditions can easily be combined with a visit to Knock and the proposed Connacht Provincial Airport.

Further information can be obtained from:  
Ireland Tourism West  
The Mall  
Westport  
Co. Mayo  
Tel: 098 25711

(John Dunleavy is author of 'Michael Davitt and Haslingden')



Michael Davitt 1846–1906



# HAMLET AGUS AN PRIONSA IN EASNAMH?

Pádraig Ó Conchúir

Viewing the problem in statistical terms an English educationalist<sup>(1)</sup> thought that it would be easy to introduce Irish Studies at Primary and Secondary level. As he saw it a large proportion of the children of Irish parents attend Catholic schools which would be receptive to such an introduction. He was unaware that at whichever level the Catholic schools have probably been the greatest single agency for assimilating the children of Irish immigrants. Whether despite or, more likely because of, the predominantly Irish derivation of most of their pupils the consistent end product of these schools has been English Catholics. All sorts of arguments in favour of this system or excuses for it can probably be produced and no doubt the theme will eventually have the attention it merits. In the meantime it is hard to avoid the impression that the lack of respect or interest in the Irish tradition which relates to so many pupils is hardly conducive to the development of well balanced individuals or even well balanced Catholics.

In default of either a green or an orange pigmentation the Irish immigrant element has been assimilated apparently without undue difficulty. Most or in practice all<sup>(2)</sup> Irish immigrants are fairly well anglicised before ever they set foot in England. Once in England<sup>(3)</sup> the Catholic school system can be relied on to complete the process for their offspring. That apparent success could lead the observer to believe that Irish claims to an ethnic identity are very tenuous.

Allowing for the institutionalised anglicisation of the Catholic schools the line of least resistance for introduction of Irish Studies is in the field of Adult Education. Unfortunately this is a period of severe cut-backs so that Irish Studies can be seen as another hungry claimant to a slice of an ever-diminishing ethnic cake. In this context it can be expected that other immigrant groups will look askance at our claim to ethnic authenticity. There seems to be some measure of demand for Irish language classes. In such instances where tutors are anxious to promote Irish History or Anglo-Irish Literature courses their ethnic credibility will be enhanced if they can locate tutors to take Irish Language courses also in that institute.

Almost a hundred years have elapsed since Douglas Hyde gave his lecture<sup>(4)</sup> that led to the establishment of Conradh na Gaeilge. Although that time span has seen some improvement, notably the emergence of a modern literature in Irish, the overall position shows a definite advance of the culture conquest.

Acquiring mastery of another language is a big undertaking. However, the hundred years prior to Dr. Hyde's lecture most of the country had switched from Irish to English. That came about through economic and status pressure in conjunction with an egregious lack of perspicacity from the country's leaders.<sup>(5)</sup> There is no good reason to revise Dr. Hyde's diagnosis. Although the three factors impinge on each other the cultural aspect of the conquest is more dangerous than the political or economic because that much more difficult to remedy. Having adopted the language of the coloniser we can hardly avoid adopting his view of the world that has shaped that language and been shaped by it. That is not to disparage an English view of the world but merely to point out that it is

not an Irish view. When the Irish Free State was established the cultural reconquest was one of its objectives, but this has been downgraded to some very indeterminate level. Under the present government there has been much talk of pluralism. From observation that version of pluralism comprises three strands, namely, the Catholic, the Protestant and the Post-Christian – all English-speaking. That ostensibly cynical interpretation was confirmed at Dr. Fitz-Gerald's disastrous Press Conference after the Chequers New Forum Summit meeting. When a question was addressed to him in Irish, the Taoiseach was either incapable or unwilling to reply in that language, so that any suspicion harboured by our Asian neighbours that our ethnic claims are bogus appeared to have official confirmation.

Whether in Ireland or the diaspora, in Britain or further afield, there is a strong tendency to what might be termed the Fox's Tail Syndrome. In that particular fable of Aesop a fox lost its tail. Its reaction to this misadventure was to urge all other foxes to get rid of their own tails with a minimum of delay. After all tails were at best an encumbrance and any fox with one was hopelessly out of date! Statistically, one's own ignorance of Irish or lack of confidence in that medium can be taken as the norm. What about Wolfe Tone, a founding father of Irish Republicanism? How much Irish did he know? This acceptance of the statistical average is reinforced by the excellence of writing in English. Paradoxically, much of this literary activity was inspired by Dr. Hyde's efforts to direct attention to the literary and aural tradition in Irish. The Celtic Twilight was Celtic to the extent that it took its inspiration from the IRISH (Celtic) tradition. Ireland's closeness to England and the proliferation of the mass media and of urbanisation ensure that it was a Twilight with the occasional belated after-splutter. It is feasible for a time to live off capital, but ultimately that capital will have disappeared and if that comes to pass we shall have reached a Post-Irish era.

Here in England Irish Studies are handicapped by the ill provision for Irish in the Irish educational system. Within that context there is a strong temptation to all but ignore what is the integral core of those studies. Depending on circumstances and resources available an Irish Studies course should include an Irish language content, whenever possible. Where that is not practicable an introduction to the language, its history and some of its characteristics should be provided. Ultimately failure to include such a content diminishes Irish Studies to a regionalism something in the nature of Hardy's Wessex.<sup>(5)</sup>

Would it be completely fanciful to think that in some cases the tentative introduction of Irish Studies does not include the authentic fox's tail? In some instances such a weakness could be ascribed to lack of familiarity with Irish by those behind the initiative. Occasionally there could be a mental conjuring trick that creates the illusion that the Irish language is English. An authentic Orwellian Newspeak concept of that nature merits from our English hosts the patronising comment of: 'How very Irish!'

However well intentioned those concerned with the introduction of Irish Studies might be there will be instances where it will be difficult to apply a language



content as required. From the example of many other countries it seems that we ought to have a legitimate call on official Irish resources for difficulties of that nature.

Clearly the Irish authorities are in no position to emulate the cultural support provided by such agencies as L'Alliance Francaise or the British Council. There are facilities in Ireland for Celtic Studies that could be very helpful, particularly crash-courses, that could be made available for those concerned with Irish Studies outside Ireland. Some specific work in connection with the requirements of Irish Studies overseas could readily be undertaken without undue taxing of the educational experts available or straining of the necessary infrastructure.

Those of us of a more cynical bent sometimes suspect that the Irish government is, and indeed most Irish governments have been, decidedly more interested in promoting tourism than in fostering the Irish cultural heritage. Without rubbing salt into the wound Bord Failte's campaign to attract the 'quality' English tourist have proved a costly failure. In comparison the ethnic market would prove highly elastic if an imaginative attempt were made to cultivate it. Integrated into such a campaign, a measure of subsidisation of crash-courses, of attendance at them and travel to them in the short term would prove of considerable long term benefit to tourism.

## BOOKS

### RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS

Recently arrived Irish-interest books on the 'Irish Studies in Britain' desk include:

**Sean O'Faolain: A Critical Introduction** by **Maurice Harmon**. (Wolfhound, £15 hardback; £5.95 paperback). A wide-ranging exploration of probably Ireland's major contemporary writer. This portrait of O'Faolain and his work is also a commentary on contemporary Irish thought and politics.

**The Fenians in Context: Irish Politics and Society 1848-82** by **R.V. Comerford** (£17.50 hardback). The Fenian movement is one of the central elements in the development of Irish nationalism. Its influence stretches from mid-Victorian Ireland to the Provisional Republican movement of the 1980s and in between has been instrumental in influencing the course of the Land War, Parnell's career; the Anglo-Irish literary revival as well as 1916 and the War of Independence. This extremely readable book restores fenianism to its original context and explains it as a product of its own time. It is therefore a new perspective on the political and social history of mid-Victorian Ireland.

**Voices of Ireland** by **Donnacha O Dúlaing (O'Brien)** £9 hardback, £4.50 paperback). The text of the popular RTE broadcaster's interviews with prominent Irish people including Eamon de Valera, Micheál & MacLiammóir, Edna O'Brien, Nora Connolly-O'Brien and Siobhan McKenna. These are supplemented by biographies written by Henry Boylan.

**The Blasket Islands - Next Parish America** by **Joan and Ray Stables (O'Brien Press)** £6.95 paperback). Traces the growth of the island community from earliest records, through the Famine to the evacuation in 1953. Lavishly illustrated, it provides in depth information on the people, the writers (**Peig Sayers, Tomas Ó Criomhthain** and **Maurice O'Sullivan**), the houses and the land.

**Owen Roe O'Neill and the Struggle for Catholic Ireland** by **Jerrold I. Casway** (University of Pennsylvania Press). This biography is the only modern and full account of the life of the enigmatic Owen Roe O'Neill. It contains a wealth of detail from Irish, English, Spanish and Papal sources never before published, on the Irish aristocrat who returned after

(1) An informal conversation at the Conference on 'Irish Dimensions in British Education', Soar Valley College, Leicester. 11th February 1984.

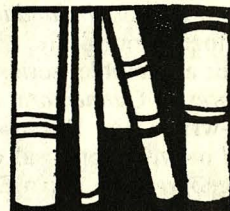
(2) Arguably no Gaeltacht of any consequence now remains, if Gaeltacht is defined as a community in which the normal medium of communication is Irish.

(3) 'England' is used deliberately rather than 'Britain' because different parameters apply in Scotland and in Wales. See 'Internal Colonialism' by Professor Michael Hechter (Routledge 1975).

(4) 'The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland', delivered before the Irish National Literary Society in Dublin on November 15th, 1892.

(5) Notably Daniel O'Connell and most of the Catholic hierarchy subsequent to the establishment of Maynooth at the end of the eighteenth century.

(*Pádraig Ó Conchúir is a member of Conradh na Gaeilge and is an Irish language teacher in East London*)



35 years exile on the Continent to lead the Catholic confederacy in the wars between 1641 and 1650. The book explores from an Irish standpoint the complicated series of events in Ireland that forged unity between Gaels and Anglo-Irish, led to the downfall of Charles I, the collapse of native Ireland and the rise of Oliver Cromwell.

**Book of Irish Quotations** edited by **Sean McMahon (O'Brien)** £11.95 hardback). 'The courts are open to anyone - like the Ritz'. Dr Noel Browne's quip is one of a comprehensive collection of memorable phrases - in prose, verse and song - by Irish people throughout the ages. Included are the famous words of such well-known Irish people as Behan, Beckett, Carson, Connolly, De Valera, Joyce, Larkin, O'Casey, Pearse, St Patrick, Wilde and many others, politicians, writers, saints and rebels from all periods of Irish history.

**The Christy Moore Songbook** edited by **Frank Connolly (Brandon)** £3.95 paperback). The words and music of over 100 songs from Christy Moore's repertoire, including many from his Planxty and Moving Hearts days.

**The Jimmy Ingle Story** by **Jimmy Ingle (Brandon)** £3.95 paperback). The first Irishman to win a European amateur boxing title writes about his upbringing in Dublin's Ringsend and his twenty-year career as both an amateur and professional boxer.

**The House** by **Leland Bardwell (Brandon)** £3.95 paperback). Leland Bardwell is a versatile and respected novelist, playwright and poet. Her latest novel is the story of an Irish Protestant professional family with a confused national identity - English in Ireland but Irish in England. A member of the family returns to the family home near Dublin and recalls his history in the house: a history of emotional distance, avoidance of expression, reserve and misunderstanding.

**The Dead Kingdom** by **John Montague (Dolmen/Blackstaff)** £3.95 paperback). Montague's latest sequence of poems moves from Cork where he now lives, through a leisurely evocation of the Irish Midlands to his native Ulster where the mood of his writing darkens.



**Selected Poems by Austin Clarke (Dolmen £4.95 paperback).** Clarke has been described as the best poet of his generation after Yeats. This collection, edited with an introduction and additional notes by Thomas Kinsella, presents in chronological arrangement the best of Clarke's poetry.

**The Rock Garden by Leo Daly (Lilliput Press £8.95 hardback, £3.95 paperback).** Set in the Aran Islands, this first venture by the new Westmeath publishing house, Lilliput, portrays Peig Flaherty a woman living on the Aran Islands who is trapped in a childless marriage and blighted by her husband's tragic past.

★★★★★

#### New Irish Publisher

Lilliput Press is a new small publishing company founded by Anthony Farrell who spent 12 years working in publishing in London. Based near Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, Lilliput aims to publish history, fiction, biography/memoirs and local studies – in short works of general Irish interest with a regional bias, mirroring life and culture in the rural Ireland.

Their first publication was *The Rock Garden* a novel by Leo Daly set in the Aran Islands, *Ireland in a Nuclear Age* by Dervla Murphy is a forthcoming title.

Lilliput also publishes a pamphlet series which includes *Setting Foot on the Shores of Connemara*, a topographical piece by cartographer-writer Tim Robinson and *Ulster – The Common Ground* a lively appraisal of the northern heritage by renowned geographer, Estyn Evans.

Further information is available from Lilliput Press, Gigginstown, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

★★★★★

#### Irish Directory

Euromonitor Publications Ltd of 87–88 Turnmill Street, London EC1 are the distributors of *Ireland: A Directory* published by the Institute of Public Administration in Ireland. The directory provides up-to-date information on over 2,000 of Ireland's institutions and organisations while the statistical section provides a wealth of data on all major economic, social and demographic indicators in Ireland. Detailed facts and figures are provided on government departments, state-sponsored bodies, major companies, education, religious denominations, trade and professional bodies as well as separate sections on Northern Ireland and the EEC. Statistics on population, industrial production, external trade and earnings and prices are also included.

This valuable reference book costs £32 and really should be on the shelves of every library in the country. Tell your local librarian.

★★★★★

#### Antrim Bibliography

Brendan Sharkie, a librarian working for Belfast Public Libraries has produced a new bibliography of *all* publications relating to Co. Antrim between 1971 and 1982. It contains over 2,000 references on all topics ranging from folklore to politics and archaeology to geology. 180 pages covering all recently published material on Antrim (including Belfast) must be of interest to quite a few Antrim exiles. The bibliography costs £19 and is available from Brendan Sharkie, 6 Gransha Parade, Glen Road, Belfast 11.

★★★★★

#### Women's Community Press

Sue Richardson of the Women's Community Press, Fleet Street, Dublin 2 has sent us a copy of their catalogue. The WCP is a worker's publishing co-operative with a special interest on material written by and of interest to women. For example, the 'Irish Feminist Review' analyses significant events of 1984 in terms of their relevance to women (education, prisons, work and industrial disputes, legislation, peace and disarmament, film publishing etc). All the articles are written by women actively involved and the Review provides information as well as being a valuable source of reference. It costs £3.95. Full information of this and other publications produced by the Women's Community Press is available from Sue Richardson at the address above.

★★★★★

#### Davitt Book

*Michael Davitt Remembered* is a book written by Bernard O'Hara and launched last year at the opening of the Michael Davitt Memorial Museum, Straide, Co. Mayo (see article elsewhere in this issue).

The book covers all aspects of the achievements of Davitt – from the social revolution of the Land League and his involvement with the early GAA to his initiatives in founding the Irish Trade Union Congress and his work in the British labour movement. It contains tributes from such diverse personalities as Michael Foot and Charles Haughey and can be used for teaching purposes as well as for general reading.

£2 sterling should cover the cost of both the book as well as postage and should be sent to Matt Moran, 36 St Mary's Crescent, Westport Co. Mayo.

★★★★★

John F. Dunne is a librarian in Hertfordshire involved mainly with children and schools. He also runs 'Hibernia Books' and his latest catalogue of secondhand books on Irish literature is available from him at 10 Birch Drive, Hatfield, Herts (enclose SAE).

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