

íRish herítage oidhreacht ghaelach



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The Independent Magazine of Manchester Irish Education Group and The Irish World Heritage Centre

G.A.A.
COMHALTAS

TRAVELLERS
IN BRITAIN

PILGRIMAGE
ACROSS
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Cover Details**Jack Charlton O.B.E.**

Manager of the Irish Republic's World
Cup Soccer team . (Photo D. Claffey)

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Irish Heritage is a quarterly magazine that aims to increase the pride and self esteem of the Irish especially those living abroad. We do this by writing about the positive achievements of the Irish, be it in Sport, Music and Dance, Poetry, Stories, Language and Literature, etc.

Our articles and stories are from ordinary people who share a love of Ireland and the Irish. The Editorial team, contributors and distributors are all volunteers. If you would like to be involved, and it doesn't matter where you live in Britain, Europe or further afield, just contact us through the wonders of modern technology or drop us a line. We would welcome any contribution.

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MUSIC

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

The Spirit of Ireland

by Pat Sweeney



The year 1951, the place Mullingar, West Meath. As the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann came to an end, the Fleadh committee gathered to chew the fat. Anxiety for the state of Irish music punctuated their discussion. The high emigration of the forties had included many potential musicians leaving, sadly never to return. Would the anticipated emigration of the

fifties cause the spirit of Irish music to be extinguished altogether? Happily for us, before the meeting ended that small group of dedicated men and women had founded Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. Its first task was to save the music of the harp and uilleann pipes, two of Ireland's oldest musical instruments. The message of Comhaltas swept like a gorse fire all over Ireland. Branches

were formed, teachers provided and lessons taught until the art of music, song and dance shone brightly once more.

Today Comhaltas is rooted in every one of the 32 counties; there are 38 branches in Britain and overseas branches in America, Canada, Australia, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sardinia and South Africa. A total of 400 branches provides 600 music lessons a week and promotes the music, song and dance of Ireland. Every year, one and a half million people attend Comhaltas events, showing it to be a powerful force for good, bringing people of different creeds together and promoting co-operation and harmony throughout the four provinces of Ireland.

For the future, Comhaltas is setting out to establish an archive centre in every county in Ireland where information about that county's folklore and culture will be stored for future generations, and joining with Connradh na Gaeilge to preserve and foster the Irish language.

The headquarters of Comhaltas are at Cultúrlann na Éireann, Belgrave Square, Monkstown, two miles from Dun Laoghaire on the way into Dublin. There a Céad Míle Fáilte is assured to members and non-members alike.

For more information about Comhaltas, please contact any of the following: Ms Mary McAndrew, 71 Park Lane, Bootle, Merseyside L20 6DL. Tel. 051-922-3503; Mrs. Margaret Gallagher, 5 Brentfield Avenue, Glasgow G44. Tel. 041-637-0241; Ms. Mary Walsh, 4 Oliver Close, Nottingham. Tel. 0602-788-432; Mrs. Joan Burke, 304 Empire Road, Perivale, Middlesex. Tel. 01-997-1784; Ms Margaret McNicholas, 34 Prescott Road, St. Helens, Merseyside WA103. Tel. 0744-34778 or C.C.E., Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin Tel. [01] 800295.

Pat Sweeney is the National Chair of C.C.E. (U.K) and lives in Manchester.

WOR JACK by Ged Hynes

Jack Charlton is Ireland's popular soccer team manager.

The world of football is not one in which there are many surprises left. Few people raise an eyebrow at transfer fees that could build a small housing estate. Fans are no longer surprised at the rapid departures of managers or players as a result of failure, injury or just plain greed and we have, sadly, come to have a cynical view of what was once the most honest and popular team game in the world. Now it is just popular.

JACK CHARLTON O.B.E. is a rare commodity in the cynical world of football. He is an honest man who became the centre of one of the biggest surprises in European, if not world, football.

In 1986, the Football Association of the Republic of Ireland (F.A.I.) was looking for a new manager. Despite the depth of skill that existed in Ireland and among the first and second generation of emigrants abroad, the Republic had little to show in terms of success. It could only bask in the reflected glory that at least the majority of successful British teams had Irishmen at their hearts.

In a bold move the F.A.I. appointed an Englishman, a very English man, as the manager of its team.

Jack Charlton appeared the very epitome of the huntin', shootin' and fishin' Englishman of mythology and stereotype but, like many myths and stereotypes, the truth is contradictory.

The F.A.I. apparently took a great risk with their appointment of Jack Charlton as manager of their national team in 1986. At the time, a great deal of criticism was made of the non-Irish appointment but in retrospect the decision to choose Charlton was one of daring and wisdom. Not only did it take the world of football by surprise but also the Irish people and the media. It was only the media, however, who were critical, but their criticisms became muted as "Big Jack" or "King Jack" became more and more popular and, more importantly, increasingly successful.

John Charlton was born in 1935 in the mining town of Ashington and like his father, Robert, would have gone into the pit if he had not shown great skill at football. Jack

and his younger brother, Bobby, were prodigiously talented and they were taken by Leeds United and Manchester United respectively as professional football apprentices.

Jack began life as a fullback in the hard game that was played in the late fifties.



Tom Ely, Michael Forde, Jack Charlton
Peter Griffin, Michael Forde Jr. Photo by Alan Angel

Football was regarded as a 'man's game' and one in which physical knocks were part and parcel. The motto of the game then could have been described as 'hard but fair' but in reality it was often just 'hard', with confrontations between individual players regarded by the spectators as a normal and acceptable part of the game.

By the early sixties, Jack was playing at Centre-half where his height was an advantage. In 1962, Leeds United rose from the second division with a formidable team that was to dominate English and European football in a way similar to that of Liverpool in the Eighties.

Big Jack was the lynchpin of this team for the next decade until he retired from playing in 1973.

That decade saw him win medals in domestic and European competitions such as the F.A. Cup and the Fairs Cup. In 1967 he was named Footballer of the Year and in 1971 and in 1972 was in the Leeds team that won the Division One championship. In that period of time he was booked forty eight times and sent off on eight occasions. Jack was a robust player, a 'hard but fair' player.

The highlight of that decade came in 1966 when an England team with few outstanding players took on the most skilled ball players on the planet, in the World Cup finals.

The Charlton brothers starred in the team that beat Germany in the final and although

Bobby's contribution was the most obviously spectacular, it was the work of Jack in defence that prevented the German team dominating the game in extra time.

On his 'retirement', Jack became manager of Middlesbrough, bringing promotion success. In 1977 he moved to Sheffield Wednesday for a period of four years. This was followed by a year at Newcastle United, where personal dissatisfaction with the set-up made him leave the game. A striking feature of Jack's management has been his willingness to work without contracts, relying only on a 'gentleman's agreement'. Of course this has meant that he could leave a

club if dissatisfied but it also meant that he was not just in the game for the money - a refreshing contrast to most current managerial practice.

In 1974 Charlton was awarded the O.B.E. for services to football. An indication of Jack Charlton's integrity can be seen in the way that he recently honoured an agreement to appear at a fund raising dinner at the Irish World Heritage Centre in Manchester. He gave this agreement many months before the success of the European Championships and yet he found time in a daunting schedule to be guest of honour - and deliver an extremely entertaining stroll down the memory lane of his career. Late in the night he signed many autographs and posed for many photographs before driving home to Newcastle and his wife, Patricia, whom he married in 1958.

In picking Jack Charlton as manager of the team, the F.A.I. chose a man of humour and integrity who may not bring the Republic the ultimate prize of the World Cup but who will bring the respect of the football world. And who knows what may happen in Italy? A great deal has happened already.

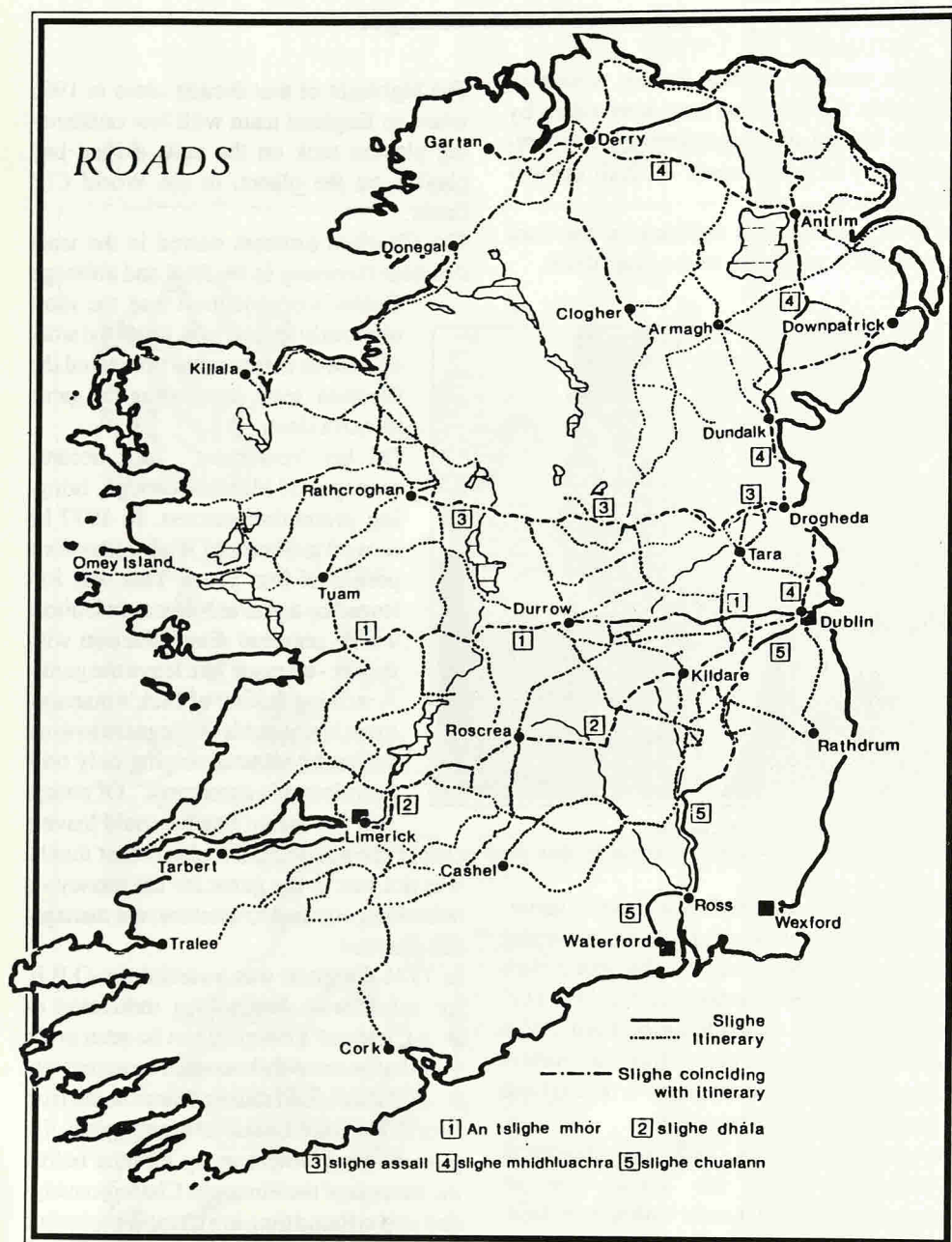
Ged Hynes produces GMR Radio's Irish Programme, "Come into the Parlour".

FEATURE

From Sea to Sea

Across Ireland following the steps of the pilgrims and traders of a thousand years ago.

David Hill and Margaret Worthington



The traditional view of the six centuries of western European history after the withdrawal of the Roman legions has been of a dark age. Scholars have pictured Europe as a series of isolated and backward villages in the wild wood, with few if any contacts even with their nearest neighbours. This view is called a 'model', to hide the fact that it is a series of guesses which take no proper account of all the available information.

When these facts are investigated it becomes clear that these were the centuries when the peoples of western Europe rebuilt their cultures after the shattering of the Roman Empire. The roads were busy, with

saints and scholars, traders and even whole tribes on the move. The leaders in this, as with much else at this time, were the Irish, whose recorded movements run from Iceland and the Faroes down through Northern Italy to Rome and Palestine. Their travels form a fascinating chapter in history. Every child knows of the Vikings and their discoveries. Few know, even in Ireland, that the Vikings were simply following in the wake of Irish hermits and colonists.

There are people interested in the period who believe that the way to understand these journeys is actually to follow the routes. Tim Severin is justly renowned for his North

Atlantic voyages in the wake of Brendan. Driven by the same impulse, we followed the early medieval pilgrim route, on foot, from Canterbury to Rome in 1985 and then the *An tSlighe Mhór* or Great Road across Ireland in 1987. These long walks gave us insights into the difficulties and pleasures these early travellers must have encountered.

O Lochlainn in 1940, in the *Feilsgríbhinn Eoinn Mhic Neill*, used a mixture of eighth and ninth century sources to reconstruct the main outlines of the road system. He noted that the early roads appear to have been paved with stone, wooden causeways being constructed over bogland. *An tSlighe Mhór* winds across southern Ireland from Galway Bay to Dublin Bay, crossing the central plains and marshes on deposits of sand and gravel laid down by retreating glaciers at the end of the Ice Age. The narrow band of higher, drier ground of this esker, known as the *Eiscir Riada*, was the basis of much of the road which marked a dividing line between the north and south and enabled journeys to be made across treacherous bogland. The route passes a number of the great monasteries of the early middle ages. No doubt travel between these was one of the reasons for the Great Road; they would also have provided resting places on the journey. The system is often described as early Christian but the map shows how the roads focus not on Tara but on Dublin, the great port on the east coast. This evidence argues not only for a ninth or tenth century date but also that these were trade routes as well as religious ones.

When we came to trace the route to Rome, following the itinerary of the tenth century English Archbishop Sigeric, our task was made easier because Sigeric had followed Roman roads. In England the Saxon tracks are often still in use but in much of the midlands of Ireland plantations and enclosures have obliterated the medieval pattern. However the route of the Great Road can still be seen away from modern paths because it tends to run along the esker and ridges leading to ancient fords, to ways across bogs and to monasteries and churches. Much more detailed work is needed than we were able to achieve whilst moving. The evidence is still there in the bones of the land and the original route can be seen in the area around Clonmacnoise.

FEATURE



David Hill at the River Shannon

In the twentieth century, finding inexpensive overnight accommodation when walking through such rural areas could have been a problem. But we were welcomed at many monastic centres, helped perhaps because part of our reason for walking was to raise sponsorship for the Save the Children Fund, in response to the famines in Africa. We sampled sports hall floors - cold and draughty but out of the rain; youth centre offices - no sleep until the disco finished but warm and very lively; convents where the sisters impressed us with their dedication and wide ranging knowledge.

One of our main preoccupations before setting out each day was to check that we had correct map sheets. We were clear as to the route we were taking and had estimated how many miles we were likely to walk during that day, so that the backup vehicle could go ahead and make arrangements for the next night's accommodation. The arrangements could be complicated but can have been nothing compared with the possible difficulties to be overcome by a tenth century traveller. Travelling without benefit of detailed and accurate map and signposts at cross-roads, not to mention a telephone system and friends who could take it in turns to walk some of the way while others drove the car carrying the heavy gear and food, life on the move must have been cruel. Itineraries are known from the early mediaeval period and texts suggest that guides were employed on some routes. The pilgrim road to Rome was studded with hospices to shelter travellers overnight if they became sick, the most famous being the monastery at the head of the Great St Bernard Pass.

The weather on such adventures is also critical. On a day when the sun is shining and the birds are singing it is possible to stride along and hardly notice the miles go by. The gorse smells wonderful and the cowslips and orchids can be admired. The number of miles

covered and the attitude to them changes dramatically when the rain comes down, even when you are assured of a warm bed and meal at the day's end, something which must always have been in doubt for the early traveller. Obsessions develop in normally rational people. Feet are a constant topic of conversation and the suggestion that an extra few hundred yards may have to be walked or a wrong turning might have been taken can cause a major upset within the group. One afternoon was spent climbing through gorse and bramble and over fences when a towpath along the canal became blocked; whatever the difficulties

it was better to be moving forward than having to retrace our footsteps. Perhaps to a mediaeval pilgrim these hazards on the journey were as important for chastening the soul as would be the safe arrival and prayer at the shrine, although the merchant may not have taken such a philosophical view.

The lasting memories are, however, of the kindness of the people. We lost count of how many people stopped to offer us a lift and were surprised when we said we had to walk all the way. No doubt they thought we were paying penance for some dreadful sin! The visits to the wayside shrines, crossing the Shannon and walking into Clonmacnoise, the sadly overgrown churchyard at Durrow with its magnificent high cross, these will not be forgotten, nor the final evening when we arrived in Dublin with such a sense of achievement at having walked every step of the one hundred and twenty eight miles!

David Hill & Margaret Worthington are members of the Extra-Mural Studies Dept. at the University of Manchester.

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LITERATURE

The Two Loves of Alice Milligan: Ireland and Poetry

by Michael Hannon



Alice Milligan in her youth

One of Ireland's most delightful writers was an Ulsterwoman, Alice Milligan. Born in Omagh, Co. Tyrone in 1866, the daughter of a Protestant business family, she was educated at Magee College, Derry, the Methodist College, Belfast, and London University.

As a child Alice never heard about the Fenian Brotherhood, or indeed about anything connected with the Fenian Movement. To her well-to-do Protestant family the Fenians were the desperadoes of the day of course. When she grew up Alice often recalled her childhood days. She tells of being called indoors when darkness came. To disobey would result in disaster. No, she wasn't told the fairies or the Pookha were things to be afraid of. No. "The Fenians will get ye" was enough to send Alice and her friends scurrying indoors for shelter. Here is how she recalls those days:

When I was a little girl
In the garden playing,
A thing was often said
To chide us, delaying-

"Come in, for it's growing late
And the grass will wet ye.
Come in, for when it's dark
The Fenians will get ye."

Then, at the dreadful news
All helter-skelter
The panic-struck little flock
Ran home to shelter..

All around the nursery fire
Sat still to listen
Forty bare toes on the hearth,
Ten eyes a-glisten.

To hear of a night in March
And loyal folks waiting
To see a great army of men
Come devastating...

Yet all those childhood tales of the dreadful
Fenians failed to frighten little Alice, for at
heart she was a rebel too. She was to write
that she

....wished she had been a boy
And a good deal older-
Able to walk for miles
With a gun on her shoulder.
Able to lift aloft
The green flag o'er them,
Red coats and black police
Flying before them.

And as she dropped to sleep
Was wondering whether-
God if she prayed to him
Would give fine weather.

Alice Milligan had the courage to break away from the shackles within which she had been brought up. She harboured none of the inbred prejudices which were so prevalent in her day, and which have lingered into our own troubled times. She became prominent in the Gaelic League, founded by Dr Douglas Hyde in 1893. She travelled much of Ireland, lecturing. Still she found time to write her poems.

One of her great friends was Anna Johnson, who wrote under the pen name of Ethna Carbery. Ethna's husband was Seamus McManus, himself a great Donegal writer. Alice and Ethna founded the 'Northern Patriot' and later Alice launched another publication- the *Shan Van Vocht*, which attracted such writers as James Connolly, hero of the Easter Rising, and William Rooney.

Most of Alice's poems tell of Ireland's ancient past. They tell of its heroes, the O'Donnells and the O'Neills, of Tara's hills, as well as of her beloved Tyrone. She uncovered all the ancient heritage that in her early years was hidden from her. This well-loved Ulster poet died at 87 in 1953 and was laid to rest in Drumragh graveyard, Tyrone, close by her parents.

Alice held to a vision of Ireland as one nation where religious and social standings would be no barrier to nationhood. The love she had for her great country is deeply etched in the wonderful poems she has left to us.

The Returning

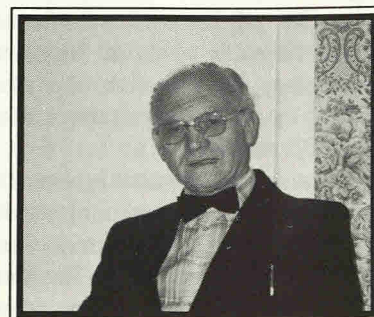
by Michael Hannon

Yesterday, I returned,
All the dreaming over,
Quenched at last, I thought,
The fire of being a rover.
The magnetic call of home
Had come to claim me.
A friendly hand would stretch
A warm voice would name me.
The old house
'Twould be the same
With familiar forms behind the curtain.
No more an exile, I,
No more my heart a-hurtin'.

Again I'd lay my head
In my room on the patterned pillow,
Again, I'd meet my love
Down the lane, by the weeping willow.
I'd walk the meadow paths,
Listen to the song of lark and linnet
As if the ache of absent years
Never had been in it.

Ah, time is fickle, friend,
For no warm voice would name me.
The house was in strangers' hands,
No one to claim me.
The willow tree was there
But my love no longer waiting,
Others now had claimed

This lovers' lane for dating,
Ghostly forms hovered
Behind the heavy curtain.
I turned - and walked away-
My heart a-hurtin' hurtin'.



Michael Hannon

Emain Macha - Navan Fort

by Walter Cassin

The great geographer Claudius Ptolemy (AD 127-151) prepared an atlas of the then known world, basing some of his information on an earlier map by Marionos of Tyre, and that gained from talking to seafarers. He also had at his disposal the use of the greatest library of the ancient world at Alexandria. Because he began at the West the first country he described was Ireland. It was a work of considerable detail, giving the location of 55 rivers, islands, tribes and places in Ireland. He mentions a people in Greek, Oulountrioi, which could have been a form of Uluti, or, in modern Irish, **Ulaidh** - the people of Ulster. He also mentions a place called Isamnion, again possibly an early form of **Emain**. In legend this became **Emain Macha** - the fort of Macha, a war goddess. She also gave her name to nearby **Ard Macha** - the Height of Macha, the modern Armagh. But other authorities give the origin from the old Irish **eo-mhuin**, meaning a neck-brooch, for it is said that Macha marked off the circuit of the fort with a brooch. Whatever the origin, Navan Fort is not to be confused with the Navan of Co. Meath; this is from a different root, **An Uaimh**, meaning the caves.

The greatest literature ever to be associated with Ulster is the Ulster Cycle of Tales. There are stories of Fergus, of the great Cúchulain - the Hound of Ulster - of Druí - the ill-fated Deirdre of the Sorrows - of King Conchobar Mac Nessa, and other heroic figures of legendary Ulster and their sterling deeds against the forces of Queen Medb. These form such a large part of the great Irish epic story, the Táin Bó Cualgne - the cattle raid of Cooley. It was on this mound that King Conchobar was wont to play fidchill, an early Irish chess game, and from where Sualtain, the father of Cúchulain, raised the alarm that Ulster had been invaded by Queen Medb's armies. It was on these ramparts yet that Deirdre met her love, Naoise, and from here that Emer, the wife of Cúchulain, watched him go off to his final and fatal battle. In the area outside the fort lie the playing fields where he practised his warrior skills as a young boy.

The actual construction of the fort, where the bank and the ditch surrounding it are in reverse order, with the ditch on the inside, would appear to give the attacker the advantage over the defenders. This has led archaeologists to believe that Emain Macha was a

vast ritual site for the surrounding area, rather than a defensive fort. There are similar configurations at Knochaulin in Kildare and the more famous Tara. It is reported to be the one representing for Ulster the Coiced, one of the famous 'Fifths' of Ireland. The Irish word for province is **cuig**, meaning a fifth as Ireland was anciently divided thus, into Ulad, Connacht, Muman, Laigan and Mide (Meath) which was a province in its own right until the Norman invasion. Some analysts put the date of the building as 668 BC and it is believed that Macha and her kingly successors ruled Ulster for some 850 years.

The excavation of nearby Loughnashade revealed mainly animal bones but the most exciting discovery was in the 18th century when a workman unearthed four beautifully crafted bronze trumpets. Three of these were later lost. Their exquisite craftsmanship suggests that they were used for major Celtic rituals. Clay moulds for swords were also found. Perhaps the most bizarre find was that of a skull of a Barbary ape, which could only have come from Spain or North Africa. Rare animals were always prized as special gifts and this one could have been a gift to the king of the time, it being the practice until the middle ages to present the Kings of Europe with rare animals and birds.

The end of Emain Macha in about 100 BC was dramatic, indeed astonishing. The people had first of all filled in the entire structure with limestone cobble, leaving the central and surrounding wooden posts exposed. They then razed the site in some mystic form of immolation. The final stage was the piling up of several metres of sod atop of the cairn, leaving it much as it can be seen today. One theory is that they feared their annihilation by late invaders and so by destroying it they merely moved it from the world of mortal humanity to the Otherworld - that they had preserved it for eternity. They were the Tuatha De Danaan and they were driven under the sidhe mounds by the Milesians.

The seeming fate of this ancient place is not a happy one. A limestone quarry was opened in the 19th century and in recent times has devastated much of the land between it and Loughnashade, encroaching to the very edge of the fort. Instead of being a beautiful and worthy surround for such an historic site, the area is now an eyesore. Perhaps the

greatest mystery of Emain Macha is why the Department of the Environment could have countenanced such a brutal rape.

Perhaps the last word should go to Lawrence Flanagan, current Keeper of Antiquities at Belfast Museum, who says that for Ulster "it is Stonehenge, the Parthenon, Troy and Camelot all rolled into one. There's nothing quite like it."

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed reading Walter Cassin's informative article on the site at Tara.

There are one or two points I'd like to make. On a visit there I found the site of the Great Banqueting Hall amazingly well-defined, though no stones are there. There are large embankments. Similarly the sites of the Mound of the Hostages and the Fort of the Kings can readily be discerned.

Walter Cassin doesn't mention that, prior to Daniel O'Connell, Tara held another historic value, as the spot where, I understand, four hundred 'croppies' of 1798 assembled to do battle, only to be defeated by Lord Fingal the Irish Catholic and his yeomen (mostly Irish Catholics too, sadly).

Part One of William Bulfin's "Rambles in Eirinn", written in 1907, looks to a free Ireland, and conveys a powerful appreciation of this site. I have heard elsewhere that the Stone of Fál, or Lia Fáil, is not genuine. There is a legend that Fergus MacErc of Scotland had it stolen in the 5th Century AD, but this is unlikely. Unlikely too that Edward I stole it, when Robert the Bruce of Scotland was fugitive (though crowned above 'their' stone of Destiny). Today it is supposed to lie in Westminster Abbey, though nothing like the fabled stone.

It is true that the site appears insignificant on approach and may disappoint some, but in the evening, with the sun gloriously sinking over the plains, there is a lovely silence there, unspoilt by any tourist trappings - not the first time I have found this in Ireland.

Yours faithfully
John B Fitzpatrick.
Hyde.

Ireland's Outsiders - Travellers in Britain

by Dennis Binns

Suni all the cripachs in the sarc, Bridget, that'll bug us a milc of fe'. 'Let the sooblik get the cripachs, Martin, someone's nyocked my gulimas'. How many would realise that this was Ireland's 'other' language, being spoken daily in Manchester, Sheffield, London and most other parts of England. Estimates vary of course, because no true census has ever been taken, but it is believed that there are about six thousand Travellers living in Britain today, perhaps about ten thousand in Ireland and then smaller groups in Canada, the USA and Australia. In Ireland they are called Itinerants, which has a less perjorative tone than it does in this country. Their language, variously called Shelta, Gammon, the Cant (Irish- the speech) or Tarry, bears little resemblance to Gaelic, although there are elements of Gaelic in it. It consists of a vocabulary of around two or three thousand words in English syntax, both here and in Ireland. The opening sentence translates as 'Look at all the rabbits in the field, Bridget, that'll give us a bit of meat'. 'Let the boy get the rabbits, Martin, someone's taken my shoes'.

The origins of the Irish Travellers are still shrouded in ignorance and may always be so, there being little written evidence to solve the mystery. In general there are three theories which encompass most of the suggestions put forward:

1, that Travellers are descendants of those that chose to live outside the Brehon laws in pre-Christian times and have a Pictish origin.

2, that they have several origins but come mainly from those dispossessed during the land clearances two hundred years ago and from the famines of that time.

3, that they are an admixture of Irish settled people and gypsies.

Most academics favour the first option and it would seem that as Travellers tend to marry within their own group and as they have a limited number of surnames amongst them which in no way reflects the spread of surnames in Ireland, this theory has much to commend it. However it may not be as simple as this.

The Gypsies came from India and entered Europe in the fifteenth century, and according to written records entered Scotland in 1505 and England in 1547. They also appeared in Ireland at about the same time. They also adopted local surnames. Many

Irish Travellers have similar customs to the Gypsies, burning caravans on the death of an elder, arranging marriages, giving a dowry, maintaining cleanliness taboos such as washing hands, crockery, clothes in different bowls etc, although these are not common to all Irish Travellers. Amongst them are many sub-groups which operate as different ethnic groups, each with their own customs, and it may well be that there is a group which satisfies the third theory, that some are descended from Gypsies and Irish Travellers (not Irish settled people). In the literature these are known as the 'gillie-smiths' (Romany-Gillie=song) and it is this group which most resembles the English Gypsies in their customs and surnames (Prices, Smiths, Boswells etc).

Mention has been made of the lack of written records of the Irish Travellers and there is little in literature either. Perhaps the most notable references are to be found in McAlister (1937) **The Secret Languages of Ireland**. There are many novels by Patricia Lynch for children, and Olivia Robertson's novels and Synge's play, **The Tinker's Wedding**. More recently there is the work of George Gmelch and his studies of the **Irish Itinerants** and Nan Joyce's **Traveller Autobiography** (ed. Anne Farmer), and Sharon Gmelch's **Nan: The Life of an Irish Travelling Woman**. Also notable is Sean Maher's **The Road to God knows Where**. Beyond this and a few magazine articles the Travellers are virtually ignored.

Like the Gypsies the Irish Travellers are a very adaptable group of people living on the margins of society. They tend to shun the paid labour of the factories and farms and prefer to work in the interstices of the labour market, fulfilling jobs and occupations that will leave them with control over their labour and time. In Britain they often opt for tarmac jobs, which allow them to travel freely, but many have found their own niches such as tree-felling, scrap merchants, drain-clearing, horse-dealing etc. The women sometimes go hawking door-to-door or try for-

tune-telling. In Canada and the USA they often specialise in farm maintenance such as barn-painting and gate and fence renewal. Many in Britain deal in new and second hand furniture and carpet selling.

The Travellers tend to maintain closely-knit kinship groups which operate as economic units. Often families 'marry across', the boys and girls in one family marrying those in another. Many marriages are arranged, usually when they are 15 or so and with the marriage taking place shortly after the 16th birthday. The parents, however, usually do this with the agreement of the boy and girl. They then buy a trailer and join the family group or, if the families are separated, take turns as to which family they travel with. Most families are very keen Catholics although they may not be regular attenders. However, different sub-groups have different customs and although the parents may not always arrange the wedding, the children are expected to marry within the group. There is evidence that Irish Travellers have been in Britain for the past two to three hundred years, as they were often seen around the mop and hiring fairs, either selling or entertaining.

In 1960 many new Irish Travellers came to Britain. In fact, they usually come when times are hard in Ireland and some return when a living can be made. Britain provides site places for only about half of its Travellers, so there are always a great number travelling around and camping illegally. The 1986 Public Order Act, which was designed to deter the New Age Travellers, has also made life difficult for them. Many have been evicted so often that they have moved into housing, particularly in Man-





Photo. Graham Hall

chester and other large cities. However, even when they are placed they are reluctant to stay in one location for long and either find other housing or move back onto the road.

Most of the laws relating to Travellers in Britain during the last four centuries have been hostile to them as have the local settled people they move amongst, and the local

and national press. The fact that they have survived centuries of harassment and hostility, both here and in Ireland, must to a great extent be due to their large extended families and the close ties within these families. However, there are signs that the Irish Travellers are trying to improve their position and status in society. Many of the children now attend school in Britain through the

support of the Traveller Education Services. Voluntary organisations with Traveller members are campaigning for better access to facilities; and two years ago Nan Joyce, a Traveller in Dublin, polled 273 votes in a local election, to make the voice of the Traveller heard.

Dennis Binns is the Head of the Travellers' Education Service in Manchester

AN GHAEILGE

An Bochtán agus a chuid óir (Aesop). P. O Laoghaire

Bhí fear saibhir santach ann uair amháin agus bhí ard-duil in ór aige. Bhí feirm mhór thalaimh saor aige. Dhíol sé an fheirm agus fuair sé mórán óir uirthi. Leáigh sé an t-ór i dtreo go ndearna sé aon chnapóg amháin de. Ansin rinne sé poll sa talamh in áit uaigneach agus chuir sé an chnapóg mhór óir sios sa pholl. Thagadh sé gach aon lá chun na háite ag feachaint ar an chnapóg óir. Ba mhór an sásamh aigne leis an chnapóg a fheiceáil lena shúile. Chonaic bithiúnach é ag dul gach aon lá chun na háite. 'Dar fia!', arsa an bithiúnach ina aigne féin, 'ach tá rud éigin i bhfolach aige siúd san áit úd. Ní mór dom fháil amach cad é an rud é'. Lean an bithiúnach é gan fhios dó. Chonaic sé ag oscailt an phoill é agus ag féachaint ar rud éigin a bhí thíos sa pholl. Chomh luath agus bhí sé imithe tháinig an bithiúnach agus d'oscail sé an poll. Rug sé leis an chnapóg óir. 'Is mór an trua an t-ór seo bheith d'íomhaoín anseo', ar seisean. Amárach a bhí chugainn tháinig an fear arís chun an phoill mar ba ghnách leis. D'oscail sé an poll. Bhí an chnapóg imithe! Bhuail sé a dhá bhois agus chas sé an dá olagón déag. D'airigh comharsa é. 'Cad é sin ort, arú?', arsa an chomharsa leis. 'O', ar seisean, 'tá mé creachta, tá mé creachta, tá mé creachta!' Agus d'inis sé dó i dtaobh na cnapóige. 'Inseoidh mé duit cad a dhéanfaidh tú', arsa an chomharsa. 'Aimsigh cloch mhaith mhór, chomh mór leis an chnapóg óir a bhí agat. Cuir an chloch síos sa pholl sin agus abair leat féin gurb í an chnapóg óir í. Beidh oiread tairbhe agat as an chloch sin agus a bhí agat as an ór'.

Taken from 'An Irish Reader', Emrys Evans, Aberystwyth 1989 (available from Professor Evans, Dept of Irish, University College, Aberystwyth, price £2.50 + 50p postage.)

DEFINITIONS

By Emrys Evans

Kybosh

Now this is an intriguing word, occurring in such phrases as 'that's put the kybosh on it', meaning 'that's finished it, that's done it, that's the end of it'. Obviously the basic meaning is that the ultimate end has come and that there is nothing more to be done. The Oxford English Dictionary has in the past tried to derive it from some Yiddish word for a sixpence and some other rather suspect origin. But a much more obvious source than Yiddish, and one that fits the meaning of the English idiom best, is the Irish *caip bais* 'the cap of death', namely the black cap that an English judge used to wear when pronouncing the sentence of death after a trial, a finality if ever there was one in those far-off days when there was no appeal against such a sentence.



"That's put the Kybosh
on it" by N. O'Keeffe

IS YOUR NAME.....

by Walter Cassin

....O Ceallaigh - O Kelly, Kelly, Kelley

O Ceallaigh: "descendant of Ceallach", meaning strife, war, contention.

At the beginning of the century Kelly was the second most popular name in Ireland, next to Murphy. (Interestingly the Irish word Ceallach has the same origin as the great Munster family O Ceallacháin - the O Callaghans - but there the similarity ends).

There were several septs of O Kelly, but by far the most powerful was O Ceallaigh of Ulí Maine, that great federation of tribes, who claim descent from Maine Mór, the fourth in descent from Colla-dá-Críoch, fourth century king of Ulster. This great Connacht clan had a territory which comprised part of the present Co. Galway, Roscommon, Clare and Offaly, of which O Kelly was chief. This family produced many prominent chiefs, among them Taidhg Mór O Ceallaigh, who fell at the battle of Clontarf in 1014, and Coughlach O Ceallaigh, the last lord of Breagh, branch of the southern Ulí Neill, who were lords of this extensive territory which covered a large part of Meath and the north of Co. Dublin, until after the Anglo Norman invasion, when they were dispossessed and dispersed throughout Ireland. From Rochach, son of Colla-dá-Críoch, descend the O Kellys of Ulster. This sept, known as Cenél Eachach O Ceallaigh, was based in what is now the barony of Loughinsholin, in Co. Derry. Another branch of the Colla connection were the O Kellys of Clanbrasil Mac Coolechan of North Down. Some Kellys in the west of the province may originally be the O Kellys of Ard O gCeallaigh of Temple Bay in Co. Sligo.

Irish Tongue Twisters

and other proverbs

Sliocht sleacht ar shlioch bhuir sleachta.
Blessing on your posterity (toast to newly-weds).

Ná bac le mac an mhacaigh is ní bhacfaidh mac an mhacaigh leat.
Don't mix with the wrong company.

Is gaire cabhair Dé ná an doras.
God's help is nearer than the door.

Is fada an bóthar nach mbionn casadh ann.
It's a long road that has no turning.

Bíonn an fhirinne searbh.
The truth is often bitter.

AN GHAEILGE

Irish place names by Séamus O Muireágain

The following are some root words found in the formation of Irish place names. I have given only some of the more common ones, enough I hope to whet your appetite and lead you on to what can be a most interesting pastime, and perhaps stimulate an interest in our native language.

For a variety of reasons many of the words have been altered, both in spelling and pronunciation. I have given some examples of how you may find them, in brackets. Also it is easy to get mixed up: the Bally in English could, in Irish, be Baile 'town' or Béal 'mouth' or Bealach 'road'. Likewise Kil could be Cill 'church', or Coill 'wood', so tread warily!

Achadh- field (agha, agh, augh).
Ard- height.
Baile- town (baly, vally, bal).
Bán- white (abne, baawn, vaun).
Beag- little (beg).
Béal- mouth (bel, beul).
Bun- bottom
Carraig- rock (carrick, corrig).
Caol- narrow (keel).

Cill- church (kil).
Cloch- stone (clogh, clough, cloy).
Droim- ridge (drum, drom, drim).
Dún- fort (doon, down).
Eaglais- church (aglish, eglis).
Fearann- land (farn, arran).
Gleann- valley (glan, glen, glin).
Inis- island (Ennis, inch).
Lios- round earthen fort (les, lis)
Loch- lake (lough).
Má- plain (magh).
Mór- big (more).
Mullach- summit (mullagh, mul).
Oileán- island (illan, illaun).
Port- bank, landing place.
Ráth- fort (ra, rah, raha).
Rinn- point, promontory (reen, ring).
Sliabh- mountain (sle, slieve)
Tulach- little hill (tulla, tallow, tully).

Reading further into the subject you'll find that some of these root words have additional meanings.

Books that are helpful include:

The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places by PW Joyce; **Ainmeacha Gaelige na mBailte Poist**; **Pocket Guide to Irish Place Names**, by PW Joyce (Appletree Press); **A Dictionary of Irish Place Names** by A. Room (Appletree); any good Irish-English dictionary.

I Bhfad Uainn translated by Walter Cassin

I bhfad uainn is glas iad na cnúic i gcéin
Is ar shléibhte tán sneachta bán.
I bhfad uainn tán taoide tréan
Is an t-iolar í muinín sciathán.
I bhfad uainn tá mórán suaimhnis
Le féachaint tríd an domhain.
Sé cumhachta dóchais é
Sé cumhachta síochán é.
Is é guí do'n saol.
Dia ag faire orainn, Dia ag faire orainn.
Is é ag seasamh siar ag faire.
I bhfad uainn is cáirde muid go léir
Cé go bhfuilimid ag troid.
I bhfad uainn ní thuigim ar chor ar bith
Cad is cúis leis an gcogadh seo.
Dia ag faire orainn, Dia ag faire orainn,
Is é ag seasamh siar ag faire.

Far away the hills are green
The mountains white with snow
Far from us the tide is full
The eagle glides on outstretched wings.
Far from us there is peace in plenty
To be seen throughout the world
But it's a power for hope, it's a power for peace
It's a prayer for all Mankind
That God is watching over us, God is watching over us
And on us His vigil keeps.
Apart we are all friends
Although we fight each other
Away from it I don't understand
What this war is all about.
But God is watching over us, God is watching over us
And on us His vigil keeps.

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LITERATURE

THE PERFECT COUPLE

by Helen Tallon

This short story was the winner of the 1989 children's writing competition run by the Federation of Irish Societies. The competition is an annual event with prizes for both fiction and non-fiction.

Fourteen year old Helen Tallon is from The Wirral.



As she stood on the ship's deck, she felt something tugging at her skirt. Slowly, she looked down.

"Mummy! Mummy!" a voice insisted.

"Yes, Darling?"

"Why are we going to I...I...that place over there?"

Charlie pointed with her little hand.

She looked out over the crisp blue ocean to a land, emerald green. She wallowed in its beauty and dreamt about the new life she would start there. A big house maybe, de...

"Mummy! Mummy!" the voice insisted.

"We're moving to Ireland because Daddy has got a new job there. Now do me a favour, go and get Daddy. Tell him I want a word with him."

She heard the patter of tiny feet as Charlie ran away.

Yet again her mind wandered to the Emerald Isle. She knew how hard it would be on Charlie having to go to a new school, make new friends. After all, she should find it easy. She was only four. The hardest part would be living without...

"Hi, Carol! Dreaming about our new start?"

"How did you know?" she laughed. He didn't know how close to the truth he was.

Suddenly a loud bell sounded and everybody rushed inside for dinner. Charlie slid one hand into her mother's and the other into her father's.

"I love you both," she whispered.

They ate dinner, constantly talking and laughing...the perfect couple.

Then, it came.

At about 8 pm. that night, rain started to fall

in torrents and loud claps of thunder resounded through the air. Brian, her husband, always seemed to suffer from seasickness. He didn't want to disturb Charlie or Carol and so quietly he slipped out of the berth and crept stealthily along the corridor. He stepped onto the deck and the wind hit his face. Through the rain and light mist he could see the distant outline of Ireland.

He clung to the railings as he tried to stop himself from falling overboard. He hated travelling by sea, he only hoped that Charlie wouldn't take after him and suffer from seasickness as well. At least, Carol didn't.

He sometimes wondered if Carol realised just how much he loved her, how much he needed her. He had worked hard to get the transfer to Ireland. Maybe it wasn't a big move to a lot of people but for him it was the biggest thing in the world to happen.

He didn't hear the footsteps at first, not until they were directly behind him. He turned around but it was too late. The knife went straight into him. It had been timed perfectly. Suddenly a freak wave came and they were swept overboard. Their bodies were carried along with the current. She screamed. Nobody could save them. Her own plan had gone wrong. She had signed her own death warrant.

Poor Charlie. She woke up screaming. Nobody could find her parents anywhere. She'd lost both of them, the perfect couple.

The prize was a week-end in Dublin for Helen and her parents (by boat!) courtesy of B+I!!

Prize Quiz.

A prize of a £20 book token is offered for the first, all-correct answer drawn after the closing date, which has been extended from the one given in the last issue.

1) What is the epitaph on W.B. Yeats' grave, and from which poem is it taken?

2) In the following lines by Yeats who are the two girls he is describing?

Great windows opening to the south,
Two girls in silk kimonos, both beautiful
One a gazelle.

3) What subject did James Joyce intend to study when he went to live in Paris, in 1902?

4) When Joyce returned to Ireland, to live in his Martello tower at Sandycove, who lived there with him?

5) In 'Finnegan's Wake', who is Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker's wife?

6) What was Oscar Wilde's full name?

7) Who painted the portrait of Dorian Grey?

8) The following were the pseudonyms of which authors? :

- a) An Pilibín
- b) An Craoibhín Aoibhinn
- c) An Seabhac
- d) Miles na gCopaleen

9) Which Irishman became Poet Laureate of England in 1692?

10) In 1893 a poem, in Irish, first appeared in print, under the title 'Mediae Noctis Consilium.' Who wrote it, and how is it better known?

11) The County of Clare originally formed one of the Counties of Connaught. When was it added to Munster?

12) Name the Irish equivalent of Neptune, God of the Ocean.

13) When and where did Michael Dwyer, the famous Wicklow rebel, die?

14) Which Irish Parliamentarian was invited to address the House of Representatives in the United States, in 1880.

15) What great pagan idol was destroyed by Saint Patrick?

16) When and where did Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Ulster, die?

17) Which Irish Saint is known as 'the Navigator', and when is his feastday?

18) Where is Lord Antrim's parlour?

19) In 1815 Daniel O'Connell was challenged to a duel. Who challenged him, and why?

20) What was the original name of the street in Dublin where Patrick Pearse was born, in 1879?

Entries should be sent to "Prize Quiz", Irish Heritage Magazine, Irish World Heritage Centre, 10, Queens Road, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, M8 8UQ.

Rules of the Competition:

- 1) Entries must be received by first post 19th Aug 1990
- 2) The first all-correct (or best) answer out of the hat will be the winner
- 3) Entries will not be accepted from members of the M.I.E.G. or their immediate families.
- 4) The decision of the editorial team is final.

The name of the winner, and the answers to the questions, will be announced in the Autumn 1990 issue of 'Irish Heritage'.

BOOK REVIEWS

Sectarian Violence: the Liverpool Experience 1819-1914,

by Frank Neal,

Manchester University Press, paperback
£12.95 (Autumn 90)

Statistics. That stultifying word deters so many people, for whom data and numbers entail those 'lies, damned lies'. But what Frank Neal has done, in this splendid and enthralling history of sectarian violence, is to marshal a fascinating array of figures and flesh them with excitement. Take, for example, the density of population in 1841. When the average population for England and Wales was 275 per square mile, that for built up areas in Liverpool was a staggering 138,244 per square mile. Consider also that this was just before the massive influx of Famine Irish. (Teeming Manchester had, for comparison, a mere 100,000 souls per square mile).

By 1851 22.3% of the people of Liverpool were Irish born, bringing the total for Lancashire, the most 'Irish' of English counties, to 64%. This figure does not account for the children born thereof, who would also consider themselves Irish.

For those unfortunates subsisting in cellars and overcrowded tenements, in squalor and cramp, with rats and disease their daily companions, there must have been immense anger and frustration, intercut with apathy.

The prospect of faction fighting must have been a welcome diversion.

Frank Neal's book is a meticulous record of the parallel rise of Orangeism and Fenianism. It charts the reasons for their emergence and their sickening legacy of riots, hatred and bloody warfare. Orange lodges sprang up rapidly on the English mainland in the early nineteenth century, trumpeting their policy of defence of the establishment, composed as they were of veterans of the Napoleonic wars in the main.

By the time of Waterloo there were 25 such lodges in the Manchester area alone and scores of others across the Lancashire cotton belt. Significantly there was seething unrest among the cotton workers, and sympathies for Chartism were strong. These disaffections the Orange lodges sought to contain. This was also the time of the little known United Englishmen, who were especially strong in Lancashire and strongly sympathetic to their counterparts in Ireland, broken at the 1798 rebellion.

By the 1850s polarisation was almost complete. On this aspect Frank Neal seeks, and I think achieves, a strictly neutral stance, letting the facts speak for themselves. He trades accounts of vicious and monotonously regular Orange attacks on Catholic processions with examples of cross-antagonism. He cites one case of a Catholic being attacked by his co-religionists for simply talking to a Protestant.

The bigotry ran deep on both sides, in the depressingly familiar ruts of present day Northern Ireland politics. The rise of Fenianism, notably through the Irish Republican Brotherhood (hundreds of whose members were in the British Army, perhaps even the majority of the lower ranks - a supreme irony!) and the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850, further emphasised the Protestants fears of being 'swamped' and their continuing sense of isolation. Their fearful reaction was violent. For the Irish, the dispossessed who had lost everything by repression, their homes, land, language and culture, indeed their very living back home in Ireland, stricken as they were by hunger and driven to emigrate, theirs was a rising anger.

The longevity of this conflict is stunning, dragging well into the present century with attacks not only on processions but on houses and schools, even on infant schoolchildren. But there were touches of black, typically Scouse humour, with the story from the 1950s of a ham-shank hung from a lamp-post with a sign saying "Cured at Lourdes..."

While Frank Neal's work would be a valuable addition to any library of social history, filling a gap in a neglected area, it remains highly readable and I urge you to search it out.

Reviewed by Walter Cassin, librarian for the Manchester Irish Education Group.

Dubliners, by James Joyce

Paladin Press £3.99

James Joyce, born in Dublin in 1882, was educated at Jesuit schools and at University College, where he studied philosophy and languages. He left his home town for Paris at 24, but shortly returned to be at his mother's deathbed. He then made his home in Trieste, where he scraped a living teaching English at the Berlitz School. During 1909 and 1912 he made what were to be his final trips to Ireland, trying to arrange publication of 'Dubliners', which appeared in England at the outbreak of world hostilities in 1914.

'Dubliners' was set against the background of turn-of-the-century Dublin. In a style unusually realistic for the time, it describes the lives of ordinary people, made

extraordinary by his genius. The short stories deal progressively with youth, adolescence, young adulthood and maturity. The themes of repression, entrapment and revolt link the stories together but, throughout, a unique Irish wit surfaces, relished and splendidly displayed.

After this tour de force, still yet considered one of the greatest pieces of writing in any language, Joyce wrote on, often in great poverty. The play 'Exiles' (1915), 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' (1916) and the triumphant 'Ulysses' of 1922 poured from him. Two months after 'Finnegan's Wake' was published he died at the age of 58, in 1940. As the Times Literary Supplement put it, "James Joyce was and remains unique among writers in that he published nothing but masterpieces." Try them. They may change your life.

By Sue Berman

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

May to August. University College Galway Summer School Irish Studies, Gaelic, Drama etc. Details from Séamus O Grady 091 244411

31st. Four Irish Poets - Eilean Ni Chuilleanain, Michael Davitt, Pat Galvin, Macdara Woods. 6.00pm

Cornerhouse M/c 061 228 2463
1 - 3 London Irish Book Fair, Irish Centre, 52 Camden Sq. NW 1
Free admission; exhibitions, over 50 book-stalls, childrens events, readings,

famous guests etc. Fri noon- 10pm, Sat 10 am- 10pm, Sun 10 - 5pm
Contact G. Bell Green Ink Bookshop, 8 Archway Mall, N19 5RG or tel. 263 4748

30 - 1st July Glasgow Irish Book Fair, as part of the Culture Capital of Europe festival. Contact Green Ink Bookshop London 263 4748

July

3 - 27 Irish Studies Summer School, University College Cork "Who are the Irish? Approaches to identity" contact Dr. M. O Fathaigh 021 2768 71 ext. 2465 (£850)

Throughout July there are courses at Oideas Gael at Glencolmille. Co Donegal

The Irish in Argentina

When did the Irish arrive on Argentinian soil? Well, it appears that most of the Irish can trace their arrival to the 40's, 50's and 60's of the last century, when the Great Famine and its consequences provided the tragic impetus for emigration. The earliest recorded Irishman there was the Jesuit, Thomas Field, a native of Limerick, who arrived towards the end of the year 1586. If the number of new arrivals is now small, second, third and fourth generation Irish remain a distinctive and discernible segment of the population.

The Reverend Fred Richards, whose ancestors are from Wexford, edits the community newspaper, "The Southern Cross." When it celebrated its centenary in 1975, it carried congratulatory messages from Eamonn de Valera, the then Taoiseach, Liam Cosgrave and President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh. The first English Language newspaper in South America, "The Standard", pre-dated the "Southern Cross" by 14 years, having been founded by Edward Mulhall and his brother in 1861. Edward and his brother, Michael, were born in St Stephen's Green, Dublin. Michael's book, "The English in South America", included a whole galaxy of Irish who were active in the early days of development both in military and civil areas. The Mulhall connection with Ireland is today strongly maintained in the person of one of the grandsons, Eric, who represents both Aer Lingus and Bórd Fáilte as area manager for South America.

Buenos Aires

In the city centre of Buenos Aires is the "Centro Argentina de Cultura Irlandesa". John Scanlan, as well as running his own school, is the Centre's Director. English is taught on a commercial basis to adults and children by 25 part-time teachers. The Centre gives free lectures on Irish History and Literature on Saturdays. In the early 1980s it was, as John puts it, "time to give Ireland its identification, and show that there was such a thing as the Irish language". An advert in the newspapers drew some 25 to 30 people at the first attempt. The Centre deals with a wide variety of questions on Ire-

land, many redirected from the Embassy.

The fabric of Buenos Aires itself still evokes the Irish presence and its past. At the corner of Reconquista and Bartolome Mitre Streets once stood the house of Thomas Armstrong, a highly successful Protestant Irishman from County Laois. The first "Irish Immigrant Infirmary" was opened by Father Fahy in Cangallo Street in 1848. The Sisters of Mercy arrived in 1856 in Baggot Street where the Order is still based.

Cordoba

Argentina is a timeless country and Cordoba, the third city of Argentina, seems rooted in its own antiquity. It was founded by Luis Geronimo de Cabrera in 1573. In the year 1613, the Jesuits established a university and made it their national headquarters until the expulsion of their Society in 1764. It was the ancestor of one of the Cordoba Irish families, the Morans, who was the first Irishman to return. Two sons of Westmeath and Wexford, John Mooney and Patrick Browne, are said to have been responsible for bringing out many immigrants from their counties.

Today, Cordoba boasts Finns, Hogans, O'Kellys, O'Sheas, Mooneys and Mullins to name but a few. An earlier wave of Irish immigration was represented by Senora Carmen Garson Mason de Padros, a direct descendant of one of Admiral Brown's two nephews, Charles and William, both seamen. Admiral Brown, born in Foxford, County Mayo in 1777, arrived in the River Plate in 1809 and offered his services to the independent government of Buenos Aires. He rose to become Commander of the Argentine Navy.

Cordoba, with its own international airport, has retained much of its colonial architecture, and with it, its sense of history. With the rich agricultural land and mountains surrounding it, the city would come easily to anyone from Cork, Kerry and Westmeath. One of the typical attitudes of the older generation with Irish roots is, "I have given 18 Argentinians to the country. Let them allow an old man to go on being Irish."

Mendoza

Ambrosio O'Higgins, an Irishman born in Summerhill, Co. Meath, emigrated to Spain and then to South America. His first crossing of the Andes from Mendoza in the winter of 1763 was so terrible that he resolved to do something about it. From supervising the building of a series of "casuchas" or brick shelters at strategic intervals, he went on to be the Governor-General of Chile and later, the supreme representative of Spanish Power in America.

Ambrosio's scheme to encourage large scale emigration from Ireland to Chile was forestalled by the more accessible opportunities of North America.

The Irish community of Mendoza, in the foothills of the Andes, did not become involved to any great extent in vineyards and viticulture, as they had done in France, Spain and Australia. Nor was the Irish community in Mendoza ever as concentrated or influential as it was in Cordoba and the province of Buenos Aires. Indeed the early Irish communities of Mendoza, Cordoba, Rojas and Buenos Aires were significantly different from those that later developed under the stimulus of 19th century immigration.

"The Camp"

Father Fahy, born in Loughrea, Co. Galway in January 1801, having spent some time in North America, was determined that the Irish who came to the River Plate would not end up in city ghettos like those in New York and Chicago. He wrote to the Archbishop of Dublin in 1847 and spoke of 'The Camp' (Campo = country) "The salubrity of the air, the fertility of the soil...the magnificence of its rivers all combine to invite the poor man to settle in it." With his encouragement, the Irish moved into 'The Camp' with the result that the Province of Buenos Aires section of Mulhall's Handbook is thick with Irish references. For example, a description of the settlement of Rojas went as follows: "The Village....43 leagues WNW of Buenos Aires, has 1508 inhabitants, church, shops.....Irish Club and Library, with stated race

British Association for Irish Studies

by Seán Hutton

meetings. This district suffers constantly from Indians who carry off all the horses....."

In Rojas, the head of the Irish/Argentine community is an engineer, John Gear, a substantial *Ranchero* who advertises his seed maize in the pages of "The Southern Cross". If one were to take the route out of Buenos Aires through the flat rich land of Pampa, one could almost believe that one was on the edge of the Curragh of Kildare; it's here that so many Irish fortunes were made.

From Rojas to Monte, the holdings were smaller and the Irish community more concentrated. Now most of the Irish here are third generation. Take a look round its graveyard and it is full of Irish names—Hughes, McCormicks, Dolans, Gannons, and so on.

In Monte, Irish families are well documented. However, in Buenos Aires, statistical numbering of the Irish as 'English' makes the determination of actual numbers of Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century difficult according to Doctor Eduardo Cogan. In Monte, many still preserve many of the old ways. Here the Hughes, MacGoeyes and Hogans still marry within the community. One of the locals observed that the Irish, 'all kept their customs' unlike the Italians who, with other immigrant groups, live here. Perhaps this is due to the rural isolation helped by the sense of community and a largely shared religion, for Father Fahy made sure that they received regular visits from Irish priests. Mulhall in 1875 noted that 'each district has its own clergyman.'

As a further manifestation of their identity, the locals of Monte have erected a statue of Admiral William Brown on the shores of Lagunna de Monte, a large natural lake which they are developing as a tourist attraction. With the construction of an attractive hotel, on the shoreline, the settlement of Monte is in need of tourists since there is no other industry and agriculture is depressed.

John Scanlon says his next dream is to bring out Irish performing artistes to enrich Irish culture in Argentina and South America as a whole. As Eric Mulhall states, "Outside Argentina, the image of Ireland in South America is virtually nil."

The Association was set up in 1986, as a non-political, non-sectarian grouping, the membership of which largely consists of people professionally involved with Irish Studies in Great Britain. Membership is by annual subscription. BAIS has charitable status and is controlled by its elected officers and executive committee, while day-to-day matters are in the hands of a full time executive director. Sub-committees advise, develop policies and initiate programmes in the areas of higher education, adult and further education, compulsory education, the Irish Language and cultural matters.

Objectives and Strategy

BAIS supports those already involved in Irish Studies but also aims to promote and expand such studies at all levels of education throughout the United Kingdom by:

- establishing Irish Studies firmly in Higher Education
- giving the school-going population access to Irish Studies
- developing Irish Studies programmes for adult education.

Services to Members

BAIS organises a biennial Irish Studies conference and an annual series of public lectures which this year took place in Manchester, in co-operation with the John Rylands University Library. It publishes the Survey of Irish Studies in Britain and a twice-yearly newsletter, both sent free to members along with Irish Studies in

Britain and the Irish Literary Supplement. It offers financial support to a number of independent initiatives, including the highly successful annual conference at Soar Valley College, Leicester, on Irish Dimensions in British Education.

Achievements so far

In 1986 the University Grants Committee stressed the importance of Irish Studies provision. Since that time BAIS has found funding from the British and Irish governments, the Allied Irish Bank, the American Ireland Fund and the Ireland Fund of Great Britain.

The support of BAIS contributed to the setting up of an Institute of Irish Studies at Liverpool University. The partnership between BAIS and the Institute, in a Joint Education Programme has resulted in two A/S level syllabuses: "The Irish in Britain 1815-1914" and "History, Literature and the Irish Identity 1890-1926", which together make up an A level in Modern Irish History. BAIS has also developed a series of Irish language examinations for adult learners, in co-operation with the Institute of Linguists, set up by the BAIS/Gael Linn Irish language scholarships, and holds an annual series of sixth-form history conferences in Northern Ireland.

Further details on membership from :
Seán Hutton, Executive Director, BAIS,
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FEATURE

THE FIDDLER

BY Michael Hannon

Without fail he came, every Spring, and always his fiddle with him. We never did get to know his real name, but we called him 'Danny Boy'. Of all the tunes he played, he played *Danny Boy* the best - and he played it the most often.

He was a big strapping fellow, with a round face and dark, piercing eyes. His voice was soft and musical, a voice that had the lilt of Munster in it. As to his age, anyone could hazard a guess — but it would only be a guess. To me he was ageless — as ageless and as unchanging as the big stone in Jim McGee's field.

He found work with local farmers during the Spring and was happy with the few shillings and the bed he received in return. At night the rafters would ring with the wild airs from his fiddle. And tired feet would keep tune on the kitchen floor. Sometimes he would break off and stare into the bright glow of the turf fire. Often I wondered what strange images he had seen there. Maybe it was the faces of loved ones — a wife, children, or a sweetheart ... or was it a winding road through Clare or Kerry that was beckoning him to move on.

There was something that stirred his musical fingers. In a way his music was his voice. It told of his happiness, his sadness, and his sentiment.

One wet St Patrick's night we were sitting round the fire in Bill Cleary's kitchen when 'Danny' walked in. He had his fiddle tucked under his arm.

"'Tis a terrible night that's in it, altogether," he groaned, "and not a crop in the ground yet."

"Ah, it's a terrible night right enough," Bill Cleary echoed. "I'm thinking the Great Saint himself isn't too pleased with us."

'Danny' smiled. "Sure, 'tis His day," he chided, "and he can do what he wants with it."

He grabbed the three-legged stool by the dresser and pushed his way towards the fire. Rainwater dripped from the rim of his hat onto the hearthstone. He took it off and shook the water from it. Then he tossed it towards the hob to dry. He placed the fiddle gently at his feet.

"You'll play us a tune, won't you?" asked Barney Toalin impatiently.

"Ah, hold your whist, man," butted in Bill Cleary. "There's a long night in it yet."

'Danny' leant over the open fire. He held out his hands and let the flames fill them with warmth. "'Tis thankful for the heat we should be," he said reproachfully. "I can remember nights without it ... many nights." "I could never take to the roads," Barney Toalin reflected. "You've got to be a special breed for that life."

'Danny Boy' smiled to himself and remained silent for a minute. His dark, piercing eyes stole in Toalin's direction.

"We're all of the one breed," said 'Danny' thoughtfully, "the human kind. We all came into the world the same way - and it's the same way we'll go, more or less."

Bill Cleary nodded in agreement, while Barney Toalin was half stunned to silence. This man with no name puzzled him. He was a strange mixture of philosopher, poet and musician. Each spring he came, like the sun rising out of the mist. When the urge surged within him he would go. He'd steal away into the shadows.

In silence Barney Toalin sat, conjuring up queer contorted thoughts of life on the open road. But his thoughts only took him to Connor's Corner in Lenareva village — the furthest he had ever been.

The warmth had returned to 'Danny's' hands now, and his face glowed in the firelight. Bill Cleary's wife came with a cup of tea. She offered it to the fiddler. He stretched out his delicate hands, thanking the lady of the house for her kindness. He took a few sips, then placed the cup at his feet beside the fiddle. Barney Toalin shuffled uneasily in his seat. But his face showed some displeasure when 'Danny' ignored the fiddle at his side.

The rain lashed furiously against the window pane. The fiddler shivered slightly and pulled his stool nearer the fire.

"There's more tea in the pot," said Mrs Cleary, "if you want it."

He thanked her, then handed her the cup.

"You've been coming this way now for many a day," said Barney Toalin, "and devil the better fiddler ever darkened a man's door."

'Danny's' face glowed. He stooped and picked his instrument off the floor. He placed it gently on his knees.

"You'll find as good in Munster, and Ulster, too," he said, smiling.

"You're a Munster man yourself, then?" said Cleary, probing for information.

'Danny' shook his head. "The four corners of Ireland are mine," he whispered. "And always have been."

"Where did you get your collection of tunes?" asked Old Toalin. "For 'tis a great many you have."

'Danny' thought for a moment. "Well, if you want to know," he drawled, "'twas from the four winds and the fairies."

"From the fairies!" gasped Cleary, crossing himself.

"Yes, I stole a few of their tunes once," the fiddler replied thoughtfully. "It was one moonlit night in May. A place called Lisheen it was. I was shackled up in an old cabin in the valley. All night they played, and by dawn I could play as good as themselves." "My God!" croaked Toalin. "'Twas a fool thing to do - to steal the wee folks' music." "I know it now," said the fiddler, lowering his voice. "I know it now."

A gust of wind rattled the windows and for a moment there was silence in Cleary's kitchen.

'Danny' removed the fiddle from its case. I could see Old Toalin turn pale as he did so. All his earlier impatience was gone. Mesmerised, he watched as 'Danny' tucked the fiddle under his chin.

Outside, the night wind shook the trees furiously. The louder it roared, the louder came the music from 'Danny's' fiddle. It filled every corner of Cleary's farmhouse. Even when he had finished it seemed to re-echo through the trees outside.

The fiddler rose to go. "I'll be on my way now," he said, in a subdued tone. "They'll have the door shut on me down at Kelly's." Bill Cleary followed him to the door. The rain had eased a little now, but the wind was as furious as ever. Wild clouds floated across a pallid moon.

"'Tis a wild night the Saint sends us," said the fiddler as he stepped out into the semi-darkness.

"God speed you on your way," called Bill Cleary. "You'll come again?"

The fiddler waved his hand in salute, then faded away into the shadows of the night. We never saw him again.

SPORT

Gaelic Games by Paddy Johnson

Willie Hogan, Chair of Kilkenny Assoc. M/C. with Richard Power (left) & John Hennessey (right) of the Kilkenny and All Stars Hurling Teams.

Photo Danny Claffey

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) was founded in Thurles in 1884. Over the years both hurling and football have reached many parts of the world. Gaelic games are major crowd-pullers in Australia, America, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Wales and England, to mention but a few places.

In Manchester there is a thriving association under the authority of the Lancashire County Board. Games are played every weekend between March and November. Hough End Playing Fields on Princess Parkway is the main playing venue and there are also pitches at Turn Moss, Stretford. There are nine clubs based in the Manchester area: St. Brendan's, Emerald Gaels, St. Peter's, Oisín, Four Provinces, Sarsfield Gaels, St. Kentigern's, Pride of Erin and St. Lawrence's, while in Bolton there is the Shannon Rangers Club and in Liverpool the John Mitchells club.

Clubs run teams from the age groups Under 10, U12, U14, U16, U18, U21, Junior Adult and Senior Adult. So a great coverage of age groups is achieved. All clubs would welcome any person from all age groups to join them. Underage football is also enjoying great success with two clubs from Manchester having won the all-Britain U14 championships over recent years. Young boys get a big kick out of Gaelic football, making new friends and going on trips to Ireland organised by the clubs. When immigration sank to its lowest ever in the last two decades the young boys of underage football became the backbone of many clubs.

The game of Hurling has suffered badly over the years, with the fall off in immigration in the seventies and after. Thankfully things are now turning round, with the hard work and endeavour put in particularly by members of the Sarsfield Gaels. When the club was formed a few years ago there was little opposition for them to play in Lancashire, so they decided to join the Gloucester Co. Board who were promoting hurling with just a few teams. This decision involved the Gaels in travelling hundreds of miles to take part in competitions, but they found huge success, culminating in their reaching the Senior All-Britain Championship final in 1989.

The latest club to form a hurling team is Pride of Erin, so perhaps hurling will enjoy a great renaissance in Manchester. Obviously all this activity calls for much hard work and dedication from the people involved in running the clubs. Games every week, training, meetings and fund raising, all are draining but necessary aspects. One of the main priorities of the GAA is to secure its own pitches with proper facilities, and this is starting to look possible.

Gaelic games are also played by women and there are a number of teams taking part in the Pennine League from Greater Manchester and Yorkshire.

The playing of Gaelic Games brings hosts of new friendships and a sense of comradeship that is hard to find elsewhere. Remember, you are welcome at any time.

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