Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

History on your Doorstep

Volume 8

Seven stories of Dublin's history

by Dublin City Council's Historians in Residence Katie Blackwood, Elizabeth Kehoe, Catherine Scuffil, Dr Cormac Moore, Dr Mary Muldowney, Historian in Residence for Children Dervilia Roche, and Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire

Edited by Elizabeth Kehoe and Dr Allison Galbari

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Brollach

Is cúis áthais domsa, mar Ardmhéara Bhaile Átha Cliath, an t-eagrán is déanaí seo de *History on Your Doorstep*, ár bhfoilseachán bliantúil atá bunaithe ar stair Bhaile Átha Cliath, a chur in bhur láthair. Gach bliain, agus sinn ag tiomsú an ábhair éagsúil agus shaibhir atá san imleabhar seo, meabhraítear dúinn an fhairsinge dhochreidte thallainne, léargais agus dhúthrachta a bhíonn le tabhairt faoi deara in obair ár rannpháirtithe.

Ní haon eisceacht é eagrán na bliana seo. Idir anailís ghéar agus na scéalta pearsanta ó chroí, léirítear ar na leathanaigh seo a leanas an tóir gan staonadh ar eolas agus ar scéalta tábhachtacha a insint. Tá ár rannpháirtithe, Staraithe Cónaithe Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire ina measc, tar éis ár n-ionchais a shárú arís, tar éis dóibh bailiúchán píosaí a sholáthar atá faisnéiseach, thar a bheith tarraingteach agus inspioráideach, agus a bhfuil ábhar machnaimh iontu.

Scríobhann Katie Blackwood faoi na ceisteanna síoraí maidir le béasaí, róil inscne agus faisean in Éirinn sna 1920idí trí pheirspictíocht litreacha a seoladh chuig an *Evening Herald*. Nochtar sa chaibidil seo dearcthaí agus tuairimí na scríbhneoirí litreacha seo, a bhí thar a bheith gníomhach agus a bhí greannmhar go minic, ar an nua-aoiseachas agus ar an moráltacht ag an am sin. Tugtar leis seo léargas suimiúil dúinn ar an saol laethúil i mBaile Átha Cliath agus ar na nósanna a bhí i réim ag an am sin.

Tá caibidil Elizabeth Kehoe bunaithe ar Stair Bhéil. Rugadh Moira Mahon sa bhliain 1924 agus léirítear ina saol scéal Bhaile Átha Cliath ón am sin go dtí an lá atá inniu ann. Tabharfar ina scéal iontach tuiscint don léitheoir ar stair an tsaoil laethúil agus ar conas is féidir le stair na cosmhuintire, a bhfuil an-leamh de réir dealraimh ar a laghad, a bheith sách neamhghnách i ndáiríre.

In a chaibidil, tagann Cormac Moore faoi scéal Yitzak Herzog, an chéad Phríomh-Raibí i Saorstát Éireann. Scríobhann Cormac faoi shaol luath Herzog, a chuid oideachais, a chumas agus conas a thug sé aghaidh ar shaol an-phoiblí in Éirinn le linn tréimhsí suaiteacha, tar éis dó a bheith ina cheannaire reiligiúnach ar phobal Giúdach Bhaile Átha Cliath. Tugtar tuiscint dúinn sa saothar seo ar an bhfear agus ar a chreideamh araon.

Pléitear i gcaibidil Mary Muldowney saol agus saothar Liam Uí Fhlaithearta agus aird ar leith á tabhairt ar a shaothar ceannródaíoch, *The Informer*. Ní hamháin go bhfoghlaimímid faoi shaol agus faoi shaothar an Fhlaitheartaigh sa phíosa seo ach foghlaimímid freisin faoin gcaoi ar chuir sé faoi i gCeoláras Ospidéal an Rotunda chun aird a tharraingt ar chruachás na dífhostaíochta i mBaile Átha Cliath go luath sna 1920idí. Ina theannta sin, tarraingíonn Mary ár n-aird ar a oidhreacht cheartais shóisialta agus a chumas castachtaí staid an duine a léiriú, trína chuid scríbhneoireachta.

Déanann Dervilia Roche, Staraí Cónaithe do Leanaí i mBaile Átha Cliath, cur síos ar thuras do leanaí atá forbartha aici i gcomhar le Stair Ghráinseach Ghormáin (Grangegorman Histories). Agus í ag obair i dteannta le daltaí agus múinteoirí ó Scoil Ag Foghlaim Le Chéile Bhaile Átha Cliath 7 agus ó Bhunscoil Shráid Stanhope, fiosraíonn Dervilia stair éagsúil an tsuímh seo, stair a bhíonn dúshlánach go minic. Tugtar leis seo deis don léitheoir tuiscint a fháil ar an bhforbairt a tháinig ar an áit seo ó na 1700idí go dtí an lá atá inniu ann.

Sa chaibidil seo le Catherine Scuffil, déantar iniúchadh ar shaol Michael Flanagan, iar-Alderman, Comhairleoir Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, Breitheamh Síochána, fostóir áitiúil, úinéir talún mór agus garraíodóir margaidh in iardheisceart Chontae Bhaile Átha Cliath. Bhí ról mór aige i múnlú Bhaile Átha Cliath ag deireadh an 19ú haois agus tús an 20ú haois mar pholaiteoir agus mar úinéir talún araon. Sa lá atá inniu ann, tá a thalamh

díolta, le haghaidh tithíochta agus forbairtí eile i ndeisceart Bhaile Átha Cliath, ach cuimhnítear air trí ghairdín margaidh pobail sa Charnán ar a dtugtar Flanagan's Fields.

Fiosraítear i gcaibidil Mháirtín Mhic Con Iomaire Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath, stobhach clúiteach a dhéantar de ghnáth as oinniúin, ispíní agus prátaí. Bíonn blasanna éagsúla ar chadal agus is cosúil go bhfuil idir ghean agus ghráin air. Úsáideann Máirtín teangeolaíocht, sanasaíocht, béaloideas, leabhair chócaireachta, filíocht, agallaimh, agus tuilleadh chun stair an chadail a fhiosrú chomh maith lena bhunús agus conas a thárla go bhfuil baint mór ag an mias sin le Baile Átha Cliath.

Ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas ó chroí a ghabháil lenár rannpháirtithe uile as a n-obair dhian agus a ndúthracht. Is iad a bpaisean agus a ndúthracht stair éagsúil Bhaile Átha Cliath a iniúchadh a chuireann beocht sa leabhar seo, agus táimid thar a bheith buíoch díobh as cur leis. Ba mhaith liom iarrachtaí gan staonadh na foirne eagarthóireachta a aithint freisin, toisc go raibh a n-aird mhionsonraithe agus a dtacaíocht dhochloíte ríthábhachtach chun an t-eagrán seo a thabhairt chun beatha.

Agus tú ag scrúdú ábhar an leabhair seo, tá súil agam go bhfaighidh tú an oiread céanna inspioráide agus léargais agus a fuair siadsan agus é á chur le chéile. Tá súil agam go spreagfaidh na scéalta agus an léargas ar na leathanaigh seo smaointe nua, go gcothóidh siad tuiscint níos doimhne, agus go spreagfaidh siad thú chun leanúint ar aghaidh agus an stair a bhaineann lenár gcathair iontach a fhiosrú.

Go raibh maith agat as ucht a bheith mar chuid den turas seo. Táimid ag tnúth le bheith ag obair leat trí leathanaigh an leabhair seo agus níos faide anonn.

Comhairleoir Ray McAdam
Ardmhéara Bhaile Átha Cliath

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I, as Lord Mayor of Dublin, present to you this latest edition of *History on Your Doorstep*, our annual publication based on the history of Dublin. Each year, as we compile the diverse and rich content that makes up this volume, we are reminded of the incredible breadth of talent, insight, and dedication that our contributors bring to their work.

This year's edition is no exception. From incisive analyses to heartfelt personal narratives, the pages that follow are a testament to the relentless pursuit of knowledge and the sharing of stories that matter. Our contributors, who are the Dublin City Council Historians in Residence and Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, have once again surpassed our expectations, delivering a collection of pieces that are not only informative and thought-provoking but also deeply engaging and inspiring.

Katie Blackwood explores the perennial questions of manners, gender roles, and fashion in Ireland during the 1920s through the lens of letters to the *Evening Herald*. This chapter discloses the attitudes and opinions of these prolific and often amusing letter writers on modernity and morality. This, in turn, offers us a fascinating glimpse of everyday life in Dublin and the prevailing mores of that time.

Elizabeth Kehoe's chapter is based on an oral history. Moira Mahon was born in 1924, and her life reflects the narrative of Dublin from that time to the present day. Her remarkable story offers the reader an understanding of the history of everyday life and how what seems, on the surface at least, to be a most ordinary life, can truly be quite extraordinary.

Dr Cormac Moore's chapter considers Yitzak Herzog, the first Chief Rabbi of the Irish Free State. Cormac writes about Herzog's early life, his education, aptitude and how, on becoming the religious leader of the Jewish community in Dublin, he navigated his way through a very public life in Ireland during tumultuous times. In this work, we gain an understanding of both the man and his faith.

Dr Mary Muldowney's chapter explores the life and work of Liam O'Flaherty with particular attention to his seminal work *The Informer*. In this piece, we learn not only about O'Flaherty's life and work but also his occupation of the Rotunda Concert Hall to highlight the plight of unemployment in Dublin in the early 1920s. In addition, Mary draws our attention to his legacy of social justice and his ability to portray, through his writing, the intricacies of the human condition.

Dervilia Roche, Dublin's Historian in Residence for Children, describes a children's tour she has developed in collaboration with Grangegorman Histories. Working with students and teachers from Dublin 7 Educate Together School and Stanhope Street Primary School, Dervilia explores the diverse and often challenging history of this site. This, in turn, gives the reader an opportunity to understand how this place developed from the 1700s to the present day.

Catherine Scuffil's chapter explores the life of Michael Flanagan, former Alderman, Dublin City Councillor, Justice of the Peace, local employer and major landowner and market gardener in south west county Dublin. He played a large part in shaping Dublin in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as both a politician and a landowner. Today his land has been sold, for housing and other developments in south Dublin, but he has been remembered through a community market-garden in Dolphin's Barn called Flanagan's Fields.

Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire's chapter explores Dublin Coddle, a well-known stew that is traditionally made from onions, sausages, and potatoes. Coddle comes in a variety of flavours and is seemingly both adored and reviled in equal parts. Using linguistics, etymology, folklore, cookbooks, poetry, interviews, and more, Máirtín explores the history of coddle, including its origin and how it came to be associated with Dublin.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all our contributors for their hard work and dedication. Their passion and commitment to exploring the diverse history of Dublin are the lifeblood of this book, and we are profoundly grateful for their contributions. I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the editorial team, whose meticulous attention to detail and unwavering support have been instrumental in bringing this edition to life.

As you delve into the contents of this book, I hope you find as much inspiration and enlightenment as they did in compiling it. May the stories and insights within these pages spark new ideas, foster deeper understanding, and encourage you to continue exploring the history of this great city of ours.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. We look forward to engaging with you through the pages of this book and beyond.

Councillor Ray McAdam
Lord Mayor of Dublin

About the authors

Katie Blackwood is Historian in Residence for the Dublin North Central area. She holds an MA in Public History and Cultural Heritage from the University of Limerick and a BA in Fine Art Sculpture from the National College of Art and Design. She has worked for many years in libraries and archives. As an independent researcher, she has undertaken community-based oral history projects focusing on cultural and social history.

Elizabeth Kehoe is Historian in Residence for the Dublin Central area. In 2015, she returned to formal education and completed a degree in history at Trinity College Dublin, followed by an M. Phil. in Modern Irish History. She is an independent tour guide and researcher based in Dublin, working in Ireland and online. She shares her love for history with established local communities, new Irish communities, and visitors to this island. She has recently undertaken projects based on oral histories and people's memories and is developing events based on this research.

Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire is a senior lecturer at Technological University Dublin, co-founder and chair of the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium, former trustee of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, and currently course chair of the Masters in Gastronomy and Food Studies in TU Dublin, the first such programme in Ireland. In 2018, he presented an eight-part television series for TG4 called '*Blasta*', celebrating Ireland's food heritage. He is co-editor of the *European Journal of Food, Drink, and Society*. He is co-editor on the award-winning *Irish Food History: A Companion* (Royal Irish Academy; EUt+ Academic Press, 2024). In 2025, he was awarded his second PhD titled 'Championing Food Studies within the field of Irish Studies: A Serendipitous Autoethnographic Journey'.

Dr Cormac Moore has a PhD in History from De Montfort University in Leicester and an MA in Modern Irish History from UCD. He is Historian in Residence for Dublin South East and is author of *The Root of All Evil: The Irish Boundary Commission* (2025), *Laois: The Irish Revolution, 1912-23* (2025), *Birth of the Border: The Impact of Partition in Ireland* (2019), *The Irish Soccer Split* (2015), and *The GAA V Douglas Hyde: The Removal of Ireland's First President as GAA Patron* (2012). He is a columnist with the *Irish News* as well as editor of its daily 'On This Day' segment. He co-presents with Tim McGarry the history podcast series *The Irish History Boys*.

Dr Mary Muldowney holds a PhD in History from Trinity College Dublin and a postgraduate qualification in Adult Continuing Education and Training from the National University of Ireland at Maynooth. She is the Historian in Residence for Dublin North West. Mary is the author of books and journal articles with a particular interest in labour and women's history. She is a member of the Grangegorman Histories Expert Working Group, the organising committee of the Irish Labour History Society (ILHS), and is co-editor of *Saothar*, the peer-reviewed journal of the ILHS. She is a regular consultant on other history projects.

Dervilia Roche is Education Manager and Historian in Residence for Children at Dublin City Council Culture Company. She has been working in heritage and public history for over eighteen years. She has a BA in History of Art and Architecture and Music from Trinity College Dublin and an MSc in Tourism Management from Dublin Institute of Technology. She has undertaken and published research on how children engage with heritage sites and has worked across the city in education roles at historic sites and museums. She was appointed as Dublin's first Historian in Residence for Children, as part of Dublin City Council Culture Company's Creative Residency programme. The Historian in Residence for Children Creative Residency @ Richmond Barracks is a partnership with Dublin City Council Culture Company, and Dublin City Libraries.

Catherine (Cathy) Scuffil, MA, BBS Hons is Dublin born and reared. Cathy's interest in local history started at an early age. She holds an honours Business and Management degree, and a Masters in Local History from NUI Maynooth. An abridged version of her master's thesis was awarded the silver medal by the Old Dublin Society (2018). Cathy participated in a range of community events during the 1916 Rising centenary commemorations. She is currently a tutor in local studies and a consultant historian for a range of projects working to promote the use of archives and other resources. Cathy is Historian in Residence in Dublin City Council's South Central Area.

Dublin City Council's Historians in Residence programme is created by Dublin City Libraries and is delivered in partnership with Dublin City Council Culture Company.

To contact, email historians@dublincitycouncilculturecompany.ie or call 01 524 0346

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Dublin United Tramways, GPO/Nelson's Pillar, Car No. 71 Dalkey Route
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

'A Lady and a Jolly Flapper are as far apart as two worlds': Letters to the Evening Herald debating chivalry, modern girls and tramcar etiquette in 1920s Dublin

Katie Blackwood, Historian in Residence, Dublin North Central

Ladies in Tramcars

Sir – Please allow me to express my indignation at the discourteous manner in which a number of my sex are treated on the city tramcars. The other night about 11.30 another girl and I boarded a tramcar in O'Connell St. All seats were occupied when we entered, chiefly by young men, with the result that we both had to remain standing throughout the journey. Is this typical of the modern young man? Is it that they are too lazy or too feminine to offer their seats to a lady? Probably the reason is that most of these people were too weary from parading Grafton St. and O'Connell St. all the evening; but then they should have some consideration for two ladies who had been dancing from 8 p.m.

I trust that our modern young men will make a mental note of above.

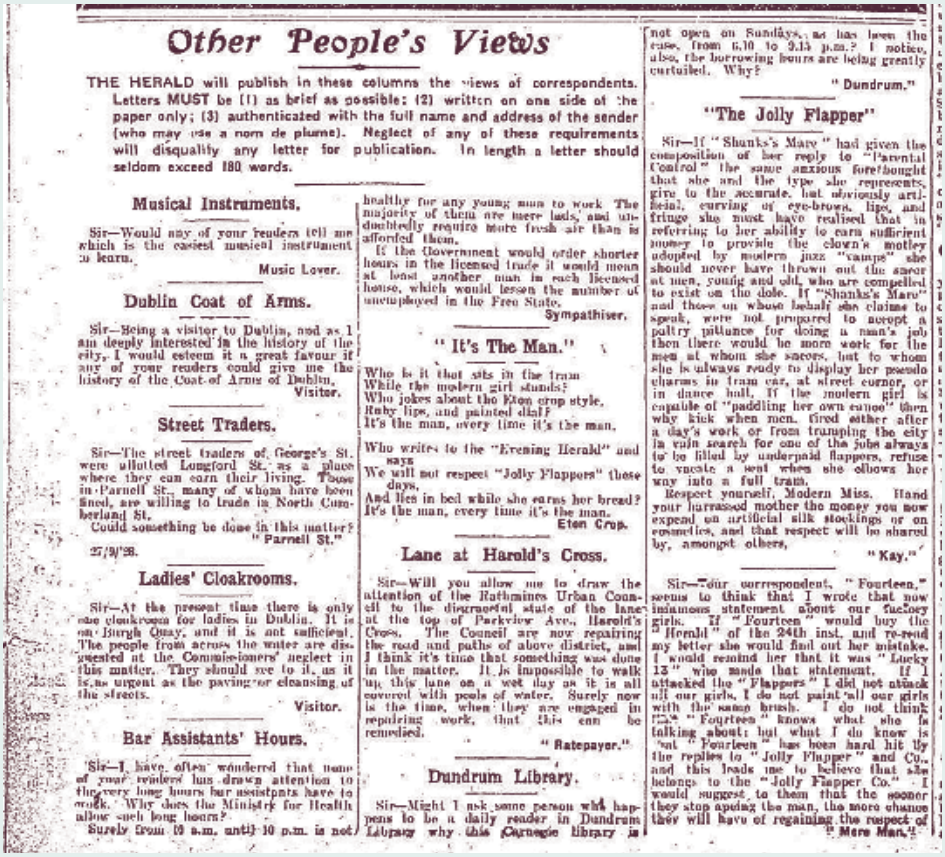
Jolly Flapper

This letter was published on Monday, 12 September 1928, in Dublin's daily newspaper, the *Evening Herald*. It featured in a column called 'Other People's Views', which printed readers' letters on a wide variety of topics. These letters, from members of the public, echoed the issues and debates that were appearing in the wider professional print media, although in a more idiosyncratic fashion. Around this time, the column also featured letters on the national anthem, licensing laws and the scourge of speeding cyclists on the city's streets. The letters in 'Other People's Views' are a window into the opinions and thoughts of everyday Dubliners – or at least of those who chose to put pen to paper, and that the *Herald* chose to print.

Jolly Flapper was clearly vexed by what she saw as the declining standards of etiquette in Dublin's young men. In her letter, she assertively throws down the gauntlet, naming the problem as lazy and effeminate men not offering seats to young women on public transport, and requests a change in the behaviour of Dublin's menfolk. This sparked a mini-controversy in the pages of the *Evening Herald* and over the course of five weeks, a series of replies – consisting of 64 letters in total – were printed. These letters give us a glimpse into the social lives of young Dubliners in 1928 with its dances, fashions, and the age-old dilemma of how to behave on public transport. Along with plenty of mudslinging, they illustrate the tensions that existed in the early years of the Free State regarding gender roles, identity, and power.

The *Evening Herald* specified that letters should be no more than 180 words and should include the real name and address of the sender for authentication. However, it allowed a *nom de plume* to be used in the paper itself. This allowed letter-writers to remain anonymous, which meant their commentary was more cutting than would otherwise be the case.

By choosing the name 'Jolly Flapper', this correspondent was associating herself with the international phenomenon of the 'flapper', also known as the 'modern girl.' Flappers were fashionable young women who were easily identifiable in public places due to their cutting-edge style. Flappers had short, bobbed haircuts; they wore make-up and loose, comfortable clothes, typically short skirts, and sleeveless dresses. Seen as a reaction to the horrors of the First World War (Dublin had its fair share of turmoil during



Other People's Views

THE HERALD will publish in these columns the views of correspondents. Letters MUST be (1) as brief as possible; (2) written on one side of the paper only; (3) authenticated with the full name and address of the sender (who may use a nom de plume). Neglect of any of these requirements will disqualify any letter for publication. In length a letter should seldom exceed 180 words.

Musical Instruments.

Sir—Would any of your readers tell me which is the easiest musical instrument to learn.

Music Lover.

Dublin Coat of Arms.

Sir—Being a visitor to Dublin, and as I am deeply interested in the history of the city, I would esteem it a great favour if any of your readers could give me the history of the Coat of Arms of Dublin.

Visitor.

Street Traders.

Sir—The street traders of George's St. were allotted Longford St., as a place where they can earn their living. Those in Parnell St., many of whom have been fined, are willing to trade in North Cumberland St.

Could something be done in this matter?

"Parnell St."

27/9/'28.

Ladies' Cloakrooms.

Sir—At the present time there is only one cloakroom for ladies in Dublin. It is on Burgh Quay, and it is not sufficient. The people from across the water are disgusted at the Commissioners' neglect in this matter. They should see to it, as it is as urgent as the paving or cleansing of the streets.

Visitor.

Bar Assistants' Hours.

Sir—I have often wondered that none of your readers has drawn attention to the very long hours bar assistants have to work. Why does the Ministry for Health allow such long hours?

Surely from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. is not healthy for any young man to work. The majority of them are mere lads, and undoubtedly require more fresh air than is afforded them.

If the Government would order shorter hours in the licensed trade it would mean at least another man in each licensed house, which would lessen the number of unemployed in the Free State.

Sympathiser.

"It's The Man."

Who is it that sits in the tram
While the modern girl stands?
Who jokes about the Eton crop style,
Ruby lips, and painted dial?
It's the man, every time it's the man.

Who writes to the "Evening Herald" and says
We will not respect "Jolly Flappers" these days,
And lies in bed while she earns her bread?
It's the man, every time it's the man.

Eton Crop.

Lane at Harold's Cross.

Sir—Will you allow me to draw the attention of the Rathmines Urban Council to the disgraceful state of the lane at the top of Parkview Ave., Harold's Cross. The Council are now repairing the road and paths of above district, and I think it's time that something was done in the matter. It is impossible to walk up this lane on a wet day as it is all covered with pools of water. Surely now is the time, when they are engaged in repairing work, that this can be remedied.

"Ratepayer."

Dundrum Library.

Sir—Might I ask some person who happens to be a daily reader in Dundrum Library why this Carnegie library is not open on Sundays, as has been the case, from 6.30 to 9.15 p.m.? I notice, also, the borrowing hours are being greatly curtailed. Why?

"Dundrum."

"The Jolly Flapper"

Sir—If "Shanks's Mare" had given the composition of her reply to "Parental Control" the same anxious forethought that she and the type she represents, give to the accurate, but obviously artificial, curving of eye-brows, lips, and fringe she must have realised that in referring to her ability to earn sufficient money to provide the clown's motley adopted by modern jazz "camps" she should never have thrown out the sneer at men, young and old, who are compelled to exist on the dole. If "Shanks's Mare" and those on whose behalf she claims to speak, were not prepared to accept a paltry pittance for doing a man's job then there would be more work for the men at whom she sneers, but to whom she is always ready to display her pseudo charms in tram car, at street corner, or in dance hall. If the modern girl is capable of "paddling her own canoe" then why kick when men, tired either after a day's work or from tramping the city in vain search for one of the jobs always to be filled by underpaid flappers, refuse to vacate a seat when she elbows her way into a full tram.

Respect yourself, Modern Miss. Hand your harassed mother the money you now expend on artificial silk stockings or on cosmetics, and that respect will be shared by, amongst others,

"Kay."

Sir—Our correspondent, "Fourteen," seems to think that I wrote that now infamous statement about our factory girls. If "Fourteen" would buy the "Herald" of the 24th inst. and re-read my letter she would find out her mistake. I would remind her that it was "Lucky 13" who made that statement. If I attacked the "Flappers" I did not attack all our girls. I do not paint all our girls with the same brush. I do not think that "Fourteen" knows what she is talking about; but what I do know is that "Fourteen" has been hard hit by the replies to "Jolly Flapper" and Co., and this leads me to believe that she belongs to the "Jolly Flapper Co." I would suggest, to them that the sooner they stop aping the man, the more chance they will have of regaining the respect of

"Mere Man."

***Evening Herald*: 'Other People's Views' column, Friday 26 September 1928, p. 6**

Courtesy of Evening Herald and the National Library of Ireland

this period) and a symbol of Modernism, flappers celebrated life, youth, and hedonism through their love of dancing, cycling and smoking cigarettes. Flappers were portrayed as being fun-loving, witty, and independent spirits. That Jolly Flapper wrote to the newspaper complaining about Dublin's young men suggests a character who felt perfectly entitled to air her views.

The initial responses to Jolly Flapper's letter all vehemently disagreed with her and were outraged by her 'haughty' and 'shameless' attitude. The first reply appeared the following day, on Tuesday 11 September, from Wo(e)man who asked,

> *"... are the girls of today earning the respect that induces young men to give up their seats? The masculine habits brazenly being adopted by the modern girl are most unbecoming to their sex. Smoking is now being practised on the double-deck trams, and the racing bicycle which I have seen occupied by a girl in this city makes us ask where will they stop? Most men will, I think, say girls are better standing."*

This point was reiterated by several other correspondents who argued that it was women who were behaving inappropriately. Many of these letters expressed disdain towards women's increasing role in public life and anxiety around campaigns for female emancipation. Sit Tight was especially unhappy, writing:

> *"I venture to suggest that Jolly Flapper, like all her sisters, boasts that women are no longer the weaker sex; that they are as strong, both physically and mentally as men... She cannot deny that the common ambition of her sex is to equal man – a most foolish and futile ambition."*

Women between the ages of 21 and 30 gained the vote in 1922, and by 1928, young women had been eligible to vote in three general elections. However, female representation in the Dáil was extremely low, hovering between 0.5 – 3 per cent until the 1970s. Indeed, Wo(e)man and Sit Tight need not have worried, as the new state proved to be conservative in its attitude towards women. Many historians have examined the 'special relationship'

between the Catholic church and the Free State government in the 1920s and 1930s, in which women were tasked with embodying the morality and respectability of the nation. In the effort to establish Ireland as unique and separate from its former coloniser, ancient and supposedly-pure aspects of culture, such as Catholicism, Irish language, traditional sports, dance, and music were fostered. According to historian Louise Ryan, Ireland defined itself in opposition to Britain, which was considered 'decadent, immoral and materialistic.' And women, most of all, were expected to be the virtuous, spiritual guardians of the nation. Under these ideological conditions, the Dáil passed a series of laws that restricted women's citizenship by limiting their employment opportunities, excluding them from jury service, and banning contraception.

Several correspondents accuse flappers of 'aping' men. Aspects of this problematic behaviour included being out late, going home unaccompanied, attending cinemas and theatres, smoking, drinking cocktails, dancing, and partaking in exercise and sport - especially cycling, motoring and aviation. It is doubtful that any Dublin flappers were regularly taking to the skies, but nevertheless, Barney states, 'when ladies start Atlantic flying and Channel swimming, is it not the time for them to be treated the same as men' i.e. that they should stand on the tram. Barney is referring to the well-publicised Americans, Amelia Earhart, the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean in June 1928 and Gertrude Ederle, the first woman to swim the English Channel in August 1926. These women, who featured prominently in the press, were clear evidence of capable and strong women's bodies participating in the public sphere. However, the idea that women's participation in sport was foreign and unacceptable in Ireland had many supporters. An editorial in the *Irish Times* in May 1928 stated:

> *"In France, Germany and even in England, many girls are devoting themselves to public sports which demand violent exertion and sometimes, it would seem, a notable scantiness in clothing... These performances are done before crowds of male spectators. His Holiness is surely in the right when he says that they are 'irreconcilable with women's reserve'."*

Amelia Earhart at Derry
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

But Irish women were not in danger of outnumbering men on the sports field. In the Olympics of 1928, just one woman, compared to 28 men, represented Ireland in a sporting event. She was Marguerite Dockrell, and she competed in 100 metre freestyle swimming.

As well as participating in sport, another criticism aimed at flappers in the letters was their love of 'jazzing.' Jazz, a catch-all term for modern music and dancing, was regularly vilified from the pulpit by the Catholic hierarchy, who worried about its denationalising effect on the nation's youth. Louise Ryan has shown that in Ireland, as elsewhere, the flapper was derided as a foreign import signifying 'vice, immorality, sexuality and disobedience.' Embracing modern, international forms of music, dance, and fashion was a transgressive act. Accusations of vanity were cast at flappers. Another correspondent, Colm, despairs 'Can we hope to ever develop a womanhood that will not be addicted to the use of beautifiers, jazzing, etc.' while Three Good Men wrote to the *Evening Herald* to say

men should 'treat this jazz-mad, sporty, gold-seeking type of creature with the utmost contempt' articulating fear of flappers as a dangerous and destabilising force.

While flappers were rebuked for acting like men, the fiercest criticism of all was reserved for their dress and what it revealed of the physical female body. Dubliner strongly expressed his objections.

> *"Young men... have nothing but contempt for the scantily attired caricatures we see nowadays... they seem to revel in showing as much leg as possible, and if people stare at them the brainless things believe they are making an impression. They are, but not the impression they imagine."*

Historian Maria Luddy points out that from the early 1920s there is a 'focus on women, their appearance and presence in public life that is deemed to have upset the moral order' which perhaps explains the indignation in some of the letters. The female body and its suggestion of sexuality on view in public spaces was too much for Three Good Men to bear and he was compelled to advise the men of Dublin 'By keeping our seats... we deprive them of specialising in the "art" of knee showing, which is to all clean minded men, disgusting, and fit for the covers of English magazines.' Here, English publications are labelled sordid and depraved. Throughout the letters, all mentions of England have wholly negative connotations.

From Wednesday, 19 September, there was a change in the responses as the correspondents began reacting to the first week's letters. Although there is still plenty of criticism, letters defending Jolly Flapper and young women started to appear. Yvonne argues that all women deserve to be treated with respect regardless of their appearance.

> *"No matter what kind of girl is in question, even be she contemptible in every way, it is her womanhood that demands courtesy. It is showing respect to one's mother, to every woman one holds dear, to be polite to her. That is the reason a gentleman shows chivalry, not for personal reasons, for personal admiration or disapproval."*

The debate around manners and expectations of public conduct continued. Mere Man remarks, 'how she can be a lady if she is a Jolly Flapper, for a lady and a Jolly Flapper are as far apart as two worlds.' Through their pastimes, assertive behaviour, and androgyny, flappers skewed contemporary gender norms. Therefore, according to some of the letter-writers, having changed the rules, they could no longer expect to benefit from 'the usual little courtesies.' Mere Minx is pessimistic about the prospect of ever being offered a seat on the tram, declaring, 'The age of chivalry is dead.' The issue of who deserves to be offered a seat on public transport arose again and again, with many correspondents attaching conditions as to who qualified. The elderly and 'feeble', or mothers with children, were deemed eligible, whereas young, healthy women out dancing all evening were not.

Inevitably, in discussions on power dynamics and the sexes, the issue of money arises. Lucky 13, who wrote 'I bet that Jolly Flapper is none other than one of our £1 factory hands' draws the ire of many correspondents. Black Cat retorts that this comment is an 'ungentlemanly slur on an apparently less lucky social order' and that 'only a snob could speak like that.' Baker's Dozen writes, 'Lucky 13 should remember that the £1 factory girl is just as good as the 15s pen-pusher. And if she does powder, paint and dance, she is perfectly entitled to get all the enjoyment out of life she can.' Josheen goes one step further and points the finger at young men and their 'disgraceful pestering of girls… using language such as the worst English, penny horrible would not dare publish. God help Ireland if this is a specimen of future Irish manhood.' Working Girl mentions the cost of female beauty routines and the implicit but fraught social rules about who pays on an evening out. 'Every girl knows how the chemist makes us pay through the nose for our cosmetics, so also the hairdresser for our shingle and wave. This leaves us stranded with nothing except the few shillings required to pay for our tickets of admission to our disco hall.' She laments, 'the unchivalrous gents of today are going to the dogs, though a few years ago they took delight in paying for young ladies.'

This point is taken up by several other correspondents, with Shy Girl writing, 'the young men of today are too mean to pay a penny tram.' Whereas Shank's Mare boldly declares, 'We girls of today can well afford to pay for ourselves in dance halls or any other place we wish to go.' Ralph the Rover chips in 'Some months ago I spent 90 per cent of my pocket-money on my-er-young lady. She never spent a penny on me, although she calmly informed me that she had almost as much wages as I had.'

In a city where people are crowded together, manners and etiquette are a way of negotiating the shared space. But Kay is unimpressed. She warns, if women,

> *"... were not prepared to accept a paltry pittance for doing a man's job then there would be more work for the men at whom she sneers, but to whom she is always ready to display her pseudo charms in tram car, at street corner, or in dance hall."*

She suggests that the flapper is rude, forthright, and selfish, that she 'elbows her way into a full tram' – perhaps, in much the same way that they are elbowing their way into the workplace. Kay was not alone in her concern about women taking men's jobs. In the 1930s, the Marriage Bar, a policy requiring women to retire upon marriage, was extended. Historian Mary E. Daly argues that this policy was designed to increase male employment, and therefore to 'increase marriage rates, reduce emigration and increase fertility' for the new state.

In the 1926 Census, 30.5 per cent of women over 12 years of age were recorded as occupied in paid employment. The majority worked in domestic service and the agricultural sector. However, industry and manufacturing were a growing source of employment for women, especially for young, single Dubliners, who may have identified with M.F.'s sentiment.

"Permit me to reply to the narrow-minded so-called men who have the audacity to attack the limited pleasures of Jolly Flapper and her companions. Are not we, modern girls, as much entitled to utilise the dance halls and even the streets as Gerry, Rudolf or their fellow critics... I am proud that I am in a position to earn enough to enable me to clothe and feed myself and with whatever I have left over I see no reason why I may not devote it to enjoying the few and all too short hours after a hard worked day."


IRISH LADY BILLIARD CHAMPION.—Miss Rita Fanning, Dolphin's Barn, Dublin, who has won various prizes, her latest success being the Tailteann Championship.—Cashman.

***Evening Herald*: Image of Rita Fanning, Friday 21 September 1928, p. 10**
Courtesy of Evening Herald and the National Library of Ireland

***Evening Herald*: Ad for Craven A cigarettes, Wednesday 19 September 1928, p. 5**

In the mainstream Irish press, there was certainly criticism of flappers, but equally there were women's pages and advertisements that celebrated and marketed 'a healthy, unrestricted, independent, happy modern girl.' While the Jolly Flapper debate was ongoing in the letter's column, many of the ads featured alongside it in the *Evening Herald* depicted young, attractive women with short haircuts and fashionable clothing selling consumer goods. Newspapers, including the *Herald,* contained contradictory messages relating to modern girls, reflecting the different views and requirements of the population at large.

***Evening Herald*: Ad for Veet, Friday 21 September 1928, p. 5**
Courtesy of Evening Herald and the National Library of Ireland

An advert for Craven "A" cigarettes on Wednesday, 19 September, proclaimed them to be 'the only cigarettes made specially to prevent sore throats' and featured a photograph of a young woman. On Friday, 21 September, an advert for Veet, which 'removes superfluous hair' featured an illustration of a young, confident woman holding her hands behind her head to reveal her hairless armpits. The *Evening Herald* often featured photographs of actresses from the Abbey and the Gaiety theatres and other notable women like 'Irish Lady Billiard Champion – Miss Rita Fanning, Dolphin's Barn, who has won various prizes, her latest success being the Tailteann Championship.' Rita is photographed holding a cue, standing behind a billiards table, wearing a sleeveless blouse and a fashionable cropped hairstyle.

On Saturday, 22 September, a new type of commentary appeared in the form of rhyming verse. In total, 11 letters take this poetic, lyrical form. Many of these are humorous, and although several take a side in the debate, others parody the debate itself. Certain phrases previously used in the letters are repeated in the poems. Literacy rates in Dublin in the 1920s were high, and this poetic response to the Jolly Flapper debates demonstrates a sophisticated, active readership engaging with the debate, and making fun of the uproar. Balloon retells the story so far.

> *"I just cannot tell her how sorry I am*
> *That she had to strap hang all the time in the tram.*
> *Though if I'd been her, I would certainly not*
> *Have written to the "Herald" bemoaning my lot*
> *For she's brought down a storm of abuse on her head*
> *That must make all the flappers in Dublin see red.*
> *Poor thing, she'd been dancing for hours that night,*
> *But the hardened, unchivalrous men all sat tight;*
> *So driven, no doubt, by the pain of her corn,*
> *She vowed she would write the first thing in the morn."*

Poetry was often published in Victorian newspapers as an alternative commentary on events covered in other parts of the paper. Through the 'Other People's Views' column, readers of the *Evening Herald* were able to speak and respond to each other. On Monday, 1 October, Red Michael's light-hearted take in verse shows a sense of humour about the whole debacle.

***Irish Independent*: Ad for Three Knot Hosiery 'For smart wear town wear', Monday 10 September 1928, p.4**

Courtesy of Irish Independent and the National Library of Ireland

"Well here's to the "Jolly Flapper,"
By some she is despised;
They say her clothes are rather short
When in the tram or bus she rides;
That's why they leave her standing
When all seats are occupied,
But I, for one, will just stand up
When occasion does arise...

I know she paints and powders,
That's why I love her more:
She has not got a shiny face
Like the girls in days of yore.
Yes, I'll wed a "Jolly Flapper."
Then my joy will be complete.
So now; my girls watch out for me,
My name is underneath."

And a couple of days later, on Thursday, 4 October, Powder Puff responded directly to Red Michael, bringing even more levity to the debate.

""Red Michael" is a poet,
Of that I feel so sure.
I would love him for a hubby,
Though he be rich or poor.
One day I hope to meet him
In a crowded tram or bus
When he says "Now Miss be seated"
The cranks will make a fuss.

He will help me with my lip-stick
And my little powder-puff.
And if there are four or five of us
He will make the crank stand up,
And when we girls are seated
The cranks can hold the straps,
Then all we jolly flappers
Will seat "Red Mike" upon our laps."

This series of letters demonstrates that there were a multitude of voices and attitudes regarding flappers, modernity, and morality in 1920s Dublin. The tone of letters varies from sarcastic to outraged and from earnest to amused. But there is ample evidence that, much like today, different people living in the same city at the same time viewed life, etiquette, and public transport in completely different ways.

The saga concluded on Wednesday, 10 October, with a second letter from Jolly Flapper. If she was upset by the tirade of comments and invective, she did not show it. Instead, she addressed her many critics in a combative form. She accused men of 'aping the modern woman' as they queue to purchase face cream, hair oil, perfume, and wear 'ladylike shoes.' And she remained defiant, adhering to the adage that living well is the best revenge.

> *"Probably some of your readers think that I have taken their advice. Well, I am still dancing, having an occasional cocktail... and a cigarette. But I must say my letter had the desired effect. When I board a tram now, some sheik immediately offers me his seat. I also have a young man now, and could have several others, who are infatuated by the short skirt and good make-up of Jolly Flapper."*

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Moira Mahon

'Always paddle your own canoe'

Elizabeth Kehoe, Historian in Residence, Dublin Central

'Love many, trust few and always paddle your own canoe'. This is the advice given to me by Moira Mahon at the end of an oral history interview in October last year. Born on 11 May 1924, she is a centenarian, and while that is interesting, there is so much more to this remarkable woman. She was born into an emerging state, one that was shaking off the shackles of centuries of oppression and taking its place in the modern world. She is from a staunchly republican background, and she and her family have always been engaged and active in Irish politics. All this makes her narrative interesting, but it is the woman herself and her enduring sense of justice and fair play that makes this ordinary woman's story extraordinary.

Through the prism of her life story, the reader will gain an understanding of the history of Dublin from 1924, encompassing the War of Independence, the Second World War, work and leisure, emigration to England and the growth and development of the city of Dublin.

Moira as a child in Rathgar
Courtesy of Moira Mahon

Ballykinlar Internment Camp
Courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland

Moira started life in Frankfort Avenue in Rathgar. Her mother was a member of Cumann na mBan, and her father was interned in Ballykinlar Internment Camp because of his involvement in the War of Independence.

This was the first mass internment camp established in Ireland by the British authorities in 1920 to deal with members of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). It operated as an internment camp from late 1920 until December 1921, shortly after the signing of the Treaty on 6 December. This converted military camp held up to 2,000 Irishmen who were suspected of IRA activity. Camp conditions were harsh; five men died due to maltreatment, and three internees were shot dead. Her father was interned along with his father, Moira's grandfather. He was arrested because he had the same initials as his son. He had nothing to do with politics or the troubles at that time, and his arrest left her grandmother destitute.

After the war, her father worked for the British Petroleum oil company, and the family's first home was in Donnycarney, which was one of the cottages built there for tenant purchase. In the 1920s, Dublin Corporation completed housing schemes in suburban areas on the Northside of the city. Four hundred cottages were planned for Donnycarney for tenant purchase that favoured private middle-class people. Government housing policies were not in favour of the working-class at the time. No slum clearance schemes were tackled until the 1930s, which in turn led to corporation housing being built. In 1932, the family sold their interest in that property and eventually settled in Fairview in a house her grandfather owned near Annesley Bridge. Moira was the eldest of six children. She had three brothers and two sisters. Only she and her youngest sibling are alive today.

Moira went to Scoil Mhuire, which was a Gaelscoil, an all-Irish speaking school. Nora Ashe, the sister of the Irish revolutionary politician Thomas Ashe, became the principal there. Nora was the third daughter in a family of ten. Her parents were Gregory Ashe, a farmer, and Ellen (née Hanafin) of Tobar, County Kerry. Both her parents were native Irish speakers, and though English was the dominant language in the Ashe home, she was always bilingual. Moira was also a fluent Irish speaker and has a great love for the language. She revealed to me:

> *"Do you know I think in Irish? And then I can't always put it into words. But I was so busy looking after kids that I never got the opportunity for to go and go back to school and renew it, you know, because I could speak it fluently at one time, but now I can think it".*

As a child, Moira went to the Gaeltacht in Spiddal in County Galway. She went in the company of the Schweppe family, who lived on Mountjoy Square. They were of German descent and could all speak Irish. Sean O'Casey, the playwright, lived in the same house, and Moira remembers that one of the Schweppe sisters died of tuberculosis, which was a prevalent killer of tenement dwellers in the 1920s and 30s. During this period, overcrowding in Dublin's slum areas worsened, and Mountjoy Square's large Georgian houses were in a poor state of repair. Moira recalls the professionals who once lived there moving out to Rathgar and Rathfarnham.

The Dublin of Moira's childhood was a complex mix with much to be positive about for its citizens, but this was tempered by the constant menace of poverty and decaying inner-city housing. In the preceding decade, one of the final acts of the old corporation had been to rename Sackville Street as O'Connell Street, and the street itself began to regain its status as the capital city's main thoroughfare after the destruction caused during the Easter Rising in 1916 and the ensuing Civil War. Moira has fond memories of O'Connell Street:

O'Connell Bridge and Street, Dublin
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

> *"It was great. Dublin was lovely. And I had a friend who, years later, told me when she'd go away anywhere, she'd come back, she'd say, oh, Moira, I'd just love to get on the bus and go into O'Connell Street and walk up the boulevard. That's what she called it. Because that's what it was like. And beautiful shops. Dublin was the most beautiful city you could dream of going into. It was so clean and the shops were beautiful".*

After finishing her education at Scoil Caitríona, a Gaelcholáiste, which was an Irish-medium secondary school in Eccles Street, Moira went to work for Lambert Brien and Company in Grafton Street. According to the National Library of Ireland, this was a hardware specialist store from 1940-1970, and Moira explained to me that they sold 'very high-class hardware and the brides would get all their kitchenware and you'd be left to look after that'. She eventually went to work in Clery's until she got married.

During this time, Moira joined a Trade Union. She received a 'little note' asking her if she would like to 'join the union of shopkeepers or shop assistants'. The union for retail workers in the 1930s-40s was the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, which later became IDATU and is now Mandate. Moira recalled that unions were 'only coming into vogue then' and joining unions was a relatively new experience for most working women in the early to mid-twentieth century. The work environment could prove to be a hostile environment for women, and in some quarters, the belief persisted that women represented competition for men. Trade unions in Ireland were male-dominated, and the Irish Drapers' Assistants' Association (IDAA), formed in 1901, marked a breakthrough in the involvement of women in the Irish labour movement. Female drapers' assistants throughout Ireland finally got the opportunity to become active participants in the labour movement. Women began to hold leadership positions in the union, and one of them, Cissie Cahalan, was elected president of the union in 1921. Cahalan, who came from a working-class background, was an unwavering campaigner for suffrage and workers' rights.

Though Moira was doubtless influenced by her experiences at work and as she asserts, 'the money was trash', she was a young woman and her thoughts were also on dances and outings. She cycled everywhere. She ventured to Howth for Sunday evening dances, and sometimes to stay with friends in Brittas and go to the dances in Blessington. On occasion, she went to more formal dress dances in Clery's, the Gresham Hotel and the Metropole.

Cissie Cahalan
Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons

Moira on her wedding day
Courtesy of Moira Mahon

Moira met the man she would eventually marry while she was still at school. Sean Mahon played hurling and football, and he was friendly with her brothers when the family lived in Fairview. During the Second World War, he went away to join the British Air Force. They would not accept him, so he joined the British Army. She says of him:

> *"Anything to get away, there was no work here, nothing, nothing. And it was excitement to get away through the war".*

She married Sean after the war. He had been a prisoner of war in Korea for two and a half years. When they were first married, they lived in London for a year, but then:

> *"I discovered I was pregnant with my eldest son. I came back to Dublin because I promised my father that I wouldn't break the line. If I had any children they'd be born in Dublin. So, I came back to Dublin and I had him in the Rotunda. And after he was born, I went over to Manchester. And I was living in Manchester for six years. A very challenging place to live I longed for Dublin.*
>
> *And I remember when I got a little house in Manchester, it was only two up and two down, and the people next door were talking. It was like Coronation Street. And they were across to one another and said, I see you have new neighbours. We'd have been better off if we'd had blacks than Irish. And that was for me to hear. I never settled in it. So, I came back to Dublin and I shipped what I had over".*

Moira moved to Coolock in 1964. She had at that time what she called a 'challenging marriage'; with a husband who was rarely there, Moira was to all intents and purposes a single mother of six. The majority of Coolock, excluding Ayrfield, was developed by Dublin Corporation as part of a programme of the phased inner-city clearance of people from unsuitable inner-city slum housing. This was roughly between 1952 and 1987. The completion of Kilmore, Edenmore and Bonnybrook districts took place in

the 1960s, and the family settled in the Bonnybrook district at the same time as the concept of the shopping centre arrived in Ireland. In October 1970, Northside shopping centre was opened, and this place would feature in the next part of Moira's story.

The emergence of ladies' or women's clubs was a significant social and political force in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They offered women a platform for social interaction, community engagement, and the advancement of various causes. The era from about 1890 to 1940 was a time of maternalism, with some women assuming a measure of public responsibility for the health of women and children and using their authority to advise working-class women. In more recent times, clubs have served as hubs for local communities, providing spaces for women to gather, build friendships, and address pressing issues such as poverty, education, and health. Their importance for the health and well-being of women and their families is considerable.

In 1973, Ireland entered the European Union. The government was forced to abandon the marriage bar, which had meant women had to leave their jobs when they got married. Joining the EU was mainly executed for economic reasons, but also led to many amendments being made to measures that had once prohibited women from participating in public life. This saw the slow but steady increase in women becoming involved in politics, the legal system and many other parts of society. It was in this context that Moira decided to establish a ladies' club in Coolock. It started with her simply wanting to do something for herself and the women who lived there. She recalls, 'There was nothing for us to do and at that time clubs were springing up in all parts of the city'. She asked a friend of hers what she thought about the idea of a lady's club, and she replied, 'That would be great.' The next day, Moira presented herself at the newly opened technical school, Coláiste Dhúlaigh and met the headmaster and asked him about having a room at the school for the club to meet. He asked if she had a committee, and she replied, 'no it's just me.' He agreed to her having a room one evening a week for two hours. She continued:

> *"So, I told a few women like the likes of Mrs McGarry who is long gone and Kathleen Cavanagh and a few others. So, Northside Shopping Centre was only open and I was walking up to Northside each morning to go up and get the daily requirements. And as I walk along, any woman I'd meet, I'd say, excuse me missus, but we're opening, we're starting a lady's club next Tuesday, would you like to come? Oh my god that's great! When is it? In the technical school at 8 o'clock. Go on along, meet somebody else. Excuse me missus, but we're starting a lady's club next Tuesday, would you be interested? Oh, that'd be great.*
>
> *Right. Well, I want to tell you now, a hundred women turned up for that first night".*

According to Moira, the club carried on for many years and was a great success. Like their maternal foregoers in the early part of the century, the club invited people to speak on issues that were affecting the women and their families at that time. For example, a nurse from Jervis Street hospital spoke to them about poisons in the home and with the emergence of a drug problem in Dublin, they were advised about tablets like Valium that were open to abuse. In the 1970s, Valium (diazepam) was a very popular and widely prescribed medication. It became the most prescribed medication globally by 1977, largely due to its effective use for treating anxiety and muscle spasms. While commonly used for these purposes, Valium was also known as "Mother's Little Helper" and was sometimes used recreationally.

Apart from those valuable advisory sessions, the club was also clearly a space for women to socialise away from their domestic responsibilities once a week. As a member of Fianna Fáil and a member of the Cumann, people would come to Moira for help, so she often found herself dealing with local problems and trying to find solutions. She recalls:

> *"But then, it was a great community in Coolock. The best community you could come across. Everybody looked out for one another. And the Labour Party, the fellas that were in the Labour Party, and the Fianna Fáil crowd, we all looked after one another".*

Once a year, an outing was organised and the women contributed a shilling a week toward this. Moira would go into town to the Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) offices in Abbey Street and look up all the places they could go. Founded in 1945, CIÉ at that time was providing a range of transport services. According to their 1971-72 annual report, there were increases in the number of passengers carried and in the tonnage of freight handled, but the tourist trade was being adversely affected by the 'disturbances in Northern Ireland'. Tours for the domestic market, including educational school tours and private hire like Moira's club, continued to do well. Their first outing was to Powerscourt in County Wicklow, and although Moira is not sure of the exact year this happened, she remembers the day very well. 'It was the 27th of June', she told me and one of her passengers said on the day, 'did you know that when you were booking this, Moira, that it's Father's Day?'. Moira told her she did not know that, but now that she did, she would make sure to book the same day every year. I told her that she probably saved many of these women's sanity, and she replied that they had also saved hers.

The Northern Ireland Troubles featured again in Moira's life when she took in a family of refugees, Marjory and her two girls. In 1969, refugees had begun to stream across the border to the Republic to escape the violence of the Troubles. In the summer of 1970, more refugees arrived, and the figure peaked at 1,558 in 1970. In July 1971, still more arrived, and by the second week of August 1971, they began to arrive in unprecedented numbers, and the capacity of army refugee centres at Gormanston, Finner, Kilworth and Coolmoney was soon greatly exceeded. The government had to call on the local authorities for help, and communities and religious leaders put their facilities and services at the refugees' disposal.

Moira and her children
Courtesy of Moira Mahon

On a beautiful sunny Sunday morning Moira had decided to bring her children to Claremont Strand in Howth for a picnic. She was meeting her sister and mother there after she went to Mass. She continued:

> *"The priest had announced from the altar that they had brought down a busload of mothers and children from Belfast, and if there was anybody in the parish that could give them a room or could put them up for a week then give their name. So, I came outside the church and Paddy said to me, what's the story, Moira? Any chances? I said, yeah. I said, I have a bedroom, my fourth bedroom.*
>
> *I had a four-bedroom house. But I'll tell you something Paddy, I said, my kids are sitting over there waiting for me to come back from Mass. We're all going out to Howth for the day. I said I have a picnic. There's my key, you let them in, they can have the back bedroom. I came back over, got the kids, went off, walked down as far as the Howth train, down to Raheny. I left the key with Paddy and I said, you look after them. He said, I've a mother with two babies. I said, that's fine, don't worry about it. I went to Howth.*
>
> *I said, I won't be back till seven o'clock because the last train leaves Howth at 6. I'll be on that and we have to walk up from Raheny. As we came up the road Paddy was standing at my gate with a woman and two little children. I brought them in and set them up in the bedroom. I kept them for more than a week. But then I wasn't the only one that took children. There were loads of people around that took mothers and children and I think a lot of them remained friends for years".*

And that's exactly what happened. Marjory and the 'two babies', now grown women, were guests at Moira's 100th birthday party in May 2024.

Moira was an activist in the Fianna Fáil party all her life. She taught former Taoiseach Charles Haughey how to canvas. She remembers that she 'went out around Marino with Charlie teaching him and making sure he shut

Moira with the Belfast Family
Courtesy of Moira Mahon

the gates.' He often told that story about her telling him to close the gates, as there was nothing more annoying to residents than garden gates being left open. And that could cost him a valuable vote. Her favourite man was Seán Lemass – he put the country on the map, she said.

On her 100th birthday, she received her cheque from President Michael D. Higgins, and another former Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, presented it to her. Bertie told her he had looked up some records and discovered that when she was a delegate at an ard fheis, she proposed that the Proclamation be hung in every school in Ireland. It was a great wish of her father's, and she carried on with that wish. She always hoped it would happen, that the proclamation would be hung in every school so the children could read it.

Along with her political activism, she taught people how to cook and was famous for her apple tarts. Like so many other women from the Northside of Dublin, she worked in Cadbury's and Core Memories. Shift work in these factories could be arranged around family life, so it was ideal for women like Moira.

Moira Mahon making scones
Photo by Elizabeth Kehoe

When I asked for her advice about her longevity, she said:

> *"I've a good outlook on life. I never over-worried. I'd worry for the few minutes or the few days maybe about something, but then I'd find a solution. I'd think about getting a solution to whatever it was. There's always a solution and if you just stop and think what can I do you'll work it out".*

Moira downsized and moved to Clonsilla in her seventies, and she remains fiercely independent. She has 13 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. Her son has been, and her granddaughter is a local councillor, so public service is part of her legacy.

When I went to see her last October, she could not answer the door because she was in the back garden hanging out her washing. And when I went back to see her a few weeks later, she had a batch of scones ready for me to enjoy. And as we ate them over a cup of tea, she was busy telling how she is thinking of ways to get young people involved with cleaning up the local neighbourhood. She is indomitable and has the loveliest twinkle in her eye. Her life deserves to be honoured and remembered, and this chapter and her oral history interview will play their part in that commemorative process.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Anne Reynolds for introducing me to Moira and all her subsequent help with the interview and gathering information and photographs. Special thanks also to Sean Paul Mahon and Cathy McConnell (née Mahon) for their help with this essay and to all the Mahon family for their cooperation throughout the project.

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Yitzhak Herzog spent twenty years in Ireland and was the first chief rabbi of the Irish Free State
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Yitzhak Herzog – "the Sinn Féin Rabbi" who was first Chief Rabbi of the Irish Free State

Dr Cormac Moore, Historian in Residence, Dublin South East

Yitzhak Herzog, the first chief rabbi of the Irish Free State, was known as 'the Sinn Féin Rabbi' because of his support for the Irish independence movement during the revolutionary period and his closeness to figures from that movement, particularly Éamon de Valera. Yitzhak Herzog, a boy-genius, led an extraordinary life, spending around 20 years of it between Belfast and Dublin. Widely respected in Dublin, he was an excellent advocate for the Irish Jewish community, securing financial and political support for Jewish causes in Dublin at a time when Jews throughout much of Europe were facing existential threats. He left Dublin to become chief rabbi of Palestine in 1937. This was the most revered spiritual role in Judaism, and just over ten years later, he became the first chief rabbi of the new state of Israel.

Yitzhak Herzog was born in 1888 in Lomza in present-day Poland. Taught at home by his father, Rabbi Joel Leib Herzog, it was evident from an early age that Yitzhak was a genius. According to his son Chaim, Herzog had acquired a reputation as an ilui, an outstanding thinker, by the age of nine. By the age of sixteen, he knew the entire Talmud (the central text of Rabbinac Judaism) by heart. Herzog's father was an early supporter of the Zionist movement, which sought a national Jewish state in Palestine, and was elected as a delegate to the first World Zion Congress in Basel in 1897. However, he was unable to attend due to Yitzhak being quite ill at the time. Rabbi Joel Herzog's reputation was growing, and he was offered posts abroad. The family spent six months in Massachusetts in the US before Rabbi Joel became the chief rabbi of the Jewish community in Leeds in England.

Yitzhak Herzog stood out for his devotion and aptitude, not just for religious studies, but for a host of secular topics too. Studying in England and France, where his father became chief rabbi of the Jewish Community in Paris, as well as continuing with his Talmudic studies, Herzog became an accomplished scholar in fields as diverse as law, the classics, mathematics, oriental languages, and marine biology. He studied oriental languages at the Sorbonne in Paris and the classics and mathematics at the University of London, where he received his doctorate. As stated by his son Chaim, for Herzog's dissertation on marine biology, he identified 'The Royal Purple and Biblical Blue', the shellfish that provided the purple dye for the holy garments in ancient Israel. His findings were later published as a book entitled *The Dyeing of Purple in Ancient Israel.*

Becoming a rabbi in 1910, Herzog's first appointment was in Belfast in 1916, arriving in Ireland when the island was in the midst of great political and social changes. The Jewish community in Ireland was approximately 5,000-strong by 1916, with some Jews prospering in their different fields. In Belfast, the German-born Jew, Otto Jaffe, served as Lord Mayor on two occasions, from 1899-1900 and again from 1904-05. Based in Belfast at the time of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, an offer of support by the British government for 'a national home for the Jewish people' in Palestine, Herzog became one of the founders of the Mizrachi (religious Zionism) movement in Britain and Ireland.

The synagogue on Victoria Street in Belfast. Yitzhak Herzog moved to Belfast in 1916 for his first appointment as a rabbi
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Sarah Herzog with her first son Chaim
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Although he only lived in Belfast for two years, those were momentous ones personally for him. He married Sarah Hillman, daughter of a rabbi in London, in 1917, and a year later his first of two sons, Chaim, was born. Chaim served as the sixth president of Israel from 1983 to 1993. Chaim's son, Isaac, is the eleventh and current president of Israel.

That same year, 1918, Herzog was offered the position of religious leader of the Jewish community in Dublin. Much to the disappointment of the Jewish community in Belfast, he accepted.

Herzog and his growing family moved to Dublin just as the First World War was ending and the Anglo-Irish War of Independence was about to commence. The family first lived on the South Circular Road before moving to Bloomfield Avenue. A second son, Yaakov, was born in 1921. Yaakov went on to become a distinguished diplomat and advisor to four prime ministers of Israel, including David Ben-Gurion. Israel's third prime minister, Levi Eshkol 'treated him like a son' according to his brother Chaim.

Chaim and Yaakov Herzog in Dublin as boys
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Chaim claimed that 'My father was an open partisan of the Irish cause. When Irish prisoners went on hunger strike, he pleaded with them to cease endangering their lives. In many circles in Ireland, our family name is still associated with those who fought for liberty'. Herzog's biographer, Shaul Mayzlish, claims that his support for the Sinn Féin cause 'earned him the love and admiration of the Irish people.' When the Irish Free State was founded in December 1922, Rabbi Herzog assisted in garnering American support by taking advantage of his strong connections with the Jewish lobby in the United States. Herzog served on the General Council of the Irish White Cross, a body that worked closely with organisations in the US to assist with relief and reconstruction across Ireland following the destruction caused by the War of Independence.

Chaim's 'first vivid memory in Dublin was of the Irish civil war'. He wrote of a skirmish on South Circular Road, near their home, where a man driving a horse and cart was shot dead in front of him. He recalled 'the horse wandering aimlessly, a dead man lying on the cart in a grotesque manner, and mounds of fruit from William's food shop windows cascading onto the street'.

While Herzog was a skilful diplomat who remained neutral and enjoyed strong relationships with both the pro- and anti-Treaty sides of the divide, he was particularly close to Éamon de Valera. Herzog is believed to have hidden de Valera in his home occasionally during the War of Independence. After the civil war, according to Chaim, de Valera visited their home regularly to 'unburden his heart to my father'. They both had a love of mathematics and remained firm friends until Herzog died in 1959.

Yitzhak Herzog's diplomatic skills allowed him to secure tangible results that greatly aided the Jewish community in Dublin
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Their friendship was aided by their mutual friend Robert Briscoe. Briscoe was the leading Jewish figure who fought in the IRA during the War of Independence. He worked with Michael Collins in General Headquarters (GHQ) but, like de Valera, opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty that Collins signed in December 1921. Briscoe subsequently became a Fianna Fáil TD and Lord Mayor of Dublin, as did his son Ben. Herzog was a regular visitor to the Briscoe household. Robert's father, originally from Lithuania, strictly observed the orthodox Jewish dietary rules, which were 'so complicated and difficult to follow in a non-Hebraic country' and 'were the absolute rule' in the Briscoe home. Robert Briscoe usually accompanied de Valera on the latter's visits to Herzog's home.

Herzog also had a close relationship with W.T. Cosgrave, Cumann na nGaedheal leader and president of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State for the first ten years of its existence before being succeeded by de Valera in 1932. It was partly Herzog's ability to carve out close relationships with all sides of the bitter political divide that engulfed the Free State in its early years that allowed him to secure tangible results that greatly aided the Jewish community in Dublin. His strong relationships with the Christian leaders in Ireland at the time, particularly with Joseph MacRory, who became Catholic Primate of All Ireland in 1928, were also of great assistance to the Jewish community. Chaim wrote of an occasion at a state dinner in Dublin Castle where his father ate nothing but fruit and Cardinal MacRory jokingly reproached him 'for not trying the excellent ham being offered. My father reportedly smiled whimsically and said: "Let us discuss this at your wedding"'.

Writing for the *Jewish Echo* in 1931, American travel writer Philip Rubin was impressed with the range of facilities for Jews he witnessed in Dublin, commenting, 'There are two big synagogues in Dublin, three smaller ones, charitable organisations, Zionist groups, a "shechita board", a fine Talmud Torah where three hundred Irish Jewish youngsters, girls and boys, get a good Jewish education, a Jewish Social Club which has its own building and many other institutions which Jewish communities in America much larger than Dublin haven't got'.

He also commented on the prominent role Jews played in Irish life at the time as judges, doctors, barristers, painters, musicians, as well as there being one Jewish member of the 'Irish Parliament', Robert Briscoe. Rubin described Herzog as someone who 'looks and acts like any of the older, Yiddish speaking orthodox Rabbis in America' but yet 'still he is in with all the high mucky-mucks of the Irish government – is even invited to all the social functions given by the Governor-General, the King's representative in Ireland'.

While Herzog was chief rabbi of the Irish Free State, showing the vibrancy of the Jewish community in Dublin at the time, the main existing synagogue on Adelaide Road was extended in the mid-1920s and a new one, Greenville Hall, was built in Dolphin's Barn. The foundation stone of Greenville Hall was laid on 23 April 1916, the day before the Easter Rising commenced, and was opened in September 1925.

The foundation stone of Greenville Hall synagogue was laid on 23 April 1916, the day before the Easter Rising commenced. The synagogue was opened in September 1925
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Herzog was granted financial support by the government to provide educational assistance to the growing Jewish community. A committee led by Rev. Abraham Gudansky and Arthur Newman secured a grant from Cosgrave's government to cover one-third of the costs of building a school. The government paid £4,000 for a school that cost £12,000 to build on Bloomfield Avenue in the early 1930s. After its opening, Herzog and Newman appealed to Jewish parents in Dublin to 'send their children to the Talmud Torah for their Hebrew and Religious instruction and to the Zion School for their general Education', all located in the same building in Bloomfield Avenue.

In 1934 a Jewish national school was opened in Bloomfield Avenue in Dublin helped by financial support from the Irish Free State government
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

Yitzhak Herzog convinced Dublin Corporation to recognise Shehitah and to build an abattoir on the North Circular Road to be used by the Jewish community
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

Yitzhak Herzog convinced Dublin Corporation not only to recognise shechita (the ritual slaughtering of animals according to Jewish religious dietary laws), which permitted Kosher butchers to operate in Dublin, but also to build an abattoir on the North Circular Road to be used by the Jewish community. The construction of the abattoir, with a cooling hall that could accommodate 40 cattle and 80 sheep carcasses, cost £4,900. Speaking at its opening in 1936, Herzog described the city of Dublin as 'an illustrious example of broadmindedness and religious tolerance' as demonstrated by the opening of the abattoir that was vital to 'the Jews from the standpoint of religious practice and observance'. He concluded by saying that 'as far as the Free State was concerned, the Jews were faced with no difficulty and were safeguarded by express laws passed by their Parliament'.

According to historian Dermot Keogh, it would seem that Herzog's 'close personal relations with de Valera were reflected in his being taken into de Valera's confidence when the new Irish constitution – Bunreacht na hÉireann – was being finalised during early 1937... Herzog was consulted on that important matter by de Valera on more than one occasion'. Herzog had a great legal mind, publishing his own legal book, *Main institutions of Jewish law*, in 1936. At a time when Jewish rights around Europe were being trampled on, they were safeguarded under the new Irish constitution.

Article 44 of the constitution reads: 'The State also recognises the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland, as well as the Jewish Congregations and the other religious denominations existing in Ireland at the date of the coming into operation of this Constitution'.

While Herzog was chief rabbi of the Irish Free State the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933. Shortly afterwards, Herzog, accompanied by Robert Briscoe, visited de Valera, who had become president of the Free State Executive Council the previous year, to inform him about the plight of Jews in Germany. De Valera stated that 'he was deeply grieved by the information which Dr Herzog had given him and expressed sympathy with the Jewish community in Ireland in the anxiety for their German brethren'. For his remaining time in Ireland, Herzog regularly warned of the dangers Jews in Europe faced, not only in Nazi Germany, but in places like the Soviet Union and England. Speaking in 1936, Herzog said, 'Thank God, Ireland – geographically small but morally, culturally and historically very great, has been proof against that wicked craze, anti-Semitism, but unfortunately in a country so near home as England, anti-Semitism is beginning to become a source of disquietude to Anglo-Jewry'.

While at a governmental level, Jewish rights in the Free State were protected, there were elements of anti-Semitism within the Catholic Church and wider Irish society. In Limerick in 1904, anti-Semitic sermons by a Redemptorist priest, Fr John Creagh, were the catalyst for widespread intimidation of Jews and a boycott against Jewish traders in the city.

In late 1923, just months after the end of Civil War hostilities, two Jewish men were killed in the space of two weeks in Dublin city centre. On 31 October, 42-year-old Manchester-native Barnet Goldberg was shot dead near St Stephen's Green. He was a commercial traveller who regularly visited Dublin. Then, on 14 November, shortly after leaving the Jewish Social Club on Harrington Street, 24-year-old Emmanuel Kahn and his friend David Millar were shot. While Millar was not badly hurt, Kahn died from his wounds. The men who confronted them asked for their names and

24-year-old Emmauel Kahn was killed in November 1923, one of two anti-Semitic murders in the space of two weeks in Dublin city centre
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

religion. According to Brian Hanley, the perpetrators of these anti-Semitic killings were officers in the Free State Army who were never brought to justice due to a cover-up by the government.

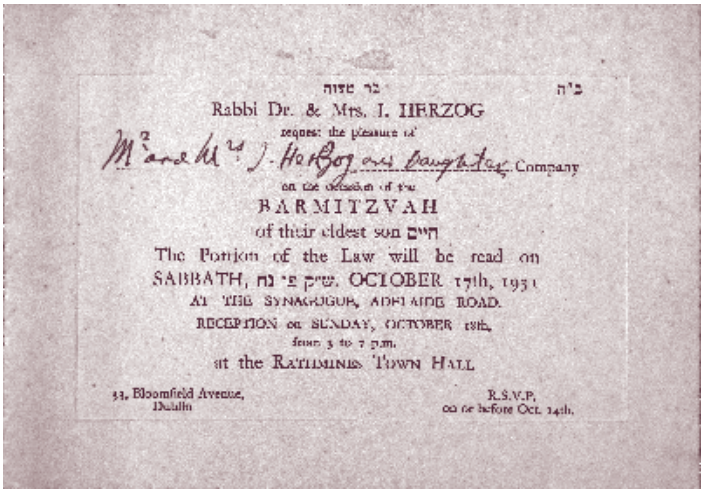
Chaim Herzog wrote in his memoir, *Living History*, 'Ireland had no history of anti-Semitism, and while I did not feel outcast, I did feel different. I was always aware that somewhere in the background I was being judged by different standards'. He felt there 'was an absence of psychological equality. Physically and psychologically, the Jewish community was closed in on itself. It had its own social organizations, Zionist organizations, and religious community. Very few Jews mingled socially with non-Jews'.

According to Dermot Keogh, Herzog 'sought to have his two sons attend the Christian Brothers' School at Synge Street. When the superior discussed the matter with his confreres, all but one agreed to take the two children. A single brother voiced vehement objection. An embarrassed superior was obliged to refuse the Herzogs' entry'. Instead, Chaim and Yaakov were educated first in Alexandria College and then in Wesley College.

Chaim Herzog, on his state visit to Ireland as president of Israel in 1985 meeting his former teacher from Wesley College, Mrs Drury
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

Herzog and other leaders within the Irish Jewish community normally confronted incidents of anti-Semitism through private representations to relevant bodies such as the Catholic Church or the government. On occasions, anti-Semitism was publicly confronted. Reacting to Catholic journals and newspapers such as the *Irish Rosary* and the *Cross*, which carried articles that claimed Jews were responsible for the moral corruption of western society, were fomenting world revolution, and, according to the priest Fr Denis Fahey, the 'real forces behind Bolshevism in Russia are Jewish forces', Herzog interjected by stating that attempts to link 'Jews and communism was one of the most outrageous libels ever invented'.

Conflicted between Orthodox Jewish religious values and secular Irish society, Herzog and his wife Sarah, concerned about the younger generation turning away from the Orthodox fold, did not want Chaim to remain in Dublin after his bar mitzvah. They wanted him to enrol in a yeshiva, an Orthodox Jewish college. He chose one in Palestine.


בר מצוה ב"ה

Rabbi Dr. & Mrs. I. HERZOG

request the pleasure of

Mr and Mrs J. Herzog and daughter's Company

on the occasion of the

BARMITZVAH

of their eldest son חיים

The Portion of the Law will be read on

SABBATH, שבת פ' נח, OCTOBER 17th, 1931

AT THE SYNAGOGUE, ADELAIDE ROAD.

RECEPTION on SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18th,

from 3 to 7 p.m.

at the RATHMINES TOWN HALL

33, Bloomfield Avenue, Dublin

R.S.V.P. on or before Oct. 14th.

An invitation to Chaim Herzog's bar mitzvah in 1931 at the synagogue on Adelaide Road followed by a reception in Rathmines Town Hall
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

A year after Herzog's father, Rabbi Joel Herzog, died in Paris in 1934, the Herzog family accompanied his remains for re-burial to Jerusalem. This was the same time Chaim embarked on his trip to his new yeshiva. While the trip made a deep impression on Herzog in what was his first time in Palestine, he made a deep impression on Jewish communities based there. Although he lost out on the rabbinate of Tel Aviv shortly after he returned to Ireland, in late 1936, after the death of Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, he was elected to the most important rabbinate position of international Judaism, the chief rabbi of Palestine.

Both he and his international reputation had grown during the twenty years he spent in Ireland. He had rejected requests to head the rabbinate in prominent Jewish communities in places such as Berlin, Vienna, New York, and Salonika in Greece, turning them all down 'out of the sense of responsibility he felt for the Jews of Ireland'. The honour of being chosen to be chief rabbi of Palestine was too great to resist.

There was much sadness throughout Ireland in December 1936 as news broke that Herzog had been elected as the chief rabbi of Palestine. A farewell reception was held for him in the Mansion House in April 1937, where representatives from Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour, together with leading members of the Jewish community, were present. While very proud of the honour bestowed on him, the Dublin Jewish community was painfully aware of how difficult he would be to replace.

Speaking at the reception and on how Jews were treated in Ireland, Herzog said, 'Ireland emerged with a record which they might well regard with a just and noble pride. A few isolated unfriendly utterances in recent times could not in the slightest degree mar so noble a record'. While sad to leave Ireland, the call of Zion was irresistible. He was going to Palestine 'at a great moment, at a turning point in the history of Israel'.

Herzog maintained contact with Ireland and de Valera's government after he moved to Palestine, particularly as the apocalyptic crisis facing Jews in Europe deteriorated, leading up to and then during the Second World War.

Reception for Yitzhak Herzog in the Mansion House in April 1937 before he left Ireland to become chief rabbi of Palestine. Robert Briscoe is immediately behind him on the left-hand side
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum


YOUNG MIZRACHI תורה ועבודה

A MASS MEETING

WILL BE ADDRESSED BY

RABBI DR. ISAAC HERZOG. M.A., D.LITT.

(CHIEF RABBI OF PALESTINE),

ON

"The Future of Palestine"

AT ASSEMBLY HALL, ZION SCHOOLS, DUBLIN

ON SUNDAY, 21ST MARCH, 1937, AT 7.30 P.M.

MISS JENNIE Z. RUBINSTEIN WILL PRESIDE

Speakers: Prof. Dr. J. BAKER B.L.; Dr. E. TELLER and Mr. J. UNTERMAN

VISITORS CORDIALLY INVITED :: :: NO COLLECTION

Notice for Yitzhak Herzog's address on 'The Future of Palestine' in Dublin on 21 March 1937, one of his last acts before leaving for Palestine
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

He was critical of the government's restrictive refugee policy and asked for it to take more Jewish refugees in as the horrors of the war unfolded. He warned de Valera of the Holocaust that was happening in Europe and asked him to 'leave no stone unturned to save tormented remnant of Israel doomed alas to utter annihilation in Nazi Europe'.

Herzog visited much of war-torn Europe following the war in 1946, including Ireland. After meeting de Valera, he was instrumental in getting the Irish government to reverse its original decision not to take in one hundred Jewish children from Czechoslovakia, and agree to do so, albeit only temporarily, for a year. The children arrived in 1948 and stayed in Clonyn Castle in Delvin, County Westmeath. Undoubtedly, Herzog was also in mind when, in 1946, the Irish government provided one million one-pound cans of kosher meat, as a gift to the Jews of Europe. Herzog and de Valera's friendship endured.

Yitzhak Herzog in Dublin in 1946. While there, he convinced Éamon de Valera's government to take in one hundred Jewish refugee children from Czechoslovakia
Courtesy of the Irish Jewish Museum

According to Chaim, 'in 1950, after the State of Israel was established, De Valera was one of the first foreign statesmen to visit. He dined with Ben-Gurion and Bobby Briscoe at my parent's home in Jerusalem'.

Yitzhak Herzog was an outstanding leader of the Jewish community in Ireland, first in Belfast and then in Dublin. His brilliant mind and diplomatic skills were instrumental in creating a safe place for Jews to live and thrive at a time when the exact opposite was happening in much of Europe.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Edwin Alkin, Hilary Abrahamson and David Phillips from the Irish Jewish Museum for their assistance in researching this article.

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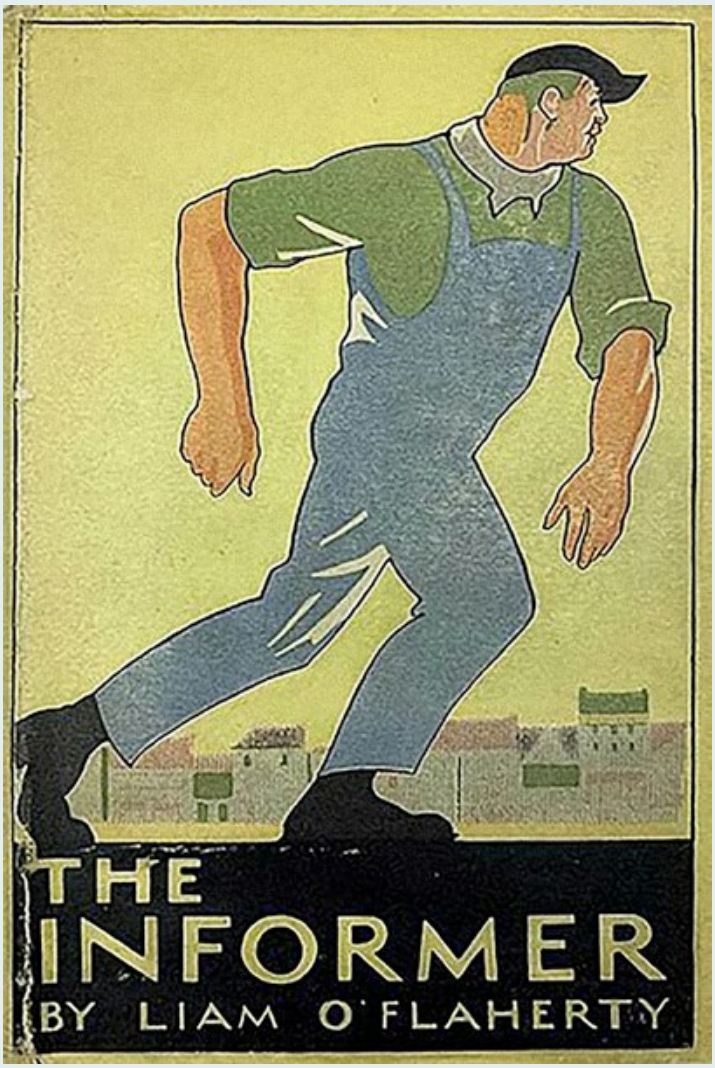


Cover of the first edition of The Informer (1925)
Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons

Liam O'Flaherty: Man of Action and Letters

Dr Mary Muldowney, Historian in Residence, Dublin North West

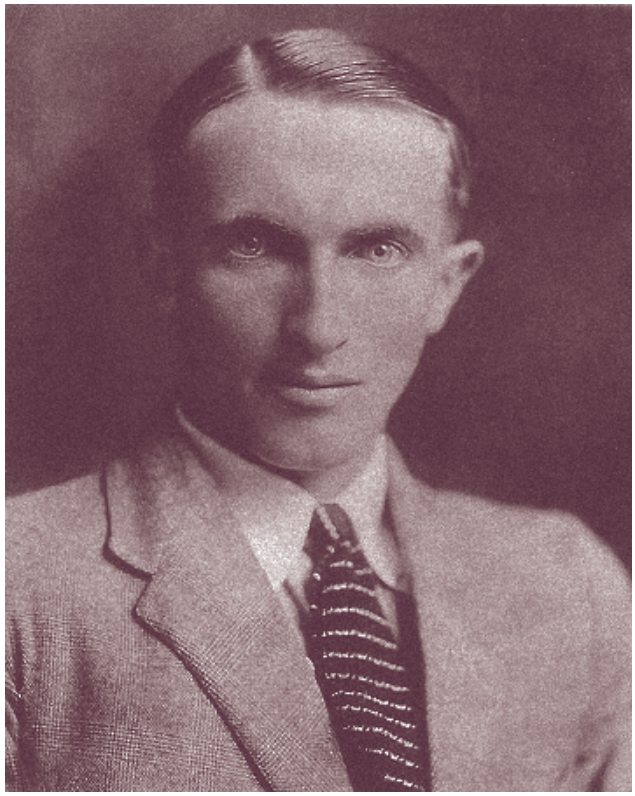
In 1925, the prestigious James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Literature was awarded to Liam O'Flaherty for his novel *The Informer*. Set during the Irish War of Independence (colloquially known as 'The Tan War'), it is a tale of betrayal, loyalty, and the human condition in the face of the moral ambiguity that is so often an element of war. Writing in 1934, in his autobiographical work *Shame the Devil*, O'Flaherty explained the focus for his novel, which was more cinematic than literary:

> *"In Dublin I worked out the plan of The Informer, determined it should be a sort of high-brow detective story and its style based on the technique of the cinema. It should have all the appearance of a realistic novel and yet the material should have hardly any connection with real life. I would treat my readers as a mob orator treats his audience and toy with their emotions, making them finally pity a character whom they began by considering a monster."*

The central character, Gypo Nolan, betrays his friend Francis McPhillip after both have been involved with an unnamed revolutionary organisation during the War of Independence. In the opening chapters of the book, McPhillip is a fugitive who has been living in hiding after killing the Secretary of the Farmers' Union, whom he had been watching on the orders of the revolutionary organisation. He is expelled from the party when his actions are disavowed because he had been ordered only to use his gun as a last resort. As McPhillip returns to Dublin to see his family before trying to escape the country, he encounters Gypo Nolan, a former associate who had also been expelled and is unemployed and facing dire

poverty. Gypo's decision to inform the police about McPhillip's whereabouts for a financial reward sets off a tragic chain of events that culminate in violence, leaving both men dead.

The novel delves into the psychological struggles of Gypo, who faces the consequences of his betrayal and the guilt he feels after McPhillip kills himself. As he navigates the gritty realities of Dublin's underclass, the novel paints a vivid picture of the social and political tensions that permeated Ireland during the revolutionary years. Many of the issues raised in *The Informer* are relevant to the Civil War and the bitter divisions that resulted after the Dáil voted to accept the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. O'Flaherty had fought briefly on the anti-Treaty side and left Ireland for London in 1922 after the burning of the Four Courts in the Battle of Dublin in early July of that year.



Liam O'Flaherty in the 1920s
Courtesy of Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, Wikipedia Commons

Liam O'Flaherty was born at Gort na gCopall on Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands, on 28 August 1896. The cottage where Liam was born had three rooms, a thatched roof and an outhouse for storing potatoes, and was typical of the island. Though the average size of a holding on Aran was one and a half acres, Michael O'Flaherty – whom his son once described on an official form as a 'gentleman' – had fifteen. Certainly, there was sufficient income in the family to pay for a good education for O'Flaherty. In 1908, he was sent away to Rockwell College. He believed he had a vocation for the priesthood and the missions of the Holy Ghost Fathers, but this proved not to be the case, and he moved from Rockwell to Blackrock College. He still intended to be a priest, and after leaving school, he studied at Clonliffe College for a time in 1914, later taking philosophy and classics at UCD.

At Blackrock, he had become involved in the National Volunteers, but he claimed to have tired of waiting for a rising, and instead he joined the Second Battalion of the Irish Guards in the spring of 1916. He served in northern France and Belgium. He was seriously wounded at Boesinge in West Flanders in September 1917, during the third battle of Ypres. He returned to Dublin suffering from 'shell shock', which we would now recognise as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. After treatment in a military hospital in Dublin, he was released into the care of his family with a disability pension.

He left Ireland and travelled the world for two years from 1918 to 1920 as a sailor, working in Canada and the USA, and teaching for a time in Argentina. During his time in the Irish Guards O'Flaherty had been 'converted to socialism' as described by historian Emmet O'Connor. He had been a member of the Industrial Workers of the World trade union, known as the 'Wobblies', during his time in Canada. He joined the American Communist Party in New York, where his brother Tom was a leading member. On O'Flaherty's return to Ireland in late 1920, he became active in the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) and edited the *Workers' Republic*, the CPI paper.

THE WORKERS'

Republic

The Official Organ of The Communist Party of Ireland.

(An Organ of the Third International.) Registered as a Newspaper

Founded by James Connolly, August 1898.

Vol. I. No. 12. New Series. Saturday, December 24, 1921. Price TWOPENCE

NOTES ON THE FRONT.

By SPAILPIN, CC.

Presumption?

Westmeath Co. Council decided to increase the amount for direct labour on roads to April 1 by £5,000, making the outlay £8,000 per month. About 200 workers carrying the red flag marched through the town, entered the Council Chamber, and remained during the meeting. When will our "No Jobbery" Council be beaten with the squanderumania and spend some of the "ratepayers'" money on Dublin's unemployed? Or are we asking our high-salaried Minister of Local Government to do too much violence to his cheese-paring temperament?

"Aid for Irish Commerce."—This is the heading in the "Independent" over an extract from the "Empire News" to the effect: "Within 24 hours of the Irish peace pact a syndicate of Irish-American capitalists put up 20 million dollars for the purpose of developing commerce in Ireland." Now we know who will be masters when Ireland is free. American-Irish capitalists of the type of Byrn, the Copper King. Won't it be splendid when the unemployed gun-men are imported from the Standard Oil Republic to shoot down Irish workers? Musha! isn't it grand that Ireland is free!

[Continued on page 7).

Front page of *The Workers' Republic*, 24 December 1921
Courtesy of the Irish Newspaper Archive online

Agricultural and industrial production in the United Kingdom (including Ireland) had increased substantially during the World War, leading to a crisis of overproduction in the autumn of 1920. This resulted in a rise in unemployment, which reached 26 per cent in Ireland and 17 per cent in Britain by December 1921. While the Irish Labour Party & Trade Union Congress (ILP&TUC) put forward proposals for tackling unemployment and emerging from the crisis, the CPI committed itself to organising the unemployed in Dublin and the rest of the country, using them 'as a lever to establish the working-class in power'. A public meeting was held on 9 January 1922 in Beresford Place, which was run by O'Flaherty and drew a large number of people. Another meeting followed the next day, at which a thirteen-member Unemployed Committee for Dublin and district was set up, with O'Flaherty elected chairman. Two of his CPI comrades, Jim Phelan and Sean McIntyre, were also elected to the Committee of the Council of Unemployed.

On 7 January 1922, the Dáil debates on the Anglo-Irish Treaty ended with a narrow victory for the pro-Treaty side (64 for, 57 against, with the Ceann Comhairle and three others abstaining). The division was ultimately to lead to the bitter Civil War that commenced several months later on 28 June. An examination of the country's newspapers from January of that year shows that the mainstream media were in favour of the Treaty and less than sympathetic to the arguments put forward by Eamon de Valera and the anti-Treaty TDs. What the newspapers also reported was a wave of industrial disputes and political protests that were prompted by the economic hardship experienced by many workers and their families at this time.

The group appealed to the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Laurence O'Neill for a hall to be made available for their meetings, but he refused. On 18 January, O'Flaherty led a march through Dublin City Centre to the Rotunda Concert Room, situated on Parnell Square at the side of the Rotunda Hospital. The men had arranged to use the concert room for one day but announced their true intentions on arrival. Mr. Kaye, the manager of the hall, attempted to contact the Lord Mayor, but he was departing for Paris. O'Flaherty gave an interview to an *Irish Times* reporter explaining the position of the Council for the Unemployed:

"We told him (Mr Kaye) that he could send for the police to eject us if he liked and we decided that if they came, no resistance was to be offered, but that they could carry us out in their arms to their Black Marias if they liked. If we were taken to court we would not recognise the court, because the Government that refuses to redress our grievances is not worth recognising."

Rotunda Concert Hall
Courtesy of National Library EAS_1681/Flickr Commons

O'Flaherty went on to explain that there were 12,500 unemployed men in the city of Dublin and, counting in women and children, the number of people affected by the crisis was 30,000. The Council for the Unemployed group intended to occupy the Rotunda Concert Hall until the local authorities made some effort to provide work for all who needed it. The Red Flag was raised, and the Irish Soviet Workers' Republic was declared. In his autobiography, Jim Phelan expressed his admiration for O'Flaherty's *Manifesto to the Citizens of Dublin*, comparing its language to that of the American War of Independence and the early days of the French Revolution.


Dublin Council of Unemployed.

MANIFESTO

TO

CITIZENS OF DUBLIN

Dublin Council of Unemployed, Manifesto to the Citizens of Dublin

For sale by Sothebys auction house, from the collection of the Hon. Garech Brown at Lugalla

Although O'Flaherty was to become an internationally known and respected writer, the Manifesto document that was printed and pasted up around Dublin was his first known publication. It was unequivocal in its language and the statement of the Council's demands:

"In Dublin there are Thirty Thousand unemployed; Thirty Thousand souls without the right to live. Able bodied men, cut off from the sources of wealth, deprived by insane laws of the means of existence; driven by hunger and want to despair, commit acts of pillage and rapine, to provide themselves and their families with food. Women, Irish women, the pride of our race, reared to be the respected mothers of the future generation, are being dragged down to poverty and destitution – some of them are forced, by the dread spectre of want, to sell their bodies in the streets to the highest bidder. Good citizens are forced by the apathy of the ruling class, by the tyranny of capitalism, to become dangerous criminals.

While at the same time, at the other end of the scale, the wealthy enjoy the fruits of the toil of those who are now hungry. They enjoy the dividends that these men earned for them on the blood-stained fields of France and Gallipoli. They enjoy

> *the liberty that these men fought for in the streets of Dublin, against the foreign foe. They enjoy, but they share not. When the battle is won they forget those who fought. The blood that was shed in France, at the command of these plutocrats of Dublin, has been turned into coin of gold, and thrown into the coffers of the rich, while the dependants of those who fought and died are starving.*
>
> *We, the representatives of the Dublin Unemployed, wish to call the attention of the citizens of Dublin to this deplorable condition of affairs, and demand their assistance in forcing a remedy.*
>
> *We demand work or full maintenance. In presenting these demands we are doing nothing that can be construed as illegal, unconstitutional or revolutionary. It is the right of all men to work. All men born into this world have a right to food, clothing and shelter; and it is their bounden duty to procure for themselves and their dependants these necessary means of subsistence."*

The Manifesto called for the City Council to provide work and to help the Dublin Council of Unemployed with the distribution of any funds that were collected by proposing the work to be done in return for the money donated. This approach underlined the determination of the leadership of the Council of Unemployed to be treated with dignity and provided with work rather than welfare.

The *Irish Examiner* of Friday, 20 January, reported the occupation of the Rotunda Concert Rooms as follows:

> *"Remarkable developments in connection with the recent agitation of unemployed in Dublin occurred yesterday, when a number of men, estimated at 200, remained in occupation of the Rotunda Concert Rooms, which they had secured from Mr. Kay, the manager of the buildings. It was first stated that the action of the men was in the nature of a "protest against*

> *the apathy of the authorities" and that they had decided to remain in possession of the rooms for the purpose of forcing the Corporation to provide another hall for them. Numerous spectators soon gathered in Granby Row and watched with interest the appearance of the Red Flag from one of the windows."*

The *Examiner's* report went on to mention the support provided by local shops, who supplied food and other assistance during the occupation. It mentioned that O'Flaherty was called "Commander in Chief" by the men and remarked on the high levels of organisation in the "garrison" occupying the Rotunda Room.

As the *Irish Independent* had never been a friend of the workers, it was not surprising to find a very mixed message on the editorial page of the paper, on the same day as the *Examiner's* report:

> *"While the Rotunda is the stronghold of resentful idleness, it seems ironical to talk of people being overworked. Yet there is considerable overwork in Dublin. There are many occupations in which employees toil ten and eleven hours a day without overtime. Numbers of waitresses, messengers, van-drivers, and handy-men to name only a few – have an excessive day. Fair hours for them would make openings for others."*

What the editorial failed to note was that unless employers were prepared to pay their employees properly, the workers engaged in the occupations listed in the paper would not be able to afford the loss of their overtime, however onerous it might be. Ironically, on the opposite page, there was a Letter to the Editor from a P. Donnelly with a suggestion about how employment could be created that would also benefit the country's finances. The *Freeman's Journal* posted a front-page piece calling on women to buy Irish goods to reduce unemployment.

On the following day, the *Irish Independent* had a report of a mob attack on the Rotunda by opponents of the Council of the Unemployed:

"The Dublin Council of the Unemployed" still hold possession of the Rotunda Concert Hall, but their occupation is no longer undisturbed.

About 8.30 last night a hostile crowd of about 500 assembled in Cavendish row and indulged in shouts and derisive cheers. About 10 p.m. a young fellow tried to reach the Red flag hung out from a window but fell to the ground. He was promptly taken to Jervis St. hospital, but he was not detained.

Shortly afterwards a second youth made a successful attempt to get the flag, which he tore down. The crowd cheered the performance loudly.

... About 10.30 the Hall was stormed, and the door broken in. The "defenders" had erected a barricade of forms and chairs inside. These were thrown into the street, and there was a hand-to-hand fight in the Hall, which was ended by the intervention of the I.R.A. police and D.M.P., who succeeded in pushing the attackers into the street.

The crowd had grown considerably, and about midnight the I.R.A., forming cordons, forced them to move back to Parnell St. and N. Frederick St., where they gradually dispersed.

The occupiers of the Concert Hall continued to receive contributions in food from city traders, and a sum of £10 was also collected. On Thursday night one of the collectors was beaten outside and had to be immediately treated."

The occupation, which had begun on Wednesday, was to end late on Saturday night. As the hatred outside intensified, shots were fired over the heads of the mob from inside the hall. Just before midnight, and under the protection of the combined police forces of the DMP and the IRA, the occupiers left the building, and the crowd soon departed without incident.

The CPI members, O'Flaherty, Phelan, and McIntyre, left for Cork in the immediate aftermath of the evacuation, on the orders of the Executive. O'Flaherty and McIntyre were accused of appropriating funds collected for the occupation, and an investigation by the CPI found that a small sum of money had gone missing. However, it seems that the accusation owed more to political disagreements than to any real evidence that a crime had been committed. O'Flaherty's own political experience in the first days of the Civil War was with a Communist group led by Roddie Connolly, son of James Connolly and through *The Informer,* there runs a personal experience of terror and its effects. One of the themes of the novel is the propensity of the revolutionary organisation to which both Gypo Nolan and Francis McPhillip belonged to create disputes supposedly based on political infractions.

O'Flaherty's disillusionment with the outcome of the Irish Revolution is evident in his placement of the main characters of *The Informant* in the squalid underside of Dublin city, where poverty and desperation had apparently reduced the ideals of James Connolly and Tom Clarke to petty crime. The revolutionary leader, Commandant Dan Gallagher, seems to have little interest in justice in his pursuit of McPhillip and Nolan, other than emphasising his control of the organisation. In the novel, O'Flaherty's portrayal of the character is not intended to show him as anything other than a brutal thug, who is not respected by the Executive of the Communist International, as described in an extract from a report about Gallagher's leadership:

> *"For the moment it would be a tactical blunder to expel Comrade Gallagher from the International. At the same time there can be no doubt that the Irish Section has deviated entirely from the principles of revolutionary Communism as laid down in the laws of the International. Comrade Gallagher rules the national Organization purely and simply as a dictator. There is a semblance of an Executive Committee but only in name. The tactics are guided by whatever whim is uppermost in Comrade Gallagher's mind at the moment. Contrary to the orders issue from Headquarters, The Organisation is still purely military and has made hardly any attempt to come into the open as a legal political party."*

***The Informer*, directed by John Ford 1933**
Poster courtesy of the Internet Movie Database (*The Informer* (1935) - IMDb)

O'Flaherty came back to Dublin in 1924 and, over subsequent decades, regularly had his work banned by the Irish Censorship Board. Although he became internationally famous as a writer, he is best known for *The Informer*, probably because of the film version that was made in 1935. The director of the film was John Ford, already well known at the time, and he also happened to be O'Flaherty's cousin. The film starred Victor McLaglen as Gypo. He won the Oscar for Best Actor for his performance, while Ford won the Oscar for Best Director. The film script sets the action during the Civil War rather than the War of Independence and has Gypo's betrayal earning him the price of transport to the U.S. rather than a night's lodging, as in the book. After members of the revolutionary organisation shoot him, he finds himself in a church where McPhillip's mother is praying. He begs her forgiveness for his betrayal of her son, and as she forgives him, he dies.

By 1924, O'Flaherty's cynicism about martyrdom in a noble cause would seem to have been justified. Many people had been killed in the Civil War in the name of that 'noble cause', and certainly the revolution had done nothing for the poor of Dublin, echoing the points made by Sean O'Casey in his Dublin trilogy of plays. The brutish behaviour of so many of the characters in *The Informant* is the other side of a true story which many would prefer to forget. Gypo's death represents the end of revolutionary politics when the revolution fails.

Back in Dublin in 1924, O'Flaherty co-founded the Radical Club, among whose members were many progressive artists, including Harry Kernoff, and his lifelong friend and leading Irish language writer, the socialist and fellow Galway man, Pádraic Ó Conaire.

Despite the challenges he faced, O'Flaherty continued to write prolifically, producing works that delved deep into the social and political issues of his time. His writings often reflected his disillusionment with the revolutionary ideals that had once inspired him. Through his stories, O'Flaherty sought to shed light on the harsh realities faced by the working class and the marginalised in Irish society.

Left: Harry Kernoff; Right: Padraig Ó Conaire
Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons

His dedication to highlighting these issues did not go unnoticed, and he became a prominent figure in the literary and political circles of Dublin. The Radical Club became a hub for intellectuals and artists who shared his vision for a more equitable society. It was through this club that O'Flaherty forged lasting friendships with fellow writers and activists, who would go on to influence his work and support his endeavours.

O'Flaherty's legacy is a testament to his unwavering commitment to social justice and his ability to capture the complexities of human nature in his writing. His works remain relevant today, offering insights into the struggles and triumphs of those who dare to challenge the *status quo*.

Further reading:

- Liam O'Flaherty, *Shame the Devil*. 1934.
- Angeline A. Kelly (Ed.), *Liam O'Flaherty: The Collected Stories*. 1999.
- Angeline A. Kelly (Ed.) *The Letters of Liam O'Flaherty*. 1996.
- Peter Costello, *Liam O'Flaherty's Ireland*. 1996.
- Olivier Coquelin, "Liam O'Flaherty's Brief Involvement in Irish Working Class Politics, 1921-1922" in Sarah-Ann Buckley, Olivier Coquelin, and Francis Devine (Eds.), *Retreat From Revolution: Irish Working Class Politics in the 1920s*. 2024.

Figiúr 1: Coddle from Pig's Ear
le caoinchead Stephen McAllister

Stair Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath: 'The most Dublin of Dublin Dishes'

Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, Scríbhneoir agus Staraí

> *People don't always agree on the ingredients for a coddle.*
> *We all agreed our coddle was delicious.*[1]

Roinn Charles Lamb (1775–1834) an cine daonna ina dhá chuid – iasachtaithe agus iasachtóirí – agus d'fhéadfaí an deighilt chéanna a dhéanamh faoi Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath – bia traidisiúnta Bhaile Átha Cliath. Is mias é cadal a bhfuil gean nó gráin ag daoine air, mar a bhfuil ar Marmite. Ar an gclár teilifíse *The Restaurant*, bhaist an cócaire clúiteach Marco Pierre White "*a hug in a bowl*" ar an mias chadail a cuireadh ós a chomhair. Ach scríobh an file Stephen James Smith ina dhán 'Dublin You Are':

> *"Dublin, you are more than a settlement on the Poddle,*
> *but Dublin what's the craic with Coddle?*
> *It's shite, why don't we just admit it!"*

Is mias ar leith nó sainmhias fhíorshimplí é cadal arbh fhéidir a réiteach in aon phota amháin ar thine oscailte i dtionóntáin, ar thaobh an bhóthair nó i gcistineacha áirgiúla. Saghas strúisín Gaelach atá ann a úsáideann bagún agus ispíní seachas caoireoil. Cé nach léir bunús na tuairime, is minic a luaitear gurbh é an cadal an mhias ab ansa le Jonathan Swift (1667–1745). Is cinnte gur mias é atá ar fáil san ardchathair ón 18ú haois ach níl aon fhianaise chinnte againn gur ith nó gur thaitin cadal le Déan Ard-Eaglais Phádraig. Mias bhaile chlainne aonphota atá sa chadal. Oiread le go leor

1 *Pavee Peck: A Collection of recipes and stories by Traveller Women* (Dublin: Pavee Point, 2024), 12.

cineálacha eile strúisíní, is minic a chreidtear go mbíonn oideas speisialta agus blas ar leith a bheith air de réir an teaghlaigh.

Le blianta beaga anuas tá cadal tagtha chun cinn mar mhias biachláir i mbialanna freisin. Tá cáil ar 'Ciarán's Coddle' sa teach ósta *The Gravediggers* i nGlas Naíon, mar ar bhlais na cócairí cáiliúla Anthony Bourdain agus John Torode de ar a gcuid clár taistil bia. Tá Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath ar fáil freisin in *Gallagher's Boxty Hous*e i mBarra an Teampaill agus in *The Pig's Ear* ar sráid Thobar Phádraig (Figiúr 1). Bhíodh leagan den chadal le húlla ar fáil san *Old Schoolhouse* i Sord tráth. Bhí cadal mara nó *seafood coddle* ar an mbiachlár fadó in *Jacobs Ladder* le hispíní déanta as bradán. Nuair a chuir Hugh Corcoran Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath ar bhiachlár na bialainne *The Yellow Bittern* i Londain bhí raic idirnáisiúnta ann. Scríobh an léirmheastóir bialainne Jay Raynor in *The Guardian*:

> *"For the main there's a bowl of sausages and potatoes in broth listed as Dublin Coddle, a mellifluous name that cannot disguise the fact it's two bought-in Cumberland sausages, some potatoes and broth for £20."*

Ina measc siúd gur breá leo Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath, tá an dream ar geal leo an cadal bán chomh maith céanna leis an dream arbh fhearr leo an cadal donn. Is ann don chadal dubh sa bhéaloideas freisin mar a léirítear i dteideal leabhair Terry Fagan *Monto: Murder, Madams and Black Coddle*. Anuas ar na gnáth-amhábhair (prátaí, oiniúin, bagún, ispíní, piobar), is ann do réimse sách leathan amhábhar eile ar féidir a chur sa chadal de réir nós do mhuintire féin – duáin, scamhóga, easnacha bagúin, croíthe, meacain, cainneann, píseanna, trátaí, ciúbanna stoic, paicéid anraith (m.sh. anraith damheireabaill, sicín, cainneann agus prátaí srl) gan trácht ar Bovril nó Oxo. Is ábhair sách nua-aimseartha iad na ciúbanna stoic agus na paicéid anraith (bia saoráideach) a d'eascair ó athruithe teicneolaíochta sa tionscal bia le céad bliain anuas.

Ach cén stair atá taobh thiar den chadal? Cad as ar tháinig sé? Cén fáth gur le Baile Átha Cliath is mó a luaitear cadal? Foghlaimeoidh muid go raibh orthu an t-ainm 'Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath' a athrú go 'Cadal' nuair a cuireadh ar bhiachlár phríosúin na hÉireann é. Cén cineál cadail is ansa

le muintir na hardchathrach? Déanfaidh an chaibidil seo iniúchadh ar stair chadail ag úsáid fianaise ón teangeolaíocht, sanasaíocht, béaloideas, leabhair chócaireachta, filíocht, agallaimh, agus ceistneoir a d'fhreagair 642 rannpháirtí a d'fhéach le héileamh na méise seo a thomhas sa lá atá inniu ann. Foghlaimeoidh muid faoi stair na cathrach, faoi eisimircigh ón Eoraip (búistéirí Gearmánacha ina measc), cócaireacht aonphota, agus mar a d'athraigh an teicneolaíocht bia agus mar ar imir an bia saoráideach tionchar ar thraidisiúin chócaireachta an chadail i dteaghlaigh éagsúla.

Is fada an cadal a bheith luaite leis an gcosmhuintir agus dá bharr is ó bhéal agus ó dhuine go duine – ó mháthair go hiníon go hiondúil – is mó a rinneadh seachadadh ar an oideas seachas i leabhair chócaireachta. Is cuid thábhachtach dár n-oidhreacht chultúrtha dholáimhsithe é. Nuair a tugadh faoi Bhailiúchán na Scol (1937–1939), bailíodh formhór an bhéaloidis amuigh faoin tuath agus i bhfad ó na cathracha. Is aisteach nach bhfuil 'cadal' luaite sa bhailiuchán agus nach luaitear *sausage* (20) nó 'ispín' (1) ach go hannamh. Mar shampla tá an bia tuaithe 'bacstaí' luaite 2,297 uair ach níl an mhias chathrach drisín nó *drisheen* luaite ach an t-aon uair amháin. Is ríléir gur bia baile mhóir nó cathrach iad na hispíní agus an cadal ina fhianaise sin. Ina cheann sin, níl an cadal luaite le Corcaigh ná Luimneach ná Port Láirge cé go raibh traidisiún láidir búistéireachta agus tionscal saillte bagúin sna bailte úd. Tá cáil ar ruipleog (*tripe*) agus drisín i gCorcaigh, agus ar *Skirts and Kidneys* nó *Skirts and Bodices* i gCorcaigh agus i Luimneach agus is cineálacha cadail iad seo ó tharla gur strúisíní feola iad seo atá suanbhruite le prátaí agus oiniúin. Ach le blianta beaga anuas, tá borradh faoi bhailiú an bhéaloidis i mbailte agus cathracha, seachas i gceantair thuaithe, agus borradh freisin faoi thaighde maidir le stair bhia na hÉireann go ginearálta. Tá bia traidisiúnta na cosmhuintire, amhail Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath, le fáil ar bhiachláir bialanna gustalacha in Éireann agus thar lear, mar ar mó an meas atá againn ar ár mbia dúchasach anois agus an náire iarchoilíneach á cur dínn. Tógadh an cócaire Derry Clarke le cadal agus nuair a thosaigh an fhéile 'A Taste of Dublin' in 2006, réitigh sé Anraith Chadail Bhaile Átha Cliath le hUachtar Bláthaí *Dublin Coddle Soup with Buttermilk Cream* don ócáid. Nuair a thosaigh mé féin ar chadal a réiteach i dtrátha na bliana 1997 agus mé i mo léachtóir cócaireachta i Sráid Chathal Brugha, chuir mé cainneann leis agus chuir mé críoch uachtair air chun an mhias a dhéanamh

níos saibhre. Saghas ardchadal nó *haute coddle* a bhí á fhéachaint agam ach thaitin sé go mór le mo chuid comhghleacaithe a rugadh agus a tógadh le cadal san ardchathair, an dream is géire ó thaobh na critice de. Os ag trácht ar ardchadal nó *haute coddle* muid, scríobh Paul Howard in 2022 faoi chló a cholúin Ross O'Carroll Kelly don *Irish Time*s faoi chadal traidisiúnta Bhaile Átha Cliath a raibh cor cheann ó dheas ann – "*traditional Dublin coddle with a southside twist*" – áit ar bhain Sorcha, bean chéile Ross, earraíocht as ispíní fiafheola agus prátaí róstaithe i ngeir lachan. Cuireadh leithghabháil chultúrtha nó *cultural appropriation* ina leith nuair a roinn sí an t-oideas ar na meáin sóisialta. Is mór i gceist é an cadal faoi láthair ar bhiachláir agus ar Instagram araon, ach oiread leis an mias féin ní lia criticeoir bia ná barúil i dtaobh Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath de réir fhianaise na léirmheasanna.

Is fearr tosú leis an ainm 'cadal' nó *coddle*. Tá leagan cainte i mBaile Átha Cliath faoi pháistí atá millte ag a máthair nó tuismitheoirí a bheith róbhog ar a gclann – *mollycoddle*. Is éard is brí le cadal nó *coddle* ná suanbhruth, cócaireáil go mall réidh faoi bhun teocht bhruite. Is minic a luaitear cadal le huibheacha *coddled eggs* toisc go ndéantar suanbhruth orthu. Tá mias eile ann darbh ainm *caudle*:

> *"a warm drink of sweetened or spiced wine or ale thickened with gruel or other ingredients, given chiefly to invalids, expectant mothers, etc., and (formerly) also to those visiting a mother following the birth of a child".*

Is ón bhFraincis *caudle* a tháinig an focal cadal nó *coddle*. Is léir freisin go bhfuil an fréamh shanasíochta chéanna ag *caudle* agus atá ag *cauldron*, an coire ina ndéantar cócaireacht ar chadal. Síolraíonn an focal seabhdar nó *chowder* ón bhfréamh chéanna. Ba í an tSean-Fhraincis a bhí ag na Normannaigh a tháinig go hÉirinn sa dara céad déag agus cuireadh fáilte roimh eisimircigh eile ón bhFrainc, na hÚgónaigh, i mBaile Átha Cliath tar éis dóibh teitheadh ó ghéarleanúint reiligiúnda sa séú céad déag. Chuir líon mór acu fúthu i gceantar na Saoirsí taobh amuigh de sheanbhallaí cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath. Tá tradisiún i measc na nÚgónach faoi strúisín bán ar a dtugtar *blanquette* – mias inar féidir laofheoil nó muicfheoil a úsáid. Deirtear gurbh iad na hÚgónaigh ba chúis leis an arán cáiliúil *blaa* a thabhairt go dtí Port Láirge agus gurbh é an focal *blanc* nó bán bunús an ainm.

Figiúr 2: Ciarán Kavanagh and Sinéad McGlynn – We need to talk about Coddle
le caoinchead Sinéad McGlynn

Ní haon rud nua trácht a bheith ar bhia bán in Éirinn. Is ar bhánbhia (cáis, bainne, bláthach, leamhnacht, gruth agus meidhg srl) mar aon le leite agus sruán coirce a mhair na Gaeil sular tháinig an práta go hÉirinn. Is féidir linn a rá nach raibh cadal ar fáil roimh thús an seachtú haois déag toisc a lárnaí atá an práta sa mhias féin. Mar sin féin, luaitear ispíní (maróc) agus bagún sa seantéacs ón dara céad déag *Aislinge Meic Conglinne* agus dá bharr sin chreid Theodora Fitzgibbon go raibh leagan de chadal le coirce ann sular tháinig na prátaí go hÉirinn. Tá sé soiléir ó na foinsí éagsúla gur tháinig cadal chun cinn sna cathracha – go háirithe Baile Átha Cliath – cab ar chab le forbairt thionscal an bhagúin agus borradh faoi bhúistéirí muicfheola agus bagúin san ochtú haois déag. Tá fianaise faoi tógáil agus ramhrú muc sna Saoirsí ón meánaois i leith agus faoin ré Sheoirseach bhí ceantar ann in aice le Báisín na Cathrach ar a tugadh Pigtown a raibh cáil an bhréantais air. Ó thús go lár an fichiú haois, bhí breis agus 400 muclach san ardchathair, mar ar tógadh muca ar dhríodar ó thionscal na ngrúdlann agus na ndrioglann agus ar aon seanbhia eile ó thithe cónaithe, ó bhácúis, ó bhialanna agus ó óstáin. Ba bhúistéirí mairtfheola agus caorfheola is mó iad na búistéirí

Éireannacha agus Iúdacha ach tháinig slua búistéirí Gearmánacha as ceantar Württemberg in aice leis an mBaváir ag tús an fichiú haois agus ba le muicfheoil agus bagún is mó a d'oibridís siúd. Is uathu a tháinig na sloinnte Gearmánacha Olhausen, Horlacher, Uzell, Hick agus Retz i mbéal phobal siopadóirí Bhaile Átha Cliath. Tháinig cáil ar leith ar Bhaile Átha Cliath maidir le hispíní, putóga dubha agus bána, agus *hazlet* – saghas builín feola spíosraithe nó *meatloaf* a ghearrtaí go tanaí faoi choinne ceapairí.

Sa bhéaloideas cathrach, is minic a luaitear gur mias é an cadal a bhíodh ag na fir nuair a thagaidís abhaile ón teach tábhairne oíche Dé Sathairn. San taighde do chéim an mháistir a rinne Sinéad McGlynn (Figiúr 2) faoi Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath, ba é an Satharn an lá ba mhinice a luadh le déantús agus le hithe na méise cé go raibh chuile lá eile luaite i bhfreagraí na rannpháirtithe suirbhé freisin. Tá cadal luaite i ndán de chuid Paula Meehan *Of Natal Charts and End Games*. Rugadh i lár na cathrach an file agus bhí nasc ag an teaghlach le ceantar Monto. Ba ar oíche Dé Sathairn agus do bhricfeasta an Domhnaigh tar éis aifrinn ba mhó ar chuimhin le Paula a seanmháthair (Hannah) a bheith ag réiteach cadail:

> *"I spent a lot of time with Hannah (Grandmother) and she would take me into Olhausen's butchers, pork butchers on Talbot Street, and she would buy the ingredients there, which were sausages and bacon chunks, not rashers, but off-cuts of bacon, chunks, like they'd be the size of maybe a child's fist … Ribs, and lights, which are lungs. So, these were the things that went in, the sausages, the rashers, or the bacon chunks, the lights. And then we'd go round to our pals and there'd be chat, and cups of tea, and sometimes something stronger. Powers, I remember, was a favourite, whiskey, hot whiskey in the winter days. And plenty of chat, but they were the basic ingredients. And then she had a huge pot, which all kinds of stews came out of, stews and soups. And into that went all those ingredients. There was never any question of measurements. It was, you know, kind of an estimation of maybe one or two*

sausages for everyone, and a chunk, a bit of the bacon for everyone. You know, it was all in her mind. Never saw her weigh anything in my life. In it all went, and potatoes were added afterwards. The ribs were cooked separately and added in. I suppose they were too salty, really. They would have overwhelmed it. I remember as a child being terrified of the lights, the lungs, because they were full of these tubes, you know, white tubes … In the kind of strange flesh of the lungs. As the lungs cooked, they went, they turned into a colour like liver, reddy, reddy brown colour. But when they went in, they were a kind of a strange beige, I suppose, is the colour they were. So, all of those things went in with chopped up onions. And as I say, just, I don't know if she used stock. I think she just used water. Plenty of onions. And then at the last, for the last hour, maybe, the potatoes went in so they kind of disintegrated back into it. And that was essentially it. I don't remember any other vegetables going in. Parsley and thyme, which seemed to go into everything … A handful of chopped up parsley and thyme. And that was it. And it always went on on Saturdays. It was ready by Saturday night and people coming back from the pub sometimes had some of it. But it was really the main reason for it or the main serving happened after mass on Sunday. So, it was the breaking of the fast".

Ba ar an Máirt de réir chuimhne Carmel Ryan a tógadh ar Shráid Berkeley a réitíodh a máthair an cadal agus luaigh sí go mbraitheadh na hamhábhar ar a fhlúirsí a bhí na pinginí ag an am:

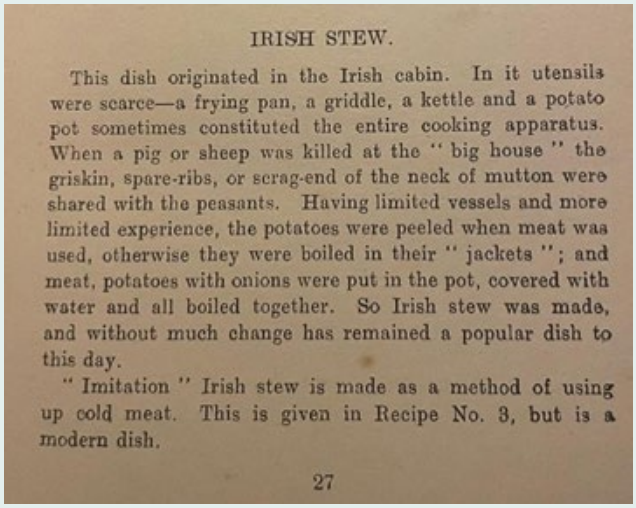
"Oh, coddle was the favourite thing. We had dinner in the middle of the day in those years, and we had coddle on a Tuesday. So, I remember I always loved going home for dinner that day. And I don't know how my mother did it because I've never been able to achieve it, but I had two older brothers, now they're quite a deal older than me, and we lived in a tenement effectively. In fact, it's not effectively, it was a tenement. So, there was limited space, but she must have had a cauldron

> *because we had coddle for the dinner. Usually, the brothers and I would have second helpings, and we always had some again that night for supper, and it was even nicer at night. And that was just it. It was made very basically. I suppose if money was good, there was rashers, sausages, and potatoes and onions, and she'd roll up a bit of cooked ham into it. And if money was tight, there was no ham".*

Is féidir cadal a ithe mar bhricfeasta nó mar dhinnéar agus moltar gan an oiread prátaí céanna a chur ann más don bhricfeasta é. Mar chuid don Urban Folklore Project (1979–1980), is mar seo a chuir Mary Spencer as an Rinn cur síos ar chadal:

> *"You made your coddle … well you were supposed to get ham rashers, but I can tell you in them days we didn't get ham rashers, we hadn't got the money for them. You went down to the aul' shop, and he'd have all these bacon bits. There'd be ham bits, there'd be bacon bits in it. Now, he'd keep them for you, if you asked him to, say the day before, say I'll be down tomorrow, keep me, he kept the bits and you got a half pound of sausages or maybe a pound of sausages. Now beef sausages you got, not the pork sausages, the big beef sausages. And two good Spanish onions, which you won't see nowadays. Aw they were beautiful, I haven't seen them in years. They were beautiful big onions, but there was a lovely mild taste off them. Aw they were beautiful now. Well, you got two good Spanish onions. Now, you put your bacon bits, and your sausages and your Spanish onion in, and you simmered it. And you never tasted anything like it. Now if you could buy potatoes, you could throw potatoes in, if you wanted to make a kind of a stew out of it, for the kids. Many a time I done that for their dinner. But if you didn't, you could take it with bread. You know what I mean, aw it was gorgeous. Gorgeous. But that was a relish, if you had that for your tea you were lucky, you generally only had a bit of bread and butter for your tea. Or maybe a bit of rye bread, you know what I mean. But if you had a coddle you were well off".*

Tá dianstaidéar déanta ar strúisín Gaelach ag Dorothy Cashman agus John Farrelly agus ar go leor bealaí, d'fhéadfaí a rá gur leagan cathrach, agus leagan Baile Átha Cliathach de strúisín Gaelach é an cadal. Tá na hamhábhair chéanna ann a bheag nó a mhór cé gur cineálacha éagsúla muicfheola a úsáidtear seachas caoirfheoil nó feoil ghabhair. Luadh cheana gur bia na cosmhuintire é cadal agus ní haon iontas dá bharr nach ann do mhórán oideas clóite de Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath sna leabhair chócaireachta. Chuile sheans go raibh an mhias féin róchomónta, róshimplí agus rócheangailte leis an lucht oibre le bheith curtha i gcló. Tá sé luaite ag Cashman agus Farrelly go raibh leabhair chócaireachta faoi bhia Éireannach mall ag teacht ar an bhfód agus tá an-mhíniú déanta acu ar údair na moille seo. Cé gur in 1798 a luaitear an chéad oideas don strúisín Gaelach, ní go dtí 1937 a fheiceann muid an chéad oideas don chadal – cé gur faoin teideal *Irish Stew* atá sé i leabhar Florence Irwin *Irish Country Recipes* (Figiúir 3a agus 3b). Is é an leabhar cócaireachta is túisce a thugann oideas do Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath ná *A Taste of Ireland* le Theodora Fitzgibbon (1968). Is é an chéad leagan eile atá foirfe mar oideas ná oideas Biddy White Lennon in *The Poolbeg Book of Traditional Irish Cooking* (1990). Tá oideas do 'Winnie Dunne's Dublin Coddle' i leabhar Darina Allen, *Irish Traditional Cooking* (1995). Bhain conspóid leis an oideas a chuir JP McMahon dá leagan siúd de Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath sa leabhar *The Irish Cook Book* (2020) de bhrí gur mhol seisean na hispíní, an bagún agus na hoiniúin a fhriochadh chun dath donn a thabhairt don mhias. Tagann na hoidis is déanaí don chadal, a foilsíodh in 2024, ó dhá fhoinse éagsula – mná den Lucht Siúil sa leabhar *Pavee Peck* agus ón cócaire cáiliúil teilifíse Anna Haugh *Cooking with Anna: Modern Home Cooking with Irish Heart* – ach ba ón mbaile a d'fhoghlam siad uile na hoidis. Bíonn cadal an Lucht Siúil donn de ghnáth toisc go gcuirtear anraith paicéid damheireabaill sa phota agus go ngearrtar croí leis na hispíní agus píosaí bagúin. Bán atá leagan Anna den chadal le beagán bainne agus uachtar ann.



IRISH STEW.

This dish originated in the Irish cabin. In it utensils were scarce—a frying pan, a griddle, a kettle and a potato pot sometimes constituted the entire cooking apparatus. When a pig or sheep was killed at the " big house " the griskin, spare-ribs, or scrag-end of the neck of mutton were shared with the peasants. Having limited vessels and more limited experience, the potatoes were peeled when meat was used, otherwise they were boiled in their " jackets "; and meat, potatoes with onions were put in the pot, covered with water and all boiled together. So Irish stew was made, and without much change has remained a popular dish to this day.

" Imitation " Irish stew is made as a method of using up cold meat. This is given in Recipe No. 3, but is a modern dish.

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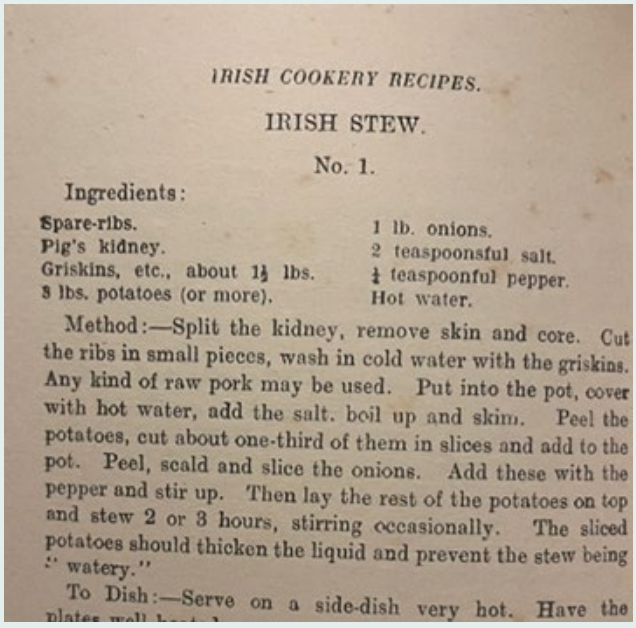


IRISH COOKERY RECIPES.

IRISH STEW.

No. 1.

Ingredients:

Spare-ribs.
Pig's kidney.
Griskins, etc., about 1½ lbs.
3 lbs. potatoes (or more).
1 lb. onions.
2 teaspoonsful salt.
¼ teaspoonful pepper.
Hot water.

Method:—Split the kidney, remove skin and core. Cut the ribs in small pieces, wash in cold water with the griskins. Any kind of raw pork may be used. Put into the pot, cover with hot water, add the salt, boil up and skim. Peel the potatoes, cut about one-third of them in slices and add to the pot. Peel, scald and slice the onions. Add these with the pepper and stir up. Then lay the rest of the potatoes on top and stew 2 or 3 hours, stirring occasionally. The sliced potatoes should thicken the liquid and prevent the stew being " watery."

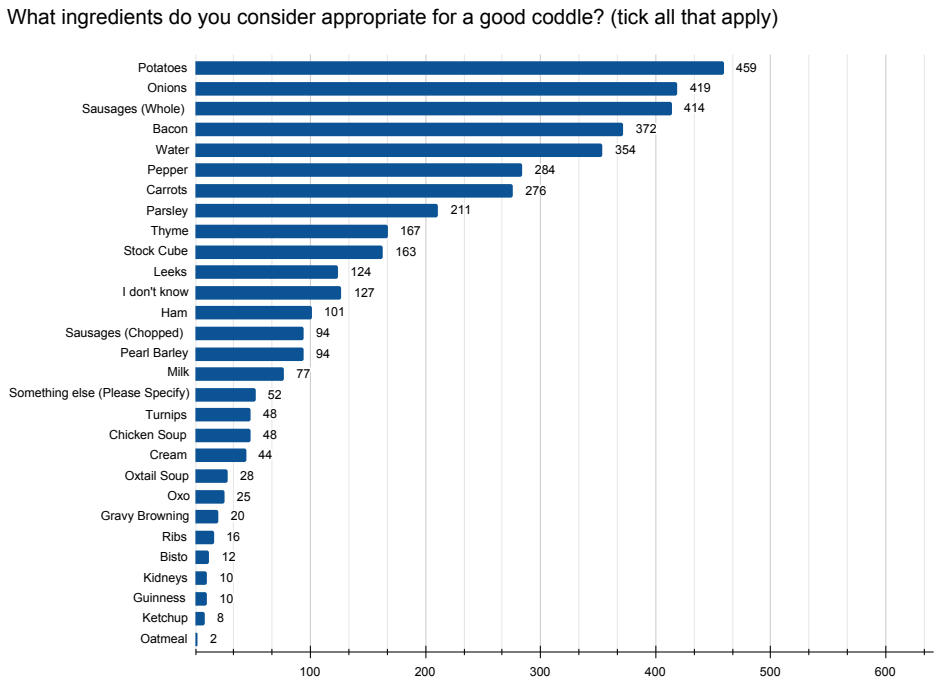
To Dish:—Serve on a side-dish very hot. Have the plates well heated.

Figiúir 3a agus 3b: Florence Irwin *Irish Country Recipes* (1937), lth. 28–29

Tá deighilt éagsúil idir na hoidis teaghlaigh agus dath Chadal Bhaile Átha Cliath (bán, donn, nó dubh). Sa taighde a rinne Sinéad McGlynn i samhradh 2023, áit ar cuireadh suirbhé ar 642 duine san ardchathair, is é an cadal bán is ansa le 81% díobh siúd a d'fhreagair an ceistneoir. I measc na n-amhábhar is minice a luaitear sa tuairisc, tá prátaí, ispíní, oiniúin, bagún, uisce, agus piobar ach luadh iliomad amhábhar eile freisin, le leachtanna éagsúla (anraith, bainne, uachtar, Guinness, citseap agus anlann Worcestershire) (féach Figiúr 4). As an 96 duine a thug le fios gur úsáid siad paicéid anraith sa chadal, ba é an t-anraith sicín ba mhó a d'úsáid a bhformhór (48), le hanraith damheireabaill (28), anraith prátaí agus cainneann (11), anraith prátaí (6), anraith glasraí (2), agus anraith trátaí (1) luaite freisin.

Is léir go mbaineann iad siúd nach dtaitníonn dath bán ar chadal leo úsáid as anraith damheireabaill, ciúbanna Oxo, súlach donnúcháin, anlann donn nó trátaí de chineálacha éagsula chun dath donn a chur ar an mias. Is minic freisin a chuirtear dath donn ar na hispíní i bhfriochtán sula gcuirtear sa chadal iad. Is ón mbéaloideas cathrach a tháinig an scéal faoin gcadal dubh. Deirtear gur thit súiche ón simléar isteach sa phota. Bhí réimse mór amhábhar eile luaite sa suirbhé freisin ó phónairí cannellini, gránphlúr, cabáiste, soilire, trátaí, turnapaí, ruipleog agus anlann YR (féach Figiúr 5). Is soiléir go bhfuil a mblas agus a n-oideas féin ag chuile theaghlach san ardchathair.

Chuir Sinéad McGlynn agallamh ar an gcócaire Pat Staffard a chuir biachlár rialta a d'athraíodh go míosúil ar fáil do Sheirbhís Príosúin na hÉireann sna 1990idí. Bhí Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath luaite ar an mbiachlár faoi dhó sa mhí ach bhí Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath á lorg ag na príosúnaithe sna príosúin Mhuinseo, Chnoc na Seamar, Pháirc na Cruithneachta agus Chnoc an Arbhair faoi dhó sa tseachtain. Os a choinne sin, dhiúltaigh príosúnaithe i bPort Laoise, Luimneach, Corcaigh agus sa Chaisleán Riabhach do mhias a ithe a bhí luaite le Baile Átha Cliath. Thángthas ar réiteach trí Bhaile Átha Cliath a bhaint den chur síos, úsáidtear stéigeanna gambúin agus ispíní friochta donna anois agus ó cuireadh an t-athrú sin i leith tá cadal anois ar cheann de na miasanna is ansa leis an 4,461 príosúnach a fhaigheann faoi dhó sa mhí é.



Figiúr 4: Príomh Amhábhair Cadal Luaite sa Suirbhé
le caoinchead Sinéad McGlynn

Mias ar leith é Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath a bhfuil na príomh-amhábhair ispíní, bagún, prátaí, oiniúin, piobar agus uisce aige cé gur féidir réimse mór amhábhar eile a úsáid chomh maith. Tá deighilt shuntasach idir an dream ar geal leo cadal agus leithéidí Stephen James Smith a mhaíonn nach deas é: *it's shite*. Luaitear cadal le Baile Átha Cliath i ndánta agus amhráin le fada mar a luaitear ruipleog agus drisín le Corcaigh agus mar a luaitear an *blaa* le Port Láirge. Is ón bhFraincis *caudle* a thagann an t-ainm agus tá gaol sanasaíochta aige le *cauldron* agus *chowder*. Tá stair an-fhada ag muca i mBaile Átha Cliath agus is léir gur tháinig borradh faoi líon na mbúistéirí

muicfheola agus bagúin san ardchathair ó thús an fichiú haois. Tá sloinnte Gearmánacha amhail Oulhausen agus Hicks fós i mbéal an phobail agus a shaothraigh cáil ar leith don ardchathair maidir le hispíní, putóga dubha agus bána, chomh maith le *hazlet*. Fad a bhí strúisín Gaelach á dhéanamh ar fud na hÉireann, ba é an cadal a bhíodh mar príómhbhia i measc chosmhuintir Bhaile Átha Cliath. B'fhurasta an mhias aonphota seo a réiteach ar thine oscailte nó ar thine gháis. Is cuid d'oidhreacht chultúrtha dholáimhsithe na hÉireann é Cadal Bhaile Átha Cliath agus is léir ón taighde is déanaí go bhfuil 69% díobh siúd a d'fhás aníos ag ithe cadail á réiteach anois dá gclann féin.

Figiúr 5: Amhábhair eile Luaite le Cadal sa Suirbhé
le caoinchead Sinéad McGlynn

Tá an mhias bogtha amach ón tinteán isteach chuig bialanna agus tithe ósta amhail *The Gravediggers*, *Gallagher's Boxty House*, agus *The Pigs Ear*. Tá conspóid idirnáisiúnta tarraingthe aige fiú ar tráchtadh air in the *New York Times* agus the *Guardian* toisc gur cuireadh ar bhiachlár na bialainne mór le rá *The Yellow Bittern* i Londain. Sílim go bhfuil an mhias slán go ceann glún nó dhó eile, chomh fada agus a bheidh búistéirí neamhspleácha ar an bhfód san ardchathair. Mar a deir údair *Pavee Peck*, "People don't always agree on the ingredients for a coddle. We all agreed our coddle was delicious".

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The old and new at Grangegorman: Local children's perspectives

Dervilia Roche, Historian in Residence for Children

The story of Grangegorman, Dublin 7, is unusual when compared to other parts of Dublin. While many areas in Dublin developed as villages and housing developments, Grangegorman became a site of institutions. From a relatively rural area, the space became gradually built up with these institutions and their associated buildings through the 1700s, 1800s and 1900s. It's a place that was somewhat hidden from public view for a long time but has been redeveloped and is now the site of the new campus of the Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) as well as a new primary school, primary care centre, and a number of other buildings.

Grangegorman Histories is a public history programme of research and shared discovery of the Grangegorman site and surrounding communities, led by Grangegorman Development Agency and the Royal Irish Academy. In collaboration with these organisations, I worked with local primary schools, delivering history-based guided tours of the site. These tours were followed by short feedback-gathering workshops, so that the children's and teachers' interests and ideas can be added to any potential future iterations of walking tours for schools there.

The tours were an adapted version of the regular walking tour delivered by Grangegorman Histories, tailored to be suitable for 5th and 6th classes. The content was adjusted to make it more interactive, to include subjects that children could personally connect to, where possible, and to link with historical topics they may already be familiar with through the school curriculum. Knowing that the children were local to the area, I also tried to

create as many opportunities as possible for them to share their knowledge and experiences of the place with me.

The historical institutions of Grangegorman included a workhouse, a hospital originally labelled as an asylum, and a prison. These are places with sensitive and sometimes dark histories, which presented one of the main challenges of talking to children about the site. From my experience of working with children, I know there is a huge interest in dark topics like diseases, plagues, war, or famine. There is an understandable curiosity to know more about these things and how they came to be. With sensitive topics, the best practice in this area is generally around tailoring information to make it age-appropriate for children, rather than completely avoiding difficult topics. This can mean simplifying ideas and stories from history while still explaining that there can be nuances and multiple viewpoints. It can also mean tailoring information based on what kinds of topics they are likely to already have some knowledge about. It's important to create a space that feels comfortable for everyone, so that they can ask questions if something is confusing or difficult. By 5th and 6th classes, children are likely to be able to engage on some level with tricky subjects, to place them within some kind of wider historical context, and to think critically about them. I kept all of this in mind when preparing school tours of Grangegorman.

We began our tour by discussing the meaning of the word 'institution', which some of the children already understood fairly well. We talked about what the place might have been like before the first major buildings. With 'grange' in its title, meaning 'farm', the children were encouraged to imagine this area as fields and countryside, at a time when the city was confined to a much smaller space. It was a fairly rural area when the House of Industry, the first of the major institutions, was built here in 1773. On the tour, we looked in the direction of where this once stood in the southeast corner of Grangegorman, roughly where Morning Star Avenue is, just off Brunswick St North.

The House of Industry was an institution for the relief of the poor and later became the North Dublin Union Workhouse. Workhouses, similarly, were institutions intended to provide work and shelter for poverty-stricken people. Many children in 5th and 6th classes will have already learned about

The clock tower building along the main road, formerly the Richmond Penitentiary
Photo by Dervilia Roche

workhouses and the famine. The children were invited to tell me what they knew about life in a workhouse, and we discussed how family members were separated, treatment was often harsh, diseases were rife, and in general, they were places that only the most desperate, starving and poorest people went. We could build on their previous knowledge by now seeing that the site of one of Dublin's main workhouses was local to them. The House of Industry building was changed and expanded over the years. The main complex has been demolished, but aerial photos from around the 1930s show us how it looked at that stage. The shape of the road nowadays at Morning Star Avenue appears to still correspond to where the entrance to the complex was.

The House of Industry, later North Dublin Union Workhouse. It is now mostly demolished. The entrance visible here is on Morning Star Avenue, where the road still has the same shape now
Courtesy of Military Archives, reference code IE-MA-ACPS-GPN-186-1

We then spoke about another major change to the area in the late 1700s, which was the building of the Royal Canal. On the north side of the city, this is one of two canals in Dublin, both of which were constructed as navigable waterways between Dublin and the River Shannon. Using printouts of historical maps, I explained how one branch of the Royal Canal used to run from Phibsborough to Grangegorman, along what is now the linear park at Blessington Basin. The canal crossed an aqueduct over the road at Broadstone, before finishing close to where we were standing, on the east side of the Grangegorman site. Like many classes I've worked with, the children were really interested in the history of canals, asking, 'Did they have to dig it out by hand?'. We discussed the fact that they were built before the development of modern industrial machinery and how hard this work must have been for the labourers. They also enjoyed hearing that early canal boats were powered by horses, and how nowadays, when we walk along canals in Dublin, we are usually following the historic towpaths once used by them. Some of the children later said that learning about the canal was the most interesting part of the tour for them, and some thought it was also the most important thing they had learned about.

From the same spot on the tour, we could see the building that once housed the second major historical institution of Grangegorman, the Richmond Asylum. Only one wing of the building remains today and is now the Lower House of TU Dublin. It was named after the 4th Duke of Richmond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at that time. His coat of arms can still be seen on one side of the Lower House. The Richmond Asylum opened in 1814. It was a psychiatric hospital, and its first patients came from the adjacent House of Industry. When it first opened, it was considered to have provided a good quality of care for patients, with individual treatments and spaces. This contrasted with many of the ways in which mental health treatment was delivered up until this point. The focus had mainly been on control and restraint. The Richmond Asylum became overcrowded over time and was unable to continue to provide the same level of care. With the children, we discussed the meaning of the word 'asylum', and how this can have negative associations, but can also refer to the idea of refuge and care for people. Many of the children knew there had been a psychiatric hospital on the site but were unsure about which buildings had been part of the complex.

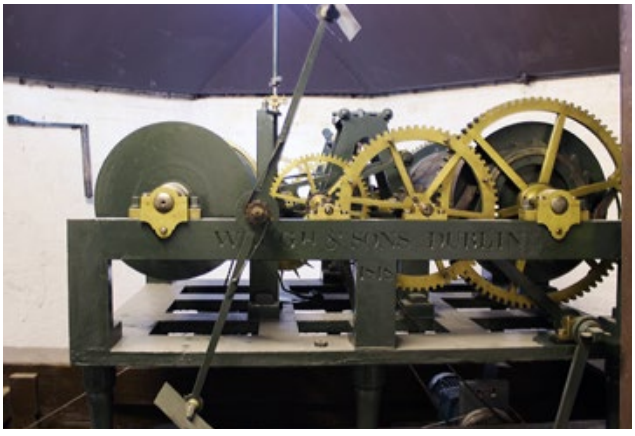
I also showed them a photo from the building's use in the 1996 movie *Michael Collins* to represent the GPO on O'Connell Street. They were interested to hear that a major movie had been filmed in this area. It was also a good way of illustrating the buildings' similarities and the fact that they were both designed by the same architect, Francis Johnston. They also looked at an image of when the Lower House was derelict. When we discussed this afterwards, the children said they thought it was a good thing that it was no longer like this and that spaces like that in Grangegorman were now being used again.

Top: The Lower House of TU Dublin, formerly the Richmond Asylum. Only one wing of the building remains
Photo by Dervilia Roche

Below: The former Richmond Asylum, derelict before being redeveloped into the Lower House of TU Dublin
Courtesy of Grangegorman Development Agency

We then walked towards the third of the major historic institutions. This is the clock tower building along the main road in Grangegorman (Grangegorman Road Lower), and the building that most people probably associate with the site's history due to how visible it is. This was the Richmond Penitentiary, also designed by Francis Johnston. Again, only one part survives from what was originally a larger building. The children were able to spot the weathervane on top of the tower, showing us that it was completed in 1816. The clock tower was a great conversation point, as we discussed why many older buildings have public clocks, and what it might have been like to rely on these for your own personal timekeeping. The clock at Grangegorman is particularly significant, as it is believed to be the oldest existing flatbed clock in the world. The name refers to the cast iron base for the clock mechanism. Another famous flatbed clock is the one in the Big Ben tower in London. The classes were very interested to hear that this building they know well from the outside has a feature of international importance inside it.

As a penitentiary, it emphasised reform rather than punishment, something that was unusual at the time. It was later notable for becoming the first ever women-only prison in Ireland or Britain, in 1836. As part of this, it became the Grangegorman Transportation Depot in the 1840s. This was where women and girls from all over Ireland were held before being sent to Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania). Over 3,000 of these people were sent on convict ships on a journey that could take around three months.



The oldest known flatbed clock in the world, inside the clock tower at Grangegorman
Courtesy of Grangegorman Development Agency

Ordnance Survey map from 1837 showing the three major institutions as well as the canal branch nearby

Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland maps.nls.uk

The children could relate the story of the convict ships to what many of them had already learned about journeys on coffin ships throughout the Great Famine. This helped them to make sense of this part of the history, but understandably, some commented that these stories of transported women and girls were 'so sad'. Some of the children asked if this women's prison was older than the one at Mountjoy, and at the end of the tours, many children told me they wanted to know more about the prison, including what life was like for the prisoners.

Although built as a prison, this building went back and forth in its function between prison and hospital at various stages throughout its history, usually relating to particular outbreaks of diseases, including cholera in the 1830s. From the road, we looked toward the small laneway that now leads to the Grangegorman stop along the Luas line, where the remains of around 1,600 cholera victims were found during the construction of the Luas in 2015. The remains have since been reinterred in Glasnevin Cemetery. Unsurprisingly, the children were very interested in hearing about this. Some of them asked questions such as, 'Did they test the bodies for DNA?'. They also continued to wonder throughout the rest of the tour whether other parts of the site might have bodies buried under them. From this area, we also talked about the Luas line following the route of the old railway that had essentially replaced the canal in the 1800s. We pointed out the old railway terminus at Broadstone, which is now a CIE bus depot.

In the 1830s, the Richmond Asylum expanded its site to include some of the land on the west side of Grangegorman, across the Grangegorman Road from the original buildings. This was bought from the Monck family, whose name is still referenced in placenames nearby. The Moncks had acquired land at Grangegorman through a marriage to the Stanley family and also owned Charleville House near Enniskerry in Wicklow. This new open space at Grangegorman was used for recreation by the patients and for building newer facilities. As we crossed the road on our tour, we looked at some of the buildings in what is now the centre of the TU Dublin campus. These were built around the 1850s as infirmaries and wards. I chatted with the children about the modern names that have been given to these buildings and how they relate to the history of the area. One building has been named

'Glassmanogue', one of the historical names of the area, and a possible translation of Monck's Green, again relating to the former landowner. Another building in this part of the campus is now named 'Bradogue', referring to a local river. Nowadays, like many rivers in Dublin, it flows underground. The children on these tours, as with many children I've worked with before, were intrigued by the idea of mysterious underground rivers flowing right below our feet. The Bradogue flowed across the road at Broadstone, near where the Luas line now crosses the road.

By the 1850s, some progressive treatments were being used at the hospital, particularly through the work of Dr Joseph Lalor, the Resident Medical Superintendent. He encouraged the use of education and recreation as treatment, with the teaching of things like reading, writing, maths, geography, art, and more. On our tour, we talked about how this tradition of education has continued on the site, with it now housing both a university and a primary school. However, less progressive treatments were also used at the hospital, many of which involved procedures that are no longer practised. These continued up to and beyond the 1950s, when the hospital complex became known as St Brendan's Hospital. On the tour, this was a part of the history where we could acknowledge the importance of improvements in treatments since then, while tailoring the level of detail in the information for the children as appropriate.

The sports fields at the site were among the most engaging parts for the children on these tours. Some were surprised to hear that there has been a long history of sport on the site, mostly as recreation for patients over the years, and encouraged by Dr Lalor during his time there. Reports from that time include mentions of football, handball, croquet, darts, bowling and walking. Many of the children on the tours had played sports there too, including at their school's Sports Day. After the tours, some suggested that the experience would be improved if they could include some sports at the end. They suggested something similar about the playground on the site, which, among other places on the site, they were used to visiting with their class or families.

One of several sports fields in Grangegorman, continuing the long tradition of sport on the site
Photo by Dervilia Roche

We also pointed out some of the other buildings on the site, including the Phoenix Care Centre, where the last remaining patients in St Brendan's Hospital moved when it closed in 2013. The combination of buildings and usages of the spaces at Grangegorman means that the historic traditions of healthcare, education, and sport are all still being continued.

We finished our tour back beside the main Grangegorman road. At this final stop, we looked at a blocked-up archway in one of the perimeter walls. The children immediately recognised this and had various theories about what might be behind it, asking 'Are there bodies in it?', 'Have you been in it?', and 'Can we go inside it?'. I explained that it was an entrance to a tunnel under the road that connected the two sides of the site. Some of the children were disappointed that this mysterious tunnel archway only led to the opposite side of the road. They knew this part of the campus very well, and one class already had a name for the area at the entrance to the tunnel, which was 'The Dip', as there is a small dip in the land there. At the end of the tour, some of them noted that it was good to now understand what 'The Dip' was. We talked about the idea of the tunnel being there to shield patients from prying eyes, but how it could also be

viewed as hiding them away. The high walls that still run along parts of the road are also a strong visual reminder of this. The walls also seem to play a major role in local people's memories of the site. Although the walls may have hidden the people and buildings behind them, participants on walking tours at Grangegorman have shared stories of jumping over the walls when they were young, and also of passing sweets to patients through a hole in the wall.

Covered entrance to a tunnel under the road that connected both sides of Grangegorman. Some of the children knew this place as 'The Dip'
Photo by Dervilia Roche

After each of the tours, we spent some time reflecting. I asked them about their favourite parts, what seemed most important, as well as what they would change about it. There was a huge variety of feedback. In general, they enjoyed the experience of being outside, walking around, and seeing the buildings. This was not surprising, and anyone who works in education will know the power of being out and about for a class. Many teachers I have worked with over the years have told me how important they feel it is for children to see and experience the real places they are learning

about, rather than just reading about them in textbooks. Some of the children suggested it would be better if they could get closer to some of the buildings, and many really wanted to go inside them. Being around the actual buildings also meant they could build up a timeline of the site just by recognising which buildings look old and which look modern, something they were very engaged with throughout. Overall, they enjoyed the tour, saying that they felt it was important to learn the history.

These classes already had some prior knowledge of things like workhouses, as well as some knowledge of the site's history of mental health facilities, so this was helpful in terms of explaining some of the more sensitive issues. This maybe suggests the value in preparatory work in the classroom before a visit to somewhere like Grangegorman. Having a limited amount of time on a tour can be a challenge, as it is not always possible to have a detailed discussion in response to every question, some of which the children will inevitably think of afterwards as they continue to process the information. From this point of view, the teachers play an important role in any kind of follow-on discussions or concerns. This also suggests the potential for developing post-visit resources to support teachers. The teachers I worked with also had some ideas about potential ways to continue their learning back at the school. These included basing a project around the history of Grangegorman and interviewing a particular school staff member who had many memories of the place, an idea that the class were very eager about.

Grangegorman is a place that's unique in Dublin's history and has affected the lives of many thousands of people over the last 300 years. It is a place where the buildings were either hidden or dormant for years and which has now been reborn with the development of the college campus and other structures. For children, it is a place to experience being around real historical buildings, and to learn and reflect on important, but sometimes challenging parts of our history. But it is also a place to observe history in a new modern context, as local children associate the site more with playgrounds, sports pitches and other fun facilities. Unusually for a college campus, it is normal to see children around the site, using these facilities, buying things at the food van, and

generally spending time there. There is a real sense of local children feeling comfortable on the site. These tours perhaps help to foster an appreciation of how a place with a complex history can evolve into something new like this.

I am grateful to Grangegorman Histories for inviting me to take part in this project, and for their extensive research and resources, which much of this chapter has drawn from. They continue to bring the history of the site alive through a variety of events and projects. Their online resources, outlined below, are a great way to find out more about the history of this unique place. Thanks again to them, as well as the students and teachers at Dublin 7 Educate Together School and Stanhope Street Primary School.

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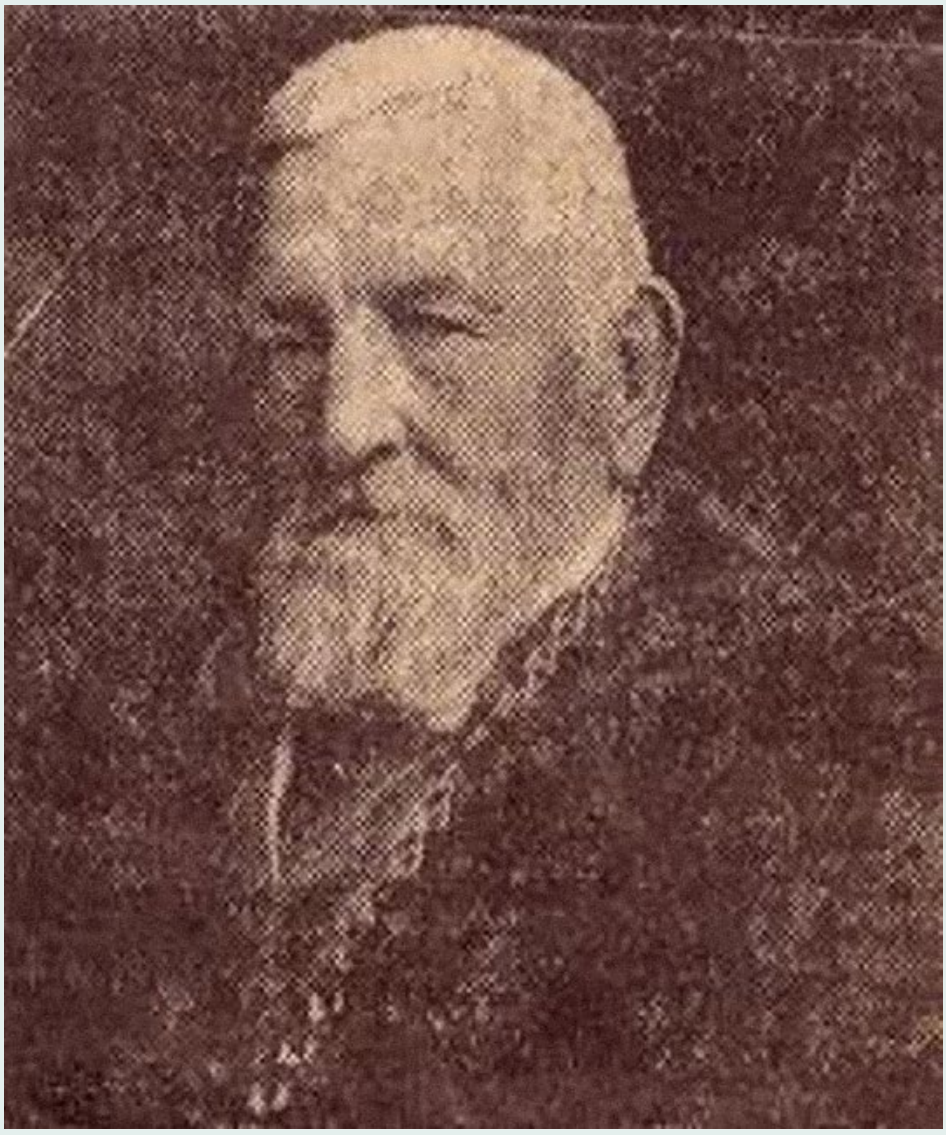


Michael Flanagan
Courtesy of Mark Humphreys www.humphreysfamilytree.ie

Why Flanagan's Fields?

Catherine Scuffil, Historian in Residence,
Dublin South Central

The initiative by the *Back of the Pipes Residents Association* in designing, constructing and landscaping a community market-garden at Reuben Street, Dolphin's Barn, Dublin, has beautifully recreated what much of this area looked like over one hundred years ago. It does, however, raise key questions – why was this community market-garden called 'Flanagan's Fields'? – who was the person 'Flanagan'? and why was a community market-garden considered an appropriate commemoration?

The name recalls a gentleman called Michael Flanagan. Although born before civil registration, available church records show his baptism on 29 September 1833. He was to become, in time, a Dublin City Councillor, an Alderman (1894), a Justice of the Peace, a not insignificant landowner and, as a result, an important local employer. He was occasionally called an 'agriculturist' or farmer, but he was a hugely successful market-gardener. From quite modest beginnings at his father's small holding located at Greenhills, County Dublin, throughout his lifetime he established a thriving business supplying fresh vegetables for the then rapidly expanding city of Dublin.

The area he ultimately farmed from 1866 to 1925 stretched around south west county Dublin. At its height – about 1914 – the massive Flanagan estate and landholdings were estimated to cover at least 500 acres and possibly up to 1,000 acres of prime market-garden land. He survived to see a few of the fourth generation of his family, whilst outliving every one of his siblings, his wife and almost all his children.

The young Michael Flanagan grew up on the family farm producing mainly vegetables at Greenhills, near Tymon on the road to Tallaght. In later life, he recounted memories of being taken by his father to see Daniel O'Connell speak c.1840, possibly at one of the so-called 'monster meetings' in the Dublin hills. He also lived through the difficulties of the Great Famine (1845-50) and was a supporter of the Fenian Rising in 1867. Local tradition has it that the Tallaght rebels were possibly entertained to breakfast at the Greenhills farm on the morning of the Rising. In 1882, on the night of the Phoenix Park murders, Michael passed a speeding sidecar with a group of men inside, en route to Tallaght. He later found out that the occupants of this sidecar were the escaping assassins. This travelling party was particularly noticeable as there was so little traffic on the roads at the time.

His family relate 'that he knew all the great Irish leaders from James Stephens to John Redmond' and he was a friend of Andrew J. Kettle, a founder of the Land League. He was a prominent member of the re-founded Irish Parliamentary Party (1882), under Charles Stewart Parnell, with newspapers reporting that he was on the platform in the Leinster Hall for a large Nationalist Meeting. Despite being a strict practising Catholic all his life – his son mentions that 'no matter how busy he was, he went to mid-day Mass daily until his last illness' – he never wavered in his support of Parnell, not even during the infamous divorce scandal of 1890.

Michael Flanagan married Anne Collins at Crumlin's small penal Roman Catholic chapel on 19 August 1866. For a short while after their marriage, the couple lived at the Garden Lodge, Royal Hospital Kilmainham, where the first of their eleven children – William Joseph (Willie) Flanagan, otherwise known as the famous practical joker "The Bird Flanagan", was born. At this time, Michael was variously described as 'Gardener' or 'Market-Gardener' and it was at this point that he actively commenced building up his vegetable growing business.

It was shortly after the Bird's birth that the family moved to the substantial and landmark Portmahon House, Rialto, which subsequently became the main family home. Portmahon was a good example of the larger, villa-style houses interspersed on the South Circular Road. It had a striking location to one side of Rialto Bridge, with associated farmland stretching from Rialto to the Griffith Bridge bordering the Grand Canal. The 1901 census describes Portmahon House as having 13 rooms and eight windows to the front. The 32 outbuildings consisted of stables, numerous storage barns and workshops, sheds and other storage for potatoes and turf, coach houses, a harness room, cow and calf houses, a dairy, piggery, fowl house, boiling house, forge and even a laundry. By 1911, the family was living at Portmahon with two servants. In the census return, the house has six main rooms with three windows to the front. The kitchens were in the basement. Many notable dinner parties were given upstairs over the years, and the Alderman gained a reputation for good entertaining.

Portmahon House Rialto
Courtesy of John Buckley

Living at Portmahon, and being popular local characters, the Flanagans were an important part of the local communities in Rialto and especially in the church and parish at Dolphin's Barn. By 1902, Dolphin's Barn had become independent, a separate parish from St. James's, James's Street. When the new church at Dolphin's Barn was being proposed, a few key people in the local community, including Michael Flanagan, who was by this time an Alderman, were involved in a canvass for the building of the then-new church. Others were James Coleman, a provision and grocer proprietor in the village and Laurence Byrne of Glenmalure House, Rialto. These three individuals, together with Monsignor Edward Kennedy, the parish priest linked to Dolphin's Barn at this time, all sponsored features in the church interior. Alderman Flanagan had two church pews dedicated to his family, with brass plaques placed on each.

Upon the death of his father in 1874, the holding at Greenhills was left jointly to Michael and his brother William, and two years later, Michael was listed as owning six acres of land at Greenhills and Crumlin. When William died in 1886, Michael inherited the sole title of all the Greenhills properties. According to a family story, in time, he had acquired so much land in the area that Dublin Corporation stopped him from buying any more.

The estate was built up by the Alderman from the 1860s until he died in 1931, as he established his market-gardening business to serve the growing Dublin population. The main estates included the original Flanagan farm at Greenhills, as well as other nearby properties at Tymon, Tallaght, 14 acres at Portmahon House at the Grand Canal Main Line/South Circular Road Rialto and the nearby Portmahon Lodge on the Grand Canal Circular Line. It also included his brother's house (later his son Willie's home) at Walkinstown House, and what was later to become his other son's residence, Leicester House, Crumlin. At its peak, the estate included fields and leases in Crumlin, Drimnagh, Rialto, Dolphin's Barn, Walkinstown, Greenhills, Tallaght, Kilmainham and Rathfarnham. It was said that at the time 'all of Crumlin was under cabbage'.

The farming was mainly tillage and vegetables, with large numbers of both men and women employed in sowing seeds and cultivating the crops. Horses were used for ploughing. In addition to supplying the Dublin vegetable market, crops were also exported to Liverpool, Covent Garden, London and possibly continental Europe before and during the First World War. He also supplied hay and cabbages to markets in Scotland. He often advertised his goods for sale, including mangolds, a cultivated root vegetable, grown as feed for livestock. On other occasions, he had day-old chicks, a calf and cow, angora rabbits and a seven-year-old chestnut gelding that was a 'capital jumper' for sale at Portmahon.

The Alderman was a well-regarded employer and acquired cottages in the Crumlin area for his workers, particularly those employed as ploughmen in the area. There are also several incidents relating to his employees in the newspapers of the day. In 1882, for example, it was reported that Patrick Connor, a watchman, was fined 20s for stealing a quantity of onions, the property of his employer, Michael Flanagan of Portmahon House. In 1894, he provided a character witness statement for an employee by the name of Glendan, who had been charged with killing a horse. It transpired that the horse was trespassing on Flanagan's land, and whilst being hunted out, it fell down an embankment, suffering fatal injuries. The final verdict determined that the death of the horse was accidental.

Michael Flanagan appears to have been a forward-thinking man, very open to new ways of doing business. The *Irish Times* of 1889 reported that he was a winner at the Spring Show, when driving a Bental's mower at an exhibition of new haymaking machines. In 1893, the Alderman was present at a meeting of farmers and market-gardeners to discuss the merits of new equipment and machinery for the spreading of manure on agricultural land.

In 1900, a newspaper article featured Alderman Flanagan in relation to a stack of 500 tons of manure, forty yards long, ten yards wide and ten feet high, located in a field off the South Circular Road adjacent to Wellington Barracks. The stack was the accumulation of domestic refuse and soil waste. This had been collected from houses on The Coombe

in the nearby Liberties, and accepted by the Alderman from Dublin Corporation when there was no room available at their own refuse depots. Dr. Curran, objecting on behalf of the War Office, was asked, during the hearing, if there had been any complaints from the soldiers, to which he replied that 'soldiers did not complain'. Alderman Flanagan ultimately gave an undertaking to remove the stack 100 yards further from the barracks and indicated that he would use it up as quickly as possible in his market-gardening business.

This was not the first occasion that 'manure' was to cause an issue for the Alderman. In 1895, the Alderman was summoned to court to answer charges relating to an assault on James Doody from Limekiln Lane, Greenmount. This young boy, along with a friend, had jumped on a manure heap when the Alderman drove up in a trap. When he saw the boys, and given previous trouble from these boys relating to trespass, he cracked his riding whip in their direction. Unfortunately, James Doody was struck with the whip, resulting in an eye injury, which required treatment and dressing in the Meath Hospital.

Michael Flanagan never ran for parliament but was an Irish Parliamentary Party and later a Nationalist Party local or 'town' councillor and eventually an Alderman with Dublin Corporation. In 1910, he was unanimously selected for the aldermanship at the coming municipal elections and returned as Alderman unopposed. He was widely regarded for his sound commonsense views. He represented the Usher's Quay ward – the electoral district where his home was located – for 35 years (1884-1919) until his retirement at the age of 86. This was, at the time, the longest tenure of office on the County Borough Council.

Tradition has it that he was offered but declined the Lord Mayoralty of Dublin, probably around 1900. It is assumed that he did so because he would have had to receive Queen Victoria at a planned royal visit, and consequently would have received a hereditary knighthood (Baronetcy) had he accepted the Lord Mayor's position. Thomas Devereux-Pile of Kenilworth House, Rathgar, who became Lord Mayor of Dublin 1900-01, was indeed created a Baronet in 1900 during the royal visit.

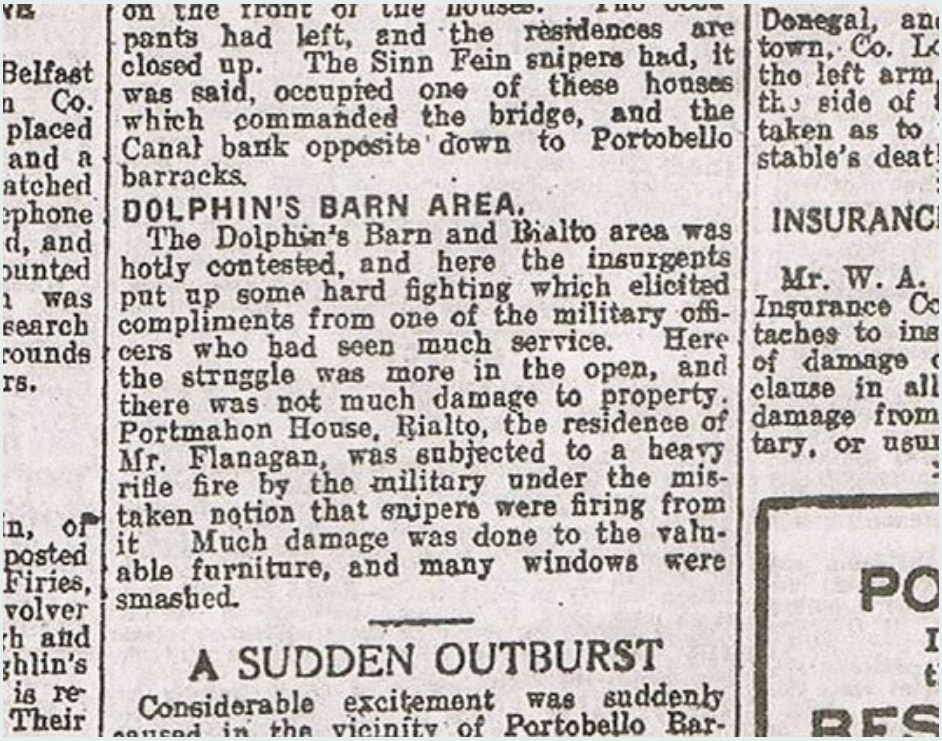
In 1908, Mr. John Scully, a local resident and businessman with a large, busy provisions shop at Dolphin's Barn, was proposed by Alderman Michael Flanagan and seconded by the Reverend J. Healy CC of Dolphin's Barn parish as representative on Dublin City Council for the Ushers Quay Ward.

Thoms Directories also list him as a "P.L.G." (Poor Law Guardian) from 1885. At this time, he was elected a guardian in the Palmerstown district for the South Dublin Poor Law Union. His younger brother, William, was elected a guardian for the South Dublin Union in 1877. Michael is mentioned as being present at meetings in 1882 and 1890.

On Saturday, 16th April 1910, Anne Collins Flanagan, wife of the Alderman, died at Portmahon House, aged 67 years, after a very short illness. A vote of condolence was passed by the United Irish League that evening, and the death was widely reported in the newspapers of the day. Her funeral to Glasnevin Cemetery had a huge attendance with many key people in Dublin society of the time present, including William T. Cosgrave, John Stanislaus Joyce, Daniel John Hishon, the Lord Mayor and many city councillors. A resolution of sympathy for Alderman Flanagan was passed by Dublin Corporation at their meeting on 19 April 1910.

During the 1916 Rising, the events at the Rialto gate of the South Dublin Union featured in a short but telling newspaper article. Portmahon House had come under heavy fire from the military under 'the mistaken notion that snipers were firing from it'. It was mentioned that 'much damage was done to the valuable furniture and many windows were smashed'.

In the months following the Rising, Alderman Flanagan submitted a claim for the property damage to Portmahon and another property nearby – namely Herberton House – to the Property Losses Committee set up for this purpose. Included in this claim were other losses associated with looted field crops, vegetables that were lost, together with details of produce that rotted due to the shipment to Glasgow being held up by the events of Easter Week 1916. The claim was admitted in full, and the committee awarded him just over £1,000 by way of compensation.



pants had left, and the residences are closed up. The Sinn Fein snipers had, it was said, occupied one of these houses which commanded the bridge, and the Canal bank opposite down to Portobello barracks.

DOLPHIN'S BARN AREA.

The Dolphin's Barn and Rialto area was hotly contested, and here the insurgents put up some hard fighting which elicited compliments from one of the military officers who had seen much service. Here the struggle was more in the open, and there was not much damage to property. Portmahon House, Rialto, the residence of Mr. Flanagan, was subjected to a heavy rifle fire by the military under the mistaken notion that snipers were firing from it. Much damage was done to the valuable furniture, and many windows were smashed.

A SUDDEN OUTBURST

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Newspaper article from *Irish Independent* May 1916
Courtesy of Irish Newspaper Archive

The Alderman would, in 1919, celebrate a family wedding when his daughter Louisa married his close colleague and friend from Dublin Corporation, William T. Cosgrave of James's Street (where Kenny's public house is today). Cosgrave had been a councillor for the Usher's Quay Ward since 1909. Michael's new son-in-law had been previously involved in the 1916 Rising at the South Dublin Union, fighting with forces mobilised by Eamon Ceannt at Emerald Square, Dolphin's Barn. In the years following his marriage to Louisa, William Cosgrave would become the first President of the Irish Free State. Their son, the Alderman's grandson, Liam, would later become Taoiseach.

There are many references to the Alderman's benevolence to others, with an annual subscription to the Home for the Deaf in Cabra recorded in 1911 and another to the St. Vincent de Paul collection in 1928. His grandson, Liam Cosgrave remembered going to midday Mass in Adam and Eve's Church, Merchants Quay with his grandfather in the late 1920s, recalling that the Alderman would throw coins to the poor chaps hanging around outside. In 1921, Rialto National School, South Circular Road, was built on land donated by the Alderman for this purpose. This was one of the first boys' schools to be erected in the Irish Free State.

The Alderman finally retired from Dublin Corporation in 1919, aged 86 years. He was to live in retirement at Portmahon until his death on 16 October 1931, aged almost 99 years. His funeral was attended by his son-in-law, W.T. Cosgrave, President of the Irish Free State, the entire cabinet and numerous clergy and politicians, including among others Eoin MacNeill, John A Costello, Sean MacEoin, the Ceann Comhairle, the President of the High Court and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfie Byrne. He was buried in the family plot in Glasnevin Cemetery with his wife and his young children who had predeceased him.

In his will, the Alderman was described as a 'farm produce merchant', and his assets would be valued at about five million euro in today's money. There were also many debts to be addressed, but he included a provision that in the event of a contest, any parties involved would forfeit their entitlement.

Flanagan Family grave, Glasnevin Cemetery
Courtesy of Mark Humphreys at www.humphreysfamilytree.ie

Portmahon House was sold in the 1930s by the Alderman's son Frank, and soon after, New Ireland Road was built on part of the farm, with a road facing the front of Portmahon House later called Portmahon Drive as part of this development. In 1932, newspapers advertised the executor's sale of the estate of the Alderman in four lots at Walkinstown House, comprising 174 acres at Crumlin, Greenhills and Cromwellsfort, a further 94 acres at Tymon North, 14 acres at Kilnamanagh and 11 acres in two parcels in and near Crumlin village. Some surplus farm machinery and carts were also included in the sale. The rest of the estate was gradually sold off over a thirty-year period, to be replaced by built-up suburbs of houses, bungalows and flats stretching from Dolphin's Barn to Tallaght.

Other than Portmahon House in Rialto, which is now a protected structure, other remnants of the Flanagan estate can be seen in parts of south Dublin. The land covered by the original Flanagan Farm at Greenhills is now incorporated into Tymon Park at Greenhills Road. The two plaques sponsored and placed in Our Lady of Dolours Church, Dolphin's Barn, by the

The Bird Flanagan public house, Rialto
Courtesy of John Buckley

Flanagan's Field Nameplate Reuben Street
Courtesy of John Buckley

Alderman are still extant on the pews in the church. Walkinstown House has been replaced by Supervalu Walkinstown. His other son's property, Leicester House, Crumlin, was approximately where Crumlin's Children's Hospital is located. A number of the ploughmen's cottages built between 1904 and 1917 can be seen today on the north side of the present-day Kildare Road. The building that was formerly Rialto Boys School still exists in the form of the Rialto Parish Centre on the South Circular Road, and of course, we have a certain hostelry in Rialto called *The Bird Flanagan*.

The only tangible evidence of the existence of the Alderman's extensive market-gardening business is the Dublin City Council-supported community market-garden established by the Back of the Pipes Residents group at Reuben Street near where the Alderman's cabbages were harvested for the Dublin markets. Congratulations to all concerned in rekindling the agricultural tradition in this area in the place now known as 'Flanagan's Fields'.

Acknowledgements

Sincere acknowledgement of permissions from Mark Humphreys at https://www.humphreysfamilytree.ie for use of research, text and images. Courtesy extended is much appreciated.

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- Dublin City Library & Archive https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/libraries/find-library/dublin-city-library-and-archive
- Dublin City Libraries subscribe to the Irish Newspaper Archives Online which give access to a searchable electronic archive of newspaper titles in the city's libraries.

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Since 2017, Dublin City Council's Historians in Residence have worked in neighbourhoods across Dublin City to encourage local people to engage with history, and to promote its sources and discussion, especially the historical collections in Dublin City Library & Archive.

Since 2020, a Historian in Residence for Children has been included to provide space, opportunities and resources for children to uncover the stories of the places where they live, planting seeds for a lifelong connection to the history of Dublin.

By engaging with local communities and keeping people front and centre of history, the Historians in Residence help the people of Dublin City feel a connection to their local history.

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Above: O'Connell Bridge and Street, Dublin
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

Cover: Moira Mahon as a child in Rathgar
Courtesy of Moira Mahon

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