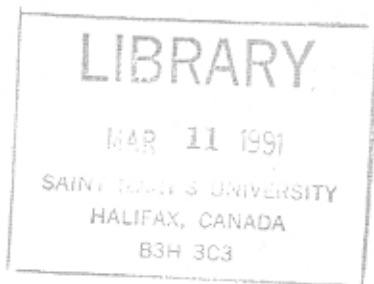


AN NASC

Chair of Irish Studies
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia



In this issue:

An Cumman
News from the Chair
Fallona Scholarship
Irish Christmas Customs
Book Review
Irish Surnames...

Volume 3, Number 2, Fall 1990

Editor: Cyril Byrne

If you would like to receive AN NASC, please write to:

Editorial Committee:

Pat Boyle
Pat Curran
Dominic Larkin
Anthony O'Malley

AN NASC

D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada, B3H 3C3

Secretary/Layout:

Shirley Buckler

Telephone (902) 420-5519
Fax (902) 420-5561

With special thanks to Anne West, Public Relations Department, Saint Mary's University.

AN NASC is the newsletter of the D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

AN NASC was established as a link between the Chair of Irish Studies and those who are involved or interested in promoting Irish studies and heritage in Canada and abroad. It also seeks to develop an awareness of the shared culture of Ireland, Gaelic Scotland and those of Irish and Gaelic descent in Canada.

AN NASC is provided free of charge. However, we welcome financial contributions which will allow us to extend the activities of the Chair of Irish Studies. A tax receipt will be issued for all contributions over \$5.00.

We welcome letters and comments from our readers.

Proceedings of the
First
North American
Congress of Celtic Studies
held in Ottawa, March 1986

Edited by
Gordon W. MacLennan

Order From:
The Chair of Irish Studies
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 3C3

Cost \$22.50 + 2.50 post
(where applicable)

AN CUMMAN/THE IRISH ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

Pat Curran

On October 1, 1990, after a couple of years of sporadic discussions and several months of regular meetings by a small founding group, An Cumann/The Irish Association of Nova Scotia was incorporated under the Societies Act of Nova Scotia.

"An Cumann" was chosen as the first part of the name to show a commitment to Irish Tradition. "An Cumann" means "the association" in Irish.

The aim of the association is to foster knowledge and enjoyment of Irish customs, culture, and heritage throughout Nova Scotia. Particularly at regular Irish Heritage Evenings, the association intends to promote knowledge and enjoyment of Irish music, language, literature, theatre, dance, folklore, history, current events, genealogy and sports. Longer range goals include developing greater ties between Nova Scotia and Ireland and sponsoring Irish festivals. An Cumann intends to cooperate with other Irish festivals and with other Irish organizations to avoid duplicating their work.

The first two Irish Heritage Evenings were held on November 15 and November 28 at St. Paul's Parish Hall on Hebridean Drive in Herring Cove, a ten minute drive from the Armdale Rotary in Halifax. The association is grateful to St. Paul's Parish for allowing its hall to be used. Herring Cove itself is an appropriate place for Irish functions, since it

was a settlement founded by the Irish and retains its Irish flavor.

During 1991 An Cumann intends to hold Irish Heritage Evenings every two weeks for most of the year. The first evening will take place at St. Paul's Parish hall on Thursday, January 17 beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The association plans to publish a newsletter, probably three times a year. There is already talk of having a *ceili* band and set dances. Other activities will depend on the desires of the members. Membership dues for 1991 will be \$12.00 for individuals and \$16.00 for families.

For information write to:

An Cumann/
The Irish Association of Nova Scotia
P. O. Box 27153
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 4M8

Or telephone one of the following persons:

Pat Curran	(902) 454-5765
Frances Reynolds	(902) 423-3998
Don Sullivan	(902) 479-1856

NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Pádraig Ó Siadhail who held the Chair of Irish Studies since 1987 was awarded the major Irish Studies Fellowship in Queen's University, Belfast for the academic year of 1990-91. He is researching the literary career of Piaras Béaslaí.

In Pádraig's place Dr. John Shaw of Glendale, Cape Breton has been the Chair Holder for the first half of the current academic year, and in January Dr. Seosmhaí Watson of University College, Dublin will take over from Dr. Shaw. Dr. Watson will continue teaching the course in Scottish Gaelic begun by Dr. Shaw and will also teach Modern Gaelic Literature in Translation and Advanced Modern Irish.

Samuel Beckett Teleplays

We co-sponsored with the Art Gallery at Dalhousie University a presentation of a series of video plays by Samuel Beckett, the recently deceased Irish playwright. Part of this co-sponsorship consisted of two lectures given by Dr. Anne Beer of McGill University. One of these "The Inviolable Rose" and 'A Good Smell of Dung': Beckett's Irish Inheritance" was presented at Saint Mary's; the other lecture "Two Lit Refuges": Beckett's Bilingualism" was given in the Dalhousie Art Gallery.

Concert

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann gave a thrilling concert of traditional Irish music and dancing at the Cohn Theatre 29th September; the event was jointly sponsored by the Chair and the

Prince Edward Island Department of Tourism. It is hoped this lively group will come back next fall.

Visitors

Visitors in the first term included Dr. Brian Cosgrove, Director of the Irish Studies Summer school given each summer at University College, Dublin and Ian MacLeod from Sabhal Mhor, a Gaelic language Business school operating with enormous success on the Isle of Skye. Students will be encouraged to consider attending the Dublin Summer School for partial credit, and anyone interested in further information should write to Dr. Cosgrove at University College, Belfield, Dublin. It is hoped that students in Scottish Gaelic from Saint Mary's will in the near future be able to attend this school as the result of some formal linkage.

The Irish Musicologist and Dean of the Engineering Faculty at University College, Cork, Thomás Ó Canainn, presented a most interesting lecture in the Art Gallery at Saint Mary's in late September. Dr. Ó Canainn demonstrated his lecture on the Irish Pipes and delighted the audience with his brilliant playing and witty exposé of Irish traditional music.

Prince Edward Island

This year the Prince Edward Island Department of Tourism used as its theme "We're Akin to Ireland" highlighting the contribution of the Irish to Island life and culture. To complete this year of special

events and concerts linking the Irish and Island culture, a Genealogical Weekend was held in Charlottetown and dealt with Irish-Island family connections. Donald Begley, the Chief Herald of Ireland was the major attraction along with the well-known genealogist of Southeast Ireland Julian Walton. Numerous speakers including Dr. Tom Power from the University of New Brunswick and Dr. Brendan O'Grady who have concentrated their academic research on the Irish in Atlantic Canada. Dr. O'Grady's detailed work on individual immigrants is already proving a boon to family historians seeking to link their fourth, fifth and sixth generation island ancestry back to Ireland. Dr. O'Grady's work was recognized this fall at a special Convocation at the University of Prince Edward Island when he had conferred on him an honorary doctorate by the university for his years of dedication to the cause of Irish culture in Prince Edward Island.

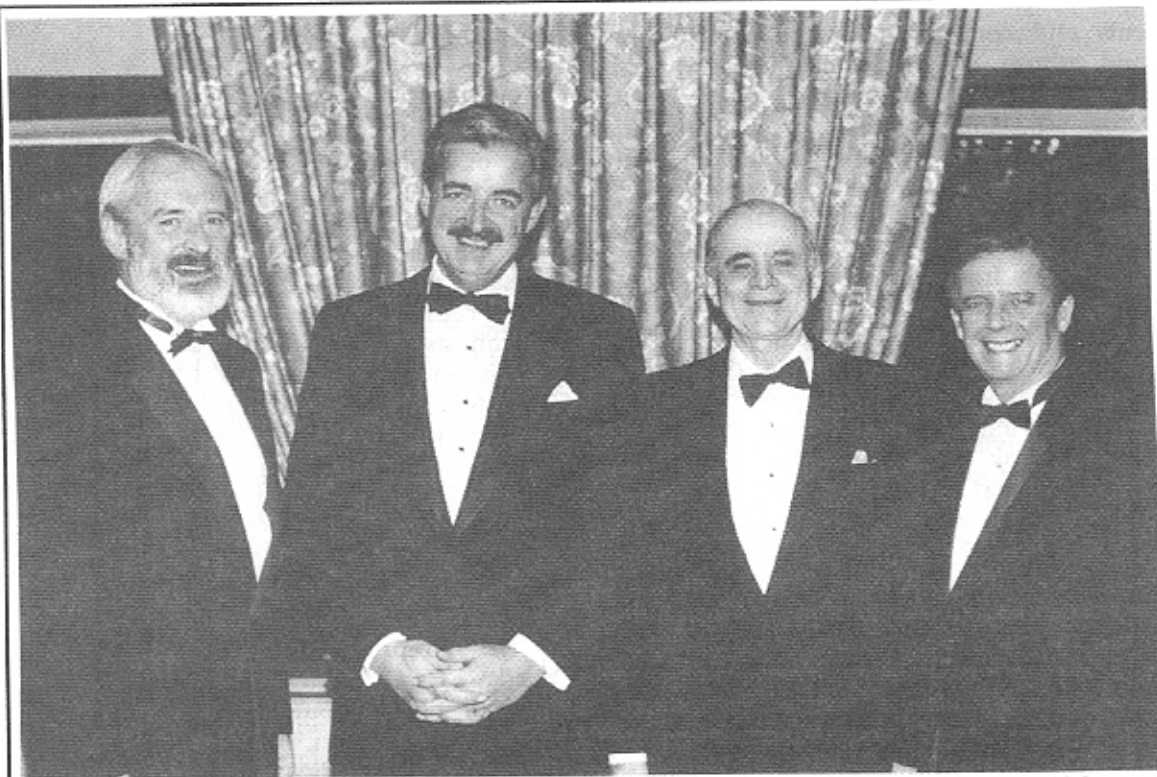
SSHRCC Grant

The Chair was awarded a grant of \$10,000 by SSHRCC this year bringing to \$50,000 the support given by the council to improve the special collection of Irish materials in the Patrick Power Collection. Microform reproductions of manuscripts, newspapers of the 18th and 19th centuries and rare pamphlets and other printed materials constitute the bulk of this Irish collection which focuses chiefly on Irish contemporary literary culture and on the Ireland whence the emigrants to Canada came in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the communities the Irish formed in Canada.

Fund-raising Dinner

On the 9th of November Mr. Matthew Barrett, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank of Montreal held a gala fund-raising dinner in the Chairman's dining room of First Canada Place, Toronto. The thousand dollar a plate dinner grossed over one hundred thousand dollars! and will have raised the Chair's capital to nearly a million dollars. We are immeasurably grateful for Mr. Barrett's most generous boost to the Chair's Capital Campaign. Hon. Arthur A. Donahoe, representing the Province of Nova Scotia at the dinner announced a grant of \$50,000 to the Chair. Needless to say we are delighted at this support for the Chair's efforts to maintain the Irish strand in Nova Scotia's and Canada's multicultural fabric. Special thanks also to Dr. Richard O'Hagan of the Bank of Montreal, Dr. Edward Brennan, Irish Ambassador to Canada, Hon. James A. McGrath, Lt. Governor of Newfoundland and Honorary Campaign Chairman, Donal Begley, Chief Herald of Ireland whose presentation on our behalf of an illuminated genealogy of the Barrett Family to our host, was the crowning point of the evening. Behind the scenes work in anticipation of this event went on for a long while and special thanks goes to the President Dr. Ozmon, Denis Ryan, Campaign Chairman, Craig Dobbin and Elaine Parsons for their support and assistance. In all these fundraising events, the *"eminence grise"* deftly managing and keeping on top of everything is, of course, Don Keleher without whose continued support and expert handling of the detailed arrangements involved, none of this would happen.

4 An Nasc



Denis Ryan, Campaign Chairman, Matthew Barrett, Chief Executive Officer of the Bank of Montreal, Ambassador Edward Brennan and President Ozmon.



FALLONA SCHOLARSHIP

Tanya Cook

This past summer, thanks to the generosity of Margaret M. Fallona of London, Ontario, Air Canada, and the Chair of Irish Studies of Saint Mary's University, I found myself in County Donegal, Ireland, for an Irish language and culture course.

This Oideas Gael course lovingly nurtured by Liám O'Cuinneagáin and Dr. Seosamh Watson is a *mecca* for those interested in furthering their Irish studies and meeting people who share a common delight in the culture.

The bus from Donegal Town to Glencolmcille was full of arriving students for Oideas Gael and several of us, myself included, upon descending from the bus wondered how to reach the school. Upon asking, we were informed (kindly) that we were standing in front of it. A second glance assured us this was so and it was also gleefully noted we were standing in front of "Teacht Biddy's", the most "Irish" of the bars.

In the ensuing conversations carried on in fluent to broken Irish, it was evident that we represented a mini United Nations. There were Scots, Brits, American, Canadians, Irish, Aussies, Spaniards, Austrians and some Japanese, to name a few.

The ages ranged from pre-teens to septuagenarians, but there was no generation gap; everyone was there for the love of the language and to meet others of similar interest.

All the Irish dialects were represented and that coupled with "national accents" led to some faint bewilderment until the ear adjusted. I was a trifle bewildered by one fluent Connamara speaker but he, like the rest of the people, showed unfailing patience and good humor in guiding one along without making you feel incompetent.

I had expected Glencolmcille's beauty, but the sweeping slopes and green fields were breathtaking, and the discovery of a white sandy beach minutes down the road was the topping grace. *Bhi athas orm!*

The sheep which wander freely (sleeping in the roads at night) stopped to peer at the newcomers before meandering away. Oideas Gael arranges (if desired) for their students to board with Irish speaking families and I was fortunate not only in being just minutes from the School but also in the kindness, culinary skill and patience of my *bean a ti* — Mrs. Gillespie. She would hold supper until I had run down to the beach. The other boarder was a retired school teacher from Leinster, and a better room mate couldn't have been wished for.

The classes started early and ran to supertime and sometimes beyond, but not only did the days pass happily but those of us who were so inclined also passed the night happily. "Teacht Biddy's" was the favourite.

The classes were divided into three levels: the *bunrang*, for new speakers, the *meanrang*, for intermediate, and the *ardrang* for fluent speakers and classes were self-chosen at orientation. There was, however, no pressure to stick with the original class and each student was encouraged to move freely until

6 An Nasc

they found a niche in which they were comfortable.

The last night in Glencolmcille the school arranged a farewell dinner at the folk village with sean nos singers and young talented (naturally) Irish dancers and dramaies. Everyone present enjoyed themselves immensely except for the saying goodbyes to those who were not going on to Glenfin.

The second week classes were held in Glenfin, which was another beautiful area, but quite different in that it was much more isolated and less populated. Again, however, like Glencolmcille, the people were very friendly and helpful.

My bean a ti, who was located down the road from the school and the Reelin Bar, Kitty Campbell and her family were all fluent speakers (and wonderful cooks) who were also quite helpful when one had any questions.

There were dance and art instruction in the afternoons for some classes, and in the evenings poetry readings, singing, dances, and folk tales were the fare. The last night a Ceilidh was held and attended not only by the Oideas Gael people, but the people of the community. It was a wonderful time, marred only by the realization that this was the last night.

I consider myself very fortunate to have received this scholarship and introduction to Oideas Gael. The course is structured so all who take it, leave with more fluency and confidence and also with not only having been enriched by the language and culture but by the friendships formed.

I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity and especially Dr. Pádraig Ó Siadhail who first introduced me to the beauty and intricacy of the Irish language.

KELTOI

A PAN-CELTIC REVIEW

\$5 U.S. per two issues
available from

KELTOI

Box 20153

Dag Hammarskjold Centre
New York, NY 10017

U.S.A.

OIDEAS GAEL

Summer Courses for Adults
in Irish Language and Culture
in Donegal, Ireland

Please Contact
Oideas Gael
Gleann Cholm Cille
Co. Dhún na nGall
Ireland

Telephone: Dublin (01) 213566

IRISH CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Christmas was the chief communal celebration in the areas of Ireland whence so many thousands emigrated to Atlantic Canada in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The full twelve days of the festival were celebrated with house visits at which dancing, music and feasting were the chief activities. Some of these customs were transferred to the New World and took root here in areas where the Irish predominated. Nowhere have the ancient Christmas customs of Ireland survived more intact and more long-lived than in Newfoundland.

On Christmas Eve it was customary to light a candle to be placed in the window, the candle having been lit by the youngest in the household. This candle was lit each evening of the twelve days. This custom survived in Newfoundland where the Eve of Christmas was also ushered in by hauling in the Yule Log or Yule Junk which was placed at the back of the fireplace and burnt throughout the festival. Curiously, the day before Christmas Eve was celebrated as Tibb's Eve in Newfoundland as a kind of practice run. This custom was of Irish origin as well and entered Newfoundland speech in the expression, "That'll be a Tibb's Eve," meaning never or unlikely to take place.

Christmas in Ireland also saw the visitation of houses by the Mummings who performed a play whose scenario included the death and resurrection of a principle character, and is of ancient and primitive origin. The death and resurrection theme is believed to be a dramatizing of the death and resurrection of the sun during the winter solstice. A similar play was also part of the folk culture of the

West of England. The Newfoundland population's being of a mixed southeast of Ireland (the Mummings' play tradition was especially prominent in Co. Wexford) and West of England origin resulted in a reinforcement of this mutually shared Christmas tradition in the New World. Consequently, the Mummings' play remained a staple of the Christmas celebration in Newfoundland for many years until the great social disruption of the Great War (1914-18) effectively ended it. 'Til the beginning of this century the Christmas season was sure to bring a visit from the players representing Father Christmas, St. Patrick, the Turkish Knight and the Doctor — the old stage line "is there a doctor in the house" probably originated in the Mummings' Play.

Another kind of Mummings were the masked visitors who paraded through the villages of the outports of forty or fifty years ago; not only was this tradition active in Newfoundland but many parts of the Maritimes had visitors called variously Santa Clausers or Bell Snicklers but resembling their Newfoundland cohorts. The disguise was transvestite, men dressing as women and vice-versa, and donning the most elaborate and bizarre costumes. Prowse described these visitors in his *History of Newfoundland* for during the period of their preeminence they took over the streets of St. John's and the larger outports, frequently engaging in rough-house attacks against spectators. So large a threat did they pose to public order in the middle of the nineteenth century that Mumping was outlawed. The Irish of St. John's were accused of using the occasion to take vengeance on their political enemies and a number of murders were popularly ascribed to the Mummings.

8 An Nasc

Somewhat less threatening of human life and limb was the custom called Hunting the Wren (Wren). The practice was widespread in the South East of Ireland and made its way across the Atlantic with the early settlers. On "Stephenses Day" (26 December), as it was called, groups of young men, latterly boys and girls, made the rounds early in the morning of December 26th with a wren (or some diminutive bird) killed for the occasion and tied to an evergreen branch. They recited verses which went something like this:

The Wran, the Wran the King of All Birds
On Stevens Day was caught in the furze
Although she was little her honour was great
Rise up fair madam and give us a treat:
Up with the kettle and down with the pan
A penny or tuppence to bury the Wran.
A pocket full of money and a cellar full of beer
We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year.

The only Irish communities in Canada where I've heard of this practice being followed were in Newfoundland and I would appreciate hearing from those who know of its existence elsewhere in this country.

Another less widespread Christmas custom from Ireland which survived in Newfoundland was the practice of throwing twelve small currant cakes at the opened house door on the twelfth night. The number of cakes which went through the door was believed to indicate the number of bad months in the ensuing year.

These are a few of the folkloric practices with which the Irish filled the idle house of the Christmas Season which came to an end on Twelfth Night or Old Christmas Day or, as it

was known to the Irish, Little Christmas — a translation of the Gaelic *Nollaig Bheag*.

1991 CONFERENCE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR IRISH STUDIES

The 1991 CAIS Conference will be held at Carleton University from Wednesday, February 27 through Saturday, March 2. The topic for the conference is Biography and Autobiography, and will include both native Irish and Canadian Irish subjects. Besides the papers and panel discussions which will take place during the day, there will be social and cultural events in the evening. The Wednesday evening registration and reception will include a variety night with Irish music, dancing, and storytelling by the local Irish community. Thursday evening will feature a tour of the National Gallery and an illustrated lecture on Irish painting. Friday evening there will be a performance of Brian Friel's play *The Loves of Cass McGuire* by Ottawa's Tara Players. Friday's daytime sessions on the Irish in Canada will be held at the National Library. The banquet and dance on Saturday night will take place at the National Arts Centre

For registration materials please write to:

CAIS 1991 Conference
c/o Department of English
Carleton University
Ottawa, Canada
K1S 5B6

**St. John's? Miramichi? Halifax?
Another List of Irish Passengers
1817**

Cyril Byrne

The list of passengers appended to this item got entered into the records because of the vagaries of travel between Ireland and British North America. Originally these migrating tradesmen from Dublin had been contacted in the spring of 1815 by a Mr. Lewis Desmond, a merchant in London, offering them terms of passage to Newfoundland on the Concord, John Stobe, Master. Lewis stated in a letter to the Earl of Bathurst, Secretary for the Colonies, that he was acting under the belief "that by public advertisements Tradesmen were encouraged to emigrate to His Majesty's North American Colonies". Consequently he enlisted 77 persons to take passage for St. John's. After arriving in St. John's, Francis Kenny, acting as Desmond's agent was taken before the court and ordered to pay maintenance for some forty-four of the passengers whom the court alleged were in a distressed state: "It is considered by the court that the Master or owners of the said Brig Concord do receive, keep and maintain on board the said vessel all such passengers as aforesaid, and in no wise leave them on shore in this place in such circumstances as may endanger their becoming an encumbrance to the inhabitants." St. John's at this time was in no condition to accept emigrants having just suffered a devastating fire and was going through the financial depression following the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars.

The court ordered that these passengers be taken on to Miramichi where the Brig was destined. However, the Captain refused to take them for the £40 offered for their passage and the magistrate, James Blackie, altered the passport to enable them to go to Halifax, Nova Scotia on the Kitty, under a Captain Duggan. One presumes the 44 Irish tradesmen described as bricklayers, carpenters, etc. arrived in Halifax some time in July or August of 1817.

James Reddy
Mathew Duhy
Mark Proctor
Denis Gardan
William Rooney
Joseph Healy
John McEvoy
John Byrne
John Walsh
James Berne
Christopher Donohoe
John Callaghan
Mrs. Callaghan, his wife

Daniel McKiernan
Laurence Byrne
Thomas Coonan
George Keating
George Abraham
John Bryan
Peter Hayden
Pat^k Walsh
Maurice Carthy
John Jackson
James Doyle
Martin Healy
Terence Haig

10 An Nasc

Pat^k Mahon
William Swords
John Wall
Michael Lanergan
John Dunn
Henry Donnelly
Michael Murphy
Michael Farrell
Thomas O'Mera

James Fogarty
John Barnett
Pat^k Berne
Richard Croaker
Judith Croaker his wife
John Bonham
James Smith
Joseph Gillam
Michael Gillam

The relevant documents can be found in the Colonial Office papers for Newfoundland cited as CO 194/60 175 ff.

Cead Mile Failte

(A hundred thousand welcomes)

IRELAND welcomes you to the
second programme of
IRISH ANCESTRY COURSES
in Dublin Ireland.

September 9 to 14 or October 7 to 12

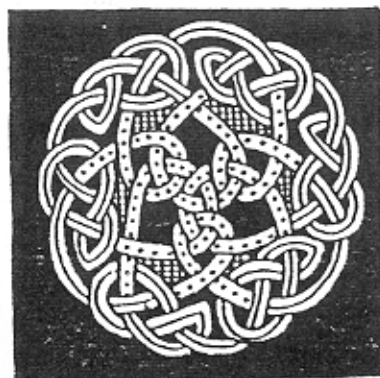
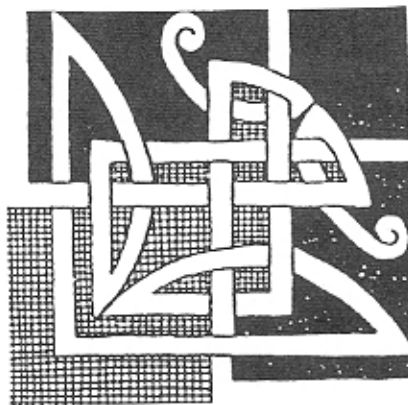
Directed by
Dr. James G. Ryan

This is the second in a series of five-day programmes for genealogists, both advanced and beginners, interested in Irish records.

For complete details write to:

IRISH ANCESTRY RESEARCH COURSES
Stratford House
Barnhill Road, Dalkey
Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Phone: Dublin 857731



Flight From Famine by Donald MacKay. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, \$29.95, 368 pp. Reviewer: Jan Morgan

As Mr. MacKay informs us in his introduction, "In the past 250 years, more than six million Irish have left their homeland, a figure almost twice the present-day population of Eire, and a million more than that of Eire and Northern Ireland combined." A million of those emigrants settled in Canada, most of them in the nineteenth century, between 1815 and 1870.

This book is their story. Mr. MacKay shifts the scene back and forth across the Atlantic, from Newfoundland and Halifax to County Cork, then to Upper Canada, stopping by Grosse Ile above Quebec, the harrowing quarantine station. In 1832 alone, 2,350 were estimated to have died there or on board ship of the dread cholera. And again in 1847, Dr. Douglas, the heroic doctor in charge of the station estimated despairingly: "Out of 4,000 or 5,000 emigrants who have left this island since Sunday, at least 2,000 will fall sick somewhere before three weeks are over ... all the Cork and Liverpool passengers are half dead from starvation and want before embarking."

The author has not tried to write a scholarly history of the coming of the Irish to Canada. He makes little attempt to interpret for us the reasons for the migration, being content to give us an account of those who set out and of those who pushed them out or helped them to leave.

The misery of the Atlantic crossing, when hundreds were crowded into the dark holds of creaky, aging cargo vessels, whose owners found it more profitable to ship emigrants

than ballast on the return voyage of the timber trade, is vividly described, with examples and quotes from many sources. The chapter "Shovelling Out the Paupers" closes with a suggestion from the annual report of the Colonial and Lang Emigration Commissioners in 1853. "We would recommend that free emigrants should be treated at least as well as convicts in transport ships."

Mr. MacKay devotes almost a third of the book to the horrors of the potato famines of 1845 and '46 and the terrible, icy winter of 1846-47 which witnessed the return of the cholera. He documents the failures of the government to supply emergency food supplies and the reliance on free trade, though even Lord Bessborough, the viceroy, had doubts. "I know all the difficulties that arise when you begin to interfere with trade, but is it difficult to persuade a starving population that one class should be permitted to make 50 per cent by the sale of provisions while they are dying in want of them."

Flight From Famine, written in a lively, colourful style and filled with the words of those who lived the experiences, should be read by any one who wishes to understand, and relive, the most dramatic surge of immigration in Canada's history.

"They say Canada is a fine country, let us go out there, in the name of God, and try our luck."



THE VALUE OF READING AN NASC

Dear Editor,

In July of 1990, I found myself faced with a dilemma. I had been asked to be the main speaker at the interfaith service held in conjunction with the annual event known as Londonderry Days, in the village by the same name located in Colchester County, Nova Scotia. The dilemma I faced was the simple fact that I could not think of a theme for the talk I had agreed to give.

About a week before the scheduled event I picked up my copy of *AN NASC* from the Chair of Irish Studies and found a section that dealt with the meaning of place names in Ireland. As I read the definition of the name Derry, I knew immediately that I had found my theme. Among my many hobbies in life, the growing of trees has always been near the top of the list. Oak trees have proven to be a real challenge, but one I have been able to overcome. As a result I now have many of these trees which I hope will someday be used for their durability, their strength, their symbolic uses and many more.

I told the people of Londonderry about the wonders of oak and concluded my talk by giving the village a tray of 45 young oak trees. The trees were received with genuine enthusiasm and have been planted throughout the village of Londonderry to replace those that have disappeared over the years.

If you are asking what the link with *AN NASC* is, the answer is simple. *AN NASC* had defined the place name Derry as Daire,

meaning 'oak grove'. Nothing could have been of more help to me at the time than this definition.

Thank you *AN NASC*.

Rev. J. B. Christensen
St. Joseph's Parish
Halifax



AN IRISH CONNECTION WITH THE HALIFAX EXPLOSION

A letter from R. B. (Dick) Walsh of Dublin provides an interesting bit of Irish-Canadian linkage. Among those killed in the Halifax explosion of 6 December 1917 was Eoin McGavork a young Irishman on his very first sea voyage. Young McGavork was the only son of Anne MacNeil McGavork, a sister of Eoin MacNeil (1867-1945), scholar and shaper of the modern Irish state.

On his way to the U.S. in 1930 on the White Star liner *Baltic*, Eoin MacNeil stopped in Halifax to visit the place where his nephew had been killed. Dick cited the source of this as the 1980 Clarendon Press Book *Eoin MacNeil, Scholar and Man of Action, 1867-1945* by Michael Turnig.



IRISH FOR A DAY

The Celebration of Saint Patrick's Day in
Québec City, 1765-1990

by
Nancy Schmitz

This book is an important contribution to the on-going study of the Irish in Québec. The book documents the first celebration of the feast — that by Irish Protestant officers of the British garrison and civil authorities in 1765 — and continues with a wealth of information that brings the reader to 1990.

The title arises from the universal enjoyment of March 17th in Québec in the latter part of the twentieth century — celebration by all citizens, regardless of their ethnic origin. "Everyone is Irish on Saint Patrick's Day", as Québécois, both French and English will assure you.

The eight chapters are generously illustrated with a variety of photographs and other material.

200 pages, softcover; maps, photos, illustrations, notes, select bibliography, indices. This and other books of Irish-Québécois interest are available from:

Carraig Books
P. O. Box 8733
Saint Foy, Québec
Canada
G1V 4N6



Irish Cultural Transfer in British Columbia

Susan Forbrigger
(An Arts student at Saint Mary's)

In the fall of 1986, I met four very unusual people in a small town called Vanderhoof, in the interior of British Columbia: three were Irish: Nuala from Waterford, Geraldine, from Ballymena, and Kate from Navan; Josephine was English, from the Isle of Mann.

We were all brought together to teach in a Catholic school. I found myself in an entirely different culture and language. Both Geraldine and Kate were fluent in Irish Gaelic, Nuala and Josephine could both speak it, and while Nuala could speak quite well Josephine's command of the language was weak. Then of course there was me! The only words I knew in Gaelic were *Ciad Mille Failte* and that is just because it's heard so frequently.

What I soon learned was that we had difficulty in understanding each other's English. I was told to get the "Byro out of the Press", put the paper in the "bin", and "knock up the nuns" at 5 p.m. because that's what time they could see me. I soon learned to understand them and found myself, on more than one occasion, translating what they said to other people in the community — not from Irish into English but from Irish English into Canadian English!

The legend of an Irish temper is true. On many evenings Kate and Geraldine would be discussing the day's events while enjoying a cup of tea when Kate would correct Geraldine's pronunciation. An argument usually followed and could last up to three or

14 An Nasc

four days until they would forget what it was about or they would call Ireland to prove their point.

I found they all had a love of life that we as Canadians wish we had. They use any excuse to celebrate and they do it in style. Christmas with them was a great time of sharing traditions. They had to get used to the "commercialism" in Canada while I had to learn to appreciate the get-togethers which started at one house and would continue until we would have gathered over fifty people and would head back to the church for Midnight Mass. There was always a large gathering at our house afterwards.

I think my favorite celebration, though, had to be St. Patrick's Day which turned out to be an entire week's celebration. They don't do much in the line of St. Patrick's celebrations in Ireland but while in Canada they'd decided to do it up right, as they were fond of saying.

I miss each of them and we still keep in touch. Two remained in British Columbia and two moved back to Ireland. I like to think that they remember me as I do them. They have richly touched and enhanced my life.

GARM LU

A Canadian Celtic
Arts Journal

Published Twice a year
Subscriptions \$6/year

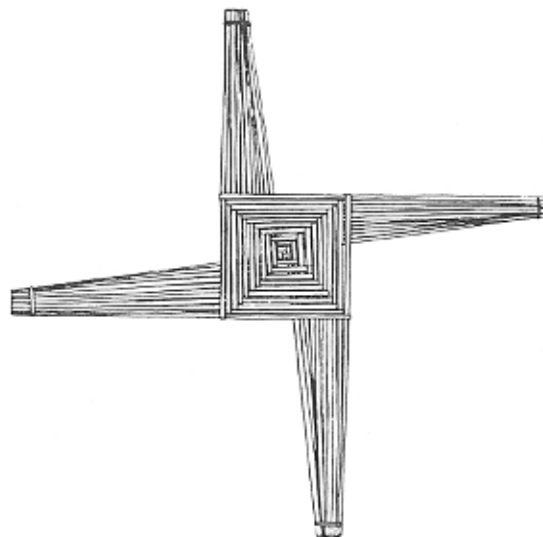
Available from:
71 St. Mary's Street
St. Michael's College
University of Toronto
Canada M5S 1J4

DISCOVER THE WORLD OF GAELIC (IRISH) FOLKSONG

A wide range of cassettes of
contemporary Irish folksongs

For a complete catalogue, write to:

Cló Iar-Chonnachta Teo.,
Béal an Daingin
Conamara, Co. na Gaillimhe
Ireland



Saint Brigid's cross
County Leitrim
(National Museum, Dublin)

IRISH SURNAMES

Terrence M. Punch, F.R.S.A.I.
 President, Royal Nova Scotia
 Historical Society

While compiling statistics for my book, *Irish Halifax: the Immigrant Generation, 1815-1859*, I realized, more than before, that there is a multitude of names which simply do not "sound Irish". I do not mean those Ulster Scots names which are easily explained as members of an identifiable group, such as James Maxwell, Hugh Macklin or Thomas Forbes, all of them authentic Ulstermen who lived in nineteenth-century Maritimes. The people who will be mentioned below had three characteristics in common: they were Roman Catholics; they were natives of Ireland; and they lived in Nova Scotia in the middle of the last century.

These names will be cited as random examples of such folk. When being Irish was considered a social or economic disadvantage, such people had the chance that their English-seeming names would work into the conviction that the ancestor was not "Irish". This makes annoying confusion for genealogists and those, such as historians and demographers, who wish to have statistical bases for general observations. The lesson is to keep an open mind about the ethnic origin of people who exist only in the written record.

Robert Ast of Tipperary and John Vereker from Kilkenny shared Dutch ancestry, while Christopher Joynt from Mayo was probably only about five or six generations removed from his Huguenot forebear who fled to Ireland after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes. I'll not hear any Canadian whose

family got here since 1815 say that Joynt "wasn't really Irish", unless that Canadian will respond to whether they "are really Canadian". Michael Granville of Kerry was of Norman stock and had six hundred years of Irish residence behind him. William Devenish of Wicklow had a forebear from Devon in the 14th. century. John Barton of Kilkenny had a line stretching to the 13th. century. Irish enough?

Don't challenge Henry Boyle of Armagh, or Peter Dempster of Waterford, let alone Alexander Keville from Leitrim, unless you are prepared to tell the world just when the Ó Baoighill, the Ó Díomasaigh and the Ó Cibhil came into existence. Now that chap Austen Needham sounds terribly British, doesn't he? Try on Ó Niadh for size in County Mayo, and you'll be correct.

When an English settler surname is coupled with a given name that is not especially "Irish" the result is not ethnically revealing to any but the most specialized observer. Yet, Arthur Anderson came from Kerry; Tom Fielding from Carlow; John Hemsworth from Tipperary; Annie Ledwidge from Mayo; and Joseph Markman from Dublin. William Oldfield and Thomas Barnes left Waterford. John Cox, Tom Kent, Robert Warner, Catherine Russell and Alexander Pannel called Cork their home. Remember such people and their names the next time someone fancies the immigrant ship bulging with Paddie Murphy and Bridget Nelligan.

MURPHY

Variants: Murphoy, Murfee, O'Murphy, McMurphy.



O'MURPHY
(Muskerry)

Murphy is the most numerous of Irish surnames. Wherever you have the Irish, there seems to be a Murphy. So plentiful and widespread did the name become that "murphy" became a colloquial term for that Irish staple food, the potato. Indeed, *Langenscheidt Standard Dictionary*, German-English edition (1970, p. 358), gives this line: "mur-phy sl. Kartoffel f." Predictably, not all of the Murphys are of the same stock. The Irish name is Murchadha, meaning a sea warrior. The major line in Ulster was MacMurchadha, while the septs of Roscommon, Cork, Carlow and Wexford were Ó Murchadha. Even the latter formed several quite independent septs.

If one Irish person in seventy-seven is a Murphy, it is not to be wondered at that Murphy is a common surname among the Irish in other countries. It is number 29 on a list of Nova Scotia surnames, number 7 in Newfoundland, and number 72 in Scotland.

One meets the name in all kinds of unexpected places. One of the qualifications of Agustin Wall to be a Knight of the Spanish Order of Santiago in 1772 was that his grandmother was a daughter of "El muy noble Senor Don Guillermo Murphi de Clonmel".

Murphys have distinguished themselves in several fields. Two clergymen names Murphy — Michael and John — perished in the 1798 rebellion in Wexford. Their contemporary survived to become Most Rev. John Murphy, D.D. (1772-1847), Bishop of Cork. Marie Louise Murphy (1737-1814) was a model for the painter Boucher and her beauty drew more than a passing glance from Louis XV of France. The celebrated Irish giant was Patrick Murphy (1834-1862) who stood 8'1". John Joseph "Fireman" Murphy (1908-1970) was a noted American baseballer, while Audie Murphy (1924-1971), the film actor, was also the most decorated American soldier of World War Two.

Closer to home, Murphy was an early name. John Murphy (1712-1802) was among the settlers brought to Halifax by Cornwallis in 1749 to found the town. Murphy was reputedly the last surviving adult of the original settlers to die in Halifax. This may be true, though it is not proved. Murphys were in Newfoundland nearly as early. William Murphy (Fermeuse 1752), Andrew (Bay Bulls 1753), William (Harbour Main 1755), Patrick (Bay de Verde 1783) are all mentioned by Seary as pioneers. The 1780s brought at least eleven Murphy men to New Brunswick among the Loyalists, including Alexander and Archibald Murphy of St. Andrews, Charlotte County. The Prince Edward Island census of 1798 mentions two men, James and Michael Murphy, as residents in Lot 21. Finally, Michael Murphy from Wexford was an early

resident of the Margaree, but removed to Newfoundland in 1808.

Murphys bestowed their names geographically as well. There is a Murphy, Inverness County, Cape Breton, which may remember that Michael Murphy who sent to Newfoundland. A Thomas Murphy gave his name to Murphys Cove, Halifax County. Prince Edward Island has a Murphy's Point, which is more usually called Ferry Point, at Southport. However, it is Newfoundland which gets the laurels for its abundance of Murphy topography, as it has a Murphy or Murphys cove, head, rock, point, pond and river.

Among our locally prominent Murphys two families stand out. Two brothers from County Cork, John and Michael, founded the clothing manufacturing firm of J. & M. Murphy, known to several generations of Maritimers for their work garments. Two brothers of J. & M. were vicars-general of the Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax, namely Rt. Rev. Edward F. (1844-1901) and Gerald (1856-1931). Their nephew, Joseph Richard Murphy (1880-1944) was a Member of the Nova Scotia Assembly, and father of eight sons, one of whom, Msgr. Gerald B. Murphy (1909-1982), opened the Irish genealogical seminar at Saint Mary's University in 1980 and charmed us all with his wit and profound sense of being Irish.

Another family, descended from Peter Murphy of Ohio, Antigonish County, gave us Dr. George Henry Murphy (1875-1958), M.L.A. and the first provincial Minister of Health (1930-33). His son, Dr. Arthur L. Murphy (1906-1987), was prominent as an author and playwright. His son, Arthur, is a member of the university faculty at the present day.

O'REILLY

Variants: Reily, Rieley, Rielly, Riley, Ryley, Riel.



O'REILLY

The Irish name Ó Raghailigh means "sportive one", and is the eleventh name in frequency of occurrence in Ireland. It is mainly, but not exclusively, associated with the counties Cavan, Meath and Longford, and the head of the clan was Chief of Breffny-O'Reilly.

Prominent persons of the name include five primates of Ireland, as Archbishops of Armagh. Edward O'Reilly compiled an Early Irish-English dictionary (1817), while Count Alexander O'Reilly (+1797) was Spanish governor of Louisiana and a career soldier. It was common to find O'Reillys serving in continental armies, since there were fifty officers of the name on King James II's Irish army list, and many of these, as well as others after them, took service abroad. Many figured among the so-called "Wild Geese".

Closer to our times was John Boyle O'Reilly (1844-1890), the Fenian rebel. Equally colourful was James 'Doc Middleton' Riley (1851-1913), an American outlaw. Charles

18 An Nasc

Nelson Reilly (b. 1931) is an actor, and won the Tony award (1961) for "How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying". Canada's most celebrated O'Reilly is usually not noticed as being Irish. Louis Riel (1844-1885), the Métis leader who was executed by Ottawa, was the lineal descendent of Jean-Baptiste Réel from Limerick, Ireland, who settled in Canada about 1700.

The widow Judith Riley married in Halifax in 1753, and Peter Riley had a child born here in 1756. Susannah (O'Reilly) Edwards lived on the eastern shore by 1787. Philip Reilly was at Cornwallis by 1792, several years after Patrick Reiley settled at Shelburne. Six men of the name came to New Brunswick as Loyalists in the 1780s, mainly settling in the vicinity of Saint John and Fredericton. A William Riley lived at Sackville (1807), and Thomas O'Reilly of the Army was killed in a duel with a Mr. Hobart in New Brunswick (1803). John Reiley and James Rieley, both of Cavan, were transported to Newfoundland in 1789 as convicts. By 1808, John, son of Michael Riely of St. John's, Nfld., was married at Halifax. A Patrick Riely resided in St. John's (1805) and another of the same name at Harbour Grace (1813). Mrs. Rieley lived at Lot 20 in Prince Edward Island in 1798, though later Reillys live in Prince County and a family named Riley was prominent in the tobacco business at Charlottetown about 1870.

George Stuart Riley, M.L.A. 1970-1974, who was briefly the Minister of Public Works for Nova Scotia (1971-1972), was not a Maritimer, but a businessman born in British Columbia. This region's most interesting O'Reilly was undoubtedly Rev. Hugh O'Reilly (1794-1859), a native of County Meath. He came to Nova Scotia in 1839 and served for two years in Queens County, then seventeen years in

Pictou, and in the final years of his life in Margaree, Cape Breton. As "Hibernicus", Father O'Reilly wrote some of the most vehement public letters ever fired off during a religious controversy in this province. He was a large kind-hearted man, but one of warm passions and easy partisanship. You could expect that of a Catholic priest who, living in Scottish Presbyterian Pictou would name his three big dogs 'Luther', 'Calvin' and 'Knox'!

The Canadian Association for Irish Studies

invites students enrolled at
Canadian Universities
to apply for a

SCHOLARSHIP

To the 32nd Yeats
International Summer School in
Sligo, Ireland
August 1991 (2 weeks)

To enter the scholarship competition:

1. Kindly send a letter of application expressing your interest in attending the summer school.
2. Request a faculty member familiar with you work to forward a letter of reference.
3. Ask your university to forward an official transcript of your academic record to:

Professor Ninian Mellamphy
Chair, CAIS Sligo Scholarship Committee
Department of English
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario N6A 3K7

Applications to be postmarked no later than
February 4.

GUIDED TOUR OF IRELAND

The Chair will again sponsor a two-week guided tour to Ireland from the 1st to 15th of July. Last year's tour was a great success with visits to Galway, the Burren, a fascinating geological area in the west of Ireland with exotic plants, etc., the Cliffs of Mhor, the Dingle Peninsula by way of the fabulous Connor Pass, Fota House near Cork, an 18th century "Big House" which is a repository of Irish Art, several days in the Waterford, Kilkenny, Wexford area. The trip ended with a few days in Dublin and everyone who went enjoyed the whole trip including evenings in

traditional Irish pubs. Much the same itinerary is planned for this year and the cost will be \$2,500-\$3,000 sharing accommodation. This will include Air Fare, Hotels and main meals. If you are interested in having more information please clip the appended form and send it to:

"Irish Heritage Tour"
D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
B3H 3C3

Please send information on the 1991 "Irish Heritage Tour" to:

Name

Address

.....

.....

ANNASC, the Newsletter of the D'Arcy McGee, Chair of Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, is provided free of charge.

We welcome financial contributions which will allow us to extend the activities of the Chair of Irish Studies.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

I enclose \$ _____ as a contribution to the work of the Chair of Irish Studies.
(A tax receipt will be issued for all contributions over \$5.00).

An Nasc, D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies,
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia,
Canada B3H 3C3