

Book Reviews

Gerard Moran, **Sending out Ireland's Poor: assisted emigration to North America in the nineteenth century**, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2004, 252 pp. Price €55.00.

So much has been written about assisted emigration to Australia that the concept of assisted emigration was in danger of becoming an Australian phenomenon. This book rights an imbalance in the historical treatment of assisted emigration and in doing so re-defines the concept: both the destination and those assisting the emigration change.

Assisted emigration to North America is not a tidy subject based on government policy and consisting largely of illustrating how it worked in its various approaches over time. There is no blueprint. Hence the daunting nature of what Gerard Moran undertook, when he decided to act on a suggestion made by Professor Cormac Ó Gráda, and foraged his way through a variety of archives and libraries in Canada, the USA, Ireland, England and Wales, aided and abetted by a veritable army of academics (I counted over forty), all graciously acknowledged. The result, while not and not claiming to be, the last word on a subject which has never been tackled with such thoroughness, is a tour de force. Any book that has 846 footnotes has to be taken seriously. (Yes, I counted them, curiosity aroused by the unusual decision to start again at 1 every time he reached 99!)

The author begins with a brief look at some abortive initiatives in the immediate aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, when the emphasis was on Canada, where there were government incentives in place to encourage immigration. This leads into the real beginning: Peter Robinson's pioneering work in North Cork in the 1820s, a scheme highly praised by all concerned, a scheme which had thousands of Irish people clamouring for its continuance, but a scheme which was expensive and quite quickly lost the support of the British government. The author starts as he means to go on, with attention to every aspect of specific emigrations: motivation, the selection of candidates, the reaction of the people in Canada, the effect, the ongoing influence. From 1826 until the Famine, the population continued to grow and people continued to talk about assisting people to emigrate, but the government did nothing. The only people who did not wait for the Famine were the landlords - those who had the resources and the will to do so, that is. After discussing the wide-ranging estimates of the numbers involved in landlord-assisted emigration, and the difficulties attendant on any attempt to be precise, chapter 2 moves on to landlords' reasons for assisting their tenants to emigrate, the role of their agents in organising it, how prospective emigrants were selected and how it was financed. Obviously, the reality varied a lot on the ground and this is also treated in detail, along with the impact such emigration had on the estates of those concerned.

With the advent of the Famine, discussion of the need for government involvement intensified. Colonisation was the bait for this. Successive governments took different positions on the subject, especially on the desired scale and who should pay for it; nationalist Ireland opposed the prospect of being weakened at home and helping to colonise the empire. A sad tale well told. Meanwhile, the Irish emigrated in droves - an even sadder tale, as, quoting Kerby Miller, we are told that a combination of the state of the ships, the state of the emigrants and typhus led to 30% of those trying to go to Canada and 9% of those bound for the USA died in the attempt. While chapter 4 seems to lose its focus on the assisted for a while, as it describes conditions on board ship, the reception at their destinations, American reaction, this is only because the reality on the ground did not differentiate between categories of emigrant and the general exodus during and immediately after the Famine included many assisted by landlords, until such time as the Poor Law provisions for emigration were brought into play.

Chapter 5 has to take the reader back to 1838 and beyond, to understand this new dimension. The only little avenue, and it was a narrow one, left open to government-assisted emigration after all the debate of the 1820s and 1830s had been the concession that such aid might be channelled through the Poor Law system in cases of emergency. Up to 1845, there were only 122 such cases country-wide, but in 1846 there were 184. The workhouses were built to cope with 100,000 destitute people. In an emergency, emigration could provide a safety valve or the whole system would break down. The system stretched to way more than 100,000 before it reached breaking point. The government's only concession was to allow 4,000 female orphans to be sent to Australia from Irish workhouses in 1848-50, to permit (1849) the USA to become a destination for persons aided under workhouse rules, and to enable the unions to borrow for this purpose. The author rightly points out that the orphans to Australia scheme 'established guidelines for the other emigration programmes that the poor law unions would introduce' (p. 132).

The work of Trevor McClaughlin (whose name is erroneously given as McCaughlin, twice), Australia's leading authority on the subject, is not given adequate mention in the bibliography; it lists a minor article by him in *History Ireland* in 2000, but not his main work *Barefoot and Pregnant?* (Melbourne 1991). Perhaps this was because the latter was concerned mainly with identifying the orphans. Obviously, historians cannot normally descend to naming individuals, but, where emigration is concerned, family historians have contributed a lot to the general picture as identification and counting and settlement frequently go together in an informal kind of way. So, reference in the bibliography to authors who go behind the statistics would not come amiss. This remark applies equally to Canadian authors, other than those mentioned on p. 16, who have done much to enlighten us on the results of the Peter Robinson emigration on the ground by showing what happened to many of the families concerned. Even my own simple articles endeavouring to identify the people behind the statistics of workhouse emigration in eight unions - Limerick, Kilmallock, Newcastle, Kilrush, Ennistymon, Nenagh, Thurles and Tipperary - from 1849-59, would be a further case in point. (The article on Limerick was listed.)

Although the chapter on 'the poor law and assisted emigration' is strong on statistics, which come at the reader like a shower of meteorites, the overall impact is more mesmerising than enlightening. This was probably inevitable, once he ventured into details of people from a variety of unions; it was to try and fit a book into a chapter. We are told, several times over, of workhouses filling up to breaking point, the numbers assisted to emigrate, broken down by age group and gender, and the changing reception accorded them in Canada and the USA, yet one does not feel enlightened. This, I feel, is due to over-elaboration, while a certain confusion is also generated by the mixing of statistics between North America and North American colonies (Canada), and also statistics for differing timeframes. Nor is one helped by the rather limp conclusion that the number of persons thus assisted in the 1850s was 'nearly 20,000' (p. 158). The official numbers, as contained in the annual reports of the Poor Law Commissioners for the relevant years were:

	Total
1849-50	871
1850-51	1,721
1851-52	4,386
1852-53	3,825
1853-54	2,601
1854-55	3,794
1855-56	830
1856-57	802
1857-58	829
1858-59	487
	24,321

Whether these figures could be made to tally with those drawn from other sources or not is another matter.

After the Famine, there was less assisted emigration, and the format changed to large-scale projects in response to economic crisis (p. 159). In the 1860s this was directed mostly towards Australia, but the agricultural crisis of the late 1870s elicits a very fine section on agriculture, seasonal migration and emigration from Connemara and West Mayo, followed by the equally excellent and more broadly based section on the 1880s. Here we meet dynamic clergy in Connemara, supportive Irish bishops in America, and clear-sighted philanthropists like J. H. Tuke, Vere Foster, John Sweetman *et. al.* whose impressive efforts convinced the government that it, too, should contribute. Sections deal with the organisation of these schemes, selection for them, opposition to them, and the impact they made. The final chapter treats of the settlement of the emigrants in North America.

Some comments must be made on the production side. Use of the spell checker is no substitute for careful proof reading, otherwise there will be inevitable pitfalls; and either the author, or possibly one of his many helpers, fall headlong into some. This provides a little light relief, as Peter Robinson became an honorary 'council' (p. 21), Aubrey de Vere had a sex change, becoming 'Audrey' (p. 36), while others 'contacted' (p. 95) diseases, while eating 'stable' diets, and analysing emigration from Ireland 'verses' Germany (p. 158). No wonder they were unable to 'extent' credit' (p. 164)! The bibliography has mistakes that cannot be attributed to the spellchecker: Maria Luddy becomes Maura, and Karel Kiely, Karen, while the book *Poverty to Promise* becomes *Poverty and Promise* and is said to cover 1835-1858, rather than 1838-58.

Apart, therefore, from a dip in quality in the chapter on workhouse emigration, where too much was expected of a chapter, this book will not only put assisted emigration on the map but also provide local historians with estate material which, rightly re-assembled, should enrich the history of many a parish. It also makes outstanding use of parliamentary papers, and the three-page list of these should prove of more than passing interest to many researchers in other aspects of nineteenth-century social history.

S. C. O'Mahony

Mike Salter, **The Castles of North Munster**, Folly Publications, Malvern, 2005. ISBN 1-871731-68-2, Pb. 2005. Price £11.00 sterling. **The Castles of South Munster**, Folly Publications, Malvern, 2004. ISBN 1-871731-66-6, Pb. Price £9.00. **The Castles of Leinster**, Folly Publications, Malvern, 2004. ISBN 1-871731-67-4, Pb. Price £13.00. **The Castles of Connacht**, Folly Publications, Malvern, 2004. ISBN 1-871731-64-X, Pb. Price £6.96. **The Castles of Ulster**, Folly Publications, Malvern, 2004. ISBN 1-871731-65-8, Pb. Price £4.95.

The publication of the North Munster volume in early 2005 completes this set of books, which replaces Salter's earlier single volume, *Castles and Strong Houses of Ireland*. The castles are listed alphabetically by county within each province and each entry contains a short history and at least one illustration per site. Grid references are given for those who wish to find the exact location, and there is a graded listing on accessibility, the key to which is to be found in the introduction. At the end of each county is a list of other castles and castle sites and there are outline location maps on the inside covers.

This is a very useful set of books for anyone interested in castles. The great strength of the work is that there is at least one illustration per castle, usually either a plan or photograph and often both. The author is for the most part responsible for the photos, so we do not get the standard Bord Fáilte

shot meant to appeal to the foreign tourist. Instead the photos try to capture the essence of a castle or show particular details within the building. This makes the books an important source of inspiration for anyone looking for parallels to their own familiar castles.

If there is a weakness then it lies in the accompanying text. From the descriptions it is possible to tell that the author has visited the sites, which is an impressive achievement considering, as I understand, that he does not have a car. The accompanying history, however, is lifted for the most part from standard published sources and does not seem to include recent works. This leads to variable quality of text. For instance, of the castles on which I have worked, I would disagree wholeheartedly with virtually everything written about Dunamase in Co Laois. Clarecastle certainly did not have a twin towered gatehouse, but the Nenagh entry seems perfectly in order. So there is something of a mixed bag.

I wholeheartedly recommend these books, which may seem strange since I have just criticised them for being incorrect in places. I see them as a great gazetteer for the uninitiated who wish just to find and explore castles for fun, as well as being a great resource for the more serious students of castles. Where else would one get so many comparative plans in one place? Such students should already be aware of the potential shortcomings of this type of work and the need to cross check facts. For those wishing to buy the complete set then there is, at the time of writing, a mail order offer of £39.00 for the set on the author's website www.follypublications.co.uk.

Brian Hodkinson

Damian McManus, **The Ogam Stones at University College Cork**, Cork University Press, Cork, 2004. 24pp. ISBN 1 85918 320 4. Price €9.95.

Chapter eleven of the Book of Genesis provides an explanation for the different languages in the world: in typical Old Testament fashion it relates to the displeasure of God with his human creation, so he frustrates their attempt to build a tower reaching to heaven by creating linguistic confusion at Babel. The early medieval Irish scholars produced an interesting variant on this when they claimed that the Irish language, and its specific ogam script, were created from the best of all these languages, to be the medium of communication for scholarship. Apart from the less-than-modest claim, this is of interest as it links the Irish language directly with the script and supports the argument, not always accepted, that it was designed for written communication of Irish rather than being merely, as sometimes argued, a curious cipher derived from the Latin alphabet.

While this work is essentially a guide to the Ogam stones in University College Cork, the author, a leading expert on the subject, provides an excellent summary account of current knowledge and debate on the wider topic. The exact time or place of the invention of ogam cannot be determined nor indeed can the precise reason for its creation. Study of the inscriptions shows that it should be divided into an early - or as it is termed here - 'orthodox' phase, used on the stones, and a later or 'scholastic' form, found in manuscripts. This corresponds to the two earliest forms of the language, the Primitive Irish of the fifth-sixth centuries and the Old Irish of the seventh-ninth centuries. It also seems to establish the broad dating parameters for the use of ogam stones. Linguistic experts have found no evidence to suggest that the orthodox form is any earlier than the fourth century while the changes which came with Old Irish from the seventh-century onwards are nowhere reflected on the inscriptions. The absence of the letter P from the inscriptions for example shows it to belong to the period before that consonant entered the language. Disappointingly, it has never proved possible to provide secure dating of any inscription through identification of the actual person commemorated.

The supposed derivation of the name of the script from the European Celtic god, Ogmios [known to us from the writings of Lucian of Samosata, a 2nd century Greek author] through the Ogma of the Túatha Dé Danann is regarded by the author as likely despite the considerable linguistic and chronological problems involved.

The location of ogam stones also raises many questions. Kerry has more than a third of all known examples with Cork and Waterford having the next highest numbers. Ogam stones are rare in the northern half of the island and this curious distribution pattern had never been explained. They also occur outside of Ireland, particularly in Wales, which has forty examples, but also in Devon, Cornwall and on the Isle of Man. All these have inscriptions in Irish but often with a Latin equivalent added. Stones with ogam writing occur in Scotland but the language used is either Pictish or Old Norse, not Irish. As the author points out, these stones are a physical reminder of Irish emigration in this period. The bilingual inscriptions in Britain are an important source for interpreting the ogam characters, supplementing later manuscript keys though the latter, such as the well-known one in the late medieval *Book of Ballymote* need to be treated with caution when applied to the earlier inscriptions.

The stones record the names of individuals, using a standard formula, with the name of the person given first, followed by his ancestry, either his father, other ancestor or tribe. The name is always in the genitive case which removes the necessity for a prefix stating that this is the stone/grave of the individual named. There is only one instance of a woman named, and that is in Wales where Avitoriges the daughter of Cunignos appears on a bilingual Latin-Irish inscription. The stones marked, in most cases, it is assumed, the individual's burial place though claims to land ownership have also been suggested. Many stones, possibly the majority, are, or were, not found in their original positions: it is suggested here that only the very large examples are still in situ. They were frequently re-used as lintels, both in medieval-period building and modern construction. The author lists the extraordinary diverse places that ogam stones have been found including, surprisingly, marking modern graves. The older view, popularised by scholars like Macalister (who, of course, did not write in the present century, as stated on p.6) that ogam was pagan and was ended due to Christian hostility is now regarded as unlikely given that some stones had crosses on them prior to their being inscribed and the author quotes an example which shows that the person mentioned was actually a priest.

Twenty-seven ogam stones are on display in UCC having been acquired in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One is from near Lismore, Co. Waterford, the remainder from various parts of Co. Cork. The author discusses a heated debate in the local Cork newspapers in 1913-4 on the propriety of the university's acquisition of some of them even though it is clear that they came from a soutterain where they had been re-used. While he acknowledges that many scholars today would not approve of such actions, he tends to justify the decision on the grounds of protection and accessibility. The former argument seems slightly shaky given that one stone has gone missing and there have also been allegations that others have suffered damage since their 'rescue'. Curiously they were never utilised as a 'teaching aid' when I was an archaeology student in UCC, nor indeed do I recall any discussion about them.

Each of the stones is fully and authoritatively discussed with details of its find-place, the inscription, valuable scholarly comments and cross references to its listing in the works of Canon Power and Professor R.A.S. Macalister. A useful bibliography, updating that in the author's highly regarded monograph on this subject (Damian McManus, *A guide to Ogam*, Maynooth 1991), is included.

This attractively produced publication by Cork University Press will primarily be of value to students and scholars. It also provides a good introduction for the ordinary reader interested in these stones or indeed the subject of ogam in general. It is written for the most part in an accessible manner

though no allowance is made for those whose everyday vocabulary may not include terms such as kennings, postvocalic or 'uncompounded dithematic' - though 'boustrophedon readings' is explained (up, top, down, if you wondered).

Liam Irwin

Seán Ó Ceallaigh, **Éamonn Mac Giolla Iasachta 1887-1986: Beathaisnéis**, Coiscéim, B.Á. C., 2003, xi + 475pp. Pragas €12.50.

My old mentor Professor George O'Brien once described Edward MacLysaght to me as a butterfly who wished to become a caterpillar. Born and brought up in England, educated at Rugby and Oxford, Ned (as he was known) then settled on a farm that his wealthy and literary ironmonger father had bought for him in their distant ancestral county of Clare, went native, acquired a brogue, became an ardent Gaelgeoir, converted to Catholicism, put a Mac before his name, acted as the unofficial spokesman for Sinn Féin at the Irish Convention of 1917, served in the first Senate of the Irish Free State, wrote novels in Irish as well as the outstanding work of historical scholarship on everyday life in seventeenth-century Ireland, became first Chief Herald, author of the standard book on Irish family history and survived in good health until 1986 when he died at the age of ninety-eight.

He himself wrote several memoirs, the last of which made it into print under the title *Changing Times* when he was ninety. He kept a diary for periods in his life and published extracts from those kept in Irish about the same time as *Changing Times* appeared. These, and a five thousand word memoir I wrote about him at the time of his death, have provided much of the material for this biography in Irish by Clareman Seán Ó Ceallaigh. The author has also had access to unpublished diaries up until 1926 and some correspondence. Sadly, they have not produced much new information of significance. But the author has constructed from the published literature an interesting account of the strange odyssey that was his subject's life and placed it in the context of his times with abundant, perhaps over-abundant, background material.

In re-inventing himself Ned carried his desire to play down his English background to absurd lengths. He expunged memories of his first twenty-one years apart from family holidays in Ireland. He claimed in his *Who's Who* entry and elsewhere that he was born at sea and baptized in the Parish of Tuamgraney. Seán Ó Ceallaigh has unearthed his birth certificate confirming that he was born in Somerset; the baptism in Clare took place when he converted to Rome in 1913. I believe that it is a key to understanding Ned that he was not brought up in Ireland. This contributed to his alienation from the Irish gentry, whom he, the most industrious of men, despised as layabouts. His family had not gone through the bruising Land War trying to live off rents. He was more English than Anglo-Irish.

He came to the national movement through the Gaelic League and his enthusiasm for the language knew no bounds. He tried to set up an Irish speaking community among the employees by importing workers from the Gaeltacht. He spoke only Irish to the two children of his first marriage, both of whom, ironically, reverted to the world of his background. As a Senator his mission was to promote Irish and he often spoke it to an uncomprehending assembly. He founded and edited an Irish language periodical called *An Squab*. He would be delighted that his biography has been written in Irish by a Clareman. He would also be pleased that it adds to what he himself had written about his days with *An Squab* and pays generous tribute to his novel *Cúrsaí Thomáis*.

The other part of the book that adds to the available knowledge on Ned's life relates to his family life on which he was deliberately silent in his own memoirs, saying they were an account of what he had seen, not a full autobiography. He married, against his parents' wishes, a South African nurse who

was unacceptable because her Irish aunt was postmistress in Scarriff and so ranked as a shopkeeper. Before the marriage he was sent around the world with his brother Pat in an unsuccessful effort to induce a change of heart; the account of his poor relationship with Pat is new and informative although it is not correct that Pat's death in 1914 was in the First World War. Ned's relationship with his first wife collapsed after the birth of their second child. Fifteen years later, in 1936, he got a divorce in South Africa and married happily a beautiful young girl with the most generous of hearts, whose father was head gardener on the estate in Cork that Ned's father Sydney Royse Lysaght had bought from a cousin about 1916. The great love affair with Bríd Ní Raogáin that occurred between Ned's two marriages is not mentioned. Nor is there much exploration of his relationship with his parents and children, especially his sad alienation from the son of his first marriage who had once been all and everything to him. Perhaps, even yet, it is all too sensitive

As Chief Herald, Ned instituted, with Mr de Valera's consent, a system by which the Genealogical Office recognized those who were descended on the eldest male line from the last inaugurated Gaelic chieftains of the name. This supported their claim to describe themselves as 'The O'Donovan' or whatever. The innovation was attacked because the Gaelic Order did not always operate by primogeniture. Ned justified it because it served to expose those who, without any real genealogical basis, arrogated such designations to themselves. Sadly, it did not work out because Ned's second next successor as Chief Herald, Donal Begley, recognized as chief of the McCarthy clan a man whose supposed pedigree was based on a forged letter. To extricate himself from this embarrassment the Chief Herald decided to end the courtesy recognition given by the Genealogical Office, albeit that that recognition was really only a genealogical statement of fact. Ned would be sad about this, not least because it severs a link between our modern Republic and the old Gaelic Ireland whose revival was so close to his heart - and that of Eamon de Valera.

Ned McLysaght's remarkable industry and selfless patriotism shines through the book and gives an insight into the pleasure he gave to those who encountered him, even casually. Less clear perhaps is the lack of confidence and poise that resulted from feeling that he was a lesser man than his very distinguished but rather pompous father. Ned was a man of whom it was easy to take advantage and, on a number of occasions not mentioned in this book, he was much upset by being treated shabbily by people in his academic and official life. It is, perhaps, a pity that the author of this book has had to rely so heavily on his subject's own recollections because he was a person to whom the wish was sometimes father to the memory and because it leaves us without a real picture of how he was perceived by others. Whether there is material available in the papers of Ned's associates to fill this gap remains a matter of conjecture. Meanwhile we can rejoice that Seán Ó Ceallaigh has made such good use of the material available to him and written a book that would have pleased its subject.

Charles Lysaght

Sean Duffy (ed.), **Medieval Ireland, an Encyclopaedia**, Routledge, New York and London 2005. 546pp + xxxi, one map. ISBN 0-415-94052-4, Hb. Price €117.65.

A reference book of this type is a welcome addition to the literature on Medieval Ireland. It has the potential both to act as an entry point for newcomers to the period and as a quick way for committed medievalists to find information on those areas with which they are less familiar. The book is wide ranging and covers virtually every aspect of the period. Over 100 scholars have contributed so the quality of the entries is high because each person is writing about his or her particular area of

expertise. There are both alphabetic and thematic entry lists in the introduction and an index at the back. Each entry consists of a concise essay followed by a short reading-list and a "see also" list of connected themes. The reading list is an especially useful tool, allowing access to the key works on the topic. It may seem strange to have an index in an encyclopaedia but it does allow one to find words that do not have entries in their own right. The book is fairly sparsely illustrated with photographs scattered throughout the text.

The book, however, does have a number of drawbacks. One of these is that some of the writers are specialists in only one part of the medieval period and do not stray beyond their own interests. An example of this is the entry on Languages which covers, Irish, Latin, Greek, Welsh, Old English and Old Norse, but fails to mention the major languages of the later medieval period, Middle English and Norman French. Admittedly there are separate entries for the last two but these are not referenced in the 'see also' list following the Languages entry, so one could easily come away believing that neither language was spoken in medieval Ireland. Naval Warfare is only discussed as far as the 12th century, while the single map, p. xxxi, is also only relevant for the early medieval period. The choice of what appears as an entry and what has to be looked for in the index is rather annoying at times. I cannot see why Latrines has an individual entry, admittedly restricted to 'see Castles', while for Betagh one has to go to the index to find it defined in the section 'Society, Grades of Anglo Norman'. Knights, another more important though less numerous social class, merit their own individual entry referring to the same section, which is a little inconsistent. It is also frustrating that some medieval legal terms, such as *mort d'ancestor* and *novel disseisin*, are nowhere defined. The first entry I looked up was Limerick and I found mention of 'black-rent' which is nowhere defined. Nor is the index comprehensive. I have excavated at Dunamase Castle in Co. Laois so it is another word I tend to look for in an index. It is not there, though there are at least three mentions of it under, Villages, Mortimer and Marshal.

Despite these gripes it has to be said that this is a very useful book that I can see myself returning to time after time. The biggest problem for most people will be the price, a massive €117 though for your money you do get a book that is printed on archival quality acid-free paper, which means it should never fox.

Brian Hodkinson

Jim McInerney, **The Gandelow: a Shannon Estuary Fishing Boat**, A.K. Ilen Company Ltd., Limerick, 2005, 70 pp. ISBN-0-9547915-1-7. No price given.

The gandelow was a light, strong fishing boat which was cheap to construct. It had a shallow draught and a pronounced bottom sheer which made it easy for rowing long distances, by a crew of three, and also made it very manoeuvrable. The name is a local version of the Venetian gondola though it has not been possible to establish any direct connection; indeed the origins of the gandelow remain unclear though it has many similarities with a North American boat known as a Dory. However it is the 'gangloes' of the Cashen area of the estuary which most closely resembles the American prototype but the close similarity of both seems to point to a common origin, probably in Canada, given the strong trade between there and the Shannon region.

As well as providing a clear, comprehensive and affectionate history of this boat Jim McInerney vividly recreates a whole way of life in the city of Limerick which has now completely disappeared. In chapter one he reminisces about his father, childhood and the beginning of his life-long interest in the subject of boats. Chapter two discusses the origins of the gandelow, its relationship to the Cashen river boats and the Dories. He also mentions the Light Keepers, farmers or fishermen who serviced

the lights and channel markers along the estuary. There were twenty-one lights between the port of Limerick and Horse Rock island, lanterns mounted in iron bases in which paraffin oil was kept burning constantly. The Light Keepers had to ensure that these remained working, by topping up the oil, cleaning the wicks and the glass of the lanterns. To access the lights, they used the gandelow.

Chapter three gives a detailed and authoritative account of how a gandelow was built and the technical detail is supplemented by clear diagrams and photographs. Chapter Six has a short discussion on the use of a sail on a gandelow which required considerable skill to prevent the boat overturning. Chapter four is a wide-ranging discussion of fishing in the Limerick area which, based on the discovery of a canoe near Bunratty, began nearly seven-thousand years ago to the present day. There is an affectionate tribute to the fishermen who lived on Clancy strand until the 1940s and who were obliged to fish in a separate part of the river from the better recorded Abbey fishermen. One of the most fascinating aspects of this book is the documentation of the role that women played in the fishing activity on the Shannon. While always a predominantly male occupation, the author gives interesting evidence of wives and daughters of fishermen also being involved. A useful glossary of technical terms is provided so that the uninitiated can distinguish stringers from strakes or garboards from transoms. There are numerous photographs both of boats and of people, those who built, owned and worked in them. The book is attractively produced by A. K. Ilen publications, part of a series which also includes books on the Galway Hookers and the famous Foynes yachtsman, Conor O'Brien. They are to be congratulated for making Jim McInerney's interesting and informed story of the Limerick gandelows and those who built, used and made their livelihoods from them, available to a wider audience.

Tom Kelly

Dermot Keogh and Andrew McCarthy, **Limerick Boycott 1904: Anti-Semitism in Ireland**, Mercier Press, Cork, 2005, 163pp, ISBN 185635 453 9. Price €20.

The small Jewish community that lived in and around Colooney Street (now Wolfe Tone Street), Limerick's 'little Jerusalem' could not have anticipated the result of the tirade of venomous sermons that the Rev Fr Creagh, a Limerick man, and the Spiritual Director of the Arch-Confraternity of the Holy Family gave to its 6,000 members in 1904. Based at Mount St. Alphonsus, the Redemptorist church and monastery, the Confraternity was founded on 20 January 1868, and consisted of three divisions that met on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and were sub divided into sections like army platoons, with a Prefect and a Sub-Prefect in command. This may be explained by the fact that the Confraternity was established, in Belgium, by an army officer. It had been alleged that shopkeepers in the city, hostile to the Jewish pedlars who were providing unwelcome competition, had approached the priest about their trading practices.

Fr Creagh, during the course of his sermons accused the Jews of pedalling goods at extortionate interest rates, which the poor of Limerick could not afford to pay. He also referred to a Jewish wedding that had taken place some time previously, which had been reported in the *Limerick Chronicle*. Reading from this newspaper Fr Creagh related to the difference that existed between those who gathered outside the Synagogue at Colooney Street, and who were described as 'poverty motley' and those inside who were clad in fine broad cloth, silks and satins, goodly to look upon. He then posed the question of how the Jews could afford such luxuries, the implication being that they were the result of the ill-gotten gains of extortion. Ending his diatribe against the community, he then called upon the members of the Confraternity to have nothing to do with or have any dealings with the Jews, and to

terminate whatever transactions were ongoing. Needless to say the latter was like manna from Heaven, as those who were repaying the Jews for goods purchased on the credit system could now withhold payment, justifying their action on the grounds that their religious leader had directed them to do so. In essence Fr Creagh had called for a complete boycott of the Jewish Community in Limerick.

Following these sermons the Jews of Limerick lived in absolute fear for their lives, at times remaining behind the locked doors of their houses. Leading political leaders of the day such as John Redmond and Michael Davitt spoke out against the attacks on the Jews, the latter more outspoken in his rebuttal of what Creagh had said. Davitt, protested as an Irishman and as a Catholic against anti-Semitism, 'this barbarous malignity' being introduced into Ireland, under the pretended form of material regard for the welfare of the workers. The Jews also received support from members of the Church of Ireland but the power of the Confraternity was too strong. Father Creagh condemned the violence that he had incited by his inflammatory sermons, but did not retract his charges against the Jews. The boycott was to last for two years eventually leading to an exodus of many of the Jewish Community from Limerick.

The title of this book, by two academics, based at University College Cork, indicates their view that it was a boycott rather than the more usual term 'pogrom'. While there is no doubt that the Jewish Community in Limerick were boycotted, to the Jews in Limerick at the time it was a pogrom, not in the sense of anyone being killed, but psychologically.

The authors have blended narrative and primary documentary sources together very well in relating the story of the events in Limerick in 1904, and the mindset of people at that time. However, there is nothing new in the narrative, as one of the authors Dermot Keogh makes it clear that it is taken from his chapter entitled 'The Limerick "Pogrom," 1904' in his book *Jews in Twentieth Century Ireland: Refugees, Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust*, much of which was based on a series of articles that Limerick man Des Ryan had written for the *Old Limerick Journal*. The book, while of interest to a general readership, is particularly geared towards the teaching of history at both secondary and third levels, providing accessible primary source materials. There are copious notes toward the end of the book relating to the sources that the authors used in compiling the book, and will be of use to the reader in the absence of a bibliography. There is a useful index of names but there are omissions, such as Michael Joyce MP for Limerick City and Julian Grande, Director of 'The Irish Mission to the Jews' both mentioned in the text. There is also no index of place names. The authors use the Census for 1901 to indicate the number of Jews who were living in the city before the boycott / pogrom but there is no comparison made with the Census for 1911 to ascertain the number of Jews who had left. Despite these limitations it provides a valuable insight into one of the darker episodes of Limerick's history in the early twentieth century.

Tadhg Moloney

Patrick J. McNamara, **The Widow's Penny** (Limerick 2003) reviewed *NMAJ*, vol. 44, 2004).

With reference to . . . the review of my book *The Widow's Penny* by Tadhg Moloney in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, volume 44, perhaps you will be kind enough to publish this letter together with the enclosed copy of other reviews of the book as my right of reply.

Publication of same I feel will provide your readers the opportunity to consider my work in a more balanced way. I enclose a few excerpts from some of the many reviews of *The Widow's Penny* that may be of interest; it shows how others viewed the book. The book has an international appeal, e.g.

it's on sale at the Ulster Tower, Somme, France.

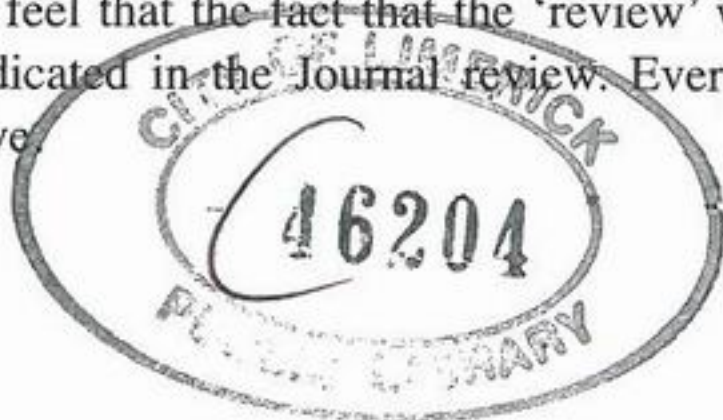
I also enclose some items down-loaded from the Irish Seamen's Relatives Association website which says it all. You will note however, that mention of *The Widow's Penny* is conspicuous by its absence from the *Recommended Reference Material WWI Executions* section, considering it is a most detailed account of the Downey courts martial including a facsimile copy of the trial documents.

The enclosed 'book review' of *The Widow's Penny* purportedly written by a Tadhg Moloney B.A., M.A. also down-loaded from the Irish Seamen's Relatives Association website, bears an uncanny resemblance to the book review by Tadhg Moloney, as published in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, volume 44. This of course could be the typical example of 'there are more Jack Barrys than one.' If on the other hand they are one and the same, I feel that the fact that the 'review' was first published on the Internet should have been clearly indicated in the Journal review. Every writer expects and welcomes criticism, provided it's constructive.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick J. McNamara

'Santa Lucia', Ballykeelaun, Parteen, Co. Clare.



Extracts from reviews of *The Widow's Penny*

'I consider this work to be a magnum opus in the area of peace and reconciliation. It is a book that was waiting to be written' Colonel Michael Shannon, Chairman, Irish Peace Institute, University of Limerick.

'The book is a model of a local record of World War I. Patrick McNamara has performed a noble task in making a fitting record for the families of the fallen and military historians' *Clare Champion* book review 12/12/2003.

'Patrick J. McNamara with this book has significantly enhanced the historical record of Limerick and its people' *Limerick Leader* book review 20/12/2003.

'The Widow's Penny is a significant contribution to local history in Limerick and contains some "absolute pearls" It is a monument to Patrick McNamara's patience and diligence' Lt. Gen. Gerry McMahon DSM, Former Chief of Staff, Irish Defence Forces.

'It's a terrific publication and I do congratulate you on your work and the treatment you have given to the Limerick VCs' Mrs. D. Grahame MVO, The Victoria Cross and George Cross Association, Whitehall, London

'It has been a monumental labour of duty and local pride, outstanding in its moral integrity and its scholarly labour. The result is a work like none other. Not merely does it shed an extraordinary light on Limerick, and what Limerick endured and Limerick lost, but also, by reflection, it illuminates the suffering and the sorrowing of so many communities throughout Ireland' Kevin Myers, *Irish Times*, 3/3/2004.

'This is the only book ever written about the Limerick casualties of WWI and as such is considered to be an authoritative and authentic account of the period. It should also appeal to those with an interest in military history of the period' *Clare Champion* 14/11/2003.

'We are most grateful to receive your publication, and I have made arrangements to have it placed in our reference library, where it will be a valuable resource' Mrs. Julie Somay, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Maidenhead, England.

'I found your book interesting, entertaining and superbly put together. Please accept that it is an important and moving account of the Men of Limerick. We will keep it here in the Embassy as a reference and a record' Colonel PBG Cummings, Defence Attaché, The British Embassy, Dublin.

