

Book Reviews

Timothy A. Donovan, *In the Shadow of Shanid: The Life of Captain Timothy B. Madigan (1897-1920)* published by the author, Rathkeale, 2010.

Timothy Madigan was shot dead during a raid by British forces on his home near Shanagolden, Co Limerick on 28 December 1920. Born in 1897 he was the eldest son and one of seven children of Thomas Madigan and his wife Daisy Nolan. His family were well off, having a pub and grocery shop in the village of Shanagolden and also substantial farmers with, eventually, over two hundred acres of land. His father died at the age of forty-one when Tim, as he was known, was only seven. He was educated at the local national school, where he was noted as a promising Gaelic football player, and afterwards attended the Jesuit-run Mungret College which at that time had an agricultural section. On his return home in 1913 he took over the running of the farm and continued his involvement in football though the local Shanagolden team was then not affiliated to the GAA. He had also become politically aware, was interested in the Gaelic League and when a branch of the Irish Volunteers was founded in the parish in May 1914 Tim Madigan was chosen as Captain.

On the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1919, the Shanagolden Volunteer Company became part of the Ballyhahill battalion of the West Limerick IRA. Their first recorded action was in May 1919 when Madigan organised his men to burn down the RIC barracks in Shanagolden. This did not require any military engagement as the barracks had already been evacuated and the four RIC men transferred to Foynes. Nevertheless Madigan's involvement and his increasingly important IRA role were known to the authorities and he went on the run, staying in local safe houses. At the end of June 1920 Madigan has the responsibility of guarding General Lucas, who had been captured by the North Cork IRA, for a period of about a week or ten days when he was imprisoned in Balliston House. On 26 August two unarmed RIC men from Foynes attended the local doctor in Shanagolden. When their presence was notified to Madigan, he organised his brother and a couple of other men to surround the dispensary and the policemen were captured. They were then ordered to take off their jackets, caps, stockings and boots which were set on fire. Having been forced to walk through the village, they had to return barefoot without their uniforms to Foynes. This was probably not a planned humiliation and more likely resulted from frustration at finding that there were no arms to be captured from them. In a reprisal raid that night, one of them, a notorious Black and Tan, Thomas Huckerby, shot and killed an innocent local man, John Hynes.

At the end of the year Madigan returned to his home to spend Christmas with his family. On 28 December the farm was surrounded by a party of RIC and Black and Tans and when he realised he was about to be captured he ran from the farmyard into an adjoining field where he was shot. He was brought back to the farm house and laid on the dining room table where he died later that day. A military court of enquiry was held in the house on the following evening when evidence was given by an RIC constable, the local doctor who had attended the dying man and his sixteen-year-old sister, Peg Madigan. The family were given permission to bury Tim in the family grave in Kilbrathern cemetery on the condition that no more than fifty people attend. No military display took place at his

burial at the request of his family. One of the notable features of the tragedy was the attitude of his mother who successfully requested her dying son to forgive the man who had shot him as she did herself. The local belief, shared by his family, that the Black and Tan who fired the fatal shot was named Barlow is incorrect; it was Frank Draper, based in Foynes from where the RIC raid had been mounted.

The author of this book is a nephew of Tim Madigan who was given the same Christian name in remembrance of him. While he has written a warm, affectionate and admiring tribute to his uncle, it is a work remarkably and commendably free from rancour and bitterness. Neither does it try to invoke the memory of a brave young man to suggest any relevance to more recent Irish history or seek to use his tragic death as a motivation or justification for recrimination, retaliation or political aims in a different period and context. Indeed he points out that such fears and concerns lay behind his mother's extreme reluctance to ever talk about her brother even though her, and the wider family's, wish to keep the tragedy a largely private matter has meant that his role has been largely forgotten. Apart from his name on the 1955 West Limerick War of Independence Memorial in Newcastle West and the dedication of the Sports Field in Shanagolden in his honour in 1977, there has been little public awareness of his contribution. This lacuna has now been filled with this well-researched and comprehensive study of his life.

However it should be noted that there is much more to this work than the reconstruction of an individual life. This is also a wider family history which traces the very interesting story, not just of the Madigans, but also of families related to them through marriage, especially the O'Briens, Donovans and Nolans. One of the most interesting ancestors, for example, was Patrick O'Brien, born in 1798 on a small farm in the townland of Mount David. He became a successful business man in the village of Shanagolden managing to become a relatively rich man within a short period of time, reflecting the opportunities open to ambitious Catholics in the early-nineteenth century. He acquired the nickname Porridge O'Brien reputedly from feeding the starving people of the area during the Great Famine with this food though Lord Monteagle wrote that labourers in the area claimed that O'Brien had 'screwed' them during the same period. He would not, of course, have been the first, or last, man to combine duteous charity with hard-headed business practice. After his daughter Bessie was born in January 1840, she was brought into the local pub by her delighted father and, according to family lore, so impressed the barman that he said he wanted to marry her one day. As he was then nineteen years old and she was nineteen days old it seemed an unlikely outcome; but marry they did in 1862 and their son Thomas Madigan was the father of the subject of this book.

Interesting and valuable information has also been unearthed and recorded by the author not only about the other families connected to the Madigans but also concerning many other families in the area. Equally impressive is the wider context provided for the entire period covered by the book, ranging from the early-nineteenth century to the present day. This includes both the national scene and also the wider local background, in particular for the crucial time from the 1916 Rising to the War of Independence. There are excellent maps, graphs, tables, photographs and family trees which help to elucidate and enliven the text. The attractive cover design features a portrait by the author's brother, the distinguished artist Jack Donovan, of Captain Timothy Madigan as he might have looked in 1919. Both brothers have, in their respective ways, recovered for us a picture of this young, brave and now no-longer-forgotten West Limerick victim of the struggle for independence.

Liam Irwin

Mark Samuel and Kate Hamlyn, *Blarney Castle, its History, Development and Purpose*, Cork University Press, 2007, xi + 152pp. ISBN 978-1-85918-411-0. Price €39.

Blarney Castle, which attracts over 300,000 visitors each year, is sadly known more for its famous kissing stone, than for the merits of the castle itself. While it has been the subject of specialist study, most of this work has not been easily available to the general public. It is this deficiency which the authors sought to rectify in writing this book. Mark Samuel completed a Ph. D. in 1998 at the Institute of Archaeology in London, on Tower Houses in the West Cork area and this is a joint endeavour with his partner Kate Hamlyn who is a freelance writer with a particular interest in history and archaeology. It is aimed at the general reader, particularly those visiting the castle, to enable them both to understand it as a building and set it securely in the wider context of Irish history.

There is a short, inevitably, first chapter answering the rather basic question of where Blarney is located. One important point that is stressed is that its position was on the edge of English rule in Ireland in the medieval period and controlled a natural route to Cork city. Despite this, it was peripheral to the heartland of its builders, the MacCarthy Muskerry and not strategically important for them. Chapter two provides a general description of Gaelic society in the later medieval period when the castle was built, at the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. It is noted, in passing, that sons were given a very limited range of names, based on their fathers and grandfathers while daughters had a greater variety of names though whether this derived, as is suggested, from romances is open to question.

In the rather short chapter on the building and evolution of the Tower House form, the often-argued thesis that the size of the structure was directly related to the quality of the land in the area is questioned or at least modified to suggest that the status of the family who built it was more significant. Succeeding chapters chart the rise to power of the MacCarthy Muskerry clan, one of the three divisions of the family that emerged during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The area around Blarney was regained from the Norman conquerors, the de Cogans, and particularly under the leadership of Cormac Laidir (1411-94) and his son Cormac Oge (1447-1537) their control and power was consolidated.

Having lost their lands under Cromwell and not only getting them back at the Restoration but also acquiring the title Earl of Clancarty, they were to lose everything again, and this time permanently, when they supported James II against William of Orange. The Blarney estate was sold in 1703 initially to the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, Sir Richard Payne who quickly resold it to Sir James Jefferyes, Governor of Cork city. The reason for this is unclear but may have been due to a fear that the McCarthys might be restored. It was reported that William III was somewhat enamoured of 'that little spark Lord Clancarty' but in the event his political judgment outweighed any amorous lust he may have entertained and the Jefferyes have retained possession of the castle ever since, though it passed through the female line to the Colthurst family in 1862 when the Jefferyes' heiress, Louisa who had married Sir George Colthurst, inherited.

Having traced the history of the castle and its owners, the authors then devote a long and detailed chapter to a description of the structure itself clearly outlining all its features. This is written in the form of a guided tour, which is comprehensive, competent and despite the necessity for many technical terms, impressively lucid and accessible for the general reader as well as the specialist. As with all sections of the work, there are excellent, plans, drawings, maps and photographs that complement and enhance the text. The

inclusion of a following summary chapter, outlining the sequences of building and alteration, with a glossary of technical terms, is a further welcome aid for visitors who may be using the work as they tour the castle. There is also a glossary of Gaelic and historic terms, a comprehensive bibliography, a good index and even an appendix, providing grid references for all the castles in Co Cork which are mentioned throughout the book.

Despite all its academic and scholarly merits, there is a danger that this work will be remembered more for its discussion of the famous, or infamous 'Stone' than for the excellent account of the Castle itself or its fascinating history. One of the earliest references to the myth comes from the account of a tour in Ireland in 1798 by the French Consul in Dublin, Charles Coquebert de Montbret. He records that those who kissed the stone would 'gain the privilege of telling lies for seven years'. Another variation of the story from 1805 attributes the ability to make people who touch it 'happy ever after' to the stone. While the practice of kissing, rather than touching, seems to date from as early as the 1770s it was probably the ballad written by Father Prout in 1835 that popularised the belief that it would confer eloquence.

The authors inform us that there has been dispute over the years on what precise stone in the castle has given rise to the myth. Early accounts talked about a stone 'high up in the tower' which was apparently the date stone. Other claims were made for a sill stone of one of the machicolations on the south side, a hollow stone on the east side, and even one supposedly carved with a shamrock, which was hidden from all but the select few. What seems clear is that the stone to which the contemporary pilgrimage is made and whose surface is so lovingly if precariously kissed, is not the one on which the myth and legends were originally based. The shock of this revelation will no doubt leave readers speechless.

John Kelly

John Crowley & John Sheehan (eds) *The Iveragh Peninsula, a cultural atlas of the ring of Kerry*, Cork University Press, Cork, 2009 512pp ISBN 978-185918-430-1. Price €59.

The word atlas, conjuring up an image in most people's minds of a book of maps, is a somewhat misleading, certainly an inadequate, term for this wide-ranging, authoritative and stimulating book. The key word of course in the title is cultural conveying that this is no narrow geographical, in the older sense of that word pertaining largely to the physical world, study but a varied, comprehensive and diverse exploration of this fascinating area. There are fifty-two contributions from archaeologists, historians, geographers but also journalists, artists and others with a variety of specialist expertise.

The first section explores the landscape with articles on its geology, mountains and coastline. There is a discussion of the flora and fauna with two pages of an excellently illustrated and explained list of the birds of the region. This section ends with a scholarly discussion of the place names. The following sections outline, analyse and discuss the historical development of the peninsula: section two dealing with prehistory up to the eighteenth century while section three continues the story to the War of Independence. Among the topics dealt with in the earlier period are rock-art, the Derrynane horn, Skellig Michael and the Viking impact. There is a discussion of the medieval kingdoms and dynasties and a fascinating account of the mapping of the area by William Petty in the seventeenth and John Powell in the eighteenth centuries.

For the later period there are contributions on Alexander Nimmo, Daniel O'Connell and his aunt Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill. The Great Famine in the area is discussed as well

as the Lansdowne estate, focussing on the period of the agency of William Steuart Trench 1849-72. We are reminded that by the beginning of the twentieth century six of the ten telegraph cables linking Europe with North America ran across the Atlantic Ocean from stations at Valentia, Ballinskellings and Waterville. How the description of the area as 'a policeman's paradise' early in 1921 was altered as the struggle for independence grew and developed is also discussed and this section is ended with a discussion of tourism and its impact. The creation of 'the ring of Kerry' as a tourist experience seems to date only to the late-nineteenth century: the first reference to a circuit tour of the peninsula is in 1894 when a combination of rail and coach travel was arranged. A Google internet search for the article in question produced 1.86 million hits, so it must surely rank among the most successful tourist marketing concepts ever invented.

Section four is labelled cultural traditions and deals with sport and food as well as the more conventional areas of music, song, folklore and the Irish language. The famous Puck Fair, the three day festival held in Killorglin each August, is also given its space here. The contemporary situation concerning farming, economic development, planning, energy production and demographic change is discussed in the next section. The Atlas concludes with an examination of the way in which artists have been inspired by and have represented the area. The main artists discussed are Jack B. Yeats, Paul Henry and Pauline Bewick. A short account of the Cill Rialaigh project, where an abandoned village on Bolus Head was restored to provide a retreat for artists, concludes this section and the book.

The high standard of the text is matched and enhanced by the excellent and numerous photographs, maps and plans. Both older historic and newly commissioned maps are included and the range and quality of all the illustrative material provides not only intellectual stimulation but is also a feast for the eyes. The aim of the editors to provide for readers a greater appreciation of the heritage of the Iveragh peninsula has been amply fulfilled and anyone lucky enough to buy this book, extraordinarily good value at the price, will have their experience of the area greatly enhanced when they visit the area as, inevitably, with such an irresistible introduction, they will undoubtedly do, again and again.

Mary Ryan

James S. Donnelly Jr., *Captain Rock: The Irish Agrarian Rebellion of 1821-1824*, The Collins Press, Cork, 2009, xiv + 509pp. ISBN 978-1-84889-010-7. Price €22.99.

The book is an eye-opener for those who might have thought that Ireland's history was relatively uneventful and peaceful between the 1798 rebellion and Catholic emancipation in 1829. On the contrary, over a period of nearly three years in the early 1820s, ninety-three murders in six southern counties were attributed to a rural uprising associated with a possibly mythical figure called Captain Rock, avenger of agrarian injustice.

The Rockite Rebellion had its origins in, and took its name from, a local agrarian disturbance that broke out on the estate of Viscount Courtenay in Newcastle West in Co Limerick. Courtenay, who was flamboyantly gay, lived abroad and ran up huge debts. According to Donnelly, it was probably Courtenay's lack of interest in his 34,000-acre estate that helped light the spark that became the explosion of Rockite violence. Courtenay's popular local agent, Edward Carte, was replaced by an English lawyer, Alexander Hoskins, who set about raising rents and collecting arrears. Hoskins's nineteen-year-old son was brutally attacked by seven men on the road, shot and beaten. He died from his wounds five days later. The incident, in July 1821, marked the start of three

years of unrest and violence, resistance to the tithes and the emergence of the legend of Captain Rock.

In the disturbances that led up to this event, a blacksmith called Patrick Dillane distinguished himself in the art of throwing rocks at Hoskins's hired men and was, as he later testified, 'christened Captain Rock by a schoolmaster ... by pouring a glass of wine on his head'. In the campaign of terror against agents, tithe proctors, 'land grabbers' and their perceived allies that gradually spread through the southwest, Captain Rock would be the name attached to the lurid threatening letters posted on so many doors. Before the fury finally abated, more than 1,000 people had been murdered, mutilated or badly beaten. Its violence was utterly shocking: women and children were murdered, rape was used as a weapon of terror and revenge, and bodies were often mutilated.

By 1821, the government had 4,500 troops in Co Limerick trying to keep the peace in the Rockite heartland. Donnelly, professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin Madison, examines the sometimes contradictory theories behind the violence and unrest of the times. Sectarianism was involved, but there were also Catholics among the victims. Anti-landlordism and anti-English feelings were at work with even well-to-do farmers with big acreages in the Rockites. Migrant labourers from neighbouring counties were also targeted by Rockites.

Perhaps the most telling feature of the Rockite movement is that it weakened when agricultural prices rose in 1824, allowing rural workers to return to bearable levels of subsistence. Surely the agrarian rebellion of the time could have been avoided if allowances had been made for the grain price collapse, the harvest failures in 1816 and 1821, the drought in 1818 and the fever epidemic of 1816-19. Instead, landlords, agents, middlemen, sub-letters and the Anglican clergy failed to give adequate relief to peasants and Captain Rock was the rallying figure for retaliation by an underclass which had nothing left to lose.

In the dramatic succession of major agrarian upheavals that began with the 'Whiteboys' of the early 1760s and persisted for decades thereafter, the adherents of 'Captain Rock' in the early 1820s stand out for a variety of reasons. The Rockites became the most violent agrarian movement that Ireland had yet witnessed; they were especially remarkable for the frequency of their resort to murder and incendiarism as weapons of warfare. They garnered support extending far beyond the swollen ranks of the poor; their movement eventually embraced many of the better-off farmers in the southern region where they exercised an extraordinary sway – most prominently in Limerick and Cork, but also in portions of Kerry, Clare, Tipperary, Waterford, and Kilkenny.

The intensity of their grievances, the frequency of their resort to sensational violence, and their appeal on key issues – especially rents and tithes – across a broad social front presented a nightmarish challenge to Dublin Castle. This challenge prompted a major reorganization of the police, a purging of the local magistracy, and the introduction of a large military force. The revolt was undoubtedly shaped by rational economic factors: the slump in agricultural prices that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars and a series of bad harvests that led to famine in the years before the violence erupted. These tribulations especially affected the young, who made up the bulk of Captain Rock's foot soldiers: Donnelly reckons that 70 per cent were under the age of thirty.

But Donnelly argues convincingly that the full extent of the violence was also fuelled by a millenarian anti-Protestant fervour. Rockism was a religious cult as well as an economic revolt. Though respectable Catholic opinion, led by Daniel O'Connell, did its best to cover up this dimension of the violence, it is clear that the ideology of the rebels

was defined by the prophecies of Pastorini. Signor Pastorini was the pen name of Bishop Charles Walmesley, whose reading of the Book of Revelations led him to predict in the 1770s that God's wrath would be poured out to punish Protestant heretics in 50 years' time. During the famine and fever of 1817, condensed versions of Pastorini's prophecies began to circulate very widely among rural Irish Catholics. The idea that Protestants would be wiped out by 1825 gained a powerful hold. The religious dimension of the violence was not, of course, entirely irrational. Much of the actions carried out by the Rockites were aimed against the levying of tithes by the Established Church on poor farmers who owed it no allegiance and received no service from it.

The Rockites had no military victories, but their campaign of arson and murder did succeed in cowing the local magistrates, stopping the collection of tithes and lowering rents. The intimidation of witnesses and 'informers' created a period of virtual legal immunity. It took large-scale military deployments in the south of Ireland, mass hangings (about 100 prisoners were executed), transportations, the introduction of the brutal Insurrection Act, the suspension of civil liberties, assisted emigration from Cork to Canada and an upturn in the economy to end Captain Rock's three-year reign of terror.

The theories put forward by the author gives plenty material for historians and sociologists to argue over, however, what sets his book apart for non-academic readers are the reports from officials and information gleaned from newspapers, depositions and other sources. The author uses those sources to give the reader an insight into the events at a local level and brings us into a countryside that was rife with atrocities. This book highlights an aspect of Irish history, which has too often been glanced over during a time when other major events were taking place, particularly the catholic emancipation movement by Daniel O'Connell. It is not just for academics but is of interest and very accessible to those who have an interest in this period and in Irish history overall as it adds to the complex tapestry that is Irish history.

Michael Deegan

Conleth Manning, *The History and Archaeology of Glanworth Castle, Co. Cork: Excavations 1982-4*, Stationery Office, Dublin 2009, xiv + 156pp. ISBN 978-1-4064-2440-9. Price €15.

As part of conservation work at Glanworth Castle, excavations were conducted in the early 1980s by the then National Monuments Service under the direction of Conleth Manning, the author of this monograph. The castle overlooks the town, sited as it is on a promontory to the north, beside the river Funshion, a tributary of the Blackwater. It is one of a number of historic structures clustered together for which the town should perhaps be better known and visited. The charming narrow, twelve-arched bridge nearby is considered to date from the early-seventeenth century largely because of its similarity to the bridge of Finnea on the Cavan–Westmeath border which is securely dated to that period. There is a nineteenth-century woollen mill, almost certainly a replacement for an earlier medieval mill, and the church of the medieval Dominican friary. Interestingly the remains of a medieval tower, wall and doorway in the graveyard across the road from the castle are regarded by the author as parts of a medieval glebe house rather than the medieval church as was suggested in the relevant volume of the archaeological survey of Co Cork published in 2000. The medieval town would appear to have been in roughly the same location as the modern one; part of the wall of a medieval church survives at the southern end and its designation in the Ordnance Survey maps as 'Templealour' indicates

a folk memory of an association with lepers. A holy well, north of the castle, beside the river is predictably dedicated to St Dominic while there is also an interesting nineteenth-century obelisk-shaped stone-built shelter.

Little written information survives about the castle. The author suggests that this sparse documentation is due to the general lack of medieval, or indeed later, records for the area and the loss of any papers relating to the main occupants, or at least owners, the Roche family. While there was archaeological evidence to suggest a military role in the wars of the seventeenth century, this also is not documented. Intriguingly the excavation revealed a complicated sequence of building and occupation. Limited evidence of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age was uncovered but disappointingly nothing from the Iron Age or Early Christian periods particularly as one of the main branches of the powerful Eoganacht dynasty took their name from Glennamrach, the Irish name of Glanworth. This lack of any evidence of occupation might, it is suggested, be explained by the use of the site only for assembly or inauguration. The sequence of building at the castle site is divided into four main phases with two sub-phases in the first and third. Basically the original structure on the promontory was a ring work, with a Hall, and what is termed a Hall-keep. There is a useful discussion of the precise meaning and appropriateness of this terminology. While dating is difficult it is suggested that this initial phase could be as early as the late-twelfth century. The gatehouse and curtain wall were added, probably in the late thirteenth century, while further development and alterations took place sometime in the following century. New corner towers were constructed, and a batter and garderobe turret added to the gatehouse, in the sixteenth century when the main entrance to the site was also relocated from the west to the north side of the castle. The final phase, dating largely to the seventeenth century, involved further alterations, the most important of which was the addition of a bakehouse and kitchen, along the west wall of the castle. Occupation of the site continued until the mid-eighteenth century when the buildings went into ruin and thereafter became a quarry for stone.

A short but valuable history of the castle and the area is provided in section one, written by Paul MacCotter for the medieval period and Conleth Manning from c.1600. This is followed by a full description of the excavation, explaining clearly what it revealed about the building sequence and nature of the constructions. Section three outlines, illustrates and discusses the range of finds and also has specialist reports. Medieval pottery is analysed by Clare McCutcheon and post-medieval material by Rosanne Meenan while Joanna Wren writes on the thirty-seven ridge tiles found. The large number of clay pipes is discussed by Joseph Norton, glass artefacts by Siobhán Scully, mortar samples by Sara Pavia and wood charcoal by Phil Austen. The archaeobotanical study by Alys Vaughan-Williams showed that the occupants had a varied diet of bread wheat, hulled barley, oats, broad beans, garden peas, lentils possibly rye while the report on the faunal remains by Pam Crabtree and Kathleen Ryan, indicated how privileged the seventeenth-century inhabitants were, eating beef, pork and mutton mainly but also chicken, geese, game and some fish. Six samples of human skeletal remains, including a third trimester foetus, are discussed by Barra Ó Donnabháin.

This exemplary monograph is written in very clear language throughout, not invariably the case in excavation reports, and the results and the overall significance of the excavation are very well summarised in the discussion section at the end. There are fifty-eight figures and fifty-five plates, which supplement and clarify the text and there is a comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography. While one might raise at least one eyebrow that it has taken a quarter of a century for the results to be made available, given the

failure to publish so many excavations and the excellent quality of the finished product it would be churlish to labour this point. Indeed it has to be admitted that the delay has had some positive elements in that the analysis and interpretation has benefitted through being able to be placed in the context of the research and insights gained in the years since the excavation was conducted.

Liam Irwin

Diane Hodnett, *The Metal Mines of West Cork*, Trevithick Society Penryn, Cornwall 2010, 288pp. ISBN 978-0-904040-83-8. Price €16.99.

This pioneering study of the history of mining in the south-west Cork area provides a valuable and fascinating insight into this neglected field of study. A total of more than twenty abandoned mines in the region were discovered, surveyed and photographed and the author's warning to readers about the dangerous condition of most of them illustrates her own dedication to the survey that she undertook. Documentary evidence for the history and operation of the mines is sparse – only the Berehaven mines in the Allihies area have any consistent records, where the account books survive. A fine museum, which was opened in 2007 in Allihies, now traces the long history of mining in that region. It is housed, appropriately in a former Methodist church erected for the Cornish miners who came to work in the mines in the early-nineteenth century.

While there is abundant evidence of prehistoric activity during the Bronze Age, modern copper mining in West Cork began in 1812 and reached its greatest period of production from the 1840s to the 1860s. It gradually began to decline in the later-nineteenth century and eventually ceased entirely in the twentieth century. In a great many of the mines, only the visible ore was exploited as this was relatively simple and inexpensive to do, and they were then abandoned as there was an unwillingness or inability to invest sufficient money to undertake more extensive exploration. All the mines were managed by men from Cornwall, the nearest area with relevant expertise. Among the more significant were members of the Reed and Thomas families. Ironically we know far more about the Cornish operators, than the native Irish workers whose details were never recorded. They were of course mainly local people and included many women as well as young boys and girls.

The author provides a valuable introduction which outlines the techniques of copper extraction and links it to the surviving structures and remains in the landscape. The early mining shafts were small, rectangular excavations, only about six feet by four feet, lined with wooden planks to prevent subsidence. They were relatively shallow, at most about sixty feet deep. The ore was raised in metal buckets by windlasses, initially worked by men but later by horses. Eventually the mines became deeper, the shafts circular in shape. This led to flooding and the necessity to pump out the water, originally by water-wheel driven pumps but later large engine-houses were erected where steam-driven pumping engines were utilised. Access to the mines was normally by ladders fixed to the shaft walls.

The book is divided into separate chapters for each of the mining areas. Comprehensive details of the location, nature and surviving features are provided. There are excellent photographs, maps and drawings. Extensive use has also been made of a journal, *The Mining Journal and Railway Gazette*. This was first published in 1835 and had a wide circulation in all mining areas, including England, Wales, Australia and South America. Published each week, it was used by mining companies to advertise and seek investment

from shareholders. Exaggeration of potential returns and hyperbole were common features of such promotion. Inevitably it also published letters from frustrated investors who had lost their money when mines failed, as so many eventually did. However its main value is the record it contains of the names of directors, accounts of company meetings and miscellaneous notices. It also published reports on individual mines by the managers which the author has used very effectively to provide a narrative of the West Cork operations.

Diane Hodnett, is Cornish, born in the former mining village of Troon and comes from a family with a long tradition of copper and tin mining. She has lived in Limerick for many years, having moved here with her husband, a professor at the University of Limerick. Now retired, he has acted as a research assistant and keen supporter of his wife during the long and arduous period of research, surveying and writing of this book. Paddy O'Sullivan, a noted Cork marine historian, did most of the dangerous underground surveying and also examined the sites from the sea. In addition he took most of the high quality photographs in the book, which is published by the Trevithick Society for the study of Cornish industrial archaeology and history. The excellent design, layout and quality of the book appropriately matches the excellent research and hard work of the author who is to be congratulated for her dedication and enthusiasm in providing this fascinating insight into a largely forgotten aspect of Ireland's industrial history.

Liam Irwin

Geraldine Tallon (ed.), *Court of Claims: Submissions and Evidence, 1663*, Irish Manuscripts Commission, Dublin, 2006, 688pp. ISBN 1 874280 80 0 Price €65.

After the regime of Oliver Cromwell collapsed and the monarchy was restored in England and Ireland under King Charles II in 1660, it was widely expected that the Cromwellian plantation would be reversed. Irish Catholics in particular, who had been loyal to Charles I during the English Civil War, confidently hoped that their estates would be returned to them. That this would not happen did not become clear until the mid 1660s and in the early years of that decade there was still a possibility that it might happen. As part of the process to establish who might be entitled to recover forfeited land a Court of Claims was set up in 1663. As its name suggests, it was to hear claims from those who had suffered as a result of their support of the monarchy in the 1640s or because of their Catholic religion. If it judged such a person to be innocent, this would be the first, essential, step towards recovery of their lands.

The seven members of the court were all from England and heard cases from January to August 1663 when the proceedings were prematurely ended due to a combination of factors. Far more people than had been anticipated made claims; of those who did, most were successful and the majority were Catholics; this led to Protestant fears and outrage which threatened the stability of Irish politics and aroused fear in England. Despite its limited output, the operation of the court is an important source for the history of the period. A manuscript containing submissions and evidence to the Court survives in the Armagh Public Library and it has now been transcribed, edited and published. It contains over 900 items, each of which varies quite a lot in size and in the information provided. Some entries just give a name and address while others give valuable details. These include information on the land in dispute, the claimants and those occupying the land and the argument on which the claim is based. Sometimes the background history to the disputed ownership is sketched.

There is also much information of value to family historians and genealogists. Extracts from official documents, which were used to support the claim, are also included and these provide further useful information about individuals and their activities particularly during the 1640s. However when it comes to the actual decisions made by the Court, there is much less information with only about a hundred of these recorded. However an abstract of the decrees of the Court survives in a manuscript in the British Library and they were also published in the nineteenth century before their destruction in 1922 when the Public Record Office in the Four Courts was blown up.

There is also a valuable introduction by the late historian J.G. Simms which expertly provides the background and context and a guide for use and analysis of the material. He was the first modern historian to use the manuscript and it was he who suggested that the Irish Manuscript Commission should consider publishing it. He died in 1979 and during the 1980s Geraldine Tallon, then working in the School of Archives in UCD, transcribed it and compiled the indices. Her work has now finally been published. Apart from making the information accessible in printed form and more easily read, there is the major advantage of both an index of personal names and a separate one of place names.

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