

① 24/3/05

**Irish Latin American Research Fund**  
**Application Form**

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Member of the Faculty?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, rank: Associate Professor
(OR) Student?	Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Principal advisor or thesis director:
(OR) Independent Scholar?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Intended Product	Thesis <input type="checkbox"/> Dissertation <input type="checkbox"/> Book <input type="checkbox"/> Article <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (describe)
Date degree expected or date of project completion	December 2005
Title or research topic (please include the time period being studied):	"Jaime O'Daly: Enlightened Planter-Administrator in Late Bourbon Puerto Rico, 1776-1826"  Abstract: this project will attempt to trace the social and economic experiences of a dynamic Irish immigrant in Puerto Rico noted for his role in the rise of commercial agriculture during the late 18th century and first decades of the 19th.
How did you learn about this research grant opportunity? (Please be specific)	I received an email from H-Caribbean, a discussion group of H-LatAm
Proposed field trip: purpose, destination, dates of travel and proposed duration of stay (may be changed)	I would like to visit the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain to examine several legajos with data on Jaime O'Daly. My trip would be for about 3-4 weeks.
Estimate of actual expenses; please provide details of air, automobile, bus, rail, or other expenses and local accommodations (please add an itemized budget):	The roundtrip fare from Detroit to Seville, Spain will cost about \$1300; food and board at a private residence in Barrio Santa Cruz should come up to about \$700; a taxi to and from airport and Barrio Santa Cruz would cost about \$25.00 or \$50 both ways; bus fare and photocopy costs would total \$100-\$160.
Amount of grant support requested (in Euros)	\$1,000

Jaime O'Daly: Enlightened Planter-Administrator  
in Late Bourbon Puerto Rico, 1776-1829

A Grant Application Submitted to the Irish Latin American Research Fund  
The Irish Argentine Historical Society  
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By

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**Jaime O'Daly: Enlightened Planter-Administrator  
in Late Bourbon Puerto Rico, 1776-1829**

Born in Galway, Ireland in the latter part of the 1730's, James (Jaime) O'Daly likely belonged to an ancient Catholic gentry lineage. In the tradition of the Wild Geese, he immigrated to Cádiz, Spain in the early 1760's, and subsequently to the Dutch Caribbean. In 1772, he helped refit a Spanish flota that had capsized near the British-controlled island colony of Anguilla. To compensate O'Daly, the Spanish Crown authorized him to export a fixed quantity of agricultural products from Puerto Rico. Once on the island, O'Daly applied for a permit to stay permanently citing, among other reasons, his eagerness to promote commercial agriculture on his own or by lending a hand at his brother, Tomás (Thomas) O'Daly's recently-established sugar plantation. Although the Crown granted Jaime a two-year temporary residential permit in 1775, he remained in Puerto Rico until his death in 1826. As one of the island's leading entrepreneurs, he came to embody the commercial-agrarian revitalization of the Hispanic Caribbean during the late Bourbon reforms. By 1784, he was in possession of a flourishing sugar plantation (known as Hacienda San Patricio), a large hato (cattle ranch) comprised of 10 caballerías (over 2,000 acres) in the partido of Loíza, and a spacious house in San Juan valued at 11,000 pesos.

Except for a short dated article on his role in the expansion of the tobacco industry, little is known of this colorful Irish immigrant who embraced Puerto Rico as his new home. Yet, fragmented bits and pieces that I uncovered at Seville's Archivo General de Indias (AGI hereafter) showed Jaime to be more than a pioneer tobacco farmer. He was one of the most informed, articulate, innovative, politically savvy, and well-connected persons of his day. His transatlantic network extended from Puerto Rico to the non-Hispanic Caribbean, Europe, and the USA. His brother Tomás followed Field Marshall Alexandro O'Reilly on his mission to Cuba and Puerto Rico following the 1762 British occupation of Havana. As head of the fortification works in San Juan, Tomás revamped the capital's outdated defense infrastructure. The Spanish Crown named Jaime Director of the Real Compañía de Tabacos. An uncle, Pedro O'Daly served in the Hibernia Regiment in Spain and a close relative, Timoteo O'Daly, died heroically in the battle of Pensacola [Florida] when Spanish forces fought the British during the American Revolutionary War. After Tomás passed away around 1781, Jaime assumed custody of his

Creole nephew Demetrio, who became the Puerto Rican diputado to the Spanish Cortes and a staunch advocate for constitutional rule.

Although Jaime cultivated mutually beneficial relations with key members of Puerto Rico's lettered, colonial elite, he also attracted his share of detractors. He was repeatedly accused of committing fraud, charges that he vigorously and consistently denied. A minority who harbored nativistic or xenophobic inclinations raised questions about his foreign-born status and alleged disloyalty over and over again. Governor Ramón de Castro even threw him in jail and ordered his expulsion for allegedly providing intelligence to the enemy when the British unsuccessfully tried to wrest Puerto Rico from Spain in early 1797. However, the Spanish Crown promptly intervened, and Jaime was released and exonerated. Jaime's ability to fend off accusations and personal attacks enhanced his growing reputation as a resourceful, privileged "extranjero." Still and all, in 1793 critics and political opponents managed to block his nomination to the post of regidor in the San Juan cabildo.

I am applying for a grant from the Irish Latin American Research Fund to help subsidize a research trip to Seville, Spain this year in order to examine primary documents on Jaime O'Daly available at the AGI. The information I sketched out above originates from 4 representations found in the Sección Audiencia de Santo Domingo addressed to the Spanish Crown in 1775, 1776, 1784 and 1786 to legalize his stay in Puerto Rico. I found those records while on a two-month research trip at AGI for a different project. At that time, I identified but did not annotate or photocopy additional materials about Jaime's agricultural, commercial, and administrative activities. I also would like to expand my search to other legajos that I have not yet consulted in the secciones Indiferente General, Escribanía de Cámara, and the digitalized Ultramar and Estado series from the Archivo Histórico Nacional, also available at AGI. Once I have collected the AGI data, I plan to visit Puerto Rico's Archivo General for two weeks to examine the protocolos notariales available for San Juan and Loíza to trace Jaime's economic transactions surrounding the founding, maintenance, financing, and output of his Hacienda San Patricio. Hopefully, these sources would also yield valuable new insights about his links to local colonial officials, planters, merchants, and the local laboring population.

Methodologically, I plan to use a variation of the historical technique of prosopography, or collective biography, to place the story of Jaime O'Daly in the larger context of the landholding and commercial developments shaping Puerto Rican society during the late Bourbon

reform era. In carrying this project, I seek to stimulate further research on Irish immigration in the Spanish American colonial periphery, particularly in the traditionally neglected region of the Hispanic Caribbean. The findings would be disseminated widely in publications sponsored by IAHS, public lectures, conferences (such as the annual meetings of the Association of Caribbean Historians, Caribbean Studies Association, Latin American Studies Association, Conference on Latin American History, Puerto Rican Studies Association) and/or other suitable fora.

### Select Bibliography

- Becrman, Eric, "Alexander O'Reilly: An Irish Soldier in the Service of Spain," Irish Sword 15 (1982): 101-104. [provides biographical data on O'Reilly]
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Arturo O'Neill: first governor of West Florida during the Second Spanish Period." Florida Historical Quarterly 60: 1 (1981): 29-41. [discusses Timoteo O'Daly at Pensacola]
- Begoña Villar García, María, La Emigración Irlandesa en el Siglo XVIII. Málaga, Spain: Universidad de Málaga, 2000. [surveys Irish immigration into Spain, including the O'Reillys, O'Neills, Powers, and others linked to O'Daly by business or family ties]
- China, Jorge L., "The Spanish Immigrant Joseph Martín de Fuentes: A Self-Styled Reformer, Imperial Watchdog, and Nativist in Puerto Rico at the end of the Eighteenth Century." Revista Mexicana del Caribe 6:12 (2001): 85-109. [discusses Fuentes' clashes with O'Daly]
- Fergus, Howard A., "Montserrat 'Colony of Ireland': The Myth and the Reality." Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review 70: 230 (1981): 330-38. [this island was a source of Irish immigration into Puerto Rico]
- Lario de Oñate, María del Carmen, La Colonia Mercantil Británica en Cádiz a finales del Siglo XVIII. Cádiz, Spain: Universidad de Cádiz, 2000. [contains excellent information on Irish immigrants and their descendants engaged in business in Cádiz who dealt with O'Daly]
- Murphy, W. S., "The Irish Brigade of Spain at the capture of Pensacola, 1781." Florida Historical Quarterly 38:3 (1960): 216-225. [mentions several persons of Irish descent--O'Neill, O'Daly, O'Reilly--with ties to Puerto Rico]
- Torres [Ramírez] Bibiano, Alejandro O'Reilly en las Indias. Sevilla, Spain: Escuela de Estudios Hispano Americanos, 1969. [traces O'Reilly's military mission in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Louisiana]
- \_\_\_\_\_, "D. Jaime O'Daly: Propulsor del Cultivo del Tabaco en Puerto Rico," Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña 5:15 (1962): 49-52. [concentrates on O'Daly's role in the Real Compañía de Tabacos]