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Irish Soldiers and Military Conflicts in Spain, Latin America and the Caribbean Guest Editor: Karen Racine

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Irish Soldiers in Spain and Latin America: An Introduction

By Karen Racine (1)
Guest Editor

Irish soldiers have a long history of seeking service in foreign lands. Known collectively and colloquially as the “Wild Geese”, they constitute a distinct subset of the Irish emigrant and diasporic communities. Irish soldiers have fought in all continental European wars, sometimes as mercenaries for hire, and other times as true believers in the service of Catholic monarchs against Protestant foes. They were present in the Americas too, dating from the first voyages that accompanied the explorers and conquistadors in the sixteenth century and continuing all the way up to the present with rumours of connections between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (2).

In fact, Irish soldiers have had a significant presence throughout the histories of Spain and Latin America. The historian Gráinne Henry has conducted an excellent case study of approximately 10,000 Irish troops who served in Spanish Flanders at the time of the great Armada. (3) This episode is significant, and it underscores the longstanding connection between Irish soldiers abroad and the development of national identity at home, the persistence of a militant strain of Counter-Reformation Catholicism in their world view, and the close connection between Ireland and the Spanish-speaking world. Another Irishman, William Lamport of County Wexford, was a solitary, quixotic figure who fought in the continental wars and then travelled to Mexico in 1659 where he tried to set himself up as an independent king. In the latter decades of the eighteenth century, Alejandro O'Reilly was a military commander who dominated Cuba, Florida and Louisiana while it was under Spanish control, and Ambrosio O'Higgins held a similar command post in Chile and Peru.

The presence of Irish soldiers in Spain and Latin America continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As Oisín Breatnach's article shows, both the French and Spanish armies had Irish soldiers who faced each other across enemy lines during the Peninsular War. Matthew Brown and Enrique Rodríguez have both written extensively on the activities of the British and Irish Legions in the Spanish American wars for independence and have provided biographical studies for this collection. Tom Byrne extends the story of the Irish role in Latin America southward, in his discussion of the 1806 invasions of the River Plate and Brazilian territories. His account reminds us of the famous Admiral William Brown of County Mayo who served the Argentine navy so memorably in that era.

Mexicans fondly recall the famous Saint Patrick's Battalion (known as the Batallón San Patricio), which fought in five major battles during the United States-Mexican War (1846-1848), and whose experiences have gone on to inspire romantic novels, films, songs, poems and, more recently, serious historical scholarship. The unit began as a small group called the San Patricio Company, jokingly called the 'Red Guards' or colorados, a reference to their red hair. Their leader was a career soldier from Galway named John Riley, or Seán O'Raghailigh, who brought together approximately 200 men under a green silk banner of his own design. The flag had a shamrock, harp and Mexican crest on one side, and the figure of St Patrick on the other, nicely blending Irish and Aztec symbolism with the incorporation of a serpent. Irish-descended deserters from the US military comprised 40% of the San Patricios, which was finally raised to full battalion status only in 1848, at a late stage of the war. Patrick Dalton, James O'Leary,

Matthew Doyle, Francis O'Connor and Henry Hudson all distinguished themselves in the service of the Mexican nation. In a conflict notable for its viciousness, the San Patricios saw a lot of action. (4) They were present at the disastrous Battle of Monterrey (21-24 September 1846), the Battle of Buena Vista (22 February 1847) and the infamous Battle of Cerro Gordo (12-18 April 1847), before being completely routed at Churubusco on 20 August 1847. A plaque to their memory has been erected in Mexico City's plaza San Jacinto in San Ángel with the inscription "In memory of the Irish soldiers of the heroic St Patrick's Battalion, martyrs who gave their lives for the Mexican cause during the unjust American invasion of 1847." Moving ceremonies in their honour are still held there twice a year, one on St. Patrick's day, and the other in September to mark the date when so many were executed by vengeful American forces. (5)

The story of Miss Eliza Lynch, the fiery Irish beauty who was the lover of President Francisco Solano López during the Paraguayan War (1865-1870) is the stuff of legend, and is often retold for its exotic and romantic qualities. She was born in Cork in 1835 and spent her life abroad attached to various military men and advising them during times of war. Fleeing the famine in her impoverished homeland, the teenaged Lynch married a French military surgeon and trailed after him when he was posted to a garrison in North Africa. Once back in France, she met Francisco Solano López, a dashing young South American soldier who was training with the Imperial forces, and the two struck up a scandalous and very public affair. A pregnant Lynch returned with young Solano López to Paraguay in 1854 where they lived together openly and she bore him five children. (6) When Francisco Solano López succeeded his father as president in 1862, Eliza Lynch assumed the position of unofficial First Lady. She was at his side throughout much of the Paraguayan War, even accompanying him to the front and participating in military decisions; she has often been blamed for ordering some of the more violent reprisals, including the massacre of hundreds of opponents at Humaitá and San Fernando. Their story has often been retold by historians and novelists alike, not just for its

drama and intrigue, but also because Eliza Lynch was a strong female presence in a very male-dominated and militaristic environment. (7) In this volume, Michael Kenneth Huner recounts a related story of the Irish-American soldier-diplomat Martin Thomas McMahon, who encountered Madama Lynch during his own service in Paraguay.

The long and close connections between Irish and Spanish national events were brought to the fore during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). An estimated nine hundred Irishmen fought in this ideologically-charged conflict, and they could be found on both sides of the bitter divide. In fact, one scholar has claimed that the Spanish Civil War even served as a prolongation, or proxy, or extension of an ongoing Irish civil war; to underscore this point, he notes that one Irish company in the service of the republicans in Spain named itself after James Connolly, who was executed for his participation in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916. (8) The Irish Christian Front used conditions in Spain as a bludgeon to attack Prime Minister Eamon de Valera's government's neutrality and to score points with the populist right-wing at home; oddly, the Irish Catholic church advocated much more strongly for Franco than did its Spanish counterpart. Similarly, the Irish left also drew inspiration and succour from the battle being fought by republicans in Spain. The Irish serving in both the republican and the fascist forces were plagued by factions and strong personalities. Frank Ryan had been a member of the Irish Republican Army and became an important figure among the approximately two hundred men who joined the republican International Brigade and went on to further renown; General Eoin O'Duffy recruited and led an Irish Brigade of seven hundred or so men who fought alongside Generalísimo Francisco Franco and the fascists before returning home in ignominy in 1937. Irish newspapers regularly carried detailed stories about the cruelties and humiliations being visited on Spanish priests and the desecration of churches in order to whip up anti-republican sentiment. Because of the longstanding cultural connections between Ireland and Spain, it is clear that the Spanish

Civil War held profound meaning for the island's domestic politics as well.

This special issue of *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America* is devoted to the theme of Irish soldiers who served in Spain and Latin America at various points in time. The authors form a diverse group and have sought to combine high-quality scholarship with humane storytelling. For

those readers who might wish to pursue additional reading about the multi-faceted experiences of Irish soldiers abroad, I have compiled the following bibliography.

Karen Racine

Notes

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2. Jeremy McDermott, "IRA influence in FARC Attack" (9 May 2005), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4528109.stm>
3. Gráinne Henry, *The Irish Military Community in Spanish Flanders 1586-1621* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992).
4. Robert Ryal Miller, "Los san patricios en la guerra de 1847," *Historia Mexicana* 47:2 (1997), p. 362.
5. Miller, "Los San Patricios", p. 376.
6. Edmundo Murray, "Santa o cortesana?" *Southern Cross* 135:5957 (February 2010). Web edition < <http://tsc.com.ar/notacomp.php?id=632> >
7. See her own letters published as: Eliza Alicia Lynch, *Exposición y protesta* (Asunción: Fundación Cultural Republicana, 1987). Biographies of varying quality include: Nigel Cawthorne, *The Empress of South America* (London: Arrow Books, 2003); Fernando Baptista, *Elisa Lynch, mulher do mundo e da guerra* (São Paulo: Civilização Brasileira em convênio com o Instituto Nacional do Livro, Fundação Nacional Pró-Memória, 1987), William E Barrett, *Woman on Horseback: The Biography of Francisco López and Eliza Lynch* (London: Peter Davies, 1938).
8. Rémi Skoutelsky, *Novedad en el frente: las brigadas internacionales en la guerra civil* (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 2006), pp. 152, 196.

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British Army, Irish Soldiers The 1806 Invasion of Buenos Aires

By Thomas Byrne (1)

Abstract

In June 1806, British troops disembarked from a small squadron of ships moored in the River Plate and made ready to attack Buenos Aires. The commanding naval officer of the flotilla was Commodore Sir Home Riggs Popham (1762-1820), a man from an Anglo-Irish family. Heading the land forces, and destined to be the first British Governor in South America if the attempt succeeded, was Brigadier General William Carr Beresford (1768-1854), an illegitimate son of the first marquess of Waterford in the Irish peerage. A high proportion of the soldiers onshore were also Irishmen. Historians have described the British invasion of 1806-1807 as forming the first stage of Argentinean-British relations and also of establishing the first tentative elements of an Irish community in Argentina. In this article, Thomas Byrne examines the events that highlight the substantial Irish involvement in the 1806 invasion, and explains the significance of this period in the context of Irish relations with South America.

On 21 September 1806, eight wagons trundled into London under military escort. Cheering crowds watched from the streets while some brave souls watched from windows overhead. Blue silk banners emblazoned with 'Buenos Aires, Popham, Beresford, Victory' in gold thread were presented to the column in St James Square. On the front of each wagon was painted the word 'Treasure'. Later that day over a million dollars in Spanish gold and silver was deposited in the vaults of the Bank of England. Many aspects of the history of British attempts to capture Buenos Aires in 1806-1807 seem more resonant of historical fiction than historical fact, perhaps none more so than this victory procession. A cavalcade of treasure-laden wagons passing through packed London streets evokes a scene from the novels of C.S. Forester's *Horatio Hornblower* or Bernard Cornwell's *Richard Sharpe* novels. Far from being fictional, however, this latter-day Roman triumph of captured booty really occurred and was documented in the sober *Times* of London newspaper. Unfortunately, however, a faraway disaster had already overtaken this triumph and ruined the reputation of the man largely responsible for initiating the entire enterprise, Anglo-Irishman Commodore Home Riggs Popham (1762-1820).

Popham came from a family established in Bandon, County Cork, Ireland. Confusion has attended descriptions of the exact place of his

birth – some sources cited Gibraltar or Morocco, but his obituary in *The Gentleman's Magazine* identified Ireland. Hugh Popham's biography gives his ancestor's birthplace as Gibraltar, explaining that while Joseph Popham, Home's father, was British consul in Tetuan, Morocco, his wife and family was based in Gibraltar at the time of the boy's birth. Home Popham joined the Royal Navy in February 1778 – his career was marked by innovation, celebrity and not a little controversy. Popham carried out a number of well received hydrographical surveys in the East Indies and invented a naval signalling system which involved the use of flags. Less rarefied aspects to his character came to the fore when he was accused of smuggling contraband from India. He also became very skilled in planning and carrying out amphibious operations with British land forces against Napoleon's French armies and continental allies.

An operation in 1801 saw the by-now Captain Popham transport a British army commanded by Scotsman General David Baird (1759-1829) from Jeddah on the Arabian coast across the Red Sea to Egypt. Baird made the two-week journey aboard Popham's flagship *Romney*, during which the two men established a close rapport – a fact which is of central importance in explaining later actions and decisions by both men. Once landed, Baird's army was part of the epic march across the Egyptian desert to Cairo.

Colonel William Carr Beresford (1768-1854), another Anglo-Irishman, and Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Auchmuty (1758-1822), an American loyalist, also featured prominently in this expedition and both would also be involved in the later attempt on Buenos Aires.

Napoleon's strategy to sever Britain's lines of communication with India, which was described by the British consul as 'the masterkey to all the trading nations of the earth,' was scuppered by British victories on land and at sea. In Europe, however, France was becoming increasingly dominant. Napoleon's series of battlefield victories seemed unstoppable. Spain's formal declaration of war against Britain in 1805 increased the pressure still further. However it also offered a promising new avenue of attack. Spain's huge South American empire was viewed as a source of immense wealth, if free trade could be established and South American markets opened up. Equally, it was suggested that much of the £20 million of exports from South America each year passed into French hands. A military blow against Spanish America would thus also be a blow to France economically. This would be a vulnerability that Britain could and - some voices suggested forcefully - should exploit.

One of the most prominent voices promoting British intervention in South America was Francisco de Miranda (1750-1816). Born in Venezuela, originally an officer in the Spanish army, later accused of treason, he renounced his Spanish allegiance and travelled widely to promote his ideas for a South American empire independent of Spain. Having unsuccessfully sought financial and military support in the United States and France, he spent a number of similarly unprofitable years in London trying to persuade the British government of the righteousness and utility of his schemes. In 1803, he met Home Popham and discovered in him what seemed to be a kindred spirit. This comparison may not be wholly positive; a recent historian sums the situation up well by describing Miranda as 'a shallow unscrupulous adventurer, not wholly innocent of knavery', and goes on to state that 'Popham's character at bottom perhaps differed not very greatly from Miranda.' The two would-be liberators worked

on a series of memoranda advocating the philosophical, political and practical reasons in favour of independence for South America. Popham's connections among the merchant and political communities in London and the changed geopolitical situation ensured a more receptive hearing of Miranda's scheme. Helpful too was the fact that William Pitt the Younger was back in power as Prime Minister of a Tory administration with Henry Dundas (1742-1811), Lord Melville, as one of his most influential cabinet members. Dundas had long been a supporter of intervention in Spanish America but had been counterbalanced previously by the scepticism of William Wyndham Grenville (1759-1834), Lord Grenville, Pitt's cousin and close advisor. Grenville was now in opposition in 1804, largely due to his support for political rights for Catholics in Ireland, and Melville thus had renewed hopes of persuading Pitt to support a South American expedition.

By 1804, despite another brush with the naval authorities and the law, due to 'enormous and unnecessary expenditure while in India', Popham had become a Tory MP for the Isle of Wight. He had been in contact with William Huskisson (1784-1844), Joint Secretary to the Treasury in Pitt's 1804 government, since the latter had been Under-Secretary of the Navy in the 1790s. Popham had also been cultivated by Melville (and most likely vice versa) and Nicholas Vansittart (1766-1851), one of Miranda's closest friends in England. Melville, Huskisson and Vansittart had constituted a South American lobby since the late 1790s - even drawing up a secret memorandum proposing a British expedition to the continent in 1796, and recommending the seizure of Buenos Aires 'because little resistance was likely, it was fertile green and healthy, likely to seek British protection and [...] would form one of the most productive and improvable colonies in the world.' Popham, an experienced naval officer who was held in high esteem by the army, politically reliable and commercially minded, seemed the ideal man to lead the enterprise. Pitt met Melville, Miranda and Popham in October 1804 to discuss the possibility of sending an expedition to South America. The trio disclaimed any interest in conquest - emphasising that 'the sole objective

would be to secure independence for the Latin Americans' and commercial opportunities for Britain. Pitt also received other representations to undertake a South American strategy from merchant and traveller William Jacob (1761/2-1851) and Captain Charles Herbert, who urged that the French be forestalled and a death blow be struck to Spanish American power (Gallo 2001: 30-31). Pitt was not moved enough by all the entreaties to sanction immediate action, citing Russian hopes to detach Spain from France diplomatically and the need to await the outcome of more conventional military challenges to Napoleon. Popham however, took this to mean that Pitt and the government would be in favour of an attack on South America once these – perhaps temporary - obstacles had been resolved.

Meanwhile, a more immediate French threat was evident in Africa. With the Batavian Republic now allied with France, the Dutch Cape of Good Hope colony presented a very real danger to British communications with India. Pitt's government decided to send Sir David Baird and a 6,654-man force to seize the territory; Commodore Home Riggs Popham was selected to command the fleet. It is not known whether it occurred to anyone in government that Buenos Aires and the River Plate Viceroyalty might present a too-tempting target to the Irishman, but Popham saw the opportunity very clearly. Having helped to take the Cape Colony with little difficulty, and receiving the recent news of Napoleon's decisive victories at Ulm and Austerlitz, Popham set about convincing Baird that an expedition to Buenos Aires without delay would be what Pitt would want in these changed circumstances. As described earlier, Baird and Popham had developed a close relationship since their time aboard ship in the Egyptian campaign of 1801. Now he explained to his old colleague that intervention in the River Plate would 'add lustre to his Majesty's arms, distress our enemies and open a most beneficial trade for Britain.' He also claimed to have information from Buenos Aires 'on the defenceless state of the River Plate' from an American merchant ship's captain, Thomas Waine; other sources allege that another motive may have spurred Popham on – information from the same merchant that a large

consignment of bullion and specie was at Buenos Aires awaiting shipment to Spain. Popham was in dire straits financially at this point in his career, burdened by debts relating to an unsuccessful trading venture; he may also have owed money to William White, another American merchant resident in Buenos Aires. The *Morning Star* newspaper later claimed that Baird was apparently promised two-thirds of the prize money in return for supplying the troops for the expedition.

In any event, Popham was able to persuade Baird that an expedition was possible, even permissible, and to give him 1,400 soldiers in total, some 844 from the 71st Regiment; he had threatened to mount the expedition without them in any case. Again harking back to the Egyptian campaign, fellow Irishman Brigadier General William Carr Beresford was given command of the troops, having 'particularly requested the appointment.' His second-in-command was Lieutenant Colonel Denis Pack (1772-1823), yet another Irishman. Peter Pyne also argues convincingly that although the 71st Regiment was notionally a Scottish unit, the rank-and-file had become largely Irish after many years garrisoned in the west of Ireland. Indeed, the entire enterprise might be termed the Anglo-Irish invasion of Buenos Aires with some justification.

The small fleet of four ships, one gun brig and four transports, set off on the voyage west on the 14 April 1806. After Popham had again worked his persuasive talents on the British governor of the St Helena and added another 200 troops, the squadron arrived off Buenos Aires on 25 June. The Spanish governor in Buenos Aires, Rafael de Sobremonte (1745-1827), had few troops at his disposal and those that were available were largely untrained and badly-equipped, despite the governor's many and repeated pleas to Spain for assistance. To add to Sobremonte's woes, summer weather had dried the coastal marshes that usually acted as a natural defensive barrier blocking passage inland from the shore. Beresford's British troops made rapid progress, dispersing the meagre Spanish forces available. Sobremonte retreated into the interior of the province, taking the royal treasury with him. Though the

Governor was just following regulations that had been laid down in case of invasion, the populace of Buenos Aires quickly condemned him as a coward and he thereafter languished as a rather irrelevant figure. On the 27 June 1806, Buenos Aires, with its population of 40,000, surrendered to Beresford's British force of 1,600 soldiers, many of whom were Irish. Historian Ian Fletcher calls this a remarkable achievement considering the numbers involved, however the porteños' (residents of Buenos Aires) pride had been wounded and any complacency on the part of victorious army was ill-advised.

Popham ordered that a squad be sent inland immediately in pursuit of the governor and the royal treasury. Thirteen days later it was brought back to Buenos Aires, and on 16 July Beresford wrote to London informing the government that 1,086,208 dollars were being dispatched back to England. An already-shocked citizenry was decidedly unimpressed by the sight of their money being shipped abroad – Ian Fletcher has gone so far as to describe this as an 'act of almost Elizabethan piracy.' The humiliation was exacerbated further when Beresford refused to clarify what exactly were the British intentions. To a large degree this was because he operating without any clear orders. Having captured the city, it seemed neither Popham nor Beresford had a clear idea of what to do next. Would the city, and ultimately the viceroyalty, be assisted in declaring its independence? Did the British intend to place the area under their protection as the newest of King George's imperial possessions?

The maverick and improvisational nature of the enterprise now rebounded to the detriment of the British commanders and troops. Resentment and hostility grew amongst all sections of Buenos Aires society. Even those disposed to favour a break with Spain (in the main creoles – those born in South America but of Spanish heritage; in an interesting comparison, Popham and Beresford could also perhaps be considered as creoles themselves, born in Ireland or to Irish-based families but with English heritage) grew restive as they wondered whether the British would long remain in the colony. What would the future hold for anyone who supported the British if and when Spanish

control was re-established? Popham seemed to have lost interest in affairs onshore by this stage and in the absence of clear and definite information from Beresford, pragmatism and patriotism became motivations operating hand-in-hand.

Dithering, prevarication and admonishments to be patient while waiting for a response from London achieved nothing – soon the British soldiers were being viewed as a force of occupation. In an eerie precursor of recent events in Iraq, an expedition which set out proclaiming an interest in 'liberation' now found itself the target of increasingly patriotic resistance. Verbal assaults soon gave way to physical attacks in the city. Shadowy groups began to plan more elaborate measures, including exploding barrels of gunpowder in the cellar beneath the main British quarters. The remnants of the regular Spanish forces also began to revitalise around the leadership of Santiago de Liniers (1753-1810), a French émigré and Spanish naval officer. Martín de Pueyrredón (1776-1850), whose mother was of Irish descent, organised an irregular force of horsemen on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. Beresford repulsed an attack by this group but noted that the situation was deteriorating rapidly; he and his opponents both realised that 1,600 soldiers could not hold the city in the face of a hostile populace. Beresford intended to evacuate his force on 10 August but heavy rain prevented the plan being put into action. Two days later, Liniers' main army joined with rebels from within the city. Facing a combined opposing force of 10,000 men, Beresford surrendered at noon on 12 August 1806.

The original conditions of surrender specified that the captured British troops would be allowed to re-embark and sail home. However voices within the Buenos Aires cabildo (municipal council) feared that British reinforcements were on their way. Indeed they were; General John Whitelocke and 6,000 men eventually assaulted Buenos Aires again in July 1807. This second expedition proved to be an almost complete fiasco, with newly-raised and better-trained local militia units resoundingly defeating the British force, which again included hundreds of Irishmen in the 87th and 88th

regiments. Whitelocke was later courtmartialled and expelled from the army. It was argued that the captured soldiers should be held as prisoners of war. To prevent escape they were moved inland and dispersed throughout the provinces.

For officers this was a comfortable existence – riding, hunting and cricket all featured in the daily prison routine. Other ranks also found the lifestyle and possibilities attractive. Peter Pyne has demonstrated that between desertions, defections and those prisoners who opted to remain behind after British prisoners had been formally repatriated in 1808, some hundreds of soldiers from the original expedition settled in Argentina; he estimates that of this group, some 250-300 were Irishmen. Pyne also argues that although a distinctively Irish community did not form at this time, partly because of the absence of Irish women, some members of this group of Irish ex-soldiers from the 1806 expedition who integrated into the social, economic and political fabric of the newly independent Argentina did manage to re-establish meaningful links with their relatives in Ireland. In one case study, Patrick McKenna's MA thesis highlights the fact that one of these men, John Murray, had strong connections with Streamstown in County Westmeath, in the midlands of Ireland. A largely agricultural county with a surfeit of population and an extreme shortage of land, it is not difficult to see the appeal created by firsthand descriptions of a local man who had done well in a country with excess land and too few people to work it. The evidence does not allow a definitive statement that this link was a central motivation for later emigration from Westmeath; however up to 40 % of Irish migrants to Argentina did originate in Westmeath. It seems reasonable to believe that firsthand information on the opportunities available from ex-soldiers who had settled in Argentina contributed to the extent of this migratory pattern. As Peter Pyne puts it, the small number of Irish troops who remained

behind in what was to become Argentina 'laid the foundations for an emergent Irish colony on the River Plate by attracting other migrants from Ireland.'

One of the outcomes, then, of the British (and Irish) invasions of Buenos Aires in 1806 was the inchoate foundation of what eventually became a very significant Irish presence in Argentina. The major immediate result, however, was Argentinean independence itself, which was declared in 1816. In concrete terms, the citizens' militia units that were formed, armed and trained to resist the British forces in 1806 became the foundation of the military forces that in time won independence from Spain. Having taken on the strongest military power in the world and won 'proved an inspiration and springboard to independence.' However the British too rebounded from the disastrous intervention in the longer term (the defeat itself has been excised from the national memory) and achieved their economic objectives through more peaceful means. Despite not being incorporated formally as a colony, Argentina and much of South America became part of Britain's informal empire. Commercially, if not politically, the area remained very much under British influence. Klaus Gallo sums up this outcome by declaring that Home Popham's rash enterprise had the unexpected result of opening up the first stage of Anglo-Argentinean relations. Despite the buccaneering aspect of the operation, Popham, Beresford and many hundreds of other Irishmen's endeavours might well be judged to have also made a significant contribution to the establishment of Argentine-Irish relations. Perhaps the silk banners emblazoned in gold thread with 'Buenos Aires, Popham, Beresford, Victory' were deserved after all, if for very different reasons than anyone in the crowd could have foreseen.

Thomas Byrne

Notes

1. Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p. 42. The sum was roughly equivalent to £300,000 in 1806 sterling currency, or £18 million in today's value.
2. The 95th Rifles, the regiment in which the fictitious Richard Sharpe served, actually did see action in Buenos Aires in 1807. Popham and the Anglo-Irish invasions of Buenos Aires also figure in several

novels including the novel entitled *Happy Return* (1937) in C. S. Forester's *Horatio Hornblower* series, and Patrick O'Brian's *The Ionian Mission* (1981) which comprises part of his *Aubrey and Maturin* novels.

3. *The Times*, 19 & 22 Sept 1806.
4. Gallo identifies Popham as Scottish, but Ian Fletcher calls him English. Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.33; Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p.2. Popham and his colleagues William Carr Beresford and Denis Pack share the perennial fate of those born in Ireland, or to Irish families, in belonging to a variety of Irishness that traces its origins back to Protestant families of English or Scottish descent. The 'hyphenated people' of the Anglo-Irish tradition typically, and often unwillingly, have been perceived as 'halfway here, halfway there.' See Jackson, "J C Beckett," pp.129-150.
5. Anon., *Notes on the Viceroyalty of La Plata in South America*, p.255; Popham obituary, *Gentlemen's Magazine* (1820), p.274; Popham, *A Damned Cunning Fellow*, p.146.
6. *Annual Biography and Obituary for the year 1822*, p.291. Popham's elder brother Stephen (1742-1795) served as Solicitor General to the East India Company in Madras (present-day Chennai). He was also involved in many projects aimed at the improvement of sanitation and policing.
7. Hook, *Life of the Right Honourable Sir David Baird*, pp. 312, 319, 334, 352.
8. Mackesy, *British Victory in Egypt*, p.5.
9. Vane, ed. *Correspondenceof Castlereagh*, p. 270; Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p.3.
10. Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p. 4.
11. Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.21. Gallo traces interest in mounting a serious challenge to the Spanish Empire in Spanish America back to Oliver Cromwell in the 1650s. He attributes the first modern plan to Governor Pulleine of Bermuda in 1711, followed by other schemes in the 1740s, 1760s and 1780s – not coincidentally all were periods of intense conflict between Britain and France.
12. Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.29.
13. Pyne, *Invasion of Buenos Aires*, p.7.
14. Popham, *Damned Cunning Fellow*, pp.144-5; Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, p.7.
15. Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.37.
16. Hook, *Life of the Right Honourable Sir David Baird*, p.138.
17. Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, p.15.
18. Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p.17; Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.75.
19. Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, pp. 4,18.
20. Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, pp.13-14.
21. Soldiers near the outskirts of the city witnessed a new tactic in action. Horsemen wielding ropes lassoed them and dragged them away as prisoners. This is the first recorded use of the word lasso in English.
22. Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, p.26.
23. Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, pp.70-71.
24. McKenna, "Nineteenth Century Irish Immigration to, and Settlement in, Argentina," pp.139, 313.
25. Pyne, *Invasions of Buenos Aires*, p.2.
26. Fletcher, *Waters of Oblivion*, p.129.
27. Gallo, *Great Britain and Argentina*, p.161.

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Irish Soldiers at the Sieges of Girona, 1808-1809

By Oisín Breatnach (1)

Abstract

This year, a series of activities will take place to commemorate the bicentenary of the heroic resistance of the city of Girona to the Napoleonic invasion, which became something of a legend over the course of the Peninsular War (1808-1814). However, among the many conferences, publications, guided tours and so on, a forgotten part of that history is the important role played by the Irish Regiments in the defence of Girona. In all, 601 soldiers of Irish descent lost their lives during the three sieges that took place in 1808-1809. In this article, author and current Girona resident Oisín Breatnach reminds us that Irish soldiers have had a long and complex involvement in Spanish military affairs dating back to the sixteenth century. Their services were sought by royalists and rebels, reactionaries and republicans alike.

Today, the picturesque and popular touristic medieval city of Girona boasts between 80,000 and 100,000 inhabitants. Two hundred years ago, Girona was a sleepy Catalonian town with a population of 6,000 civilians and about 2,000 seminarians, and its garrison held 400 soldiers of the first battalion of the Ultonia Regiment. The Ultonia was one of three Irish regiments in the Spanish Army, the name Ultonia being a latinisation of the name of the Irish province of Ulaidh (Ulster). The first of these regiments was formed in 1698 and was called the Irlanda Regiment. Contracts signed in 1709 with Demetrio MacAuliff and Reinaldo MacDonnell made possible the formation of two further Irish units which would later become the Ultonia and Hibernia Regiments.

In 1808, the Ultonia Regiment was composed of soldiers of Irish ancestry and led by officers of Irish origin. Its colonel was Antonio O'Kelly, born in Ireland in 1743, and among his staff in the Ultonia were Lieutenant-Colonels Pedro O'Daly (of Galway origins) and Ricardo MacCarti (born 1753 in Ireland), Sergeant-Major Enrique José O'Donnel y Anethen (born 1776 in San Sebastián to parents from County Mayo). Its commander was Juan O'Donoban (born in Spain of Irish origins) and its captains were Pedro Sarsfield and Patricio Fitzgerald (both born in Spain of Irish origins), and Daniel O'Sullivan Beare who was the son of Tadeo, Earl of Berhaven. Many officers and men were accompanied by their wives and children, which was the custom of the time. Reflecting the Irish

diaspora, both the French Napoleonic Minister of War Louis de Lacy Gaultier and his Spanish counterpart Gonzalo O'Farrill were of Irish origin. Soldiers of Irish origin on both sides of the Napoleonic wars would fight each other and die in the six long years of the war.

The Peninsular War, which lasted for six years from 1808 until 1814, was fought between the armies of Napoleon on the one side and an alliance of the Portuguese, Spanish and British on the other. It was a particularly brutal war, the horrors of which were later made famous by the Spanish painter Francisco de Goya. A secret treaty had been negotiated by the French in which Spain agreed to allow France access to Portugal in order to prevent the British establishing naval bases there. In February 1808, Napoleonic troops entered Catalonia in accordance with that treaty. Once there however, Napoleon proceeded with plans to take control of all of Spain. King Fernando VII was forced to abdicate and the throne was handed over to Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte.

In Madrid, while the upper classes quietly submitted to the foreign yoke, a spontaneous rising by the lower classes took place. On 2 May 1808, French soldiers fired into the rioting crowds that had attacked them, causing the deaths of between 1,200 and 1,500 insurgents and wounding many. The repression following the crushing of the initial rebellion was terrible and hundreds of prisoners were executed the following day - a hugely symbolic event that

Francisco José de Goya commemorated in one of his most famous paintings *The Third of May 1808, The Shootings at Mount Principio* outside Madrid (1814). As news of these massacres spread, an insurrection broke out in other parts of Spain, and soon encompassed the whole country. It was the beginning of the Spanish War of Independence.

After the start of the Spanish uprising in the spring of 1808, Guillaume Philibert Duhesme, the French general at Barcelona, found himself isolated from the main French armies in Spain. He decided that he needed to secure his direct line of communications with France, and so Duhesme left Barcelona in mid-June at the head of a column of 6,000 soldiers, reaching Girona on 20 June. He encircled the town with his troops and sent messengers to negotiate a surrender. Local tradition has it that it was an Irishman from the French army who was sent over and found himself talking to another Irishman from the Spanish Army. When the demand to surrender was refused, the French general then sent an attack against the bulwarks but, despite the bad condition of the fortifications, the garrison, with the help of civilians, managed to rebut the attack. Two further assaults by the French general cost him around 700 men. After the failure of the third attack, Duhesme decided that he was too weak to capture Girona and withdrew under the cover of darkness. It was the end of the first siege.

After the furious attack of 20 June, additional Spanish troops arrived at the city of Girona to reinforce the garrison. A renewed and much stronger French assault was expected by all. The *Ultonia* regiment was increased to the number of 800 men and was assisted by 102 grenadiers of its sister regiment the *Hibernia* and various other forces of the Spanish army, including guerrilla forces and militias - in all a force of 5,723 soldiers.

On 20 July, General Duhesme appeared again, this time with a much larger force of 11,000 men, which included 5,000 commanded by Honoré Charles Michael Joseph de Reille (of Irish O'Reilly ancestry) and with numerous and potent artillery pieces. He rapidly deployed and positioned the artillery along the waters of the *Monar* rivulet and directed the attacks against

the city and its various outlying forts. The French artillery bombarded the city, causing severe damage and destruction. A breach was opened in one of the walls of *Montjuïc* Castle, an outlying fortress of Girona, but French troops were still unable to enter.

On 16 August 1808, a combined sortie from the defenders of Girona and an attack by Spanish troops outside the walls attacked the French siege works, overran the regiment guarding them and captured the siege guns. The French were forced to retreat, abandoning their cannons and provisions in their haste. After a dangerous and costly retreat along the coastline, Duhesme eventually reached Barcelona on 20 August, having been subjected to constant guerrilla attack and this time also to gunfire from British ships patrolling the coast. The siege of Girona was broken once more.

In early 1809, the Spanish government, now based in Cádiz, named Mariano Álvarez Bermúdez de Castro commander of the Army of Catalonia and military governor of Girona. The aristocratic Castro had previously been ordered to surrender the castle of *Montjuïc* in Barcelona to the French in early 1808 and was determined to recuperate what he felt was his loss of honour. He promptly set about organising the defences and personnel and posted notices stating that anyone found talking of surrender would be summarily executed. A women's company, called the *Compañía de Santa Barbara*, was also set up to look after the wounded and to bring provisions and munitions to the men. These women would fight very fiercely in the months to come and earned many citations for bravery which were awarded to them after the war.

On 9 May 1809, the French besieged the city for the third and last time. This new siege was initiated by General Laurent Gouvion Saint-Cyr, with an excess of 22,000 troops. They mounted forty gun batteries that over the next seven months would blast the city with some 20,000 explosive shells and 60,000 cannon balls, causing wide-scale destruction and deaths. By October, all the food inside the city was gone. Mice, rats and household pets were being eaten, and so many priests fell fighting on the walls that no services were held in the churches. By

December, the situation in the city was desperate; many houses were in ruins due to the constant bombardment, serious illnesses raged as a consequence of the hundreds of decomposing corpses inside and outside the walls, and the inhabitants began to fall in the streets to a foe more terrible than bullets. Eventually, Álvarez Castro himself fell victim to disease and relinquished command. The city promptly capitulated on 10 December 1809.

The following day, while Spanish troops evacuated the city via the St Père Gate and were led off into captivity, French troops entered and took control of the partially-destroyed city. The civilian population had been reduced by half to a mere 4,000 inhabitants; 349 of its houses were

destroyed and 1,000 men were injured or sick in hospital. The Ultonia garrison had lost 550 men and the Hibernia Grenadiers 51. Altogether it is estimated that some 10,000 people, soldiers and civilians, had died inside the walls. French losses were around 15,000, over half of those to disease.

Sadly, to date, neither sculpture, street, nor plaque records the gesture of these Irish soldiers who during the sieges helped to write with their blood the epic pages of Girona's history.

Oisín Breatnach

Notes

1. Oisín Breatnach is a historical researcher and genealogist specialising in the genealogy of the Irish in Spain, France and Austria. He is also a well-known artist.

Richard Crofton, Irish Soldier in New Granada's Battle of El Santuario in 1829: A Work in Progress and Search for More Information

By Matthew Brown (1)

Abstract

Hoping to capitalise on the collective knowledge of the IMSLA readership, historian Matthew Brown engages his audience in his work-in-progress, a book on the Battle of El Santuario. Best known for his excellent work on the British and Irish Legions in the Spanish American wars for independence, he now turns his attention to a more focused study of the personnel involved in a single battle, El Santuario (1829). In this article, Brown walks us through his research process in search of documents and details related to the life of Irish soldier Richard Crofton. Any clues or information can be sent to the author (Matthew.Brown@bristol.ac.uk).

Ricardo José Crofton is the most mysterious of all the Irish mercenaries who served in the Wars of Independence in Colombia and Venezuela. [1] He achieved his greatest notoriety when leading a mock execution of Vice-President Francisco de Paula Santander in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1829. He served General Daniel O'Leary at the Battle of El Santuario in 1829, and was one of the few foreign adventurers who remained strictly loyal to Simón Bolívar even after El Libertador (The Liberator) had lost power, begun his journey into exile, and died in December 1830.

I am researching Richard Crofton's biographical details as part of a collective biography of all of the veterans of the Battle of El Santuario (17 October 1829), which includes Colombians, Venezuelans, Germans, Italians, North Americans and Uruguayans, as well as Irishmen.

Crofton is among the most difficult to pin down. He has left no service records in the military archives in Bogotá. We do not know his age, whether he married, nor where he came from. [2] No images of him have survived. His South American descendants, if he had any, did not petition the Venezuelan government for a pension as relations of an illustrious Prócer (National Hero). Online genealogies of the Irish Croftons similarly cast no light on the identity of their adventurous precursor. So at present, Richard Crofton effectively disappears from the historical record when he was exiled from New Granada (present-day Colombia) in 1832.

In the following discussion, I provide a brief summary of what we do know about Richard Crofton, and make an appeal for any information that historians or genealogists may have about this most mysterious missing person. Was he a mercenary or a spy? Did he make it back to Ireland? Was he an agent of British imperialism?

Military historian Eric Lambert stated - without providing documentary citation - that Crofton was 'an Irishman and a former Corporal in the British Army'. [3] I have searched for the birth notice of a Richard Crofton in the incomplete Catholic Church baptism records held by the National Library of Ireland. There are very few Croftons there, so I searched for the births registered in the Representative Church Body Library in Dublin. This is where the birth of a Protestant (Church of Ireland) Richard Crofton would be expected to have been registered. Although the Reverend Henry Crofton's many children are listed here, none of them was called Richard.

Leaving his birth and following the lead of his presumed military service, I have sought, but not found, any reference to Crofton in the British Army discharge papers for this period (WO 97), nor in the desertion papers (WO 25/2938). Neither was he at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. [4] This leaves us with only Colombian sources for the details of Crofton's biography.

In the absence of any surviving sources attesting to his participation in the South American wars of independence, [5] Crofton first comes to our attention in March 1828 when he declared his loyalty to Simón Bolívar's regime with an obsequious publication signed by him and his subaltern officers. The Mounted Grenadiers declared that they felt 'a terrible pain' in seeing Bolívar leaving Bogotá. They supported the 'wise measures you have adopted to protect the security and prosperity of the republic' and they offered Bolívar 'their absolute dedication to sustain and defend Colombia'. They concluded by professing 'their support and love' for the man they saw as 'destined to preserve the nation from the evils that threaten it'. [6]

Crofton's reputation as an arch-Bolivarian was enhanced that same year when he spectacularly decapitated a figurine representing Vice-President Santander at a garden party hosted by Manuela Sáenz in the Quinta de Bolívar in Bogotá, and led a firing squad which was ordered to carry out a mock execution on a dummy representing Santander. [7] The event gained Crofton great infamy amongst Santander's supporters in Bogotá, and they saw his subsequent dramatic promotion to the rank of Coronel as a mark of Bolívar's government's 'decadence'. [8] Antonio José de Sucre thought that this set a terrible precedent. He commented: 'How can the army have discipline or ethics when any rebel who raises a weapon against his superior officer, or expresses the intention to murder him, is promoted rather than punished?' [9] General José María Córdova observed that Crofton had been 'promoting conspiracies and disorder' against Santander. [10]

Crofton earned even more hatred in the wake of the 25 September 1828 assassination attempt on Bolívar. As the Commander of the Mounted Grenadiers in Bogotá, Crofton was charged with re-establishing order in the city. Reports differ as to Crofton's role. According to one observer, Crofton's actions amounted to hiding at home until the commotion had subsided, and then making his way 'without any order, at the head of a cavalry unit, to kill General Santander'. [11] When Bolívar came out of hiding himself, Crofton was one of those who flocked to his

side shouting 'We will be lost without you, We will be Victims all of us, Colombia will fall apart!' [12]

Ricardo Crofton was amongst the most stringent Bolivarian loyalists in Bogotá in the last days of September 1828. [13] According to the official report in the *Gaceta de Colombia*, he worked with Francisco de Urdaneta and José María Córdova to suppress the uprising. Crofton led his cavalry to the outskirts of town in search of the conspirators. [14] Once order had been restored, Crofton was placed in charge of guarding the prisoners, who included Vice-President Santander. [15] In fulfilling this duty Crofton was apparently rough, aggressive and vindictive, grabbing one prisoner, Horment, by the scruff of the neck and shaking him (for which he was reprimanded by Bolívar). [16] Ezequiel Rojas asserted that Crofton had fabricated witnesses in order to convict him, and acted in a violent and unreasonable manner. [17] Marcelo Tenorio, a Mason and merchant, recalled seeing Crofton being aggressive towards the prisoners in his custody, including Santander, for which Crofton was reprimanded by José María Córdova. Córdova reminded Crofton that 'your illustrious prisoner must be treated with the consideration and respect he deserves'. [18] One Colombian who came across Crofton in these years, Joaquin Posada Gutierrez, described Crofton as a 'barbarous Irishman of the lowest order'. [19]

Crofton did not always stay on the right side of the law. In July 1829 he was tried for insubordination by a court-martial in Bogotá. The Presiding Officer was General Daniel Florencio O'Leary. We do not know what the charge was, but it may have been related either to the above instances of violent behaviour or to his involvement in conspiracies against Santander. We do know, however, that Crofton was not convicted of anything, and that he returned to the army in time to join O'Leary's expedition to Antioquia in September the same year. [20] Much later, O'Leary mentioned Crofton's name as a man he could trust. [21] It seems likely that O'Leary was pivotal in recruiting Crofton to his expedition in full knowledge of his reputation for violence,

vindictiveness and fiercely partisan Bolivarianism.

At the battle of El Santuario in Antioquia on 17 October 1829, Richard Crofton commanded the cavalry, with Rupert Hand as his second-in-command. [22] Their cavalry charge put Córdova's troops to flight, and Crofton himself pursued many of the rebels from the battlefield. When he returned he asked Hand for an update on Córdova's location, the second-in-command replied 'Here is his blood', lifting up the sword that had killed the rebel commander. [23] It is well-established by all testimonies that Crofton played no direct part in Córdova's death.

After the Battle of El Santuario, Crofton and Hand were quartered in Medellín and then Rionegro as part of the 'pacification' of Antioquia. [24] The central government authorities retained many doubts about Crofton's merits once the battle was over. Even when he had plenty of other matters to exercise his thoughts, Minister of War Rafael Urdaneta remained worried about Crofton. Urdaneta warned O'Leary that when he returned to Bogotá and left Antioquia under the command of Coronel Carlos Castelli and Francisco de Urdaneta, there would no longer be 'a general of your rank who could impose sufficient respect upon Señor Coronel Crofton, whose disobedient nature may irritate or disgust the Antioquians. I suggest that you send him back to Bogotá to avoid such problems, leaving the cavalry under Comandante Hand's command'. [25]

O'Leary chose to keep Crofton with him until March 1830, by which time they had marched from Antioquia to O'Leary's new position in Cúcuta, when Bolívar ordered O'Leary to send Crofton and Rupert Hand to Cartagena, in response to 'the outcry raised against foreigners' in Bogotá, according to Mary English who was with O'Leary, Crofton and Hand in Cúcuta in March 1830. [26] Daniel O'Leary reluctantly complied with Bolívar's order. 'It is a shame to send them away now', he wrote. 'Crofton has completely reformed himself. His conduct in Antioquia was irreproachable and I have heard no bad words spoken against him'. [27] Crofton was taken ill in Rosario and his departure was

delayed, though he eventually rode for Riohacha to serve under General Mariano Montilla. [28]

This is almost the end of Crofton's involvement in Colombian history. He re-appears briefly on the Caribbean coast, where he seems to have informally mediated between the Colombian military, Simón Bolívar, and British Royal Navy in mid-1830. Florentino González recounted in his memoirs that as he was waiting on a boat in Cartagena harbour in order to go into exile on 1 July 1830 (González had been in prison in Cartagena for several months for his political activities), Ricardo Crofton passed by him in an English frigate along with one of Simón Bolívar's assistants. Bolívar himself was in Cartagena at the time preparing his own exile, and Crofton informed Bolívar of González's presence and ordered his arrest. Help came not from Bolívar but from the British Consul, Mr Watts, who provided González with a safe-conduct pass on a British ship to Jamaica, from where he travelled to Venezuela. [29]

Crofton was exiled from New Granada in January 1832. [30] He did not give evidence at the trial of Rupert Hand, though others – including Francisco de Urdaneta – quoted him in their testimonies. [31] Some of the exiles, possibly including Crofton, were imprisoned in small damp cells in Boca Chica, Cartagena, before being sent to Curaçao. [32] After this we know nothing for certain about Richard Crofton. Perhaps he stayed in the Caribbean, or travelled to North America, or returned to Britain or Ireland. Possibly the ill health noted by O'Leary in 1830 led to Crofton's early death in 1832 or soon after.

The 1841 United Kingdom Census has two possible candidates who could be our Richard Crofton. One was thirty-five years old, living in Chester-le-Street (County Durham, England) with Mary Crofton, aged thirty, who was either his wife or sister, and his father George, aged seventy-five. This Richard Crofton, however, would have been just twenty-three at the Battle of El Santuario and thus might be too young to fit the bill. The alternative is the Richard Crofton who in 1841 was aged forty and living in Preston, Lancashire, England. He would have been twenty-eight at time of the Battle of El Santuario, the same age as O'Leary and José

María Córdova. But in 1841 he was living with his wife Amy Crofton also aged forty; together they had eight children, the eldest of whom was eighteen and therefore had been born in 1823. If Amy Crofton had accompanied Richard Crofton to Bogotá, and if the eldest children were born in New Granada, then this could be still be our man. There are no surviving references to Crofton's family during his time in Colombia, however, so probably (though not conclusively) this is not our Crofton either. [33]

What Richard Crofton did next remains a mystery. We know as little about his life after Colombia as we do about his experiences before he crossed the Atlantic. All we know is that this Irishman was a celebrated and notorious defender of Simón Bolívar's dictatorship in Colombia in 1828, 1829 and 1830. We still do not really know why.

Matthew Brown

Notes

1. The others are studied in Matthew Brown, *Adventuring through Spanish Colonies: Simón Bolívar, Foreign Mercenaries and the Birth of New Nations* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006).
2. Looking for Crofton, I have searched in national and provincial archives in Bogotá, Caracas, Medellín, Rionegro, El Santuario, London, Dublin and Belfast.
3. Eric Lambert, 'General O' Leary and South America', *Irish Sword*, 11:43 (1973), p68. Crofton does not appear at all in Alfred Hasbrouck, *Foreign Legionaries in the Liberation of Spanish South America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928).
4. *The Waterloo Medal Roll*, compiled from the Muster Rolls (Darlington, East Sussex: The Naval and Military Press, 1992).
5. In December 1827 Primer Comandante Ricardo José Crofton received 2,700 pesos as haberes militares for his services. Only the receipt survives, so the dates Crofton was being paid for remain unknown. 'Haber Militar Declarado: Año 1827, Mes de Octubre, #2500 al #2599', Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Casa de Moneda, Db5494, Receipt #2504, signed Bogotá, 20 December 1827.
6. Ricardo José Crofton et al, *Excelentísimo señor Libertador* (Bogotá: Valentín Espinosa, 1828), in BNC, Fondo Quijano 261, Pieza 200.
7. Santander, *Escritos autobiográficos 1820-1840* (Bogotá: Fundación para la Conmemoración del Bicentenario del Natalicio y el Sesquicentenario de la Muerte del General Francisco de la Paula Santander, 1988), p82, and José María Cordoves Moure, *Reminiscencias de Santafe y Bogotá* (Madrid, 1962).
8. Pilar Moreno de Angel, *Santander* (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1988), p435.
9. Antonio José de Sucre to O'Leary, 26 August 1829, in O'Leary, *Memorias*, Vol. 4, pp511-2.
10. Córdova to Bolívar, 28 January 1829, Popayán, Archivo General de la Nación, Bogotá, Colombia, Sección La República, Secretario de Guerra y Marina, Vol.140, f.1077.
11. Joaquín Posada Gutiérrez, *Memorias históricas políticas del General Joaquín Posada Gutierrez* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1929, first edition 1863), Vol. 1, p190, also Moreno de Angel, *Santander*, p453.
12. Posada Gutiérrez, *Memorias históricas políticas*, Vol. 1, p190.
13. Crofton's own account of these matters has disappeared. Declaración del coronel R J Crofton, Manuscrito original sobre la conspiración de 25 de setiembre de 1828 is recorded in the Catalogue of the Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Fondo Pineda as being (before re-cataloguing in the 1990s) in Vitrina 18, Vol. 7, 484, Pieza 36 (MSS 196). In 2002, I was informed that it could no longer be found.

14. Gaceta de Colombia, 28 September 1828, copied by Robert Ker Porter, Diario, 1 November 1828, p356. Less positively, Manuela Sáenz later remembered that Crofton's principal contribution had been to 'get in the way' of other officers. Sáenz to O'Leary, 10 August 1850, Paíta, in O'Leary, Narración, Vol. 3, p335.
15. Santander, Escritos autobiográficos, p86.
16. Cited in Eduardo Posada, 'La libertadora', Boletín de Historia e Antigüedades, 15:169 (1925), p26.
17. Ezequiel Rojas, El doctor Ezequiel Rojas ante el tribunal de la opinión (Bogotá: Echeverría Hermanos, 1862), pp28-9.
18. Horacio Rodríguez Plata, 'Santander en el Exilio', pp92-93, cited in Moreno de Angel, Santander, p471.
19. Posada Gutierrez, Memorias, Vol. 1, p190.
20. Estado Mayor Avendaño to O'Leary, 11 July 1829, Bogotá, reproduced in M.S. Sanchez, 'O'Leary y su misión a Antioquia: Documentos', BHA 17:196 (1928), Doc. 2, and O'Leary, Narración, Vol. 3, p462.
21. O'Leary to J.M. Restrepo, 25 February 1849, Bogotá, reproduced in Rayfield, 'O'Leary y Córdova', p172.
22. On Rupert Hand, see Matthew Brown, 'How did Rupert Hand escape from jail? Colombia and the Atlantic Empires, 1830-33' History 95: 317 (January 2010), available online (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hist.2010.95.issue-317/issuetoc>) pp. 25-44.
23. Testimony of Tomás Murray, 24 October 1831, Bogotá, in Enrique Ortega Ricaurte, Asesinato de Córdova (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1942) p115.
24. Carmelo Fernández, Memorias de Carmelo Fernández (Caracas: Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1973), p67.
25. R. Urdaneta to O'Leary, 2 November 1829, Bogotá, in O'Leary, Narración, Vol. 3, pp484-485.
26. Mary Greenup to William Greenup, 30 April 1830, Cúcuta, in English Papers, Suffolk County Record Office, Ipswich, HA 157/ 1 /54.
27. O'Leary to Bolívar, 22 March 1830, Rosario de Cúcuta, in Fundación John Boulton, Caracas, Sección Manuel Antonio Matos, M21-A02-E1-C532.
28. O'Leary to Bolívar, 31 March 1830, Rosario de Cúcuta, in FJB SMAM, M21-A02-E1-C534, and O'Leary to Bolívar, 24 March 1830, Rosario de Cúcuta, in FJB SMAM, M21-A02-E1-C533.
29. Florentino González, Memorias (Medellín: Editorial Bedout, 1971), p174.
30. Crofton's name was on the list of foreigners expelled from New Granada by José María Obando on 23 January 1832, reproduced in Jaime Duarte French, América del Norte a Sur: Corsarios o Libertadores? (Bogotá: Banco Popular, 1975), p520.
31. Testimony of Francisco de Urdaneta, 1 December 1831, Bogotá, in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., Asesinato de Córdova, p.117, and Testimony of Juan Antonio Montoya, 26 November 1831, Santa Fe de Antioquia, in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., Asesinato de Córdova, p130.
32. TNA FO 18/86, reports of Consul Watts.
33. United Kingdom Census for 1841 consulted online at TNA 10 July 2008.

Saving Republics: General Martin Thomas McMahan, the Paraguayan War and the Fate of the Americas (1864-1870)

By Michael Kenneth Huner (1)

Abstract

In the wake of the French and American revolutions, the rise of nationalism and romantic notions of the folk, the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of clear battle lines between the forces of liberal republicanism and the more traditional adherents of monarchy. Aided by advancements in technology and transportation, soldiers very often moved between these various theatres of war, bringing with them ideas and ideologies, not all of them useful or accurate. In this article, Michael Kenneth Huner traces the life and career of General Martin Thomas McMahan, the son of Irish immigrants, who rose to prominence in the US Civil War and went on to serve as the US representative and informal advisor to President Francisco Solano López during the bloody and violent Paraguayan War (formerly known as the War of the Triple Alliance, 1864-1870). Huner shows that devotion to a federal and republican ideal was widespread among Americans and some Europeans, often advanced by soldiers of Irish descent like McMahan, who was able to forge a more personal bond with a Paraguayan leader through the good offices of his beloved Irish mistress.

General Martin Thomas McMahan made his reputation as a war hero. Over a quarter century after the end of the conflict that defined his life, he received the US Congressional Medal of Honor in 1891. The ultimate award for valour in combat recognised his action taken while captain and aide-de-camp in the Union army during the American Civil War. It was June 1862. The Army of the Potomac was retreating from its position on a Virginia battlefield, when the then Captain MacMahon led a party of soldiers under musket and artillery fire to burn a wagon supply train that was in danger of falling under the control of the Confederate forces. Scorching war materials so that nothing was left behind for the advancing enemy decades later justified the grateful nation awarding him such a prestigious medal. By that time, however, McMahan had also forged a rising career in the Democratic political machine of New York City. He had won election to the New York State Senate in 1891 after four years serving in the State Assembly. He had held previous appointments as Tax Collector and U.S. Marshal for New York during the presidential administration of Grover Cleveland. Soon his friends and supporters were encouraging him to run for Congress. [2] McMahan commanded respect as

a tireless advocate for veterans and was a prominent curator of a heroic memory of the the Northern cause in the Civil War as well. Member and leader of various veterans' groups, he attended their annual meetings and gave rousing speeches. And in such talks he often reflected on how "this great American conflict for the maintenance and restoration of the Union will stand in human history as one of the most important events that has ever been chronicled by the pen of man." [3]

Son of Irish immigrants, Martin McMahan had staked his life and career as a U.S. patriot. He contributed to the mythic proportions surrounding the central violent struggle of his generation, one in which he participated and saw so many losses. Like thousands of his fellow veterans and citizens, he had salvaged the noble meaning of it all from the idea of a republic saved. McMahan was quite conventional in this regard, but stood out for lending his experienced voice to the commonly-held opinion that war was a natural, even sometimes necessary, calling of nationhood. He had clung to the identity of a lifetime soldier and continued to wear his rank of general, something which gave him clout that served his rise in political circles. But after

McMahon's death in 1906 at the age of sixty-eight, while sitting as a New York state judge, he fell back into relative obscurity like so many middling politicians and former officers of his time.

This article briefly examines the memories and episodes from the life of this Irish-American who served in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. If McMahon's services and sacrifices in the Civil War were typical of others of his generation, it was his brush with a similarly momentous war in South America that was more unusual and now draws our historical attention. His experience there sheds light on a somewhat forgotten geopolitical vision from the nineteenth-century past that perceived the rivalry of New World republics and Old World monarchies as the defining contest for the heart of the Americas as a whole, and took place at a crucial moment when this vision was widely shared across the hemisphere. Not long after the end of hostilities in his country, McMahon took a diplomatic post in war-torn Paraguay where, in his mind, the conflict brought to the forefront the global importance of saving American republics from dissolution. There his service, sacrifice, and loss in the U.S. Civil War took on political meaning of a hemispheric scale. He stayed only a short stint before being suddenly recalled, seeing just a part of the desperate end of Paraguay's fight against its larger, neighbouring invaders Brazil and Argentina. Back in the US, McMahon emerged as a vocal and controversial proponent of the autocratic Paraguayan president, Francisco Solano López, who had led his country into the war and was gaining increasing infamy as a bloodthirsty tyrant.

McMahon's passionate and polemical defence of a South American dictator seemed to undermine the very ideals of republican government that his experience in the Civil War had fortified. Yet this contradiction ironically reveals the depth of his conviction, whereby ugly matters and inconvenient truths could be rationalised with the belief that so much was at stake, in the light that darker possibilities loomed. McMahon advocated for the Paraguayan president as a consequence of their

mutual belief in the cause of republicanism against the predations of Old-World-style monarchies, manifested, in this case, by the Empire of Brazil. McMahon cast his defence of the autocrat in these very terms, as a fellow soldier fighting for the liberty of his native land, just as he believed that he himself had done in the U.S. Civil War. We thus first examine the principles and beliefs that General McMahon took away from his participation in the Civil War, as he reflected upon them in public speeches and statements in the decades following it. We then consider how these incipient meanings went on to inform the way in which he approached the situation in Paraguay. McMahon was not alone in his convictions; his life and legacy provides us with a clear voice representing a shared strand of opinion across the Americas that considered republican causes in the United States, Ireland, Mexico, Paraguay, and even those of insurgents in Cuba to be intimately linked.

Loss and Meaning from the U.S. Civil War

The experience of war weighed on the health and memory of the Irish-descended general; it was the defining episode of his life. Martin Thomas McMahon was born on 21 March 1838, in Laprairie County, Québec, his parent's first son born in the New World. They had recently come from Ireland and were on their way to try out settling in the United States. He had two older brothers, John and James, who had spent their early years in the town of Waterford, Ireland from whence his family came. [4] The McMahons were thus a family of Irish Catholic immigrants who made their way to New York like thousands of others at the time. It is unclear what work or wealth their parents had, but their sons proved upwardly mobile and anxious to succeed in their adopted country. Martin and his two older brothers all attended and graduated with law degrees from St. John's College in Fordham, New York. Martin himself received his initial degree from Fordham in 1855 and subsequently earned his Masters there two years later, at the young age of nineteen. He then moved around the country, looking perhaps to move up the ranks of Government service. He spent time in Buffalo as a law clerk before heading out West

to work as special agent for the Post Office in San Francisco. He later accepted a short stint as an Indian Administrator before returning east. In 1861, he gained admittance into the New York State Bar Association. Of course, that same year he also had joined the mobilising volunteer Federal Army at the news of the shelling of Ft. Sumter and the secession. [5] His older brothers also entered the force. And just as unexpectedly for many who volunteered, McMahon ended up serving four long years in the Army of the Potomac.

McMahon rose rapidly in the ranks of the wartime force, which later proved to have been a professional boon. His education, and most likely political connections as well, got him posted in 1861 as Captain and Aide-de-Camp of General McClellan, the head of the Army. He made Adjutant General and Chief of Staff of the Sixth Army Corps less than a year and a half later, due to bold actions taken, including torching the enemy's vulnerable wagon supply train. This new position coincided with his professional capacity as a lettered officer directing the paperwork and orders moving men and material. He did it all well, no doubt cultivating the necessary influence with other highly-ranked men. By the end of the conflict, he was at once brevetted Major and Brigadier General as his war record was later remembered to have been "without flaw." [6]

McMahon walked away from the battlefields respected as an honourable officer. Yet the battlefields had left their mark, most notably on his physical appearance. He had entered the military as a smooth-skinned twenty-three-year-old with a sunny countenance; a contemporary photograph showed his bright eyes staring out to an optimistic future, his brow resting in relaxed, confident contemplation. Short brown hair swept cleanly away from his face graced his head and a neatly trimmed moustache hid his upper lip. McMahon's face embodied the best of Irish-American youth, hardly touched by life's rigours and radiating self-assurance. Four years later, however, another image revealed that his jowls now carried the roughness of hardened experience, bags puffed around his eyes, and his hair already had premature white

wisps. A pained scowl had overtaken face, and his pupils possessed a new stare, one which seemed to look backwards. [7] His health had suffered. Occasionally over the course of the rest of McMahon's life, it hurt him to breathe and his lungs spewed blood, all due to exposure to four years of military camps, combat, and riding. [8] Shortly after the Civil War, influential friends tried to secure for him appointment as United States Minister to Mexico partially to aid the general's health, as a temperate climate was thought could reduce stress on his lungs. [9]

Likewise, McMahon had felt first-hand the tremendous weight of the death and loss of the conflict. He saw subordinates and superiors alike killed by his side. When he led squadrons of troops in dashes across the battlefield, his men often did not come back. In one instance in May 1864, he was standing next to his immediate commander, General John Sedgwick, a friend dear to his heart, when a sharpshooter's bullet ripped into Sedgwick's face. The General fell back into McMahon's arms, blood pouring from the wound as he braced his friend's body and watched the man die. Years later he described how he broke the news to headquarters: "As they saw me covered with blood, Gen. Williams started forward and said but one word, 'Sedgwick?' I could not answer. Each one in that tent, old gray warriors, burst into tears and for some minutes sobbed like children mourning a father." [10] Other losses were equally difficult to bear. In May 1863, his brother John died in Buffalo as the result of wounds suffered in the field. In June of the following year, bullets and shells killed his other brother, James, at the battle of Cold Harbor. While still serving in the army, McMahon also received word that his beloved Irish father had passed away. [11] Wartime had leveraged a heavy personal cost.

Years later McMahon memorialised such great losses, both personal and collective, in his speeches. He recalled the aftermath of battles where the morning dew mixed with "the blood of one thousand gallant men... many of them cold in death, many of them writhing in the agony of painful wounds." He dwelled on the wives and children who had waited to hear

word of husbands and fathers killed, those “hearts in many homes that day that were ready to break as they wearily waited news from the front.” [12] McMahan also lamented the thousands of missing, unknown soldiers who “went to the field and they came not back, where they fell, or how, a mystery forever here.” He expressed sadness over the way in which so many never received proper veneration of their death on the battlefield, his speeches aiming to rectify this omission. [13] As indicated above, his civic engagement after the war significantly revolved around participation in veterans’ groups. He dedicated his service to supporting and exalting men who had burdened conflict and loss in the U.S. Civil War. McMahan was President in 1886-1887 as well as lifetime member of the Society of the Army of the Potomac. Other memberships included the Military Order of the Loyal Legion and the Army and Navy Club. He also served as President and on the governing board of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Accordingly, he testified several times in Congressional Committee hearings on their behalf. [14] Friends and colleagues remembered McMahan as one who adored fellow veterans and worked continuously for their well-being. [15] Such commitment in words and actions helped to channel collective memory on the immense sacrifice of war, which he had himself experienced so vividly. Indeed, as a representative in the New York State Senate during the 1890s, the public record noted his efforts to preserve battle memorials and commission statues to war heroes. [16]

McMahan recognised the pain and loss constituent to his war experience, while nonetheless extracting noble meaning from it all. He did so in the conventional ways of an outspoken patriot in the public charge. His participation in veterans’ groups was an extension of his growing political involvement. He became an active member of the New York Democratic Party in New York, where he held political appointments through the 1870s and 1880s and later won elected office. In 1894, McMahan explained his political affiliation in the press as embracing “the party of the people,” seeing it likewise as “the party of the

equal many, instead of the favored few,” and championed the notion that “Government is trust and confidence, deep and sincere, in the people.” He thus understood the party as defending the ideal that the “only purpose of government is to preserve order, nothing more or less,” thereby remaining within the “rules of Democracy.” [17] In his career and civic engagement after the war, McMahan further solidified convictions as a political liberal in the classical sense. He believed popular sovereignty and limited government were the ultimate expression of democracy. These convictions had become the fabric of his public political persona, as one who, in the eyes of supporters, cherished the rule of law, fair justice, and representative government. [18] And accordingly when he recalled the war in speeches, making sense of all the pain and loss, he typically depicted the Federal cause in the conflict as a heroic struggle of heroic figures pursuing such democratic ideals. In one speech to the Vermont Officers’ Reunion Society in Montpelier in 1880, he gave a keynote address honouring the state’s native son, his late friend and commanding officer, General John Sedgewick. Here he fashioned the description of the sorrow surrounding the General’s death in combat, but also the memory of a beloved commander in a democratic army of citizen-soldiers. McMahan recounted how within the ranks, a smile from Sedgewick “went like a sunbeam through long columns of tired men until it broadened into a laugh, and culminated in cheers that came from the true hearts of as gallant soldiers as ever served a patriot cause... he endeared himself to the men who followed him and was loved by all with a love surpassing the love of woman.” [19] And such men in Sedgewick’s ranks were everyday citizens, “the farmer and the blacksmith, the lawyer and the mechanic, the preacher and the laborer, the doctor and the clerk, men of all walks of life, men of all grades of talent, men with and without ambition,” all who had struggled “to establish a principle which it had heretofore seemed to them it was sacrilege to question. This principle was that this Republic is an indestructible Union of indestructible States.”

[20] They had preserved order and saved a republic.

The idea of a republic saved thus offered to those who had perished in the conflict an epitaph of “honorable service and a glorious death upon the field of battle.” [21] McMahon, in turn, had depicted all soldiers who had fought with the Union army as worthy of the “inheritance bequeathed them by the founders of this government” and “it may be said that they differed in character and achievement as well as in personal demeanor ‘as one star differeth from another star in glory.’” [22] Cultivated for himself and fellow veterans then was a glorified memory of the war. It was entwined with a powerful pride of having allegedly lived up to the promise of forefathers and borne the sacrifice to sustain a political revolution that they had begun. That is, he contributed his public memory to fix the service of his generation, by the native-born and immigrants alike, within a mythic national past that had created and now preserved a grand American republic. Nearly two decades after his speech in Vermont, McMahon articulated similar sentiments in verse during the 1899 reunion of the Army of the Potomac in Pittsburgh:

... We fought our fight, and fought it to the last.

Not for ourselves alone, but for mankind.

To us befell the consecrated task

To make our country truly free and strong...

They confirmed earlier expressions that asserted that never “throughout all the past annals of the world has any nation or people or race produced grander types of humanity than this American Republic.” [24] McMahon’s recollections reflected dominant currents of patriotism coming out of the conflict itself that indeed washed the pain of loss from war in the conviction that government by the people “for mankind” as a whole was rescued when its very existence in the Americas seemed in doubt. [25] Moreover, a country now rid of slavery had reconstituted a republic “truly free and strong.” This son of Irish parents had crafted his public career and memory into that of a vociferous US

patriot, liberal politician, and leader of veterans’ groups. He had thus forged from Irish roots a life and identity as American, in a broad understanding of the term for McMahon had also walked away from the battlefields with an incipient sense of the global implications for the Union victory and the work of saving republics in general. Soon thereafter, this notion attracted him to the battlefields of Paraguay in South America, where another momentous battle was about to take place.

Episodes from Paraguay

While battles in North America were winding down in 1864-1865, a conflict involving Paraguay was escalating into a major regional war growing out of an armed insurgency in Uruguay. In 1864, the Empire of Brazil, led by the monarch Dom Pedro II, had intervened militarily in the small country’s rebellion, overthrown Montevideo’s sitting government and installed a friendly faction into power, all with tacit support from Argentina. The autocratic president of landlocked Paraguay, Francisco Solano López, took exception to this aggressive act and ordered the invasion of Brazil and Argentina on the very pretext of defending American republicanism. The López regime proclaimed that they did this to save Paraguay’s “sister republic” Uruguay from domination by monarchic Brazil, acting in collusion with Buenos Aires. Of course, Solano was making his own bid for power and influence by sending large armies to occupy outlying provinces of Brazil and Argentina. The gamble proved disastrous. The Brazilian empire and its client state in Uruguay formed an official alliance with Buenos Aires dedicated to destroying the López government. Beholden to the strident liberal-positivist ethics of the time, the allied states declared the war to be a crusade of Progress and Civilisation to crush barbarism and tyranny inherent in the heavily-indigenous state Paraguay. With their much-larger forces thus mobilised, the allies soon repulsed the southward invasion of López’s armies. By 1866 they had begun a protracted invasion of their own into Paraguayan territory. The fight endured for over four more years, as Paraguayan defensive trenches in the south of the territory proved perilous to break. It

became a total war for Paraguay with combatants and civilians alike being mobilised to sustain the resistance. Tens of thousands of soldiers and inhabitants perished along the way, mainly due to disease and hunger. [26] As the U.S. Civil War drew to a close in 1865, Martin McMahon started to see the central events of his own life as one episode in a larger conflict raging throughout the Americas. The Paraguayan war would be a prominent one in this regard; a major civil war also had erupted in Mexico when imperial French forces attempted to impose a European monarch to rule the bankrupt country, at the invitation of desperate Mexican conservatives. The 1862 invasion sent the Mexican liberal-republican government under Benito Juárez into armed insurgency in the countryside while the Austrian prince Maximilian assumed a newly-fashioned crown as Emperor of Mexico. Contemporary commentators also noted how Spain had tried to reassume imperial control of Santo Domingo (and reinstate slavery), as well as assert its naval influence over waters near Peru. At the same time, in 1868, insurgents in Cuba began a revolution for an independent republic and the abolition of slavery on their island, the remaining bastions of monarchical Spanish rule in the Americas. [27] McMahon shared the view of many North Americans, who understood the sacrifices for the Federal victory in their Civil War as serving to reinforce the vitality of republican government in America, with a corresponding eradication of slavery in their country. [28] Developments in Mexico, Paraguay, and later Cuba and even Ireland proved alternately heartening and despairing for those likewise invested in the fate of republican governments elsewhere in the hemisphere. Intriguingly, Paraguayan state officials had manifested such geopolitical fears shortly before their own conflict, while the outcome of the U.S. Civil War was still in doubt. In December 1863, Foreign Minister José Berges wrote to his consul in New York, Richard Mallowney, concerned that the “situation in Mexico cannot be insignificant for the Spanish American republics.” Berges found the news of a European-imposed monarchy there disturbing. He requested: “I want to

know how the [U.S. Government] views the crisis in the neighboring Republic, and what it thinks or can do in favor of the republican faction in Mexico.” [29] Correspondents for the state-run newspaper in Paraguay articulated similar concerns. One article from February 1864 affirmed the embrace of republican government by former Spanish American territories and asserted that “because a monarchy could not arise from revolution made against monarchy, they have bound themselves to democratic institutions, having fought for independence evoking liberty and equality.” It then recommended the alleged democratic unity inherent in Paraguay. [30] Another article in July was more ominous in tone, claiming “the plan to monarchize republican America is well thought-out and has percolated in conquest-minded crowned heads for some time.” It cited the proof of European monarchical aggression in Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico and contested: “The entire world knows the greed with which our rich republics are looked upon by the crowned heads.” It thus advocated “the true and sincere union... of Uruguayans, Paraguayans, Argentines, Chileans, Bolivians, Peruvians, and Mexicans, that is, of all the sons of America.” [31]

By June of 1864, the crisis in Uruguay had already reached alarming proportions for these officials, as imperial Brazil prepared to invade their “sister republic.” Early that month, the Foreign Minister Berges had written to the Paraguayan diplomatic agent in Paris describing the threats that now allegedly confronted Paraguay. He believed the “certain fact” that Brazil and Argentina “have organized an armed intervention and are going to take possession [of Uruguay] for six years, with the knowledge and acquiescence of England and France.” This unusual alliance would eventually turn its territorial ambitions against Paraguay, he suggested. “I call your attention to the events of Mexico,” continued Berges, signalling: “mutual intrigue between the Monarchies of Europe and America over this part of the New World.” [32] The Río de la Plata region of South America seemed, in his view, exposed to a similar monarchic offensive against American

republics, as the Brazilian monarchy was the one now apparently poised to expand. It was, in fact, this geopolitical vision of Atlantic-wide scope that had informed and rationalised the López regime's decision to go to war against its powerful neighbours. Indeed it subsequently justified Paraguayan occupation of part of the neighbouring republic of Argentina, whereby Paraguayans claimed to be "the brave defenders of the sovereignty and independence of the Plata," whose cause was the "hope of democracy" rather than invaders themselves. [33]

The lettered officials of the Paraguayan regime were appropriating republican rhetoric heard and read throughout Spanish America since the wars of independence. Their talk and propaganda gathered similar anti-colonial, anti-imperial sentiments, again on a continental scale, around the cause of Paraguay in its war with Brazil and allies. Furthermore, the Paraguayan regime later claimed common cause with the victorious Northern faction in the U.S. Civil War in a fight for republicanism against slavery, as Brazil remained one of the last large slave-holding powers in the Americas. And, when the South American conflict turned decidedly against Paraguay, and it became primarily a war of resistance against foreign invasion, the discourse of anti-imperial and anti-slavery only grew in intensity among the regime's friends. In particular, Gregorio Benítez, the main diplomatic agent of the López state in France, emerged as the principal advocate and genuine believer in such a "Paraguayan cause" in the extensive propaganda battles over the war that occupied readers and foreign offices in the political and economic centres of the North Atlantic - London, Paris, Brussels, New York and Washington. He commissioned numerous works and articles in the European press supporting the Paraguayan side in the conflict. In so doing, he worked closely with the Argentine intellectual Juan Bautista Alberdi, who also lived in France at the time. Alberdi, past critic of the López regime, became a tireless advocate of the Paraguayan resistance. He thus also wrote countless pamphlets and articles for European and American audiences

decrying the monarchic imperialism of Brazil and touting the republican struggle of Paraguay. [34] Other major publicists also contributed. Benítez especially valued the work of the French thinker Eliseo Reclus. [35] Both Reclus and Alberdi emphasised the anti-imperial fight of the small, landlocked country. They also linked the Paraguayan struggle to a fight against slavery and thus to other similar "republican" struggles in the Americas. [36]

In his personal correspondence, Benítez himself revealed how undertones of racialised contradistinction provided increasing resonance to such claims, despite all the tensions involved coming from an autocratic and patriarchal society. For he allegedly despised the widespread slavery still practiced in Brazil, and the empire's use of impressed Afro-Brazilian soldiers to prosecute the war, but his disgust turned its projection of derogatory blackness onto the entire country. He called the Brazilians the "black imperialists," the "black empire," and the "empire of the blacks," occasionally applying the racist term *macaco* (monkey). Benítez employed in tandem the mocking titles of "slavecratic empire" and "slavecrats." [37] He thus regarded the "republican cause," the "democratic cause," the "beautiful (even Holy) American cause" of Paraguay in sharp distinction against "the slavocratic empire of South America." [38] For him, Paraguay was republican above all by virtue of its armed opposition to the slaveholding monarchy of Brazil. The Brazilian military campaign, he admonished to a colleague, had "for its primary objective the servile subjugation of the peoples of the Plata to the pretensions of the Empire of blacks that scandalizes the American continent." [39] The fight against "black imperialists" and their alleged pretensions to enslave such people thus gave, in his view, Paraguayan soldiers their clearest claim to the title "republican and free." [40] Indeed, these very sentiments lent vituperative charge to the sort of folk republicanism championed in the wartime state propaganda within Paraguay itself, which had even acquired popular resonance in the country's vernacular language of indigenous origin, Guaraní. [41]

General Martin Thomas McMahon came late to the war in Paraguay, having already heard and read many polemics circulating about it. News reports and editorials had filled the presses of the North Atlantic. Coverage was mixed. The allies did receive sympathetic treatment in many of these reports, which repeated wisdom received from Brazilian and Argentine propagandists; in this view, the war was a crusade of Progress and Civilisation against a barbaric tyrant in an indigenous and backward country. Yet large currents of U.S public opinion also sided with Paraguay, believing that, since their country had just emerged from its own conflict to preserve republicanism and end slavery, the potential expansion of slaveholding, imperial Brazil was hardly reason to cheer. [42] The U.S. government was officially neutral in the war, yet a significant faction within the State Department also openly supported the Paraguayan cause. [43] The head of the U.S. legation in Paraguay for most of the war, Charles Washburn, also often expressed his wishes that the country would prevail in its resistance against the allied invasion and led diplomatic commissions to negotiate a peaceful settlement. [44] Yet he soon fell foul of the autocrat López at a desperate time of the war, when the President was also conducting show trials and executing alleged traitors. Even so, Washburn noted how, upon leaving his post, he heard the general opinion “held almost universally throughout the United States and Europe, that Lopez was a hero, fighting bravely in defiance of his country and republican principles against monarchy, despotism, and slavery...” [45] McMahon himself was inclined to see things this way.

In fact, it was Washburn’s troubles that eventually brought McMahon to Paraguay as his replacement, appointed in mid-1868 by the outgoing Johnson administration as the new head of the U.S. diplomatic legation. Previously, Washburn and other members of the legation had fallen under the suspicion by López. The autocrat believed that they, along with dozens of Paraguayans and other foreigners, had been conspiring to overthrow his government and seek capitulation to the allies. López apparently wanted to arrest the

U.S diplomat and have him pay for his supposed crimes. Washburn had consequently petitioned for a release from his post, was eventually extracted from the capital Asunción by a U.S. warship in September 1868, and left believing himself to have barely escaped with his life. Moreover, he left decrying López as a tyrant, a petty South American despot who lived outside the pale of civilisation. He later attested that the autocrat “was not, properly speaking, a member of the human family, that he was mentally a malformation, a monster,” who proved “the worst tyrant that ever figured on the page of history.” [46]

Upon arriving back in Washington, he spread these depictions and his own tales of horror to influential friends in Congress and the State Department, or anyone who would listen. He soon had more people convinced of his impressions. For Washburn was confirming other reports emerging from the theatre of war that López was, in fact, conducting a repressive campaign against dissidents in his camp, arresting, torturing, and executing them, including members of his own family. [47] At this point in the conflict, the defensive bulwarks of Paraguayan forces in the south of the country had collapsed. Their armies were in retreat. Brazilian ironclads had finally surpassed their major riverside fortress to steam up the river Paraguay and shell the capital Asunción. As allied armies pressed northward, repulsing subsequent Paraguayan counters, López soon ordered a general retreat into the countryside, forming provisional capitals, first in Luque, and later into the interior hills in the small village of Piribebuy. The repression of the regime had turned the intense violence of the war inward in its desperation for political survival. [48]

McMahon eventually reached Paraguay in November 1868 amid such desperate conditions, ironically presenting his diplomatic credentials to a government on the verge of complete annihilation. He nonetheless fulfilled his mission with a dignified sense of political commitment. McMahon had come out of the U.S. Civil War looking for diplomatic appointment as an obvious means to advance a career in government. His rank as general and

respectable service in the war, as well as his many political connections developed in the Federal army, positioned him well to receive a nomination. In 1867, influential friends in Washington had pushed for him to be named diplomatic minister to the eventually-victorious liberal Juárez faction in Mexico. Beyond reasons of health and career ambition, the post coincided with geopolitical sympathies, to represent the United States before another American republic that had been saved, having just beaten back an imperial monarchic threat from Europe. Unfortunately for McMahon, a rival got the post. [49]

When the post in Paraguay opened, Washburn pleaded to be removed from consideration, and the administration named McMahon as the replacement. His nomination proved that United States took an interest in the political survival of a small South American republic fighting against a monarchy. McMahon accepted the call with a deepening conviction that such was indeed the case and that he had a role to play. He made the long, two-leg journey by steamer, first from New York to Europe, then southward to Buenos Aires. Upon initially arriving in the Argentine capital, both Washburn (who had just escaped from Paraguay) and the U.S. Minister to Brazil, James Webb, implored McMahon not to travel on to Asunción. They argued that the United States instead should be at war with Paraguay, due to López's alleged violation of international law, and claimed that these circumstances trumped McMahon's official instructions from the State Department. [50] Nevertheless, he pressed stubbornly on, having the U.S. naval ship *Wasp* take him north up the Paraná and Paraguay rivers, past the amassed allied armies and warships, and on toward the nebulous, shrinking, sovereign territory of the Paraguayan republic still under the control of the López regime. [51]

Little was heard from McMahon for the next several months. Indeed his accreditation to the regime proved a major irritant to the allied powers, and inversely was a boon for those Paraguayans still loyal to López. He was the last diplomatic representative from a North

Atlantic power to reside with the López government, granting it a continued level of legitimacy, particularly in the face of a provisional Paraguayan government being formed by the allies in now-occupied Asunción. As part of their blockade of the regime, the Brazilians did not allow any correspondence from McMahon to pass through their lines. Along with the regime, he was isolated.

Not long removed from scenes of war and devastation in his own country, McMahon soon encountered similar, perhaps even more awful experiences in Paraguay. After arriving, he travelled with retreating government officers, soldiers and civilians to the provisional capital of Piribebuy. He witnessed several combat actions in which the Paraguayan troops, many of whom were mere adolescents, took on overwhelming numbers of Brazilian soldiers, if only to delay their further advance. His writings and sketches later recalled wrenching incidents of child-like soldiers "dragging shattered limbs or with ghastly bullet wounds in their half-naked bodies," and mothers carrying over their heads on wooden planks the lifeless bodies of toddlers, as they pressed on in the general retreat ordered of soldiers and civilians alike. Yet as with description of women selflessly attending the battle wounded within Paraguayan lines, or captured Paraguayan soldiers escaping to rejoin López's forces, he largely remembered such scenes as evidence of the people's commitment to a patriotic cause. [52] Indeed, all indications suggest that he formed a personal friendship with the autocrat López, even agreeing, more controversially, to serve as the protector of his children and executor of his will. The relation seemed to reflect a mutual respect between soldiers, one his predecessor never had with the president. McMahon also made friendly acquaintance with López's notorious Irish mistress, Eliza Lynch, and frequently provided her with company during extended afternoon conversation and horseback rides. [53] Their Irish camaraderie, fellow-feeling and connection was evident and likely contributed to the regime's willingness to trust him. For López and his diminishing entourage, McMahon's presence also offered

the last respite of a stately life and recognition before being doomed to disappear. [54]

In spring 1869, with word of the imminent destruction of the Paraguayan government, the new U.S. President Ulysses Grant issued the order to recall McMahon. With little known of McMahon himself, Washburn speculated that he too had fallen victim to the tyrant López. [55] McMahon nonetheless stepped through the allied lines under escort in June and promptly made his trip back to the United States with a much different impression of the Paraguayan leader. Upon reaching Europe, he exchanged correspondence with Gregorio Benítez who was anxious for any word from the front and desirous for the general's public advocacy of the Paraguayan cause. In fact, Benítez had just been in the United States in May lobbying political leaders and major newspapers there, reminding them that the "Republic of Paraguay currently defends not only its own cause but that of all of republican America." [56] McMahon did not disappoint in this regard. He arrived back in the United States as the most prominent public defender of the López regime and the alleged cause that it sustained. He spoke to newspapers, gave lectures to veterans groups, testified in Congress, and wrote articles himself doing so, all during the final despairing months of the war.

McMahon was not naïve. He acknowledged the severity with which López crushed dissenters and executed deserters in the ranks. [57] When pressed, he even admitted to the likelihood of some atrocities committed by his forces. [58] Yet he actively countered accusations that López was a monster beyond the pale of humanity. Instead, his impressions offered to the press emphasised qualities just the opposite, that of a refined and enlightened leader. He called López in one instance an "intelligent, polished and courageous, and conversant with European manners and diplomacy." [59] On another occasion, he described the president as "possessed of fine administrative abilities, and not more cruel in war than the most complaining of Allied Generals." [60] He vacillated in having ever actually witnessed

torture in the Paraguayan lines and placed doubt in the validity of most such reports. [61] In a lecture to the veterans of the 69th New York Regiment in February 1870, McMahon pronounced the character of López as "that of a true soldier and scholar, a gentleman of winning and pleasing address... Unlike the monster his enemies have represented him, he was gentle, though brave, his worst crime being that for five years he has heroically defended the liberty of his native land." [62] López seemed, above all, to be an upstanding General and patriot.

These were controversial positions. In early 1870, the House Committee on Foreign Relations had begun a formal investigation into events surrounding the López government's alleged violation of the U.S. legation, while Washburn was still minister. Later an official censure from the chamber condemned the actions of the regime. [63] The proceedings produced accusations by congressmen against McMahon himself for alleged illicit dealings, given his staunch defence of the autocrat. Washburn, whose powerful family had pushed for the proceedings, also took his shots at the character of McMahon. He resorted to defamations of religious prejudice and called his successor's support of López the fancy of a fanatical Catholic. The allied propaganda machine had also levelled accusations that McMahon was López's lackey, having allegedly taken money and even led troops in the field. [64]

The charges, however unfounded or discriminatory, forced McMahon to face the seeming contradiction inherent in his position, that of a democratic defender of an apparent dictator whose actions evoked the atrocities of petty warlord-caudillos. He, in turn, fell back on a portrayal of the Paraguayan president consistent with liberal-democratic values. In his estimation, López was the beholder of the will of the Paraguayan people, the embodiment of national determination. McMahon testified that, although some dissenters rankled, "There certainly exists among the people - and I think among quite a majority of them - a most devoted attachment to López. It is a devotion

that surpasses anything I have ever witnessed before. My impression is, this feeling exists among the great majority of the people.” [65] López, in his view, only represented the popular sovereignty of Paraguay. And as with his endearment to old General John Sedgewick, McMahan could appreciate the appeal of a charismatic leader for people supposedly fighting for a patriotic cause.

McMahon also believed that greater evils loomed than López’s alleged atrocities. In a February 1870 article written for the magazine Harper’s Monthly, he charged that the prosecution of the war itself by Brazil and its allies proved more criminal in its act and potential consequences. He condemned the treaty provisions of the Triple Alliance as contrary to democratic values and self-determination. McMahon openly described the conflict as “a war of conquest and absorption by Brazil” and asserted as incoherent “to claim that the war, on part of the allies, if unjust in its inception, can be defended by prophetic relation to the vile but imaginary murders done three or four years later upon the person of the venerable mother of President López.” [66] Moreover, he decried:

to permit such conquest and absorption is contrary to received and traditional principles of American policy. We have assumed the role of protector of the American republics. We played it with success and honor in regard to Mexico. We encourage by popular sympathy the struggle which Cuba carries on to gain her independence. Yet both the government and the people survey with indifference the magnificent fight which Paraguay has maintained for five long years to preserve the independence which she gallantly conquered a half a century ago; and this independence, won from Spain, is threatened by a monarchy far less enlightened, whose dominion will be fatal to the development of Paraguay and to the progress initiated there eight years ago by this very ruler whom it is the fashion among certain interested parties of more or less standing to denounce as a barbarian and a “monster unfit to live.” [67]

While invoking the “traditional principles” of the Monroe Doctrine, McMahon nonetheless articulated the evolved and perhaps more

idealistic sentiments of his time. It was the geopolitical vision that saw co-aligned American republics struggling anew against monarchic and slave regimes of Old World origin, similarly expressed by lettered agents of the Paraguayan state, which also had its echoes elsewhere in the hemisphere. Indeed, McMahon explicitly noted how such struggles in Mexico, Cuba, and Paraguay were linked and deserving of sympathy from the United States. Their fights all seemed to reflect the efforts to preserve and extend republicanism, as was won with his own country’s sacrifices in civil war. They seemed to gather the inspiring aura of anti-colonial and anti-slavery battles, behind which perhaps the United States, considering its revolutionary origins and recent travails, should stand. A subsequent article in Harper’s in April thus made further appeals for this very sympathy for Paraguay’s war, vividly, in words and sketches, as indicated, depicting incredible acts of sacrifice by Paraguayan men, women, and children in the context of patriotic devotion, as the plight of fellow Americans. [68] Here, outrage over alleged crimes by a dictator diluted into anti-colonial, anti-imperial feelings garnered for a fellow republic also fighting to be saved from a monarchy. McMahon had joined counterparts from Latin America and elsewhere to indeed declare López and his people heroic defenders of republican America.

By the time McMahon’s second article was published in April 1870, the war in Paraguay had already come to an end. On 1 March, Brazilian soldiers killed López in a creek bed in the North-Eastern forests of the country. His resistance had finally reached its collapse. The war had devastated Paraguay; over half of the territory’s pre-war population of a half-million had either died or fled the disaster. The republic remained under mainly Brazilian occupation for a decade longer, its existence perhaps a mere legal fiction, only revived again toward the end of the century. [69] And with the defeat, López’s memory persisted in infamy for decades as that of a barbaric tyrant who had destroyed his country in war. Even former lieutenants who were faithful to the end later disavowed him. [70] Largely forgotten was the

old reverence of López as republican hero. In fact, his alleged role as national hero also had to be revived in the country much later, if nonetheless, in altered form, serving different political purposes in another era. [71] McMahon himself had most likely learned of López's death and defeat in a newspaper dispatch. He nonetheless hung onto his convictions. Three years later, living in New York City and soon to pursue a political career in the Democratic Party, he was elected president of the local "Cuban League," a lobby group supporting Cuban insurgents in their efforts to win their independence from Spain. [72] Although McMahon held onto a geopolitical vision once shared with lettered patriots from Paraguay, as well as with those from Mexico and Cuba, it proved perhaps too laden with contradiction and difficult to sustain. Just as he and Gregorio Benítez, for example, never fully resolved the tension of championing the purported republican cause of a Paraguayan

president who behaved much like a repressive despot, it turned more doubtful that the United States itself could serve as a benevolent protector of American republics. In Mexico, expanding political and economic interests of the United States in the region helped to prop up the dictatorial successor of the Juárez regime, Porfirio Díaz, for over three decades. Then, in Cuba, a pre-emptive invasion by the United States in 1898 helped Cuban insurgents finally to secure their independence from Spain, if only to fall under the imperial influence of their supposed benefactor. McMahon despaired at these developments. In his 1899 poem read at a ceremony to commend the efforts of Union soldiers to save the Republic, he denounced such imperial tendencies as betraying their noble sacrifices.

Michael Kenneth Huner

Notes

1. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2. "Will Not Run for Congress - Gen. McMahon has decided not to be a candidate," *New York Times*, 22 October 1892.
3. "General Martin Thomas McMahon," *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. ed. James Grant Wilson and John Fiske. (New York: D. Appleton Co., 1888-89) vol. 4, 148.
4. "Gen. McMahon Rumored to be Appointed Collector," *New York Times*, 16 April 1885. This article provides biographical information on McMahon's life before the Civil War.
5. "Gen. Martin T. McMahon Nominated by Democrats for the Assembly," *New York Times*, 15 October 1890.
6. Arthur H. Davis, *Martin T. McMahon: Diplomático en el estridor de las armas* (Asunción: Editora Litocolor, 1985) 82, 439. Davis provides the photographs of McMahon in his edition.
7. "Gen. McMahon's Illness," *New York Times*, 14 February 1887. The article reported on an incident in which McMahon was overcome by intense chest pain and "raised considerable blood" after lifting weights at a health club. It attributed the affliction to the exposure suffered during the Civil War and indicates a similar attack sixteen years earlier.
8. Davis 57.
9. McMahon, *Sedgwick* 32. Bruce Catton provides a classic description of Sedgwick's death, *A Stillness at Appomattox*. (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1953) 109.
10. *Appleton's* 129; Davis 441.
11. McMahon, *Sedgwick* 19.

12. "Decoration Day," *New York Times*, 1 June 1875. An excerpt from McMahon's speech during the ceremony was included in the article.
13. *Who Was Who in America* (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1943) vol.1, 820.
14. Davis, 470.
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16. "Why I am a Democrat," *New York Times*, 29 October 1893. The article takes excerpts out of McMahon's essay under the same title in Donahue's magazine.
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18. McMahon, Sedgwick, 28-29.
19. McMahon, Sedgwick 5.
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61. "The War in Paraguay- Lecture by General M. T. McMahon," *New York Times*, 15 February 1870.
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63. Washburn 557; *Globe* 325; Mora and Cooney, 32.
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John O'Brien: Captain Dynamite of the Cuban War for Independence, 1868-1898s

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Abstract

This article, written by noted Cuban historian Herminio Portell Vilá as one of a series of biographies of Cuban patriots and heroes of Pan-American solidarity, traces the swashbuckling adventures of John O'Brien, the feisty sea captain who ferried Cuban republicans from the US and the Caribbean coast to serve the nationalist cause. In his characteristic storytelling style, professor Portell Vilá recreates the personality and activities of this colourful son of Irish immigrants and reveals just how deep the love of liberty lay in his breast.

The revolutionary effort of Cubans to achieve their independence was prolonged for much more time than should have been necessary, and it required far more heroism and greater sacrifices than that of any other people of the Americas. During the course of nearly one hundred years, Cuba was in continuous political tumult, marked by both smaller, abortive conspiracies and larger-scale attempts to throw off the Spanish colonial yoke. Because Spain had lost the majority of its New World dominions during the first third of the nineteenth century, it had learned its lesson well and went on to concentrate all remaining resources in Cuba, along with an intensified hatred of republicanism and all that was American. With jealous zeal, the Spanish Crown's most characteristic strategy was to keep Cubans out of the armed services and to render it impossible for their sons to become sailors. The imperial government dared not manufacture any guns, sabres, or munitions on the island itself; all weaponry had to be brought to Cuba from abroad through official Spanish channels. Its aim was to maintain domination over a docile and disarmed population. Cubans should be kept unfamiliar with the technical knowledge of warfare and lack access to such maritime communication as would be indispensable for any successful rebellion. This imperial monopoly over the trade in arms and explosives characterized a regime of externally-controlled defense that left the average Cuban

to his own devices when personally threatened or when contemplating a rebellion. For example, the machete was a key tool for agricultural workers, but in the hands of the mambises [a colloquial name for Cuban revolutionaries], it could be turned into a terrible weapon.

Cuban uprisings, therefore, have always depended on military expeditions that were organized and equipped abroad. These ragtag ventures had to alight at remote spots along the coast with the goal of linking up with patriots in order to provide them with arms, and to stage their surprise attacks. From the infamous 'Expedition of the Thirteen' in Bolívar's days (1826) throughout the course of the entire nineteenth century, all Cuban revolutionary movements needed outside assistance. This was the case with the secret Masonic lodges known as 'Los Soles y Rayos de Bolívar' and 'La Cadena Triangular y Soles de Libertad', and with the many attempts of the filibuster Narciso López and his followers, up until 1868. Similarly, the sustained guerrilla effort of the Ten Years' War (1868-1878), the Guerra Chiquita (1879-1880) and, finally, the last and definitive push for independence between 1895 and 1898 all had crucial contacts and assistance from abroad. In fact, Cubans would have freed themselves much earlier if they had actually received all the war matériel that they had bought but which had never made it to the

island due to having been confiscated in the United States or in British Caribbean colonies, or having been lost at sea, or because the cargo was captured by the Spaniards. The failure of their many attempts, on the other hand, was almost always also the failure of one or more Cuban amateurs who had been trying to prepare themselves as navigators. On many occasions these men paid with their lives – they were shot, hanged, or garrotted for struggling for their homeland's liberty. For all these reasons, it was difficult for Cubans to acquire sufficient technical knowledge to head out on the open sea with confidence and strength. Gunrunning in support of the Cuban mambises was one of the riskiest endeavours along the margins of Caribbean society.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the United States government was showered with constant denunciations from the Spanish Legation in Washington which consistently invoked neutrality laws and international treaties in order to curb illegal trade of all kinds to Cuba. Its agents operated throughout the major cities of the eastern seaboard from New York to Key West to New Orleans, all of whom actively worked to impede the many expeditions that were outfitted on those shores. But, even if the United States federal government relaxed its vigilance or showed any sympathy for the organisation of expeditions headed to Cuba, the rebel exiles were also being shadowed by implacable and untiring spies in the service of Spain; many of these 'gumshoes' belonged to the Pinkerton Detective Agency with salaries paid directly from Cuba using contributions that the colonial government managed to extract forcibly from the islanders themselves. [3] The mid-nineteenth century was a time of dramatic struggles all throughout the independent Latin American republics. There were inter-American border wars that fuelled lucrative businesses for the daring navigators and their supplies, and whose personnel were often drawn from the margins of the law. These men were known as filibusters and, without a doubt, they revelled in the memory of those valiant highwaymen of the seas, the pirates, who had been the first to rise up against colonial arbitrariness and who had challenged

the power of the great European nations. Indeed, the pirates almost managed to establish their own independent republics governed from their Caribbean island haunts.

A Pirate's Life for Me

Captain John O'Brien of New York had made a notorious career of gunrunning and the conduction of dangerous cargo to its intended destination, no matter where it might have originated. Born in the heart of the docklands and shipyards of New York's East River, the earliest memories he had were those of the sea and sailboat, not of his parents or home environment. Little Johnny O'Brien, the son of Irish immigrants who worked on the docks, first crawled and then ran around the workshops, climbed the walls, skipped up the steps, and explored the ships under construction; he never refused a ride on a motorboat or the ferries, and especially loved the big boats on which he worked as a cabin boy. As he grew older, he studied navigation, and eventually graduated as a ship's pilot. 'He was very skilled, dedicated and worked harder than anyone else, this Johnny O'Brien,' the old 'sea dogs' pronounced sententiously, 'but he had something of the Devil in him.' Obstinate, determined and somewhat of an evil genius, prone to fighting, he was not born for a tranquil life. His daydreams were those of Captain Kidd. For him, there was no law except his own, and he knew no other way to react against injustice except with violence.

In effect, the reputation that Johnny O'Brien had achieved by age of twenty-five was that of a fearsome man, full of generous impulses and capable of throwing himself enthusiastically into whatever noble cause he found until he reached the sacrificial end. O'Brien had two supreme and overriding loyalties, one to his boat and the other to the sea itself. All other loyalties, including patriotism, he understood in his own particular way. He could switch sides in various conflicts. For example, Johnny O'Brien, named third official on the cruiser Illinois of the United States navy, participated in the famous battle attack on the USS Merrimack when the confederacy raised and rebuilt it in 1862, but he became upset with the

Admiral Louis M. Goldsborough's caution and discharged himself; a few months later, O'Brien had signed on as commander of the South's brigantine *Deer* in which he brought a cargo of arms and munitions from New York to Matamoros in Texas for the confederacy, outwitting a federal blockade. [4] He always considered this episode to be a supreme demonstration of his unrivalled sailing ability. Later on, as pilot for the Port of New York, O'Brien's skill confirmed his reputation as a daring pilot; he knew the coastline like back of his hand and understood the treacherous currents of Hell's Gate on an intuitive level. O'Brien was soaking wet much of the time and, despite stormy seasons, he never hesitated to bring to port or take out to sea any boat that was entrusted to him, and he never had a single accident. Around 1871, all the toughest piloting jobs were left to Johnny Daredevil, or Fearless Little Johnny, as he was then called, a young man with muscles of steel and unequalled competence.

Ship-owners themselves came to prefer Johnny O'Brien as their captain on difficult routes, secure in the knowledge that he always made it to port with their boats. There were times when he was in command of two ships at the same time, the *General Washington* and the *General Cromwell*, both of which trafficked between New York and Halifax. Difficult or insubordinate crews were not a problem for him; besides being a strict disciplinarian, he earned respect and loyalty for the generosity with which he treated his subordinates.

With the fame he so richly merited, 'Johnny Daredevil' was put in command of the steamship *City of Mexico* in 1885. He was hired by Colombian revolutionaries from New York with an expedition destined to overthrow President Dr Rafael Núñez who had been elected as a liberal, but went on to embark upon a programme of conservative centralisation, perhaps even a dictatorship. [5] As O'Brien had already demonstrated in his own country, he was not given to a preoccupation with the niceties of who was in the right up until that point in his life. He had fought for both the North and the South

during the United States Civil War, and in the same vein now, he was allying himself with Colombian liberals against the reactionaries. Because of his indifference towards issues of justice and sectarian politics, the crew of the *City of Mexico* signed up in the belief that they were engaging in a legitimate commercial trip to Jamaica, and then found themselves one day on the coast of Colombia. Yet this new adventure would awaken O'Brien's interest in the many other similar voyages all along the Atlantic coast of the United States, and once he found his true cause, he came to be known as the sailor who never backed down in the face of anything.

An Irish American Comes to Cuba

A short while later, Johnny O'Brien made his first contacts with Cuba and the Cubans. The *City of Mexico*, ostensibly chartered for the transportation of bananas, coconuts and tropical fruits throughout the Caribbean, began to visit Baracoa and other ports of the island. Its explosive captain, O'Brien, had to deal with the corruption and the despotism prevailing in all parts, and he began to sympathize with a tyrannised people whom he found to be both liberal and hospitable. Using the cover of each legitimate trip that he conducted, O'Brien also brought in his contraband small quantities of arms and munitions that were destined to be put to use in the little revolution that was slowly starting to take shape. Somehow or another, the Spanish authorities discovered that O'Brien was up to something other than simply buying Guinean bananas and coconuts; the sea wolf understood that the best thing to do would be to suspend his voyages and avoid complications. His sympathies for the Cubans, however, began to grow in the same proportion to his hostility for the Spaniards.

Toward 1887, the *City of Mexico* passed into the hands of the President of Honduras, Marco Aurelio Soto, friend and protector of Antonio Maceo, Tomás Estrada Palma and other Cuban patriots. [6] O'Brien was contracted to captain a ship to carry a revolutionary expedition; the plan failed when English authorities intercepted information in Jamaica, but the exiles reorganised themselves with a new plan. The

already well-known contrabandista captain was put in command of the Norwegian steamship Fram which he took to the Turks and Caicos Islands north of Hispaniola; there he joined the expeditionaries intending to invade Honduras in order to restore Soto to the presidency. O'Brien was not a man of many scruples, and his passengers did not like him, with the exception of three, all Cuban veterans of the Ten Years' War who were in Central America as professional soldiers.

'How is it that you joined up with this mongrel group who promised you land if you would fight?' he asked the Cubans one night while sitting in the cabin drinking coffee. He added 'I could tell that you are the best element of those desperate adventurers from a mile away.'

Their response: 'We have no other thought but the liberation of Cuba, and we need to be able to count on a base of operations near the island, maybe even in Central America. The revolutionary preparations had just finished and more were being made in New York, New Orleans and Jamaica. Precisely because of the lack of outside aid, now we are dispersed and we will be roaming until the struggle calls us home again. We have already fought once before, alone, over the course of ten years, in order to liberate Cuba, and we will return to do it again. However, our great difficulty and major stumbling block is that we have to import arms and munitions from the United States, evading the vigilance of the North American authorities, the Spaniards, and the spies in the service of Spain?'

The Irish-American sat silently for a long time, thinking. Finally, he said solemnly, 'If you need an expert sailor to be a filibuster one day, remember Johnny O'Brien. I also want to come to the aid of Cuba.' During the course of his time in Soto's Honduran service, O'Brien came to know Antonio Maceo, the great Cuban patriot whose integrity, discretion, and bearing made an excellent impression upon him. [7] Maceo and his Cuban compañeros received early proof of O'Brien's friendship when he refused to permit a Spanish cannon to pass between the island of San Andrés and the Honduran coast in order to assure himself that

the expeditionaries were not going to Cuba. This event may perhaps have contributed to the chain of events that culminated in the arrest of the caudillo and his compatriots.

Lighting 'Captain Dynamite's' Fuse

Upon returning to New York, a new adventure awaited Johnny O'Brien, one which would give him his nickname for life. A Cuban merchant established in Panama negotiated the purchase of seventy tonnes of dynamite in the US city, but did not have a ship that was willing to take a cargo of explosives on such a dangerous passage. Juan O'Brien was already well-known among the Cubans, and, therefore, he was the one to whom they confided the voyage; it took place in the middle of tropical storms which threatened the ship with destruction at any moment. Fortunately, the journey went off without a hitch. The Rambler's dangerous cargo had been the talk of the town among all the seagoing folk from Boston to Philadelphia. When the merchant received notice that his seventy tons of dynamite had arrived safely in Panama, he decided that it was no longer sufficient to call the skilled captain 'Johnny Daredevil'; from then on he would be known as 'Captain Dynamite'. This is how John O'Brien has come to be remembered in Cuban history.

Captain O'Brien's last filibustering service before enlisting himself in the Cuban expeditions was that of bringing arms and war matériel for General Louis Mondestin Florvil Hippolyte's faction in Haiti. He forcibly conquered power and expelled his rival. The General offered O'Brien the chance to be named admiral of the tiny Haitian navy, but he flatly refused. O'Brien was one of the better-known sailors along the routes between the United States and various Caribbean islands, and his knowledge was invaluable. Captain Dynamite knew where rebels could take refuge at any given moment. For that reason, and many others, he was an irreplaceable aid to the Cubans.

Joining the Cuban War for Independence

The first expedition of the War of 1895 was that of La Fernandina, which ended in a much-talked-about failure that had the effect of breaking down the revolutionary preparations that José Martí, Máximo Gómez and Maceo had made with such care. The *Amadis*, the *Lagonda*, and the *Baracoa* were detained by the North American authorities by virtue of a betrayal that was quickly followed by insistent complaints from the Spanish ambassador in Washington. Rifles, revolvers, machetes, munitions and other war matériel that had been bought with funds cobbled together one peso at a time, often through patriotic donations of mere pennies, were confiscated. This was an early, and definitive failure of the first stage of the movement. Cuban patriotism then went on to initiate its revolution with almost no arms at all. Its chiefs, Martí and Gómez, headed for the island in a little more than a rowboat with four more compatriots. Antonio Maceo and Flor Crombet, went separately with a group of twenty-three other patriots. They were the first and poorest expeditionaries who came to Cuba, and it seemed to point to a repeat of the setbacks that had plagued previous attempts. In the United States, however, an ad hoc Department of Expeditions had been organised among Cubans, headed by Colonel Esteban Núñez, a veteran of the Ten Years' War. Other Cubans joined and aided them upon arrival, most of whom had knowledge of navigation and machinery that was little more than elementary.

It was not until the end of July 1895 that the mambises received an expedition of importance, which was that of Carlos Roloff, disembarked near Tunas de Zaza and which brought with it three hundred rifles, three hundred machetes, and corresponding munitions. One hundred and fifty men, under the command of General Serafín Sánchez, incorporated themselves with the disembarked group. Later on, several ships arrived and their passengers disembarked, including: the *León* at the Punto de Taco in Baracoa, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes in the *Laureada* at La Caleta in Baracoa, and General Francisco Carrillo in the *Horsa*, at Cabañita which was a small dock joined to the fort of La Socapa, Santiago de

Cuba. Even with the influx of men and armaments, they still would not have been able to secure the island's independence, had not been for the heroism with which the Cubans met their challenge. With their limited supply of guns and ammunition, it would have had been impossible to carry out the invasion.

Gómez and Maceo made frantic demands to delegate Tomás Estrada Palma to send them arms and matériel. Their letters arrived at the offices of the Cuban Revolutionary Party in New York, painting with sombre colours the situation of an army that was carrying out such a portentous deed almost entirely unarmed. Estrada Palma and Emilio Núñez struggled with the lack of resources, but worried even more about the difficulty of obtaining good boats and personnel who could be trusted. Espionage had infiltrated the ranks of the revolutionaries, many of whom had practically sold themselves to Spain. In one notorious case, the captain of the *Comodore* had been bought for \$5000; he revealed in advance the place where his expedition would disembark. When Calixto García embarked with his men on the steamship *Hawkins* in January 1896, a traitor opened the floodgates and the boat sank with the loss of ten lives and all the valuable cargo. A few days later, in the middle of New York harbour, Calixto García and his companions were arrested on board the *Bermuda*, after Spanish agents made a complaint when they were about to raise anchor.

The consternation was general among Cuban emigrés. Violent attacks were directed against Estrada Palma and his auxiliaries. The expatriate community held them responsible for these expensive disasters, while the mambises in Cuba frantically and futilely cried out for arms. The press continually published information on the activities of the Cubans and their friend Johnny O'Brien. For his part, Captain Dynamite, reading the newspapers while seated in the doorway of his house in Arlington, New Jersey, on the outskirts of New York, despaired in the face of these failures.

One night, speaking before various compatriots, he declared 'I affirm that it is

possible to bring expeditionaries to Cuba, despite the vigilance of the federal agents and the many spies that infest these territories.'

'I don't suppose that you are thinking of returning to filibustering and coming to the aid of the Cubans,' ventured one of his friends, while O'Brien was taking furious draws on his pipe.

'Well, then, it would not upset me to do that,' Captain Dynamite replied. 'In the first place, I don't have many good memories of the Spaniards, and the life of a pilot in port is very monotonous. For a long time now, I have had genuine sympathy for the idea of Cuban independence.'

'John,' said another of his friends, 'I know Mr John D. Hart, the owner of the Bermuda, and I am going to tell him about our conversation.'

On the following day, 14 March 1896, Mr. Hart came calling upon Johnny O'Brien, after having consulted with the chiefs of the Cuban emigrés, who eventually confirmed their faith in Don Tomás [Estrada Palma] after an acrimonious debate.

'Captain,' Mr. Hart began to say, 'I have called upon you today to discuss how we can aid Cuba by bringing General García's expedition there. The recent setbacks and betrayals have produced such an effect upon the Cubans that, unless General García arrives in Cuba with his arms, the general reticence of the contributors who live there will become a real danger. If we cannot get the General there, the Cuban fighters will wait defenceless and eventually will have to surrender or be killed. I have a good boat, and I am disposed to risk it in the hands of a man of resolve, loyal and able, like yourself. I cannot offer much for your services, which may end up costing you your life. The revolutionary treasury can offer you \$500, but there is glory in this enterprise itself, aiding a people struggling to be free.'

'Mr. Hart, the economic part of your offer does not interest me,' responded O'Brien. 'Yes, I am happy to help the Cubans' cause. Years ago, I offered myself to the revolutionaries, among them General Maceo, and the only

thing I regret is that this invitation has been delayed so long. You can count on me.'

'When will you be ready to set sail?' Mr. Hart enquired.

'I am ready to go right now,' was the response. 'Despatch the ship as if it were going to Veracruz, and we will leave tomorrow morning. Tell General García and his men to go to Atlantic City by train that same night and I will pick them up by boat along the coast. They should go by the last train so that they will not have to linger too long there, and they should keep away from the town. You can get a little rowboat on shore to take them out to sea where they can board the Bermuda, which will be waiting there for them. If all goes well, the ship will be there in front of Atlantic City tomorrow around noon. If a coast guard vessel follows us, I will take measures during the day to shake it off before nightfall. Then Monday morning we will take the general and his companions on board.'

All went according to plan. The Bermuda was loaded up with war matériel when it left New York, supposedly heading for Veracruz. Surreptitiously, the Cuban revolutionaries slipped on board near Atlantic City and headed off toward Cuba. Coming face to face with Captain Dynamite, Calixto García said to him, with the same pessimism that had dominated his previous reversals in fortune, 'I never thought that I would see Cuba again.'

'Do not worry about that, General,' said O'Brien. 'This time you will disembark in Cuba.'

'That is what they all said,' replied the old soldier.

'But I have never been the one to make that promise to you, have I?' interrupted the old sea dog.

'Certainly not,' admitted García.

'Well then, accept my word of honour. This time you will return to your fatherland.'

Two weeks later, in Marabí, Baracoa, General Calixto García returned to Cuba, after an

absence of many years and having been taken out of the country as a prisoner. A good number of patriots disembarked with him, along with more than twelve hundred guns intended to energise the revolution. After the brief stopover, as he was bidding goodbye, Calixto García became overwhelmed with emotion when he said to O'Brien, 'Captain, you have kept your word. Where others lied to me, you did not. We will never forget you. I hope that you will continue in the service of Cuba, because we need it.'

Devoted Until the End of His Days

The Bermuda returned to the seas and returned to the United States, where O'Brien was charged with being in violation of the North American neutrality laws. Estrada Palma received Captain Dynamite as a hero, which, in fact, he was, and the exiles' Revolutionary Delegation invited him to join their work as chief of navigation. Johnny O'Brien accepted their offer, with the declaration that he was doing so because of the sympathy that Cuba's cause inspired in him. Almost immediately, the Spanish espionage network discovered that the famous filibuster had come to an agreement with the mambises and made him an object of careful surveillance. One day, Mrs O'Brien doused one of these thugs with boiling water when he lingered outside; others were caught in the terrible bear traps that Captain Dynamite had set out in the yard when they tried to sneak into her house. In both cases, before freeing the busybodies, O'Brien told them, in the most energetic terms, what he thought of Cuba's Governor Valeriano 'the Butcher' Weyler, of the Spanish Minister in the United States Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, of Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, and of the Spanish colonial regime in general. He made them promise to repeat his words to their superiors when they reported the misfortunes they just suffered at his hands.

Cubans had been encouraged by the success of the Bermuda. Following O'Brien's advice, other smaller expeditions came to Cuba, and disembarked all or part of their cargo, but in order to maintain the war throughout the entire country, to complete the invasion, and to

construct the trail, logistics demanded that the boats be much bigger. For these reasons, the foreign community organised new expeditions on the Laurada and the Dauntless, undoubtedly the most important ones ever despatched by the overseas Cubans. Before the aforementioned ships were sent out, however, the Irish-American Juan O'Brien had paved the way with small disembarkations which were ultra-useful, of men and equipment in various places throughout the island. His had been a mere tugboat, but the man himself was to dedicated to bigger things.

In those days, Spanish diplomats, federal agents and spies of all types worked in conjunction to bring Captain Dynamite to trial for having violated the United States' laws of neutrality. But, wherever the picturesque sea wolf was betrayed to lawmen, juries declared him to be innocent. He had always handled his affairs with great caution in order not to leave evidence that might incriminate himself. Under O'Brien's personal direction and others who acted according to his instructions, the expeditions continued to arrive in Cuba. The available boats were old and almost unserviceable; some were mere tugboats which resulted in extremely dangerous adventures on the high seas. However, Johnny O'Brien was never once shipwrecked while in the Cuban service and always made his haul with all possible precision. The revolutionaries had twice risked their lives in order to serve their Fatherland, and they would stop at nothing to complete the task.

In December 1896, Captain Dynamite weighed anchor in the port of La Fernandina, carrying the expedition of Colonel Rafael Pérez Carbó, while some friends entertained the customs administrator with a game of poker. The distracted official boasted that it was impossible to beat him. This time, the expeditionary boat was just a little tug, the Three Friends, later to become famous as a filibuster's ship; on board it had guns, munitions, machetes and a twelve-pound cannon called Hotchkiss. On 19 December 1896, the Three Friends approached in order to obscure the predetermined rendezvous point for the disembarkation in the

jurisdiction of Cienfuegos. Johnny O'Brien was at the wheel.

'Break port and head for the sea at full speed!' shouted the old contrabandista.

'It seems to me that you are outrunning a shadow,' said Colonel Federico Pérez Carbó, one of the chiefs of the Department of Expeditions and who had not yet seen the enemy ship.

'You think so?' O'Brien laughed, 'Wait a minute and you will see that I am right.'

The Three Friends barely escaped when a detonation exploded from the bow of the persecuting cannoner and lit a blaze. The cannonball landed very close to the tug while O'Brien was saying to Pérez Carbó 'There we have what you had called a lively shadow, colonel.' Almost immediately, two more Spanish ships appeared, making it evident that they had fallen into a trap intended to capture the Three Friends or else to sink it. O'Brien ordered the cannon Hotchkiss to be armed at the stern, secured with rope, and aimed at their pursuers. One of the sailors, Mike Walsh, had been an artilleryman in the United States navy, and he was put in charge of the cannon.

'If you would permit me to handle it,' said Walsh, 'I guarantee that I will induce many pains in Spanish stomachs with these little pills.'

'Ah, young man,' O'Brien replied, 'discharge the cannon as often as you can, because our lives depend on it.'

'Now this is glory!' exclaimed Walsh, and then, taking the megaphone in his own hands, shouted in the direction of enemy boats, 'Prepare yourselves for a burial at sea!'

In effect, shortly after the attack of the cannon Hotchkiss, he made his only shot which almost sank the Three Friends, but the grenade exploded with precision on the bridge of the cannoner, which was a half a mile away, killing thirteen men and wounding a dozen more. With that, the persecution ended, and the small Three Friends continued its voyage until it discharged the expedition.

Governor Weyler's rage knew no bounds. A spy sent by his secretary Congosto offered the sum of twenty-four thousand pesos to O'Brien in order to discover the whereabouts of the next expedition. The Dynamite Captain refused the bribe, and then brought the formidable Roloff-Castillo Duany expedition to Cuba on board the Laurada, which disembarked in Banes, and, without the loss of a single crate, turned over its cargo to the revolutionaries.

'Captain O'Brien has eluded us until now,' thundered a furious Weyler, 'but that same audacity will allow him to fall into our hands. Sooner or later we will capture him and when we do, instead of executing him as we will do with the Cubans who accompany him, we will hang him ignominiously from the flagpole of La Cabaña, in view of the whole city.' O'Brien's response was characteristic and elicited a great guffaw from his men, at Weyler's expense. He taunted back: 'To show my disdain for you and for those you obey, on my next trip to Cuba I will disembark within sight of Havana. Maybe I will even enter into the bay itself and take you prisoner. If I capture you, I will cut you to pieces and feed you to the boiler of the Dauntless.'

In the month of May 1897, in the Dauntless, O'Brien discharged half of his cargo at Nuevitas and took off with the rest, heading toward Havana, where he arrived on 24 May. Under the watchful eyes of the coast guard and garrison, he unloaded the other half a mile from El Morro. He had complied with his promise to Weyler. Thus, this valiant and incorruptible man continued to risk his life for Cuba in boats great and small, under sail and steam, as many as he could charter, to carry arms, munitions, medicines, clothing, et cetera, to a people struggling for independence. His name had been turned to a legend of unforgettable, heroic deeds.

On 15 February 1898, at the wheel of the Dauntless, O'Brien disembarked an expedition in Nuevas Grandes and, in the course of a few hours, landed another a little further along in the bay of Matanzas. Upon his return, while he was in the Florida Keys, O'Brien learned of the

explosion of the USS Maine in the bay of Havana, and quickly realised that open war between Spain and the United States would soon follow. A few weeks later, at the beginning of hostilities, Estrada Palma put Johnny O'Brien, Captain Dynamite, in the command of the Alfredo, the first ship of war that flew the Cuban flag freely in foreign waters. His plans had been devised specifically for O'Brien, so that he could dedicate himself to the service of the expeditions; chance of circumstances had converted it into the first boat of free Cuba.

'Now I sail under my own flag,' said Captain Dynamite, gazing upon the Cuban flag flying proudly in the air.

Johnny O'Brien, the intrepid Irish-American filibuster who had risked his life many times for the independence of Cuba, ended his long and illustrious career as a captain in the Cuban Coast Guard and Pilot of the port of Havana in the independent republic that he had helped to create, but which never compensated him as fully as it should have.

Herminio Portell Vilá

Notes

1. The original article appeared as "John O'Brien, el Capitán Dinamita" in Herminio Portell- Vilá, 25 biografías de americanos ilustres, (Havana: Editorial Minerva, 1944), pp.353-367.
2. Herminio Portell-Vilá, (1901-1992) was a professor at the University of Havana, where he once taught a young Fidel Castro. He left the country for Miami shortly after the Revolution, where he worked for the Voice of America, was Director of the American Security Council, and continued to write his historical studies. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, he was the author of: Narciso López y su época (1930), Céspedes: El Padre de la Patria Cubana (1933), Medio siglo de "El Mundo": Historia de un gran periódico 1901-1951 (1951), Benjamín Franklin: El primer americano universal (1956), History of Cuba in its Relations with the United States (1973), Nueva Historia de la República de Cuba (1990), and Finlay: Vida de un sabio cubano (1990).
3. The Pinkerton National Detective Agency was founded by Allan Pinkerton in 1850, and specialised in several nefarious jobs: infiltrating the work forces of factories and mining companies to root out potential unionizers, private military contracting work, and guard duties on the frontier.
4. See James L. Nelson, The Reign of Iron: The Story of the First Battling Ironclads, the Monitor and the Merrimack, (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).
5. Alberto Dangold Uribe, Rafael Núñez: regenerador de Colombia, (Madrid: Anaya, 1988); James William Park, Rafael Núñez and the Politics of Colombian Regionalism, 1863-1886, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985); Gonzalo España, La Guerra Civil de 1885: Núñez y la derrota del radicalismo, (Bogotá: Ancora Editores, 1985).
6. Darío A. Euraque, Reinterpreting the Banana Republic: Region and State in Honduras, 1870-1972, (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1996); Kenneth V. Finney, In quest of El Dorado: Precious Metal Mining and the Modernization of Honduras, 1880-1900, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987); Mario Argueta, Cronología de la reforma liberal hondureña, (Tegucigalpa: Univ. Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, 1982).
7. Philip Sheldon Foner, Antonio Maceo: The "Bronze Titan" of Cuba's Struggle for Independence, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977); José Luciano Franco, Antonio Maceo en Honduras, (La Habana, Unión Interamericana del Caribe, 1956).

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Testimonies of Irish-Argentine Veterans of the Falklands / Malvinas War (1982)

By John Kennedy (1)



The Argentine Military Cemetery on East Falkland, where 237 soldiers were buried. Most of the graves are unidentified.

The Falkland / Malvinas Islands have long been a source of friction between Argentina and Britain. The tension escalated on 19 March 1982, when a group of Argentine scrap-metal dealers hired by Argentine businessman, Constantino Davidoff, to dismantle an old whaling base, raised the Argentine flag on South Georgia Island, an uninhabited island 1,287 kilometres northeast of the Falklands / Malvinas. The event ultimately led to the Argentine invasion of the Falklands / Malvinas on 2 April 1982, code-named 'Operation Rosario'. This action led to a full-scale war with Britain, which ended with Argentina's surrender on 14 June 1982. In the end, more than one thousand Argentines and two hundred and fifty British lost their lives in the short but bitter conflict.

Many Irish-Argentines fought in the war, either as professional soldiers or as conscripts. Similarly, on the British side, there were also numerous soldiers who were either Irish-born or of Irish descent. It is not possible to ascertain the actual number of Argentine troops of Irish ancestry who participated in the war,

but merely focusing on those with Irish surnames would suggest that their representation among the troops was broadly proportionate to the estimated number of Argentines of Irish descent in the general population (approximately 0.7 per cent). Irish-Argentine soldiers contributed in many and varied ways to the conduct of the war. According to Edmundo Murray, 'translation was one particularly skilled service rendered by many Irish Argentines during the Falkland / Malvinas War' (Murray 2005: 3:6)

Individual accounts from soldiers who fought in wars can give new insights into the conduct of a war and the execution of military strategy and thereby serve as a valuable tool for the military historian. Below, the testimonies of three Irish-Argentine soldiers who fought in the war are presented, each of which portrayed the first-hand experiences of a particular category of participant: a senior officer, a newly-commissioned officer, and a conscript.

Brigadier-General Eugenio Dalton



Brigadier-General Eugenio Dalton is a grandson of Thomas Dalton of General López, Santa Fe in the province of Buenos Aires (born in 1843 in Ireland, died in 1925 in Córdoba, Argentina) and Ellen McGann. He joined the Argentine military academy in 1953 and graduated in 1956 as Sub-Lieutenant of the infantry army. In 1974, Major Dalton obtained the title of Staff Officer. Between 1977 and 1978, he attended a course at the Academy of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany, together with Commander (Major) Colm Mangan who, in 2000 was promoted to Lieutenant-General and appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Irish defence forces.

In early 1981, at the age of forty-eight and having attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, he was appointed Chief of the Operations Division of the III-X Command of the Mechanised Infantry Brigade, based in the city of La Plata, in the province of Buenos Aires. The command's mission was to prepare officers and conscripts of the units and sub-units to carry out conventional operations who could be deployed on regional missions. After the war, Major Dalton returned to his original command and continued his military career. He was promoted to Colonel in 1982, and promoted to Brigadier-General in 1987. In December 1989, he retired from the army. Following his

retirement, he acted as an advisor to the Argentine Senate on national defence issues until 2005.

A Senior Officer's Story: The War in Dalton's Words

‘In April 1982, the brigade was training the conscripts who had recently begun their year of compulsory military service. We were fully engaged with this activity and were "surprised" by the events of 2 April 1982 [the initial landing of the Argentine forces in the Falklands / Malvinas]. On 9 April, the brigade was ordered to prepare for airlift to the Falklands / Malvinas. All elements of the brigade, including conscripts from the previous year who had been drafted, were called up to go to the Falklands / Malvinas, except for the Tenth Mechanised Artillery Group, whose armaments were obsolete.

‘The higher rungs of the brigade, of which I was part, were the first to go on 11 April. We took personal equipment, including enough ammunition for a day's combat. At 19:00 hours we landed at the airport in Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino. The deployment of the whole brigade was completed on 16 April.

‘The field kitchens, water carriers, trailers and light vehicles essential for the preparation and distribution of rations, some jeeps and ammunition for fifteen days of fighting were loaded aboard the ship Formosa and arrived in Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino on 21 April.

‘Already from 2 April, General Benjamín Menéndez, commander of the Argentine troops and military governor of the Falklands / Malvinas, together with his entourage, including the commander of the Ninth Infantry Brigade, General Daher and his staff, had deployed units to defend the Argentine positions: the Twenty-Fifth Infantry Regiment in the airport area; one of his companies from the Ninth Infantry Brigade in Darwin; the Fifth Marine Battalion in Sapper Hill, Tumbledown and Williams; the Eighth Regiment Infantry and the Ninth Society of Engineers in the Fox Bay area. The Air Force with their pucara combat aircraft was

based in Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino under the command of Brigadier Luis Castellanos.

‘On 12 April, the commander of the Tenth Mechanized Infantry Brigade, General Oscar Jofre, took over as commander of ground troops in the Falklands / Malvinas. I was part of his staff, and, as the most senior officer, was appointed Chief of the Division III-Operations (G3). It fell to our division to carry out studies and to propose a course of action. The order for the commencement of operations was made on 15 April.

‘On 24 April, with the arrival of the Third Infantry Brigade and other troops to the islands, it was decided to divide the islands into two sectors. One of the sectors included the Puerto Argentino / Stanley area, the Fressinet peninsula and Port Louis (the Puerto Argentino / Stanley group). The other sector included Darwin, Goose Greens, Port Howard and Fox Bay.

‘The command post of the army’s Puerto Argentino / Stanley Group was initially installed at Moody Brook, once the headquarters of the Royal Marines, which was later destroyed by the British during aerial bombardment. Before the attacks, the command post had been moved to Stanley House in Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino.

‘The battle for the Falklands / Malvinas can be split into two phases: the first between 1 and 20 May, which was predominantly aerial, and the second from 21 May to 14 June, which was mainly terrestrial. In the first stage, we had no alternative but to play a game of “wait-and-see” for the British air and naval actions. We reacted from our positions with the modest means at our disposal to neutralise the British attacks, and waited for the Argentine Air Force based in the mainland to strike at the British fleet.

‘In the second phase, we fought against the British attack insofar as we could, given that we were faced with their superiority, isolation, lack of resources, difficult terrain, poor weather conditions and the aerial attacks we were subjected to throughout the campaign.

‘If I were to explain the list of tasks we carried out during the campaign, it would be a very extensive list indeed, but I can attest that the commander of the Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino Group worked extremely hard, with very little rest or relaxation, and, in my case, from the operations tactical centre, mindful of anything that could happen in the area of operations.

‘On 14 June, the ceasefire happened and the Argentine forces surrendered. On 17 June, I was transferred by helicopter with other prisoners of war from Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino to a disused refrigeration plant at Ajax Bay, where we stayed until 30 June, when we boarded the ship St. Edmund which was docked in Berkeley Sound. On 13 June, we were told that the ship would be sailing to the mainland and on 14 June, we landed in Puerto Madryn in the province of Chubut. At all times we received considerate treatment by the British forces.’

Colonel Leandro Luis Villegas



Leandro L. Villegas

Colonel Leandro Luis Villegas is the grandson of Santiago Farrell, who managed the estancia of Siete Arboles in General López, in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina, on behalf of an Irish-descended landowner, Patricio Cunningham (1861-1947). Farrell’s parents had emigrated from Ireland and settled in Venado Tuerto, Santa Fe. Colonel Villegas graduated from the National Military Academy in December 1981 as a Sub-Lieutenant of the

Armoured Engineers and, in January 1982, was posted to his first unit, the Ninth Company of Engineers, based in Sarmiento in Chubut.

A Newly-Commissioned Officer's Story:
The War in Villegas' Words

‘After finishing instruction on the basic training course for the recent intake of conscripts, we met on 25 March with our head officer, Major Minorini Lima. We were asked to take an oath to not divulge to anyone what he was going to say to us. He gave us the order to prepare our unit to join with the Twenty-Fifth Infantry Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Seineldin, to partake in the invasion of the Falklands / Malvinas.

‘Naturally we were surprised by the news. Immediately we began preparations to go to Comodoro Rivadavia and then fly to the Falklands / Malvinas. We landed in Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino on 2 April at approximately 08:45 hours. We stayed at the airport until late afternoon, where we were given orders to board the ship Isla de los Estados to be taken to Fox Bay. On boarding the ship, we received the news of the death of Lieutenant Giacchino, the first Argentine fatality in the war. On the journey to Fox Bay East, I shared part of the trip with Lieutenant Estebes, who disembarked at Goose Green. He would later lose his life there, in a battle with the Second British parachute regiment.

‘My role in my unit was Chief of Combat Engineers section. On arrival in Fox Bay East, we set up positions on the southwestern part, covering a large beach side village of two kilometres in length. We immediately set about shoring up our positions until 1 May, when we first came under attack. Our position was persistently shelled by the frigates. Thank God we did not suffer serious casualties. As an engineering company, a key part of our job was laying mines along our front line and giving advice to other infantry units on how to install them.

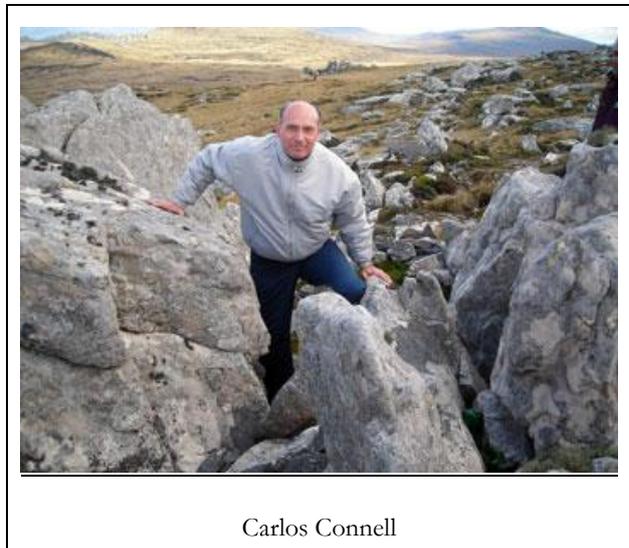
‘An interesting story is how the soldiers built pseudo-weapons (for example, anti-aircraft guns) by using the wheels of scrap cars and

sewer pipes that civilians had in their garages. The activity was undertaken at night to avoid being observed. It annoyed me as, at the time, I didn't think they would be useful. But time showed me otherwise, as on many occasions they drew enemy fire. After the war, the British were very surprised that some of coastal defences comprised pseudo-weapons.

‘As a younger officer I was proud to carry the flag of the unit. The flag was about to be burned before surrendering, but I took the decision to hide it in my spare underwear. Following our release as prisoners of war and repatriation to Argentina on the ship, the Norland, I discovered it and removed it on landing in the mainland.

‘Our treatment as prisoners of war was humane but tough, but as I was twenty-one years old and a professional soldier, it did not affect me that greatly. The great disappointment was not being able to retain the islands and the great loss in human life.’

Carlos Connell



Carlos Connell was born in Berisso near La Plata, in the province of Buenos Aires. He is the son of Carlos Esteban Connell, of Irish descent, and Nelida Arun, of Syrian-Lebanese descent. His grandfather, Thomas Connell, and grandmother, Maria Luisa MacAdden, moved to Berisso from Capitán Sarmiento, one of the

principle areas of Irish settlement in the province of Buenos Aires. Following graduation from high school in 1980, Connell carried out his civic responsibilities and entered training with the Seventh Mechanised Infantry Regiment in the city of La Plata. Conscriptation was not abolished in Argentina until 1994, under the presidency of Carlos Menem. He finished his compulsory military service at the end of 1981 and was just about to start a university degree in engineering, when he was called up for service following the outbreak of war in the South Atlantic. He should have been exempt from further service, but because the latest batch of conscripts had not been fully trained, the previous year's intake was recalled.

On his return from the war, Carlos helped found a veterans centre in La Plata, known as the Centro de Ex-Combatientes Islas Malvinas (CECIM), which assists veterans in finding jobs, accessing state services and securing affordable housing. CECIM is also active on the human rights front by searching for military commanders who mistreated common soldiers. Some officers have already been indicted for such crimes.

A Conscript's Story: The War in Connell's Words

'On Thursday 13 April 1982, we left La Plata for the Falklands / Malvinas, arriving three days later. I was immediately posted to Mount Longdon, a location of strategic importance, northwest of Port Stanley. I spent the whole war there, until 12 June, when we retreated after heavy fighting. We continued fighting until the final surrender of 14 June, after which we were repatriated to Argentina by the British ship *Continental Canberra*.

'From my impression, the landscape of the Falklands / Malvinas is similar to Ireland, particularly the rock types and the vegetation, but maybe the elevations are not as high as those of Ireland. Mount Longdon is a small rocky outcrop, about 150 metres above sea level, located at twelve to fourteen kilometres towards the northwest of Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino.

'I was a member of Company B of the Seventh Infantry Regiment, and we were supported by a group of the Tenth Regiment of Engineers and an anti-aircraft group of the Fifth Marine Battalion. In total, there were three hundred and ten troops stationed there. Our aim was to form part of a defensive cordon around Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino, the only really important city of the islands.



Memorial to those who died in the Falklands/Malvinas War. Plaza San Martín, Buenos Aires

'The seventy days we spent on Mount Longdon were very challenging. We lived in small tents which accommodated two soldiers. With each passing day, the situation got worse. As the winter wore on, our provisions began to run out. We received more and more British naval bombardment, and we had no change of clothing. Our clothing was usually damp. It really weakened us. To add to the misery, many soldiers were mistreated by their superiors. We had no running water: we had to resort to drinking water from the pools that formed between the rocks. We didn't have good communication with our families, and our weapons were not great and in some cases inoperable.

'Against this background, on 11 June, the engagement with the British troops took place on Mount Longdon. We were attacked by the Third British parachute regiment at nightfall as we were going to bed. The battle started on the

west where we were based, and we fought in hand-to-hand combat with the British troops. It was a tough night. We fought from about 21:00 until the following morning. There were many casualties on both sides. Met by fierce resistance, the British troops pulled back from the western sector of Mount Longdon to re-group. Following the battle of Mount Longdon, there was a major shift in British strategy. From there on in, the British resorted to artillery attacks by land, sea and air. Our regiment and other Argentine regiments were incessantly bombarded from land, sea and air. Amusingly, we were told to avoid using surnames like mine, for fear that the enemy thought we had taken

British prisoners. I was lucky enough to return unscathed.

‘In May 2007, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the war, I went back to the Falklands / Malvinas with a group of eight other Argentine veterans. I had a strong desire to revisit the scene of the battles, and I felt a strong sense of belonging to the islands. Accompanied by a TV crew we toured Port Stanley / Puerto Argentino, where we visited the Argentine war cemetery and other landmarks.’

John Kennedy

Notes

1. I am indebted to Beverley Berry, Librarian at the Royal College of Practitioners, London; Luca Dussin, Assistant Librarian at the Royal College of Physicians, London; Mary O’ Doherty, Special Collections Librarian, The Mercer Library, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin; Gillian Newman, Assistant Librarian, Hastings Library, Hastings, East Sussex; Edmundo Murray, Geneva, who have helped and assisted me in preparing this article; and Judy Barradell-Smith.
2. This medical journal was founded in 1832 as *The Dublin Journal of Medical and Chemical Science* and over the years became the prestigious *Irish Journal of Medical Science*. See E. Colman MD (US Food and Drug Administration, Rockville, MD 208577), online available (www.ijms.iy/Portals/_IJMS/Documents/16910.pdf), Robert Graves and the origins of Irish medical journalism, cited 7 February 2008.
3. Detail from the headstone of the Leeson grave at Hastings Cemetery, Hastings, East Sussex, UK. Arthur Leeson's father was the architect John Leeson (d.1855). In 1819-1822 John Leeson was clerk of works at the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin, and mapped out the principal lines of the church of St Nicholas of Myra, Francis Street.
4. See *The London and Provincial Medical Directory*, London 1873, Practitioners Resident Abroad Possessing British Qualifications, p.1042.
5. The Margaret Street Hospital, or ‘The Infirmary for Consumption’, 26 Margaret Street (Cavendish Square) London W1, was founded in 1847 and known as ‘Margaret Street Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest’ until 1908. The old structure was demolished many years ago and the site is now occupied by a modern office block. The only known photos of the façade of this edifice are in the Margaret Street Hospital 1898 Report, London Metropolitan Archives, Call No. SC/PPS/093/36, p. 27.
6. Lionel Sackville West, Foreign Office diplomat who had served in Lisbon, Naples, Stuttgart, Berlin, Turin, Madrid and Paris before being appointed Extraordinary Minister Plenipotentiary to the Argentine Republic 17 September 1868.
7. 1891 Census Return, Ref.: Class TG12; Piece 100; Folio 28; p.52; GSU Roll: 6095210.
8. The British Hospital of Montevideo was founded in 1857; the present edifice located on Avenida Italia dates from 1867.
9. There was also an obituary in *The Times* of London.

10. Major Dr John Elsdale Molson TD. Son of Samuel Elsdale and Agnes Molson, born in Montreal on 6 August 1863. Educated at Cheltenham College and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, MD qualified 1889. Major RAMC(T). Conservative MP for Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, 1918-1923. J. P. for West Sussex. See Michael Stenton and Stephen Lees, *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament*, Vol. III, 1919-1945; *A Biographical Dictionary of the House of Commons*, Harvester Press, Hassocks, Sussex, 1979, p. 247.
11. *The Standard* newspaper was founded by Edward Thomas Mulhall in 1861; he would subsequently be joined by his brother Michael George Mulhall and they worked together as joint editors.
12. *The Southern Cross* newspaper was founded by Dean Patrick Dillon in 1875.
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Who are the Good Guys?: Political Violence and the Figure of the Irish Mercenary in Louis Malle's South-of-the-Border Western Film ¡Viva Maria!

By Paula Gilligan

Abstract

The romantic and troublesome Irish soldier as a stock character has a long history in literature and the theater, something Paula Gilligan notes has now been extended into the genre of film. The Irish mercenary figure has many uses, some negative like being the embodiment of international conspiracies or unreliable immigrants, but some which are positive, such as that of a heroic freedom fighter devoted to family and liberty. In this article, Gilligan explores the ways in which Louis Malle's 1965 film ¡Viva Maria! deploys these stereotypes in a genre known as the south-of-the-border western.

The term 'border crossing' was originally used to describe the experience of undocumented and bracero Mexican farm-workers who crossed into the United States for seasonal work. Film scholar Hamid Naficy notes that it has expanded to become a metaphor for borders and border crossings of all kinds. (Naficy 2001:249). In his view, in dominant white cultures 'borders and border spaces tend to represent and allegorise wanderlust, flight and freedom.' He further argues that the metaphorisation, multiplication and shifting of borders are often made productive in postcolonial and multi-cultural discourses, both by safely abstracting the borders and also by ignoring the unequal power relations; in this way, the real risk and high anxiety experienced by the dispossessed when crossing borders is diminished and downplayed (Naficy 2001:243). As Matt Coleman states in his article 'Geopolitical Place-making after September 11,' borders are the site of state territorialisation, a process which 'involves communication or the performance of conceived boundaries through gesture, statement, symbol, and marker: and enforcement of control over access through the threat of sanction' or a 'substantive articulation of identity and allegiance'(Coleman 2004:90)

The attractions of metaphorical border-crossing for contemporary publics are evidenced by the popularity of the border text in cinema. The topic of the two thousand-mile United States-Mexico border generated,

according to Norma Iglesias, 147 Mexican films during the decade between 1979 and 1989, and well over three hundred border films between 1936 and 1996.(2). One of the most popular of the border genres is the south-of-the-border western. Robert Aldrich's *Vera Cruz* (1954) is the most famous of the 1950s-era films, but Sam Peckinpah's films consolidated the genre in the 1960s and have gone on to achieve canonical status in American film culture (French 1993:51). An even more specialized variant, the Irish south-of-the-border western genre, emerged as early as the 1930s with the release of *God's Country and the Man* (Dir: J. P. McCarthy, 1931) and *The Irish Gringo* (Dir: Lloyd Bacon, 1935). Irish rebels and revolutionary characters were a prominent feature of the 1950s and 1960s south-of-the-border western, including films such as: *Rio Grande* (Dir: John Ford, 1950), *The Wonderful Country* (Dir: Robert Parrish, 1959), *Alvarez Kelly* (Dir: Edmund Dmytryk, 1966), and *Major Dundee* (Dir: Sam Peckinpah, 1967).

There are good historical and cultural reasons for this strong cinematic interest in the border, and in the Irish presence in turbulent events in Latin America in general. In the aftermath of the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848 and the tremendous loss of Mexican national territory to the United States, French Emperor Napoleon III saw an opportunity to expand his colonial ambitions. He connived with Mexican conservatives and established a satellite

Mexican monarchy under Austrian Archduke Maximilian, prompting a patriotic response from republican patriot Benito Juárez and his liberal compatriots. This period of the so-called French Intervention (1864-1867) forms the backdrop to numerous south-of-the-border westerns. It is most often inter-cut with the theme of the American adventurer crossing the border for active engagement with the armed forces of another culture. This is the basic plot of Robert Aldrich's *Vera Cruz* (1954), which was a wide-screen film featuring Gary Cooper and Burt Lancaster as rival mercenaries at the time of the French occupation of Mexico.⁽³⁾ Another important feature of the later south-of-the-border westerns is the figure of the Irish revolutionary. Sergio Leone's *Giù La Testa* (1971) [English version titled *Duck, You Sucker / A Fistful of Dynamite*], for example, features an IRA explosives expert in Mexico who gets caught up in the revolution and whose expertise is called upon by the local rebels. Peckinpah's *Major Dundee* also features Irish rebels who have turned mercenary and who are hired by the American major of the title in order to pursue Indian tribesmen south of the border. *Major Dundee*, like *Vera Cruz*, takes place at the time of the French Empire. In this film, too, the Irish fighters come to the aid of a local rebellion.

A European take on the genre, Louis Malle's *!Viva Maria!* (1965), stars Brigitte Bardot as the title character. *!Viva Maria!* was a huge box-office hit upon its release and took the Grand Prix du Cinema Français in 1965. The film continues to appear regularly on television listings in Ireland, Great Britain and France. Indeed, one clip from the film has more than 60,666 viewings on the popular website YouTube. Its popular success can be attributed in no small part to the appeal of its two stars, both iconic female actors of the 1960s. Bardot plays Maria, the daughter of a French woman and an Irish revolutionary, and Jeanne Moreau plays a Parisian actress and singer who is travelling with a circus in South America. At the beginning of the film, we see Bardot's character, Maria, as a small girl, travelling with her Irish father as he conducts a bombing campaign throughout the British Empire,

including various sites in Ireland, the Rock of Gibraltar and London. He is eventually killed during an action in South America. Following the death of her father, Irish Maria finds herself in British Honduras and joins a troupe of wandering players, where she meets Parisian Maria.⁽⁴⁾ Aided by Irish Maria's military expertise, the local rebels and the circus troupe take on a local dictator and have great success. As they gain ground in the war, the pair attract the attention of Catholic monks, who are supporting the dictatorship. The two Marias are captured and an attempt is made to torture them for blasphemy, but the women are liberated by their circus troupe friends and become national heroes.

!Viva Maria! represents a combination of genres. First, it is a burlesque comedy which makes more than a passing reference to surrealism. Second, it is a filmic example of the adventure genre made popular in nineteenth-century French literature, and, third, it is a parody of a Hollywood genre, the south-of-the-border film. Spatially, the majority of *!Viva Maria!*'s narrative unfolds in an unnamed country in South America. In spite of the location's ambiguity in the film's enunciation, most viewers read it as being set in Mexico. Some critics do mention that the makers have not given the film a specific location but then go on to refer to 'Mexico' and 'Mexican' throughout their commentary.⁽⁵⁾ Mexico is, therefore, an important subject of the film and informs much of the viewer's response to its content.⁽⁶⁾ Malle's venture into the Western genre followed a French tradition dating back to the beginning of cinema. The western was never an exclusively American genre. French production companies had been making westerns and exporting them successfully to the United States, at least until the First World War, most famously the *Arizona Bill* series starring Joe Hammond (1912-14)^(Abel 1998 :47). When *!Viva Maria!* appeared in 1965, European westerns were enjoying a resurgence in popularity, most famously spearheaded by the Italians, thus earning the title 'spaghetti' western. *!Viva Maria!* is, in fact, an Italian/French co-production. Work in this genre, particularly the films of the Italian

director Sergio Leone, have attained classic status (Weisser 1992 :459).

'Spaghetti' westerns demonstrate a tendency to ignore or downplay the violent colonial history of European and United States' relations with South America, a characteristic that remains true of *!Viva Maria!*. Louis Malle stated that the initial idea for *!Viva Maria!* came from Vera Cruz, and, indeed numerous references to Aldrich's work, including a gun that can shoot around corners, are made throughout Malle's film (French 1993 :51). A key feature of south-of-the-border westerns is their tendency to portray local rebellions merely as part of an adventure for the central character. This adventure ceases as soon as the protagonist returns over the border to his or her normal life in the 'West.' The countries south of the border are represented as in a state of flux, of upheaval and rebellion, a kind of Alice-in-Wonderland world where anything might happen.

The brevity of the French intervention in Mexico suggests that it was effectively one of these sorts of adventures : an unexpected episode. Accounts of its history imply that the whole Mexican experience was, for Archduke Maximilian, a means to escape his powerlessness and boredom in Europe. According to Edward Said this sort of privileged escape was a function that overseas colonies, and previously the medieval Crusades to the Holy Land, often performed for Europeans; he writes "The facts of empire are associated with sustained possession, with far-flung and sometimes unknown spaces, with eccentric or unacceptable human beings, with fortune enhancing or fantasised activities like emigration, money-making and sexual adventure. Disgraced younger sons are sent off to the colonies, shabby older relatives go there to try to recoup lost fortunes (as in Honoré de Balzac's novel *La Cousine Bette*) enterprising young travellers go there to sow wild oats and to collect exotica. The colonial territories are realms of possibility."(Said, 1993 :75). The prevalence of this view of non-western nations can be seen in the comments of Jean-Claude Carrière, co-writer of *!Viva Maria!*. He described Mexico as 'a country without faith or

law where everything seemed possible, at once both burlesque and tragic, without logic, without sense, without rhyme or reason.'⁽⁷⁾ *!Viva Maria!* represents the activities of its French protagonist Maria in Mexico as the 'adventures' of a less than successful actor in another country and confirms the film's location within this sub-genre of the American Westerns. Furthermore, the film narrates an imaginary Irish campaign against colonial England conducted in exotic locations throughout the British Empire at the turn of the twentieth century. The figure of the Irish revolutionary in the context of 'New World' struggles had an earlier nineteenth-century model in Jules Verne's novel *Les Frères Kip*.⁽⁸⁾ Both Malle and Carrière commented that they had been influenced by these earlier tales of adventure when writing their script for *!Viva Maria!*. It was to be not only a comedy but 'an evocation of childhood fantasies combined with traditional adventure.'⁽⁹⁾ Discourses of adventurism remain persistent in the global western genre as a whole.

American critics of the south-of-the-border films frequently discard the Mexican context in their analysis of the genre. They maintain that these films are not about Mexico but about Vietnam and American trauma. Michael Coyne, author of *The Crowded Prairie*, posits the theory that 'the Western backdrop most suited to encode parallels of the Vietnam War was Mexico.'⁽¹⁰⁾ Coyne's critique is consistent with dominant American discourses of their country's actions as innocent but misguided: 'In its own oblique way, it [Major Dundee] attempts to offer some comment on American hubris on the imperial stage, on U.S. vulnerability in the face of myriad small enemies around the globe and on the tragic futility of trying to wage war against an invisible, indigenous foe.' (Coyne 1997:132). This approach makes it difficult to see the relevance of the Irish characters to the genre.

'Vietnam' readings of south-of-the-border westerns also discount the persistent appeal of the discourse of interventionism as adventurism, a discourse that disguises other agendas such as the protection of capital for

American business interests. For Mexican film historian Emilio García Riera, the 1950s was the period when the American imperial project in Mexico began to flex its muscle.⁽¹¹⁾ The American heroes of Vera Cruz, for example, are shown to reject their initial function of protecting United States' capital to take on a more idealised vision of themselves as freedom fighters. Both the films themselves and the response of film critics such as Michael Coyne, reveal an ideological wish that goes further than either 'adventurism' or 'the trauma of war' agendas that have been previously noted. These films cater to American perceptions of the United States as a nation committed to freedom.⁽¹²⁾ The adventurers cross borders in order to become part of another country's struggle for liberation. This discourse was also very important in Gaullist international relations during the 1960s and, as we shall see, the Ireland subtext had an important function in the construction of France's new image as liberator of small countries. This backdrop gives a distinct context to the burlesque antics of the two Marias in *!Viva Maria!*.

The combination of interventionist discourses and the idea of the Irish adventurer- cum-revolutionary can be found in both *Major Dundee* and *!Viva Maria!*. Although *Major Dundee* was set in the nineteenth century and *!Viva Maria!* in 1910 in an unspecified South American republic, both films refer to the Mexican revolution which began that year. *Dundee*, the hero of *Major Dundee*, is amused to discover the words '*!Viva Dundee!*' scrawled on the walls outside his lodgings. The word '*Viva!*' openly associates both *Major Dundee* and *!Viva Maria!* with the classic texts of the Mexican revolution; as one scholar notes, '[a]t the start of the century, Mexico erupted with the revolts of [Emiliano] Zapata and of Pancho Villa, the inspiration for the films *!Viva Villa!* and *!Viva Zapata!*. This historico-filmic context evidently constitutes the basis for *!Viva Maria!*.'⁽¹³⁾ In *Major Dundee*, such indicators of revolution are linked to the American *Major* and confirm the American role as liberator. The two female leads of *!Viva Maria!* are given numbers: Maria I for Moreau's character and Maria II for Bardot's. The descriptions are

important. The characters are not numbered in order of appearance on the screen but rather according to rank. It is clear that French Maria is considered to be of a superior rank to Irish Maria. In this way, French Republicanism, emanating from the ideals of the French Revolution, is mediated through Moreau's Maria. She inspires the troops, a role consistent with other Joan-of-Arc-like cinematic representations of women in war. French Maria represents the old tradition of a France as liberal democracy and of the French Revolution as the origin of all revolutions (Pastor 1992:275). Indeed, its very symbol was a martial and patriotic French woman, Marianne, leading her nation into battle. French discourses concerning Ireland as colony also construct France in the role of inspirational leader and liberator, a useful alibi for a Gaullist France unwilling to recognise the true nature of its relationship with its colonies.

The Irish Terrorist

Given that Ireland was one of the first countries to assert its right to self-rule outside the British Empire, the figure of the Irish revolutionary took on a new and more disturbing role against the context of post-World War II anti-colonial movements.⁽¹⁴⁾ In *!Viva Maria!*, the figure of the Irish revolutionary has sinister overtones, at least at the start of the film. Maria Fitzgerald O'Malley's father conducts a bombing campaign against the English, striking at their colonial outposts in a manner intended to tap into a much more contemporary anxiety. O'Malley senior is thus constructed as a terrorist, not as a rebel. The opening song of the prologue criticises his efforts as the work of a fanatic and condemns O'Malley's use of the little girl to carry out dynamite attacks. Maria II relates the motivation behind her father's actions to French Maria. She tells her that his three brothers had been shot by the English in front of Cork Cathedral and that she herself was born in prison. Maria II remarks that fighting the British runs in her family; her great-grandfather had fought at Waterloo on the side of the French. She declares, however, that she herself was coerced into taking part in

the bombing and had no choice but to obey. O'Malley, the father, emerges from her description as a puritanical fanatic.

At the time of the films release, audience response to O'Malley was generally very negative. In reviews, he is never described as a revolutionary but rather as 'an anarchist,' an 'Irish terrorist' or even as a 'terroriste irlandais profondément anglophobe' [profoundly Anglophobic Irish terrorist].(15) !Viva Maria!'s depiction of Irish Republicans is consistent with tropes of revolt as a pathological act. This notion is furthered by insinuation that Maria O'Malley, her family, and, by extension, the Irish people, are genetically disposed to violent action. We are given a picture of a young woman not naturally inclined to engage in anarchy but who is led into it by a sinister father figure. Her republican history establishes Maria II's expertise in armed struggle, an expertise which assumes greater significance as the film goes on.(16) There is considerable difference between the labeling of Irish Maria II's combative actions within the Irish narrative at the start of the film and her engagement with French Maria I's campaign. While the film does not condemn all revolutionary action and indeed even celebrates it through its support of the peasant rebellion, the martyred father's Irish nationalism is condemned and, therefore, by so is all anti-colonial nationalism that acts as a violent divisive force. Such contradictions are reflective of ambivalence in the function of Ireland as sign for imperialist cultures. To determine that function, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the Irish as colonised and new 'post-colonial' empires in the western genres of the 1950s and 1960s.

For twentieth century Western cinema, the Ireland subtext generates disturbing paradigms of successful uprising that encompassed anti-colonialist behaviour and a triumphant anti-state campaign. Irish figures in south-of-the-border westerns are indicative of a crisis in identity. Their history as colonised is not always successfully masked in American pioneer myths, and their function as sign straddles borders of anxiety, transgression and deviance as a result. The consistency of this

representation is striking. Like the Irish monks in eighteenth century France, unwanted exile is part of the 'Irish Emigrant' sign in America. This sense of loss is a theme in John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956), and has its counterpart in the rural idyll of his earlier film *The Quiet Man* (1952). It is particularly strong where the Ireland text crosses colonial stories in South America. Robert Parrish directed *The Wonderful Country* in 1959, five years before the appearance of *!Viva Maria!*. The unsettled protagonist, whose surname, Brady, indicates Irish origins, is forced to travel between two cultures, American and Mexican. The title is ironic because the gun-fighting hero, played by Robert Mitchum, oscillates between his desire to identify with Mexico and a vulnerability to succumb to the dominant American expansionist culture. Eventually he chooses America, 'the wonderful country.' Similarly, Irish Maria chooses France and not Ireland or Mexico when she becomes a 'little woman of Paris', but her allegiance is reserved and not always given unconditionally.

Military Discourses and the South-of-the-Border Western:

The myth of integrity in America's relationship with Mexico is used to quell, contain and re-channel the colonised's unrest in the south-of-the-border westerns. South-of-the-border narratives, unlike other westerns and the South American gangster or drug film genres, rarely encode their Mexican characters with the disruptive rebelliousness of the colonised because such a characterisation would jeopardise paternal notions of Mexicans as victims saved by the strong men of the United States. The role of the French may be different in *!Viva Maria!* than in either *Vera Cruz* or *Major Dundee*, but it is not significantly different from the role of the American heroes of Peckinpah and Aldrich's films. In *!Viva Maria!*, the French have replaced the Americans as saviours of the poor and oppressed. Mexican landlords with Western or European pretensions are the evil dictators. The American characters in the south-of-the-border westerns earn their right to lead the revolution primarily because they are constructed as the

'strong', while the Mexicans are represented as 'weak.' The strength of the Americans is not based on 'brute' force but on technology: their ability to deploy weaponry. Interestingly, while the Americans feel free to cast the French as villains in their films, Malle does not reverse the position.

There is a pretty clear-cut association of professional characters in south-of-the-border westerns with the military. They either have military backgrounds or they exhibit military behaviour. In *!Viva Maria!* the sequences of Maria's training as a bomber present motifs associated with paratrooper fictions of preparation for 'military manhood', such as we find in American films such as Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1987), and, thereby, construct O'Malley in this kind of role. We are shown Irish Maria swimming through water carrying dynamite, struggling through jungle terrain with bombs and setting up explosions under bridges. These scenes are, of course, very funny because Maria II conducts all these activities while wearing a long dress, but they do point to discourses prevalent in the genre. The professionals of the south-of-the-border western represent the American military operating outside their national boundaries. Noël Carroll hypothesises that these films are about what the Americans want to believe, namely, that American military operations abroad are undertaken solely in the defence of freedom (Carroll :78)

Freedom gained by revolution is rarely, if ever, represented as occurring independently of the armed forces or as an advantage gained against them. Underlying these films is the presupposition of a principle that the justification of professional prowess rests in its service for freedom and in its stand against tyranny. Talbot identifies a similar wish in the paratrooper myth for France. He remarks on the paratrooper's claimed lack of racism as it is presented in fictional representations of the troops in Algeria. In his argument, he quotes Jean Lartéguy's best-selling 1960 novel, *Les Centurions*, 'We are the defenders of a type of freedom and of a new order'.(17) This is the same role allocated to the French in *!Viva*

Maria!. Of course, these are very complex discourses, but an examination of the role of the Irish in this genre, including *!Viva Maria!*, is useful in revealing the operation of paratrooper myths for the coloniser. The Irish figures function as a bridge between the colonised and the coloniser: this happens as a result of the historical association of the Irish emigrant with mercenary soldiering. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Irish emigrants saw less engagement with wars on the European continent and more and more engagement with the imperial projects of the super-powers, including the United States.

Films like *Major Dundee* implied that, if the Irish revolutionaries were ruled fairly, they could be harnessed to do 'good', not 'evil', where doing 'good' means supporting the new cultural imperialist project.(18) The progression to colonisation of other countries is mediated through Western films which involve other locations outside the United States borders, films like Peckinpah's *Major Dundee* and *The Wild Bunch*. Romanticism about the role of the military in the reality of colonization of Indian territory, and the American taste for the exotic, combine in the south-of-the-border Westerns. They pave the way for the acceptance of conquest of other countries. Imperialist adventures were seen as a potent antidote to diminished manhood in America at a time when, as Frederick Jackson Turner announced in 1893, all 'the frontier opportunities are gone'.(Kuenz 2001:101). White domination of America, with the subsequent imperial annexation of land and resource and the enforcement of neo-liberal economic policies, becomes a *fait accompli* to be justified by any reasoning other than that of rule by force.(19)

Underlying films like *Vera Cruz* is the presupposition of a principle that the justification of professional prowess, and mastery of weaponry, rests in its service for freedom and in its stand against tyranny. The ideology of technological modernism, a feature of *Vera Cruz*, offers the promise of happiness-read as victory in the Western, no longer through nature, but through advanced

technology.(20) The optimism of the type of 'military liberal humanism' we find in these films is tinged with deep pessimism, a feature of the Westerns of this period.(21) In spite of the rhetoric, the United States neo-imperial model is like the older European one - indirect rule as association. Assimilation with the local population is not really ever the aim, in fact is guarded against (Gilligan 2009: 235-249). Some commentaries have read this anti-assimilation tendency in the south-of-the-border western as oblique criticism of United States involvement in Vietnam, but it is consistent with the neo-imperialist commitment to United States rule-by-proxy.(22) In neo-imperial military discourse, elite professional cavalry officers should 'get in and get out' as quickly as possible. This was very much the attitude of Irish-descended Union Army Generals, Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman, who were brought in to threaten attack on Maximilian in Mexico; they conducted their operations at a distance.

Grant and Sherman were typical of the Irish military professional class in the United States - they had been at West Point Academy together, left the army under a cloud, but rejoined at the outbreak of the Civil War. Yet, the men were also quite different politically. Unlike Grant, the red-haired whiskey-drinking Sherman was against abolition, opposed the use of black soldiers in the army, and resisted giving black people the right to vote (Ridley 2001: 216-7) In the context of Irish emigrant cultures in the US, the political activist history of the formerly colonised Irish is subsumed into the myth of the 'Fighting Irish' (23) The 'revolting' Irish are thus territorialized, and reconfigured as the 'Fighting Irish'— army careerists who retain the aura of military expertise (gained in rebellions and in the service of the English), but who can be harnessed into the Nation. Thomas Francis Meagher exemplifies the 'Fighting Irish' type, and was nicknamed 'Meagher of the Sword'. Described as 'one of the best known generals in the Union Army', he had, as a Young Irelander, 'called on his countrymen to grasp the sword rather than adhere to Daniel O'Connell's non-violent politics'.(24) For historian William Griffin, the

Meagher narrative constructs an Irish archetype, displaying 'his rash, flamboyant temperament both on and off the battlefield', which represents the 'embodiment of some wild, poetic, impulsive figure from Irish fiction'. (Griffin 1983:137). In fact, it was Meagher who planned the 1870 Fenian invasion of Canada, though he did not live to participate in it. Meagher's untimely end, death by drowning in the Missouri River at aged forty-one, also fed the myth. The 'fighting Irish configuration', exemplified by Meagher, is a major component in the plot of Peckinpah's *Major Dundee*.

Malle was attracted to this problem, namely the participation of one group of oppressed peoples in the repression of another. He had already dealt with that subject in his film *Lacombe Lucien* (1974), the only moment he felt was truly Marxist in his work, in spite of the fact that it also contributed to a disturbing ambivalence in that film.(25) Yet the trope of Irish adventurers in South America is not comparable to Malle's African refugees who were trapped in France during the Second World War. (26) Generally speaking, Irish roles in the conquest and colonisation of the West remain unquestioned in Irish cinema. Where the Irish diaspora, recently described - perhaps more accurately- as the Irish Empire, involves the suppression of indigenous cultures to enable white colonisation; the escape from oppression in colonised Ireland serves as a justification for this act rather than a contradiction. As Mary Lawlor points out in her essay 'Fitzcarraldo: Irish Explorer', in a number of films set in the nineteenth-century outposts of empire, Irish characters are represented as imperial innocents, unimplicated in the colonial machinations in which they are embedded' (Lawlor :249). Lawlor describes the Irish in South America as belonging to, but not quite part of, the institutional machinery of empire; they are thus considered to be 'paracolonialist' (Lawlor:249). Malle often used the adventurer theme to explain the participation of his characters in historical events. Lucien in *Lacombe Lucien*, 'falls' into the Gestapo through a series of 'accidental' events. Claude Berri in his

introduction to *Lacombe Lucien* describes these events as 'un concours de circonstances' (Barri & Davy 1973:Dustjacket) Both Bardot and Moreau's Maria characters engage with the Mexican Revolution through a similar series of haphazard incidents and encounters. They experience the Revolution as an adventure, much in the way that they experience striptease as an enjoyable consequence of an accident. This theme of chance in history has created some problems for Malle, particularly in the case of *Lacombe Lucien* where Lucien's lack of motivation for joining the Gestapo has potential as an excuse for collaboration. For André Pierre Colombat, a troubling aspect of Malle's films comes from the feeling that key actions of his heroes are only the result of chance and circumstance, not from internal conviction. In Colombat's view, this poses serious problems when it comes to confronting actions of the resistance, victims, or bystanders with actions of Collaboration (Colombat 1993:270-287). On the other side of the coin, Maria O'Malley's participation in armed resistance in *Viva Maria!* is presented as much an accident of place as Lucien's collaboration previously had been. This has curious implications for the function of the Ireland revolutionary text in the film. These two elements, the conversion of the Irish figure from terrorist to soldier and then to the 'bystander' of accidental participation historical events, are played out in the representation of Maria O'Malley in *Viva Maria!*. This depiction is a double-edged sword. It has the effect of absolving the characters from blame, the same criticism that has been lobbied against Malle's other film, *Lacombe Lucien*. It also robs the characters of agency and self-determination; they are not responsible for their actions. They are thus cast in the role of minors, whereas the representatives of the dominant culture are teachers, father figures, and leaders.

The south-of-the-border films of the 1960s also develop the theme of the colonised as betrayer. Maria O'Malley in *Viva Maria!* is technically a deserter, having run away from her father's war with the British. The motif of betrayal reflects the imperialists' real difficulty in understanding their rejection by the colonised that they are

trying to save in their 'civilising mission' (Tarr 1997:65). In *Viva Maria!* and in *Giù La Testa*, the Irish 'terrorist' expertise is deployed usefully in battle but the actual integrity, trustworthiness and reliability of the actual Irish person is consistently called into question. On hearing the revolution declared following the death of the rebel leader Flores, Maria II sums up the position of the Irish figure in the genre by saying 'Don't count on me!'.(27) In the south-of-the-border western - and this includes *Giù La Testa!* - the Irish do not function as principled teachers of revolution, they are represented as largely self-interested and apolitical guns for hire. Many reviews of *Viva Maria!* reflect a celebration of both Bardot and her character Maria as the embodiment of action, pure will, and animal instinct. This absence of informed political will is frequently exercised as an apology for Bardot's own later engagement with the far-right and has the double-thrust of generating paradigms of freedom as freedom from social responsibility and immunity from the burden of guilt and consequences.

The Irish figures in the south-of-the-border westerns mediate military attitudes, including negative attitudes to political cultures, as represented by the revolutionary action, and positive attitudes, such as the uncivilised and exotic spaces of pre-revolutionary and peasant Mexico. Attitudes to 'civilisation' in the south-of-the-border genre echo the paratrooper rejection of Western civilisation as corrupt. The genre reflects the romance of the marginal which leads to a Manichean universe of absolute opposites, barely responsive to the actual complexities and over-determination of the situation under determination (Connor 1989:236-7). Burt Lancaster as the professional gunslinger, Dolworth, in another south-of-the-border western, *The Professionals* (Dir: Richard Brooks, 1966), sums up the ideological opposition of good and bad as he attempts to answer the question, 'what were the Americans doing in a Mexican revolution anyway?'. He replies '[m]aybe there's only one revolution, since the beginning. The good guys against the bad guys. Question is: who are the good guys?'

In the American south-of-the-border films, this opposition of good and bad, identity and allegiance, civilisation and nature, resonates in the negative portrayal of rebellion. Inevitably, in this genre, the revolutionary impulse is drowned in a sea of blood, and the military engagement only serves to heighten the paratrooper character's profound disgust for humanity. At the end of *The Professionals*, Dolworth [Lancaster] comments: 'the revolution? When the shooting stops and the dead are buried and the politicians take over, it all adds up to one thing, a lost cause'. However, the reduction of the Mexican Revolution, which was an actual historical event, into simply one episode of a mythic and continuous battle against evil waged by the good Americans is indicative of a not-yet-articulated contradiction between politics and metaphysics.⁽²⁸⁾ We can see the stoicism and fatalism perpetuated in the end of *The Professionals* when Dolworth [Lancaster] comments: 'the revolution? When the shooting stops and the dead are buried and the politicians take over, it all adds up to one thing, a lost cause'. Aldrich's *Vera Cruz* is similarly pessimistic. In the words of one critic: 'The setting up of the mirror image of good and bad - of Gary Cooper and of Burt Lancaster - transforms the history of the gold convoy across Mexico by two adventurers ... into a mortal game in which each one searches the negation of his own choices in the other'.⁽²⁹⁾ Thus, in the film, the revolution becomes a duel between two personalities; the revolutionary action as a communal struggle for liberty loses its meaning.

In spite of its apparent homage to the south-of-the-border western, *!Viva Maria!* does not reproduce the classic narrative of a standard western such as *Vera Cruz*, but rather it deliberately disrupts the genre and opposes simple reductionism and closure through its use of parody, pastiche and surrealism. The second part of *!Viva Maria!* mocks the military's attachment to new technologies and superior weaponry in the professional western, and, in doing so, also criticised the Fifth Republic's obsession with weaponry in the form of nuclear warheads. In many of Malle's more celebrated

films, the central characters progress through a desire to conform, to be with the group, through self-awareness and finally to resistance.⁽³⁰⁾ The characters are alienated but collaborate in evil through an absence of knowledge. *!Viva Maria!* constructs the narrative that Irish Maria's gave her father in his fanatical bombing campaign as another example of the way that people might behave in an 'immoral' fashion through ignorance. The characters of Malle's films are not particularly evil, but they do fall into evil by following the dominant culture. While this position is problematic, as we have seen, there are redeeming aspects to Malle's attitude because it resists fatalism. Evil in Malle's terms is banal and comes from class-based politics of selfishness. It is not an apocalyptic organic evil but something definitely man-made. There is, therefore, the possibility of choosing to do good. Furthermore, *!Viva Maria!* presents the 1910 revolution itself as a product of histories of oppression, and, thus, celebrates it as an agent for change, whereas in an overwhelming majority of American films, revolution is represented as catastrophe.

Unlike *Vera Cruz*, *!Viva Maria!*'s revolution is worthwhile. Much of the film's humour stems from the idea of women taking over leadership roles that were traditionally male. *!Viva Maria!* imagines how a revolution might succeed and how a female French presence might be one of solidarity with another oppressed group. We are inclined to accept this quite radical point of view because the film makes us laugh. The circus theme serves to counter and to poke fun at the ideology latent in the paratrooper and professional soldier myths. Not only does *!Viva Maria!* paradoxically depict Bardot as paratrooper, but it also turns nationalist ideals of Irish womanhood on their head by having its heroine be a sensualist, a stripper, and a philanderer to boot. Where there is weaponry, it belongs to the people and emerges hidden under hens and buried in floorboards. These scenes have cultural precedents. The early scenes of the film *Shake Hands with the Devil* (Dir: Michael Anderson, 1959) also refer to the subterfuge of a people in revolt and show how, during the Irish War of Independence (1919-

21), guns were hidden in coffins and transported through the staging of mock funerals. In *!Viva Maria!* the combination of striptease, circus song, burlesque and revolution are not only celebrations of the carnivalesque as liberty, a pronounced feature of the French Revolution, but they also have a real connection with the 'Mexican' setting of the film. In a much milder fashion than the Mexican folk dance called the zarzuela, which Mexican playwright Usigli described as a theatre of revolution, *!Viva Maria!* draws on the European tradition of the carnivalesque and the revue to build its revolution.

In spite of the fact that the first part of *!Viva Maria!* reproduces some of the imperialist thinking that underpins typical South-of-the-border films, its second part undermines the genre in a radical way. *!Viva Maria!*'s inquisition scenes introduce an anti-clerical theme not found in the border/Mexican adventure genre, neither of the American variety nor in the more irony-driven 'spaghetti' western.(31) It is this sequence that most troubles the film's critics. It is also the most surreal part of the film and contains direct references to the films of Luis Buñuel, with whom Carrière had collaborated on many scripts. The presence of the Inquisition, which had long been extinct when the actual revolution began in 1910, is suggestive of the history of Mexico as Spanish colony. The alienating effect of this false history creates problems in reading the film.(32) The playful and farcical aspect of surrealism, recalling the long tradition of the carnivalesque as resistance, constitutes the

biggest threat to the bodies who would suppress it. As Buñuel himself stated at the University of Mexico in 1953, 'Film is a magnificent and dangerous weapon if it is wielded by a free mind.' (Carrière 1994:90) For both Malle and Buñuel, the form of their films generates disruption, particularly through their use of the open text and their resistance to closure. In their films we find 'the summation of the clash between instincts, impulse of friendship, love, desire, enjoyment of life and the appeal of freedom and the agents of their repression (the church, the police, bourgeois morality, society)' (de la Colina & Turrent 1992:202-7). This clash is played out in the two *Marias*' opposition to the twin institutions of the repressive State-as-dictatorship and the Catholic Church-as-state- apparatus. By introducing this theme, Malle returns to the great traditions of radical cinema, a cinema borne of a desire to speak 'truth to power', underpinned by a belief in humanity and in human friendship as transformative which is the hallmark of Malle's work in his masterpieces such as *Au Revoir Les Enfants* (1987), *Humain Trop Humain* (1972). For Malle, the presence of the Irish figure against this backdrop of Mexico as a post-colonial society dominated by an authoritarian Catholic Church does not represent an escape from history but rather a gives us picture of history replete with holes and thus a history which empowers us.

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Notes

(1) Dr Paula Gilligan is Head of Humanities Institute of Art Design and Technology (IADT), Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, and co-ordinator of its Centre for Public Culture Studies. Recent publications include 'Race, nation, class, and the Confederate Irish in Sam Peckinpah's *Major Dundee* (1965)', in Ruth Barton, Ed., *Screening Irish-America*, 2009; and 'Space, Violence and the City in the 1930s films of Liam O'Flaherty', in ed. Justin Carville, *The Journal of Early Popular Visual Culture*, 2008.

(2) Naficy is indebted to Iglesias, quoted in Fregosa (1999, pp.189-90) for this formulation which he has modified considerably. See Naficy, *An Accented Cinema*, p.239.

(3) Louis Malle states that the initial idea for *!Viva Maria!* came from *Vera Cruz* and indeed numerous references to Aldrich's work, including a gun that can shoot around corners, are made throughout

Malle's film. French, *Conversations avec Louis Malle*, p.5.

(4) The two women become partners in a circus act. During their first show together Irish Maria accidentally invents striptease. That night, the Marias take part in a huge fiesta where Moreau's Maria meets the revolutionary leader Flores, played by George Hamilton and Irish Maria has her first sexual experience. While travelling, the troupe witnesses a massacre in a village by the agents of the Dictator. Irish Maria intervenes and shoots one of the agents and the troupe is taken prisoner. French Maria meets Flores again and falls in love. The women escape from the dictator but Flores is shot. The circus troupe take him back to the village where he dies in Maria I's arms. The villagers, led by the parish priest, are reluctant to continue their campaign but French Maria declares that she will carry on the revolution.

(5) Penelope Houston, for example, talks of an 'audience of enchanted Mexicans' in her review of the film. See Houston, 'Viva Maria!' *Sight and Sound* 35, #2 (Spring 1966): p.90.

(6) The French under Napoleon III established an empire in Mexico in October 1863 and placed Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian on the throne. The Mexicans under the Mexican president Zaragoza and directed by General Porfirio Díaz and supported by the USA, fought the occupation. Just four years later the empire was dismantled and the French withdrew from Mexico. Díaz went on to establish the dictatorship which led to the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

(7) 'Le Mexique n'est pas cartésien. A son contact, nous avons oublié que nous l'étions nous-mêmes.' See Jean-Claude Carrière quoted in René Prédal, *Louis Malle*, (Paris: Edillog, 1989), p.67.

(8) *P'tit Bonhomme* tells the varied and exciting adventures of a waif, as he travels around Ireland of the nineteenth-century. It was published in Ireland in 1895 under the title of *Foundling Mick*.

(9) Malle quoted in French, *Conversations avec Louis Malle*, p.51.

(10) Coyne criticises the celebration of arms in films like *Vera Cruz* in the same vein: 'the essence of America's tragedy is that the nation most dedicated to freedom has clearly confused liberty with licence and nowhere is this more clearly evident than in the national love affair with guns'. Michael Coyne, *The Crowded Prairie: American National Identity in the Hollywood Western*, (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1997), p.132.

(11) 'L'hégémonie américaine atteint son sommet, [dans les années cinquantes], et se fait sentir sous ses diverses facettes. Il est certain qu'à partir du moment où le Mexique a exproprié les compagnies pétrolières, l'économie a subi une transformation favorable à la bourgeoisie nationale. Il n'en demeure pas moins vrai que même si l'on a fait passer le capital étranger au second plan, la pénétration impérialiste a commencé à se faire sentir d'une manière plus subtile – à travers des prêts de capitaux, le contrôle du marché, les mythes culturels, etc., - mais aussi plus profonde et plus violente'. Emilio García Riera, 'Mexique,' in Guy Hennebelle and Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron, eds, *Les Cinémas de l'Amérique latine*, (Paris: L'Herminier, 1981), p.223.

(12) These discourses have considerable currency in the USA. The destruction of the Twin Towers in New York on September 11th, 2001 prompted endless repetition of the phrase, 'the end of innocence' in media headlines that week.

(13) 'Or c'est au début du siècle que le Mexique fut secoué par les révoltes de Zapata et de Pancho Villa qui inspirèrent les films *!Viva Villa!* et *!Viva Zapata!*. Ce contexte historico-filmique constitue évidemment la base de *!Viva Maria!* dont le titre est ouvertement référentiel.' Prédal, *Louis Malle*, p.69.

(14) In post-war American films, for example, Ford's revolutionary heroes of films like *The Plough and The Stars*, (1936) had all but disappeared from Hollywood screens only to surface again in the South-of-the-border Westerns.

(15) See *Les Chiffres de l'Année*, (TV review for 1990, Médiamat, p.v.). O'Malley is also described as a terrorist in the review of *¡Viva Maria!* by Stephan Eichenberg on the IMDb database, <<http://us.imdb.com>>

(16) 'Au cours d'une tournée dans un pays d'Amérique latine fortement agité, Maria 2 apprend à Maria I comment mener une révolution,' Marine Landrot, *¡Viva Maria!*, in *Télérama* #2390 (1-11-1995): p.151

(17) 'Nous sommes les défenseurs d'une liberté et d'un ordre nouveau'. Philip Dine, (1994), p.29.

(18) Homi K. Bhabha has pointed out the role of the Irish in the Australian colonial project against aboriginal culture. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1994), p.5.

(19) Emilio García Riera argues that USA hegemony in Mexico attained its summit in the 1950s, and that it made itself felt in all its diverse aspects. He says that 'It is certain that, from the moment that Mexico annexed its petrol companies, the economy underwent a transformation favorable to the national middle classes. It remains no less true that, even if, as a result, foreign capital had moved into this secondary position, the imperialist penetration began to make itself felt in a more subtle manner--through capital loans, the control of the market, cultural myths, but also more profound and more violent'.(my translation), Riera, 'México,' in *Les Cinémas de l'Amérique latine*, p.223.

(20) Mastery of modern weaponry is key sub-plot of 'Major Dundee.' Lt. Graham (Jim Hutton) employs a small mountain field piece to defeat the French Calvary charge, and the dialog reflects knowledge of field artillery. He orders fuses cut to length for range and elevation corrections for aim.

(21) Carroll hypothesizes that freedom gained by revolution is rarely if ever represented in the South-of-the-border Western as occurring independently of the military or as an advantage gained against them. Carroll, 'The Professional Western: South-of-the-border,' in Buscombe & Pearson, eds, *Back in the Saddle again*, p.78.

(22) For an example of a Vietnam reading of 'Major Dundee,' see M. Coyne, *The Crowded Prairie: American National Identity in the Hollywood Western*, (New York: I. B. Tauris, 1997), p.132.

(23) In the USA, numerous strategies were maintained to contain the problem of the revolutionary Irish, a problem compounded by the Irish role in political agitation for social rights in the fields of labour and land reform at home and abroad. Alarmed at political activism in Ireland, American legislators introduced the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 which raised the probationary period for attaining citizenship from two years to nineteen. See William D. Griffin, *A Portrait of the Irish in America*, (New York: Macmillan, 1083), p.137.

(24) Meagher was exiled to Tasmania, but escaped and set up law practice in New York. Schooled in the Public schools in England, he was 'the idol of the New York Irish' and, as a brigadier general, recruited thousands of them into the Irish Brigade at the start of the Civil War. See R.A. Pritchard Jr., *The Irish Brigade-A Pictorial History of the Famed Civil War Fighters*, (Philadelphia, Courage Books, 2004), pp.51-3.

(25) Malle described how, in his research, he discovered incidences of recruitment by the Gestapo of people from Martinique and Algeria, who, trapped in France, were faced with starvation and death. See

Malle quoted in French, *Conversations avec Louis Malle*, p. 100.

(26) Irish writer John McGahern's 1963 short story *Korea*, (translated into French in 1970), also turns on the participation of the recently de-colonised Irish in the suppression of Korean Independence by the United States. McGahern has a large readership in France. He has received the 1994 Écureuil Prize in Boredeaux, all his work has been translated into French and are available in Folio paperbacks. His novel, *The Barracks*, was a core text of the Aggregation exam in 1998. The Irish screen adaptation of *Korea*, directed by Cathal Black and released in France in 1995, discards the War of Independence setting of the original story and reworks it as a civil war story. The film's use of Vietnam genre iconography closes off the instability and anti-patriarchal elements in McGahern's story in favour of a father-son reconciliation narrative.

(27) Ne compte–pas sur moi!'

(28) 'between the 'nightmare of history' –still attributable to the cruelty of other people –and some more ontological vision of an implacable nature in which 'God is the first criminal, since he created us mortal.' In Jameson's view, the only response to this mutation can be some private ethical stoicism of 'a myth of Sisyphus.' Fredric Jameson, *The Geo-Political Aesthetic*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.35.

(29) *Vera Cruz* introduit une ironique distance entre deux personnages qui vivent la meme aventure selon des valeurs opposées. La mise en miroir du bon et du méchant –de Gary Cooper et de Burt Lancaster – transforme l'histoire du convoi d'or escroté à travers le mexique par deux aventuriers en proie aux memes convoitisés que ceux dont ils doivent le protéger, en un jeu mortel ou` chacun cherche en l'autre le négatif de ses choix'. Olivier-René Veillon, *Le Cinéma Américain, 1945-1960*, (Paris: Éd. De Seuil, 1984), p.18.

(30) 'Pour moi, faire un film consiste à prendre un personnage à un certain moment de son existence, à le suivre un temps alors qu'il lui arrive quelque chose qui le change et le force à se reconsiderer et puis je le quitte là, tout a coup.' Louis Malle quoted in Prédal, *Louis Malle*, p.71.

(31) Having surveyed the 600 spaghetti westerns listed by Thomas Weisser, I found no other example of the anti-clerical theme although frequently monasteries appear as sanctuaries and the occasional nun appears needing protection by the hero. See Weisser, *Spaghetti Westerns: The Good, The Bad, and the Violent*, (London: McFarland, 1992).

(32) 'Indeed reviewers generally tend towards the opinion that the inclusion of this sequence interfered with their enjoyment of the film as pure entertainment and introduced a disturbing element into an otherwise 'delightfully 'frothy farce. He [Malle] throws in some torture in a monastery which could be interpreted as a homage to Luis Buñuel.' Gordon Gow, (1966), p.6.

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The Ancestral Home of Chile's Blest Family in Sligo, Ireland

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Abstract

This work is part of a broader investigation into the history of the Chile's prominent Blest family, their European origins, and the first hundred years of their lives in Chile. Despite being a small family, its importance in the consolidation of national identity, as well as its academic, cultural and professional contributions, is notable. In this first background piece, I explore the characteristics of their ancestor Albert Blest, and his life in Sligo, Ireland, the town and county in which he was raised. His upbringing and experiences there left indelible fingerprints on the family's character and predisposition.

The surname Blest has a permanent place in the Chilean public eye. Alberto Blest Gana (1830-1920) was an exceptional novelist, whose works have aided in a consolidation of the image of who we are and who we were; his books have become part of the mental world that all Chilean students bring with them when they enter school. Clotario Blest Riffo (1899-1990) was a successful labour organiser and founding member of the Central Única de Trabajadores (CUT, Workers' Central Union) and the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR, Movement of the Revolutionary Left) whose struggles and speeches on behalf of working people spanned decades. These men are just two members of the famous and accomplished Blest family, whose efforts have had a significant impact on Chilean public life. The relationship of this family with Chilean history in the first years of the nineteenth century is so interesting that we believe it merits the trouble of going into greater detail.

Their formative experiences took place in an Irish community that had become embroiled in religious disputes; at the same time, Sligo was a booming commercial port, and the jumping off point for many entrepreneurial, westward-heading emigrants. The Blest children were marked by their youthful experiences in Sligo and brought with them to Chile certain distinct beliefs, habits and values which then became a

proud and important part of the formation of an independent Chile.

The marriage of Alberto Blest and Ann Maiben resulted in the birth of many children, of which only seven reached adulthood, five boys and two girls. [2] We know much detail about three of these children who relocated, prospered and have descendants in Chile. The oldest of these, Andrew (Andrés) was a merchant, entrepreneur and business promoter, who blazed the trail for the others. John (Juan) was a medical doctor who moved between Chile and Peru before settling definitively in Chile. William (Guillermo) was also a doctor who went on to become the founder of the School of Medicine of Chile and the scion of the prominent Blest-Gana family.

The prominent scholar Raúl Silva Castro, in his award-winning analysis of the life and work of Alberto Blest Gana shows that his father Guillermo Blest Cunningham had been raised in a domestic environment where the children acquired "an ability to get along with people and a sense of respectability that was refined by daily exercise in the home, both of which became a common family inheritance." [3] More contemporary studies of Clotario Blest have indicated a similar heritage: "[his great-grandfather] belonged to a Protestant family. Rejecting the Church and his family's religion because he found it hypocritical, he, along with

a Scottish petty industrialist, founded numerous Christian communities directly inspired by the Bible.” [4] I propose in this article to give a more complete description of the Chilean Blest family’s Irish forefather, Alberto Blest, and the home environment in Sligo in which young Guillermo and his siblings were raised.

The Maibens were wealthy merchants of Scottish extraction, who moved to the Sligo area some time before 1780, in search of a good location to develop a commercial exchange for linen, which was rapidly becoming the fashion of the day; they had succeeded in setting up a thriving business dealing in textiles and linen production in County Sligo. Blest, on the other hand, is a surname of English origin which was brought over by an army official from Leeds who met and married a young girl while posted in the Sligo area; their union produced only one son, Albert, on 25 April 1755. [5]

As for Sligo itself, the denomination corresponds to the name of both a town and the county that surrounds it. It is located in the northwest of Ireland, a distance of 210 kilometres from Dublin, along a deep bay that permitted the growth of a busy port which was active in maritime trade. The zone is covered with rugged hills which, along with Sligo’s dreamy climate, grant it a beauty that has been universally admired. Sligo was the source of inspiration for the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, who spent his childhood years in the county and is buried there today. In the nineteenth century, Sligo was one of Ireland’s most important ports, and had transformed itself into one of the most popular sites of departure for Irish emigrants – particularly those heading to North America – perhaps as many as 10,000 per year for several decades.

According to some authors, all the factors that characterise Ireland in the popular imagination come together in Sligo: a rugged geography with rocky bays, islets, cliffs and hills; an archaeology of prehistoric stone ruins; a history reflecting conflict and drama; and a talent for commercial enterprise. No other county of the island had all these elements joined together. More than two hundred years ago, one of

Alberto Blest’s contemporaries observed that “[t]here is probably no other town in the kingdom that enjoys more diversity or which has a more picturesque neighbourhood than Sligo.” [6] The same eyewitness went on to describe the city thus: “[t]he streets, in the old part of town are narrow, dirty, ill paved and badly-suited for the bustle that the export trade requires. Convenient markets and large stores, however, have been erected, the quays have been improved and the extension of the city in broad streets regularly designed and constructed will very quickly obviate the difficulties and irregularities of the most ancient part.” [7]

Linen production, namely spinning and weaving, was the dominant industry and thus a relevant part of Sligo’s history from approximately 1750 to 1830. Before that date, it was practically impossible to speak of any significant industrial activity; only subsistence agriculture was taking place. In 1720, Sligo’s farmers and entrepreneurs began to give a certain commercial life to the production of linen. Industrialists began to contract with farmers to plant seeds in their fields and also put their own tenants to work spinning – a type of work that was primarily done by women and children – and the weaving mainly done by young men. That was the county’s main occupation, one whose income receipts varied with the price of the linen cloth. In 1760 the Sligo County Council entered into an agreement to proceed with the construction of Linen Hall, a building exclusively devoted to the trade and marketing of that textile. Contemporary testimonies mention that in 1802 it was a very active depot, but that it had already begun to decline by 1815. In 1824, it was offering linen cloth at whatever price it could get, and by 1834, “the linen trade practically did not exist” in the city. [8]

To return to the person of young Albert Blest, given the responsibility that his father had to the army, shortly after the boy’s birth, his parents left him in the care of his maternal grandparents, who raised him in a very unstructured way. With such relaxed discipline, it did not take long for the child to turn into an

independent and strong-headed boy who was accustomed to deciding everything for himself. In a sense, Young Albert spent a childhood almost without rules or significant adult oversight. His home life was happy though, and he shared much in common with his grandfather especially, with whom he spent a lot of time and who taught him his first lessons. Albert always remembered his grandfather with affection, recognising in him a cultivated mind and the reserved disposition of man of character, albeit one with a strong moral centre, who was above reproach.

When his parents returned and settled down in Sligo eleven years later, they maintained a similar sort of approach to parenting, in which Albert was allowed to decide for himself what to do. This attitude quickly revealed itself to be more harmful for a teenager than it had been for a child; Albert surrounded himself with bad influences and joined his trouble-making friends in multiple misdeeds, a trend that bothered his parents a lot. They confronted him and scolded him harshly, which caused the youth to become infuriated and – demonstrating a firmness of character that would characterise him throughout his life – he decided to leave home. Lamentably for young Albert, the rainy and cold climate and the bad experiences that he had during the couple of days that he lived rough out in the countryside made him reconsider his rash decision and he decided to return to the family home. He arrived with a supportive relative who helped him to face up to his livid father, a career soldier who we can assume was accustomed to being respected and issuing orders without being crossed. When negotiating the terms of his return, the main requirement was that Alberto would become an apprentice in a dye-factory for linen near to Greenville, in the neighbouring district of Coolaney. He duly complied and took up the apprenticeship. With that, young Albert returned to his house with a new maturity gained from being without his loved ones for so long and with the sense of responsibility that comes with having to carry out daily work.

Alberto, grown up now and newly-responsible, showed himself to be a restless soul when it came to religion. While exploring options, he came in contact with Andrew Maiben, a local pastor with whom he felt a religious and familial affinity and whose second daughter he eventually went on to marry. Maiben was a wealthy Presbyterian, a cultivated man well-versed in Biblical studies, who had come to Ireland from Scotland. In Sligo, he decided to focus his efforts on the propagation of education and the Christian faith, establishing a type of religious school that included prayers each afternoon. Albert Blest toured one of these establishments in Greenville and became convinced, quickly transforming himself into Andrew Maiben's right-hand man.

Albert had a great musical talent, something that he seems to have cultivated among his group of friends long before his stay in Greenville. He continued this predilection throughout his life, dedicating himself to gathering up traditional Irish peasant ballads; in fact, he became renowned among scholars of his day for his efforts, although sadly no trace of them remains today. [9] Apparently Blest also enjoyed poetry very much, but this literary ardour often got in the way of his religious reading and his work as a pastor and director of the Hibernian Society. Perhaps here we can identify the roots of the literary affinities of his Chilean grandsons Alberto and Guillermo Blest Gana.

We know that Albert Blest was a longstanding and well-respected leader in his community. In September 1798, some revolutionary troops came from France with the intent of attacking their historical enemy England by opening a second front. Fearing that they would advance upon the town of Sligo from the bay near where they disembarked, some sources say that Albert Blest played a central role in organising his fellow citizens into citizen-militias to defend their territory. Other sources indicate that he was primarily involved in maintaining the spirit of the forces that remained to defend the town, reuniting with his congregation and intoning religious hymns. It should be mentioned that many other notable men facing the same

situation were disposed to flee in case the worst happened, and could be found embarking in boats supplied in the bay. A book from 1802 confirms that “[a] number of Methodists joined them [the Irish soldiers] singing religious hymns, headed by their pastor Albert Blest, a man of great piety, and marked by his charity and humanity.” [10] Another contemporary author wrote similarly “every man capable of carrying arms... resolved to defend the city, and a great number of Methodists joined them, headed by their pastor Albert Blest.” [11]

Blest also participated in the government of his parish and its districts, being one of the elected commissioners-for-life who had been approved in a Royal Act of 1803. According to that decree, citizens of a certain economic level were permitted to choose twenty-four commissioners to oversee the port and the city. Their responsibilities included the administration and maintenance of the port and innumerable other civic duties. [12] Albert had to renounce the post when he changed localities, but he always continued to aid his fellow citizens in a public capacity when he could. For example, in 1816 he can be found serving on a special new committee created for the alleviation of those affected by the first great potato famine. [13] The Irish potato crisis reached its apogee with the Great Famine of 1846 to 1848, a time when tens of thousands of souls perished throughout the country, and even greater numbers were forced to seek a better future abroad in other countries, notably the United States of America. According to official registers, the population of County Sligo declined by a shocking 37% in the decade between 1841 and 1851.

As previously noted, Albert Blest began to attend religious services offered by Andrew Maiben in an old building attached to a feudal castle. Maiben was Presbyterian and when he fell into disagreements over the doctrine that the church’s main pastor was preaching, he decided to break away and create his own offshoot. Blest began feeling more and more attracted to the new sect and he began to converse with Maiben at great length. Maiben quickly saw in Blest a man of great valour. The

intimacy between the two men grew stronger over time and, after numerous evenings spent at the Maiben home, Blest married their second daughter on 3 May 1780. In so doing, he transformed himself into Maiben’s personal advisor in both religious and private matters. They began to offer alternating services, denominating their church as the Independent Congregation of Sligo. [14]

The religious situation existing in the county during the waning days of the eighteenth century was one of quiet but tense confrontation. For many years, stories of clashes between Protestants and Catholics (or “Popists”, as they were called at the time) that resulted in death were common. Of course, the conflict had its origins much earlier in the time of King Henry VIII and intensified under Cromwell’s Protectorate, which initiated a difficult period in which English Catholics were forced to convert; where this was not possible or they proved unwilling, the Crown ordered their expulsion and the confiscation of their goods and land. For example, a text dated 1714 stated that the Grand Jury, the organ comprised of the principal landowners, had sent a report saying that the “Popists are so numerous in this county that without a resident army it is not possible to accomplish anything good.”

Albert Blest and all his family did not remain immune from these religious tensions. In fact, he was directly involved in a violent incident which is recounted in a biography of Selina, the Countess of Huntingdon. Apparently on 2 January 1701, the congregation inaugurated a new chapel of the protestant Evangelical Society in Sligo. A few days later, a group of hot-headed Catholics forced open the bars on the windows of the new building, breaking them and tossing burning torches into its interior with the intention of destroying it completely. Their efforts were only partially successful, and community members decided to establish a watch guard to protect the part that survived. However, the mob returned, intent on finishing the job, and it was Albert Blest who faced them down with only the arms he had in his own possession. After some tense

discussion, Albert shot his weapon without wounding anyone, but this was enough to set off their hostility anew and he had to run for his life. The angry crowd followed him, some of whom broke down the door to his house and tried to take him hostage, aided by some of his own Catholic servants. All this happened in front of his terrified pregnant wife and his twelve children. Finally, he was hauled off to see a judge along with his father-in-law and the Protestant servants that had aided him. There Albert succeeded in demonstrating the truth of his innocence and channelling the delinquent rebels toward the appropriate legal repercussions. [15]

Along with his father-in-law, Albert maintained an active participation in religious services and substituted for the older man every time he could not perform. With Albert's relocation to Greenville in 1803 and Maiben's death in 1806, their congregation could not be sustained; its numbers dwindled and the faithful began to attend a couple of other local Protestant churches in the area. Albert's wife aided him fully in all his activities, and together they took great care to educate and instil faith, correct habits and the value of hard work in all their children.

In the realm of business, it would seem that he worked for his father-in-law and the Maiben family for quite some time. However, the year 1803 he was listed as the only tenant of a linen factory in the townland of Greenville, ironically the same town to which his father had sent him as an apprentice many years before. He moved there to administer his enterprises, and was there for quite some time, eventually leaving his son Andrew in charge (the same Andrew/Andrés who would later emigrate to Chile). Registries indicate that in 1825 he announced his intention to leave the rental property, which he ultimately did the next year. [16] We know that by that time, Andrew was no longer living in Ireland and that two other sons were away at university studying medicine or perhaps even had recently completed their degrees and were beginning to practise. Albert Blest was beginning to involve himself in a subject that was a passion for him: the

education of Irish children through the use of the Bible as a source for study. In this context, he accepted the offer of the important London-based Hibernian society to take charge of its Irish branch. In the beginning, its extent was limited to the Sligo area, but thanks to Blest's dedication and capacity for hard work, it soon spread and could be found throughout Ireland.

The Hibernian Society was typical of the many societies formed at that time with the goal of educating poor youths through the study of the Bible. It had two main objectives: to raise the cultural level of children and youths who were basically illiterate, and also to introduce them to pious reading of the Bible in the belief that it would ensure their moral growth. It was founded in London in 1806 and initially its main focus was on religious education. The Hibernian Society sponsored at least 350 schools and already had more than 27,000 students under its tutelage by the year 1818. However, with the passage of time it became more and more inclined to the cause of education in general, a shift which was already apparent in 1814. Its new constitution stated that the society would dedicate itself to building schools and diffuse the sacred scriptures throughout Ireland. [17] It seems that this change was the product of the same attitude that animated Albert Blest, who prioritised teaching and education, founded multiple schools, and attracted the attention of the central committee to his work.

Coinciding with the new direction of the Hibernian Society, in 1813 Albert moved his family yet again, this time to Dublin where his responsibilities increased. Of the seven children who survived into adulthood, we know that three of the five boys studied medicine (Albert, John and William). A fourth son, Andrew, followed his maternal grandfather's path and dedicated himself to industry and commerce. Anthony, the last of the five boys, appears also to have studied medicine but may have remained in England; we have not been able to trace his later activities with any certainty.

The history of the oldest Blest son seems similar to others went to Chile. He also emigrated in search of better options but in his

case, he went to India instead of America. We know that his daughter Elizabeth was born around 1820 in Kandy, the capital city of Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka), an island that the English had seized only a short time before. In 1823, he appears in records as a resident of Madras (present-day Chennai) in India. He had returned to Dublin sometime before his father's death, which allowed them to spend his last years together. [18]

By 1813, several of Albert Blest's children were already living independently, or were reaching the end of their youthful years. Andrew became involved in the commercial trade with Chile, and his brother John practised medicine there. William, although only fourteen years of age, was about to embark on his university studies at Trinity College, Dublin. The remaining brothers seem to have been in similar situations. [19]

As we have seen, Albert Blest had been the only child produced by his parents' union, and therefore his own children had practically no close family in Ireland on their father's side. In contrast, they had a large extended family on their mother's side. We know that at least two of them were doctors as well; for example, Ann's brother Richard Maiben was a surgeon in the same militia regiment of Sligo in which Thomas Blest also served as a soldier in 1802. [20] William Maiben seems to have been one of two doctors who certified John Blest's qualifications in 1815. [21] I believe that he must have been a significant inspiration for his nephews to follow his footsteps into the medical profession.

We can conclude that by the time that Albert Blest moved the remaining members of his

family to Dublin, the family was formed and his children's character well-established. He took great care with their education and the family's relocation to Dublin had no effect on that preoccupation. Albert Blest's life had many losses toward the end. Several of his children emigrated to distant lands. His wife Ann Maiben suffered serious rheumatic problems from the year 1815 onward, which significantly impaired her mobility before she died in 1826. Deeply pious until the end, she had dedicated herself to her husband and helped him in all his undertakings. They say that even when she could no longer move about on her own, she dedicated herself to reading the Bible to a blind person each Sunday. Months after her death, Albert suffered another great loss when his daughter Eliza also succumbed to illness after many years of infirmity. Albert continued to find meaning in his activities for the Hibernian Society, but his own health entered a long, slow decline until he died at home in January 1837. He was attended to by his son Albert who was residing with him in Dublin at the time.

Meanwhile, across the ocean in Chile, Andrew (Andrés) Blest could be found already married to Concepción Prats and resident in Valparaíso, along with their eldest daughters. John was practising medicine in Santiago, where he lived with his wife María Faustina Zavala, who he had married in Moquehua Peru, and their oldest children. William (Guillermo) was heading up the new School of Medicine, and sharing a home with María de Luz Gana and their children Guillermo, Alberto, Joaquín, and José Francisco.

Moises Hasson Camhi

Notes

1 An amateur historian, Moises Hasson Camhi published his first book of history in Barcelona in 2009. It was titled *Morada de mis antepasados* [The Struggles of My Ancestors] and recounts the development, migration and disappearance of a Sephardic Jewish community in Bitola/Monastir in the former Yugoslavia and in the city of Temuco, Chile.

2 Aaron C. Hobar, *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon* (London: William Edward Painter, 1844), p.211. The number of children must have been very high, considering the rate of infant mortality. In these memoirs, the editor notes that in 1791, Mrs. Blest already had twelve children and was pregnant again. And what is more, we know that there were still other children born in later years

(for example William/Guillermo in the year 1800), so that the actual total of children was surely much greater than the twelve mentioned above.

3 Raúl Silva Castro, Alberto Blest Gana (1830-1920). *Estudio biográfico y crítico* (Santiago: Imprenta Universitaria, 1941), p.4.

4 Maximiliano Salinas, *Clotario Blest, profeta de Dios contra el capitalismo* (Santiago: Editorial Rehue, 1987), p.50.

5 Rev. Maiben C. Motherwell, *A Memoir of the late Albert Blest*, (Dublin: William Curry, 1843), p.1.

6 James Fraser, *A Handbook for Travelers in Ireland*, 2nd edition (Dublin: James McGlashan, 1849), p.446.

7 Fraser, *A Handbook for Travelers in Ireland*, p.445.

8 W.G. Martin-Wood, *A History of Sligo County and Town - Vol 3: From the Close of the Revolution of 1688 to the Present Time* (Dublin: Dublin University Press, 1892), pp.244-245.

9 John C. McTernan, *Here's to Their Memory* (Dublin: The Mercer Press, 1977), p.327.

10 Sir Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland from the Arrival of the English*, Vol.2, (Dublin: Robert Marchbank, 1802), p.168.

11 Wood-Martin, *A History of Sligo County and Town*, III: p.23.

12 Wood-Martin, *A History of Sligo County and Town*, III: pp.97-98. This book contains a detailed discussion of the committee's origin, attributes and responsibilities.

13 Michael Farry, *Killoran and Coolaney, A Local History* (2005), p.76. Original publication date was 1985. I consulted the 2005 edition found at http://www.michaelfarry.com/killoran_and_coolaney.html

14 Wood-Martin, *A History of Sligo County and Town*, III: p.145.

15 Hobar, *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, pp.209-212. Countess Selina was an English religious leader who played a prominent role in the religious renaissance of the Methodist movement during the eighteenth century, taking up the cause after her husband's death.

16 Farry, *Killoran and Coolaney, A Local History*, p.78.

17 W.D. Killen, *The Ecclesiastical History of Ireland from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, Vol.2 (London: MacMillan and Co., 1875), pp.390-391.

18 Elizabeth was born in Ceylon in 1820, and she is almost certainly the "cousin Lizzie" that the Chilean writer Alberto Blest Gana met in Paris many years later and to whom he affectionately dedicated his novel *Los Transplantados*.

19 In my private communication with archivist Irene Ferguson, Assistant to the University Archivist in Special Collections at the University of Edinburgh, it was possible to corroborate the following facts. In the registry book of medical degrees granted during the period 1705-1845, the Latinised name of Gulielmus C. Blest appears. In his enrolment card, the name is given as William C. Blest. His date of graduation was 1821 and his thesis was titled "De Amenorrhœa." Correspondence dated 7 November 2008.

20 The information relative to the 22nd Sligo regiment can be found online at http://www.igp-web.com/sligo/Military/1802_Sligo_Militia.htm. Website consulted on 1 June 2009.

21 John Blest is registered in the annals of the University of Aberdeen as receiving a doctor of medicine degree on 15 March 1815. He is recorded as a resident of S.Jago [ie.Santiago], along with Dr John Richard Farre and Dr William Maiben, both of Sligo, as course tutors. The information is found in *Officers and Graduates of University and King's College Aberdeen* (Aberdeen: New Spalding Club, 1893), p.153.

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Terrys in Latin America of Cork origin

By Kevin Terry (1)

Abstract

This article examines the Terry family of County Cork who settled in Latin America. Their arrival in Latin America from Cork was through a circuitous route. Some Terrys of Cork origin, who settled in continental Europe, moved to Latin America from the eighteenth century. From this time there is evidence of Terry merchants from Spain trading with the Americas. From around 1600 onwards, the Irish began to immigrate to continental Europe in more significant numbers than previously. After many years of struggle and effort, England was solidifying its hold on the government of Ireland. The power of the remaining great Gaelic chieftains was broken, and the reluctance of a number of Old Anglo-Irish lords and gentry to welcome the new order, not least in matters of religion, was condemned and penalised. [1] From the mid-seventeenth century, apart from a brief interlude during the reign of King James II of England, it became increasingly difficult for Catholics to own land and to hold civic and political positions. Increasingly, some of them began to leave Ireland for continental Europe.

In the years towards the end of the seventeenth century, some 25,000 Irish left for mainland Europe. The Irish joined the armies of France and Spain. For the soldiers of the Irish regiments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, life was hard. In the case of regiments in the Spanish army, they were usually on operations in Flanders and Italy, and some contingents were even dispatched to Cuba and Mexico. [2]

Parallel to this experience, during the fifteenth century, a large number of merchant families in the port cities of Galway, Cork and Waterford had become wealthy by trading with European countries. They mostly shipped Irish butter and beef to the continent on English merchant vessels, which then returned to Ireland with casks of wine. [3] Seeing their revenues plummet with little likelihood of recovery, many Irish merchants moved their headquarters to European port cities such as Cádiz and Bilbao in Spain with which they had been trading for many years while continuing to operate in Ireland as best they could.

The majority of merchants in Ireland and Spain were small businessmen, usually employing only family members. With the base of operations shifted to Spain and business prospects in Ireland uncertain, they changed their business activity to importing goods and

materials from the New World and the Far East and distributing these goods to other European countries. In the ports of Cádiz, Bilbao and Barcelona, the Irish merchants imported coffee, cocoa, rum and other products and made arrangements to send them to other European countries. To ensure that their affairs abroad would be handled effectively and reliably, the Irish merchants often sent their sons or nephews to cities in Europe, the New World and the Far East to be their agents.

One of the most successful Irish families that went into business in Spain was the Terrys. They were supporters of James II, and established themselves as an influential and wealthy family in Cádiz and El Puerto de Santa María. There were a number of Terry families involved. One family were from Limerick, where they had settled for a number of decades in the mid-seventeenth century, having moved from Cork. Another branch, based in Málaga, went to Spain directly from Cork.

The founder of the Cádiz branch was William, son of James Terry, Athlone Herald to King James II. William Terry, one of the Wild Geese arriving in France in 1693, played a major role in the growth of the export of sherry from Spain to all parts of Europe. He was also responsible for the famous Lippizaner horses

of Austria. Of this family, there are details of accounts between William Tyrry and Company in Cádiz, and Edward Gibbon, in 1719 and 1720. [4]

In 1733, one of Guillermo Terry's ships, the San Felipe – also known as El Terri, El Terri, or Tyrry - was shipwrecked off the coast of Florida on a return journey from the West Indies to Spain. A first cousin of William, Pedro Tyrry, was born in Spain in 1700. He was the son of Patrick Tyrry, brigadier and Knight of Santiago, from Limerick and Isauel Lambert. [5] His father was brother of James Tyrry. This family originated in Cork city and Ballinterry, near Rathcormac.

Pedro was appointed Director of the South Sea Company in 1737, for Spain. Tyrry was ordered to return to Spain, prior to the declaration of war by England in 1739. [6] In the Irish College in Salamanca, there were 169 letters written by Pedro, from Madrid, to the rector, John O'Brien. These were written between 1748 and 1756. These are now in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Some of these letters refer to the slave trade. In one letter, in 1749, he offers his opinion that an expedition bound for Caracas, Venezuela, was in actual fact going to Havana, Cuba. The genealogical links are now more closely examined in the case of three Terry members, Juan Tirry y Lacy, Tomás Terry y Adán and Fernando Belaúnde Terry.

Juan Tirry y Lacy, Marquis de Cañada

Juan Tirry y Lacy, born in Spain, was descended from the Terrys of Cork city and Ballinterry, near Rathcormac. His parents were Guillermo and María. His grandparents, on his father's side, were Juan and Francisco María, both Terrys and first cousins. His paternal great-grandparents were James Terry of Limerick and Mary Stritch. Juan, residing in Cuba, inherited the title Marquis de Cañada, in 1824. [7] In 1759-1760, Juan's father, Guillermo, now the Marquis of Cañada, visited the Americas and West Indies. [8] There is evidence of one John Tirry, in 1658, who was working for the King of Spain in paying his army in Flanders, and also having the protection of the English lord protector to traffic in the Barbados and other islands. [9]

In 1787, the commander Juan Terry y Lacy, who was a navy officer, presented a report to the Count of Santa Clara, on how to organise the colony on the Isla de Pinos, modern day Isla de la Juventud. [10] Juan Tirry y Lacy was responsible for mapping the Isla de la Juventud, where he went with the mission of analysing the pine trees to see if they could be used for the ships in the Spanish navy. In honour of his contributions to geography, the northernmost point of the island was called Punta de Tirry. Juan was made a Knight of Santiago in 1793 and in the following year he married María Jesus Loinaz y Lizundía. In Havana, Juan Tirry was the engineer general, was twice mayor of the city and Governor of Matanzas in 1816, a city where one of the streets bears his name. The title Marquis Cañada de Tirry, which he inherited in 1824, he retained until he died fifteen years later. [11] His son, Don Guillermo Tirry y Loynaz, born in Havana in 1799, was subsequently Marquis of Cañada.

Tomás Terry y Adán

In the case of Tomás, first the Spanish link is detailed. Don José Terry and his wife Doña María Mendoza had a son: Don José Antonio Terry y Mendoza, born in Cádiz, who went to Peru and to the city of Caracas, Venezuela. [12] He married twice. His first wife was Doña María Ortega, a native of Extremadura. They had the following children:

- Josefa: She was a native of Curaçao. She married Don Tomás Arcay y Arritegui, a native of Granada and son of José Manuel and Inés.

- Antonio.

- Guillermo: A native of the island of Curaçao. He met his demise in Havana, in the parish of Monserrate, on 25 September 1879. He married Doña Caridad Latté in Cienfuegos.

- Eduardo: A native of the city of Puerto Cabello, on the Casta Firme, married in Cienfuegos in 1850 to Doña Ana Franciscade Borja y Ballagos, a native of Holguín and daughter of Don Francisco Del Mármol y Valdés-Llarcés and Doña Ana María Ballagas y Guerra.

- José Domingo: He was baptised on the island of Curaçao, in the Catholic Church on 17

December 1826. He married Doña María Felipa Figueroa y Véliz on the island of Cuba, a native of Nueva Bermeja and daughter of the graduate Juan José Luis de Figuero y Hernández, Registrar and Provincial Lord Mayor of Jaruco, and Doña Ana Jarefa Véliz y Ganzález. They had the following children: José Domingo, who was a pharmacist, Alfredo who was baptised in Cienfuegos in 1860 was also a pharmacist. Eduardo, was baptised in Cienfuegos in 1867, married Doña Inés María Arcay y Terry, daughter of Don Tomás Arcay y Arritegui and Doña Josefa Terry y Ortega.

- Don José Antonio Terry's other wife was Doña Tomasa Adán y España, a native of Caracas and daughter of José and Manuela. They had a son, Don Tomás Terry y Adán, born in the city of Caracas, Venezuela, on the 24 February 1808 and was baptised in the parish church of San Pablo. He went to the island of Cuba and established himself in Cienfuegos in 1830. [13]

Tomás Terry y Adán was the most successful of the planters in Cuba in the mid-nineteenth century. He became the great boss of Cienfuegos, the 'Cuban Croesus'. He enjoyed a very good name with his slaves and employees: he was friendly with Congolese people and gave them money to found clubs in the towns of Cruces and Lajas. [14] He moved to New York in the 1860s and from there to Paris. [15] Tomás married Dona Teresa Dorticos y Gómez de Leys, a native of Oberon, France, in 1837. Teresa's family were French settlers from the Bordeaux area of France, who founded Cienfuegos in 1819. They had twelve children,

- Teresa, who married Don Nicolás Acea.

- María Del Carmen. She obtained the title of Marquesa of Perinat by royal despatch in 1893. She married Don Guillermo Perinat y Ochoa in 1863.

- Natividad who married Baron Alberto de Blanc, Italian diplomat and Minister of Promotion.

- Emilio, who was a lawyer and married Doña Silvia Alfonso y Aldama,

- Eduardo, who married Doña María Isolina Sedano y Agramonte, in 1877.

- Antonio, who married Grace Dalton. A daughter of this marriage, Doña Natividad Terry y Dalton married in Paris in 1902, Prince Guy-Charles de Fancigny-Lueinge e Coligny.

- Francisco, who married Doña Antonia María Sánchez y Sarría. They had the following children: Odette, who married the Prince of La Tour St. Auverge; Natividad, who married Count Estanislao de Castellane; Francisco, who belonged to the French Air Force in the First World War in 1914 and married Nelly Ormond and had a daughter Elena Terry y Ormond; Andrés, who married Doña Carmen Gutiérrez y García. They had the following children,

- María Isabel, who married Don Fernando Varona y Gonzalez Del Valle,

- Andrés, who married Doña Blanca García-Montes y Hernández. They had a son Don Tomás, who married Doña Herminia Saladrigas y Fas. [16]

- Tomás,

- Jose Eduardo,

- Juan Pedro and

- Isabel [17]

The famous French decorator Emilio Terry was also a descendant of Tomás.

When elections were held in Cuba, in 1866, Tomás Terry y Adán was returned for Cienfuegos. [18]

After making a fortune as a sugar merchant and planter, Tomás Terry became a powerful financier on the government bond and currency markets of continental Europe. He later moved much of his capital from Europe to the United States, putting millions into shares of mining and railroad companies on the New York stock market. [19]

He moved to New York in the 1860s before finally settling in Paris. He was probably the richest man on the island in the late nineteenth century, leaving \$25m at his death in 1886. [20] Of his children, Emilio Terry was the owner of two sugar estates, at the beginning of the twentieth century. On Cuba's independence he

served as Minister of Agriculture. Antonio was the owner of another sugar estate. [21]

Fernando Belaúnde Terry

Before considering Fernando Belaúnde Terry, some information is given on his ancestors on his mother's side, the Terrys. One Antonio Terry y Adriano came to Peru in 1765. He was the son of Antonio Terry and Angela Adriano. He came from Finale, which used to belong to Spain, and later to Genoa, before the reign of Italy was established. The family moved to Finale for two generations from Cádiz, Spain, where they remain (in Cádiz) also up today. [22]

Antonio Terry y Adriano married in Cádiz, Spain, Antonia Álvarez Campana. They had the following children: Bernarda, José, María, Pedro, [23] Pablo, José (II), José Antonio, 1763. [24] José married Rosa de Salazar y Pardo de Figueroa. A son married Jacoba Del Real y Solar, and they had a son Teodorico Terry del Real.

Antonio and Angela moved at a later stage to Peru, and in 1780 Antonio made a will. A descendant of Antonio Terry and Angela Adriano was Don Fernando Matias Terry, of Cádiz. Don Fernando and his second wife Dona Maria Teresa Urizar had four children, three of whom went to Central America. These were Elena, Emilia, and Santiago. [25] Teodorico Terry del Real, mentioned above, married in Arequipa, Peru, 1883, Jesús Garcia Pacheco y Vásquez de Oricáin and had the following children: Teodorico was a military engineer, married Rosa Elejalde Chopitea. [26] A son of this marriage was Teodorico Terry Elejalde, Pedro (1889-1964) an engineer, Ernesto, Hortensia, Lucila, who married in Lima, Peru, 1907, Rafael Belaúnde Diez-Canseco. One of the children of this marriage was Fernando Belaúnde Terry, architect and future President of Peru; Jesús, Blanca Rosa, Flor de María, and Graciela, who married Guillermo Rey y Lama. [27]

Notes

1. Frank D'Arcy, Wild Geese and Travelling Scholars, Mercier Press, 2001.
2. Matthew J. Culligan & Peter Cherici, The Wandering Irish in Europe, Constable London, 2000.
3. Matthew J. Culligan & Peter Cherici, The Wandering Irish in Europe, Constable London, 2000.

Fernando Belaúnde Terry was born in 1912. His mother was Lucila Terry y García. [28] He was President of Peru for two periods, between 1963 and 1968 and again between 1980 and 1985. A successful architect, he served in the chamber of deputies (1945-1948), formed the Popular Action Party in 1956, and ran unsuccessfully for president in the same year. He succeeded in 1963. He effected social, educational and land reforms; opened up the rich interior to settlement by constructing a vast highway system across the Andes; established a self-help programme for the country's indigenous inhabitants; and encouraged industrial development. However, an inflationary spiral set in, and Belaúnde antagonised nationalistic army leaders by failing to expropriate U.S. controlled oil fields and operations. Deposed by an army coup in 1968, he fled to the United States, where he subsequently taught architecture at Harvard and Columbia. Restored to the presidency in 1980, he attempted to combat inflation by denationalising industries and encouraging foreign investment in the petroleum industry. [29] Belaúnde died in 2002.

This is one example of members of a Cork family, who emigrated from the sixteenth century for financial, religious and political reasons. Coming to France, Spain and Italy, for a period, some descendants finally settled in the new world. They brought their expertise in trade and commerce and political acumen. They settled in Cuba and Peru as detailed in this article.

Kevin Terry

4. The particulars and inventories of the estates of the late Sub-Governor, Deputy-Governor, and Directors of the South-Sea Company: and of Robert Surman late Deputy-Cashier, and of John Grigsby late Accountant. Together with the abstracts of the same. Vol 1, London, 1721.
5. Catálogo de las Disposiciones Testamentarias de Cádiz, Folio 159-160, Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz; other accounts have Pedro's mother as Isabel Rocha from Limerick, see José Manuel de Molina, Terry (Tirri), www.andalucia.cc/habis/terry.htm.
6. Rafael Donoso Anes, Un análisis sucinto del Asiento de esclavos con Inglaterra (1713-1750) y el papel desempeñado por la contabilidad en su desarrollo, *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, Julio-diciembre, 2007; (translated for the writer by Aoife Terry); Ernest G. Hildner, Jr., 'The Role of the South Sea Company in the Diplomacy Leading to the War of Jenkins' Ear, 1729-1739', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 18:3, 1938.
7. Rafael Fernández Moya, (translated by Annette Leahy), 'The Irish Presence in the History and Place Names of Cuba', *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, Vol 5 No 3, 2007, p192 ;Tirry genealogy information supplied by F. Javier de Terry y del Cuvillo.
8. José Beltrán, *La Antigüedad Como Argumento. Historiografía de Arqueología e Historia Antigua en Andalucía*.
9. John Thurloe, A collection of the state papers of John Thurloe, Esq; secretary, first, to the Council of State, and afterwards to the two Protectors, Oliver and Richard Cromwell, London, 1742.
10. El Municipio de Isla de Pinos, Guije.com; Rafael Fernández Moya, (translated by Annette Leahy), 'The Irish Presence in the History and Place Names of Cuba', *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, Vol 5 No 3, 2007, p192.
11. Rafael Fernández Moya, (translated by Annette Leahy), 'The Irish Presence in the History and Place Names of Cuba', *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, Vol 5 No 3, 2007, p192.
12. Slightly different accounts come from different sources; from the web one Pedro Terry indicates that José Terry Alvarez Bell was born in Cádiz in 1755, moved to Peru and then later to Guayra. He is the father of Tomás Terry y Adán. Pedro Terry indicates the ancestors of Tomás.
13. Francisco I. Santa Cruz y Mallen, *Historia de familias cubanas*, 6 vols. Havana, 1940-1950.
14. Hugh Thomas, *Cuba*, Picador, 2001, p86.
15. Private correspondence with Lodovico Blanc, United States.
16. Francisco I. Santa Cruz y Mallen, *Historia de familias cubanas*, 6 vols. Havana, 1940-1950.
17. Private correspondence with Ludovico Blanc, United States; Will of Don Thomas Terry (from the web). Francisco I. Santa Cruz y Mallen, *Historia de familias cubanas*, 6 vols., Havana, 1940-1950.
18. Hugh Thomas, *Cuba*, Picador, 2001, pp142-143.
19. Mary Speck, 'Prosperity, Progress, and Wealth: Cuban Enterprise during the Early Republic, 1902-1927', *Cuban Studies* Vol 36, 2005, pp50-86.
20. Mary Speck, 'Prosperity, Progress, and Wealth: Cuban Enterprise during the Early Republic, 1902-1927', *Cuban Studies* Vol 36, 2005; Hugh Thomas, *Cuba*, Picador, 2001. *The New York Times*, 21 November 1886, valued his estate at \$50,000,000.
21. Mary Speck, 'Prosperity, Progress, and Wealth: Cuban Enterprise during the Early Republic, 1902-1927', *Cuban Studies* Vol 36, 2005, pp50-86.
22. Message posted by Teodorico Terry Elejalde on the web in 1999.
23. Notes on one hundred families established in Peru - Luis Lasarte Ferreyros archive of Juan Miranda Costa.
24. <http://gw.geneanet.org/fracarbo>
25. Private correspondence with F. Javier de Terry y del Cuvillo, and translated by Aoife Terry.

26. Message posted by Teodorico Terry Elejalde on the web in 1999.
27. In Peru Terry is one of the most renowned families. Its members have been very important for the development and progress of Peru. Magistrado of the Constitutional Tribunal is Guillermo Rey Terry; Message posted by Teodorico Terry Elejalde on the web in 1999.
28. Geneall.es.; parents of Lucila were Teodorico Terry y del Real and María Jesús García Vázquez Pacheco y Oricáin.
29. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition.

Castle with a Ghost

By Mario Vargas Llosa (1)

Translated by Iziar Sarasola

My interest in Roger Casement, who denounced the exploitation of indigenous people in Africa and the Amazon, has taken me to Northern Ireland. There, politics is now replacing the old internecine armed struggle.

Galgorm Castle, Ballymena, in County Antrim (Northern Ireland) was built in the first half of the seventeenth century by Doctor Alexander Colville, not a medical doctor but a doctor of “divinity”, or rather, theology. Suspicious of a large fortune he had made overnight, his contemporaries suspected him of making a pact with the devil and of practicing black magic. A portrait of him still adorns the castle’s entrance and the current proprietor, Christopher Brooke, maintains that no one has had the courage to remove it, due to the deep-rooted superstition that whoever dares to do so will die in the act.

Seen from the surrounding arboretum, the cubic-shaped castle is built of robust black stones and is an imposing symphony of turrets, grandiose windows, chimneys, escutcheons and a cathedral-like façade. Inside it is a ruin, falling to pieces. Christopher and his family, who take refuge in a few rooms on the first floor, hope that as the walls crumble, they will spew out the great nuggets of gold that, according to a legend in Ballymena, the diabolic Reverend Colville buried before he died. They would thereby raise the money to convert Galgorm Castle into a luxury residence of fourteen apartments restored to their former glory. Work has already been undertaken outside, where the good taste and historical rigour of the renovated courtyard and outbuildings could not be improved.

Like any respectable Irish castle, Galgorm has its ghost. It is not the spectre of Colville but

that of a young girl from his era whom the BBC tried to film a few years back when making a documentary there. In order to do this, a famous Greek psychic was hired but, to everyone’s disappointment, she only managed to make contact with the girl once the cameras had stopped rolling and the production crew were asleep. However, according to Christopher, the spectre is not in the least bit inhospitable and frequently materialises before the many psychics, spiritualists, Satanists, black magicians and ghost busters who make the pilgrimage to Galgorm to invoke her spirit and discuss the afterlife. Without elaborating, one morning she appeared to Christopher’s wife and they had an enjoyable chat.

Galgorm Castle has been in Christopher’s family, the Youngs, since the mid-nineteenth century. One of the most illustrious ancestors of the current proprietor was Rose Maud Young who, in spite of belonging to a solid Protestant, unionist and pro-British family, was one of a handful of Antrim ladies who at the end of the nineteenth century were actively involved in the revival of Irish language and culture, an endeavour which brought them close to their traditional adversary, Irish nationalists. In addition to keeping a very detailed diary, Rose Young published three volumes of traditional Irish oral poems, legends and songs collected from Antrim fishermen and country folk. Besides being beautiful, educated and liberal, Rose Maud Young – at whose parties Presbyterians, Anglicans and Catholics mingled – was a friend and patron of Roger Casement (1864-1916), the fascinating character, whose footsteps I am attempting to follow through these lands.

As a teenager, at the end of the nineteenth century, Casement studied three years in Ballymena School and spent many weekends at

Galgorm Castle, which are recorded in the meticulous diaries of Rose Maud Young. It was here, perhaps, that he read the memoirs of the great English explorers, like Livingstone and Stanley, who whetted his appetite for travelling and Africa. Although he was born in Sandycove, Dublin (very close to the Martello Tower where Joyce's *Ulysses* begins) his family were from Antrim and he spent a great part of his childhood and adolescence there, and returned throughout his adulthood whenever he needed to appease his nostalgia and rest his spirit from the great turmoil that assailed him throughout his intense life of adventure and danger akin to the paladin of an epic novel. A great part of his life was devoted to the denunciation of the exploitation and mistreatment of the indigenous communities of Africa and the Amazon, which extended, especially in his final years, to the fight for Irish independence.

On the night before Casement's execution, as Pentonville Prison's clinical executioner, Mr John Ellis (who in his spare time was also a hairdresser) proceeded with the macabre ceremony of taking the weight and measurements to ensure that the rope to be used to hang him had the appropriate tension and length, the condemned man requested for his remains to be buried not far from here, in Murlough Bay, which he referred to as "Paradise Bay" in his correspondence. But the British authorities did not grant him the pleasure: they buried him in the prison yard where he was hanged as a traitor (for having conspired with Germany in the First World War and for smuggling arms for the 1916 Easter Rising), in an anonymous grave beside an infamous wife-murderer, Dr. Crippen, executed a few years earlier. It was only in 1965 that Casement's remains were returned to Ireland, where they now rest in Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin, under a sombre gravestone with an Irish inscription (a language, which in spite of his efforts, he never learnt) that reads "Died for Ireland".

Roger Casement was right in wanting to be buried in Murlough Bay, for it is the most beautiful spot in Ireland, in Europe, and

perhaps the world. Here culminates one of the most astonishing glens in Antrim, a river valley or gorge that meanders between mountains tinted with every shade of green, beneath canopies of trees hiding streams, waterfalls and sheer cliffs, before descending to meet the rampaging sea smashing against sculptural rocky headlands. Flocks of seagulls migrate up and down the coast, and when the days are as bright and clear as the ones that the Celtic gods have granted me, both the tiny island of Rathlin (where Rose Maud Young collected many of the poems and stories of ancient Ireland) and the Scottish coastline of the Mull of Kintyre, can be discerned. The landscape seems to be uninhabited by people, nature unspoiled, a paradise on earth.

Of course, it is all mere appearance. This land of castles, glens, ghosts, poets and famous travelling storytellers (*seanchaithe*) has also been one of the most violent in Europe, where ethnic and religious wars have inflamed people and sown blood, hatred and resentment everywhere. Both the centuries of British occupation and the partition years, which have kept the six Northern Ireland counties as part of the United Kingdom, have been marked by killings and iniquitous outrages. Some signs of these still prevail in the height of Murlough Bay, where some years ago Sinn Fein erected a monument to commemorate Roger Casement. Soon afterwards this was blown up by an Ulster terrorist paramilitary unit and has not yet been restored. The scattered pieces that remain in the solitary hillock constitute a disturbing reminder of the other face of this dream-like place.

What will happen now in Northern Ireland? After the agreements reached during Tony Blair's government between unionists and republicans, will there finally be peace in these six counties and will Antrim's ghosts and the living be able to sleep peacefully and fraternise? Those who travel through pugnacious Belfast and its agitated nights, the prosperous countryside around it and the inland cities and places that seem to have found the miraculous secret to make tradition and modernity coexist in perfect harmony, do not have the slightest

doubt that there could be a reversal in the peace process and that those paramilitary groups of intransigent extremists that continue to place bombs and kill, will achieve their pledge to undermine peace and return to confrontations of yesteryear. Most of those with whom I spoke are optimistic and believe that the future will reinforce the process initiated with the decommissioning of both sides and that politics will definitely replace the old internecine feud. One of those optimists is Christopher Brooke, the kind owner of Galgrom. He is convinced that the accords and power-sharing between old adversaries, European integration, the mechanics of globalisation and economic interdependence will reinforce cooperation and peace. May

Cuchulain and the other gods from the Irish pantheon listen to him and grant him such a fair wish.

We part at the feet of the portrait of the sinister Doctor Colville. He has a slightly sarcastic, if beatific look. His frowning, little fair eyes appear saddened to see us go. It seems that in this country even theologians who make pacts and ghosts rigorously practice the vice of hospitality.

Mario Vargas Llosa

In October 2010, Mario Vargas Llosa was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm, Sweden.

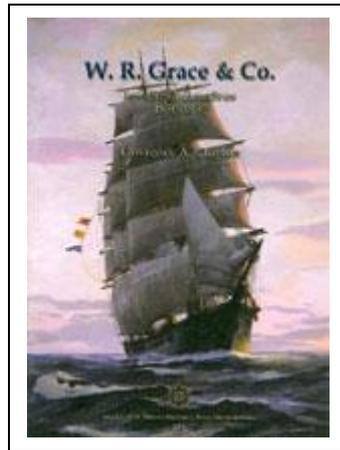
Notes

1. El País, 4 October 2009. With kind permission from El País and Mario Vargas Llosa.

**Review of: “W. R. Grace & Co. Los años formativos: 1850-1930”
by Lawrence A. Clayton,
Lima, Perú, Asociación Marítima y Naval Iberoamericana**

By Fabián Gaspar Bustamante Olgún (1)

Translated by David Barnwell



(Spanish Language Edition), 2008
348 pages, ISBN: 978-9972-877-07-0

The great migrations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from Europe to the Americas are well-known, the United States rather than Latin America being the place that attracted most of the millions of migrating Europeans. The common factor motivating this immigration was the desire to achieve a qualitative improvement in standard of living through the acquisition of wealth and fortune.

This drive for change and adventure is Clayton's theme in his account of the life and work of William Grace Russell (1832-1904) and the company he founded. Here is “an example of courage and constancy”, to use the words Professor Jorge Ortiz Sotelo employs in his introduction. This Irish emigrant, in escaping from the hunger of Ireland, went on to construct a great multinational enterprise that spanned the United States and Latin America.

This story of a man and of a business, published in its first edition in English in 1985, ranges from 1850 to 1930. It includes both the

biographical element, taking us through the founding and evolution of Grace and Co., as well as the wider framework of the central role this company played in the process of economic modernisation not just in Peru, but also in Chile, Brazil, Costa Rica and other countries (p.11). As he explains, the author's motives go beyond the strictly academic. In his childhood he lived for several years in Peru while his father was working for the company Grace founded. Having made this clear, Clayton warns us that he “has sought to be rigorous and impartial to the greatest extent possible, basing myself on my professional training. I realise that some of my opinions and interpretations will be challenged, but good history is not just a string of facts, it is an interpretation of those facts within their context, but in the light of the knowledge we have today (p.13)”. Prof Clayton's words bring to mind the thesis advanced by the French historian, Henri Ireene Marrou, for whom history is the relationship between two planes

of human existence; the past, lived by men and women of another time, and the present moment in which the historian recovers that past. That past can never be captured in itself, but rather as knowledge, in other words after being refashioned by the researcher's mental faculties and the techniques and thought processes which he imposes on it.

The first chapter, "The Travelers", recounts the difficult path to success of this Irish emigrant who left the Emerald Isle, as did so many others, when poverty and hunger became unbearable. Once hope for a better life made him "rebel out of a desire for independence", he journeyed to New York in 1846. He worked in different jobs and by the age of eighteen was a shipping agent for the thousands of immigrants who were making for the New World. However, the young William got his chance when his father James invited him to work in an agricultural enterprise in Peru, a sugar plantation belonging to his friend, Doctor Gallagher.

In the following chapter, "Peru", Clayton makes use of his knowledge of Peruvian history in order to give the reader a description of the place where William took his first steps in business. In the author's words, "William looked around and undoubtedly asked himself what he was doing in this strange place ... he soon discovered his vocation (p.41)". In the chapter "Family Matters", James returns to Ireland, while William remains in Peru and becomes an employee of the guano business operated by the Bryce Brothers on the Chinchas Islands. By dint of his tenacity and good business acumen William converts the business into the biggest in the country. His talent and energy were recognised a few years later when he became a partner in the company, renamed Bryce & Grace.

But it was not a case of all work for William, as during his time in Peru he met the young Lillian Gilchrist, daughter of George Gilchrist, a captain of one of the many ships which sailed to the island. He married her in 1859 in a church in Tenant Harbor, Maine. The union "would last for years" (p. 48). Grace's poor health — he suffered from dysentery —

obliged him to retire from the company in 1865. His brother Michael Grace took over, and stayed on to direct the growing family business in Peru. This soon became Grace Brothers & Co, absorbing the former Bryce Brothers. It is worth noting that the author here stresses the enormous importance that William attached to his relatives (brothers, cousins or other relations) in supporting the strengthening of the business in Peru.

Once his health improved, William definitively established W.R Grace & Co in New York's Brooklyn Heights. As the author points out, he was married to an American, he had made numerous personal and business contacts with Americans, and he had experienced the dizzy pace of New York life (p.59)". Yet his links with Peru remained. In fact his most important business in that country was railroad construction; described in detail in the chapter "Railroads and Fortunes".

In "The Mayor of New York," the author recounts the most important moment in the life of William Grace. In 1880 he became the first Roman Catholic mayor of New York City, representing the Democratic Party. He faced the xenophobic American press, which accused him of being an Irish upstart who knew nothing of American life. It was at that moment that a Mr. Eldridge, captain of one of the famous American ships which had berthed at Callao during the Civil War, came forward and offered a very favourable account of the actions of Grace at Callao. This had the effect of turning public opinion and Grace won an unprecedented victory. He was re-elected in 1894. Despite the new road he was following, the Irish immigrant did not neglect his business interests, nor did he lose contact with his beloved Peru.

The following chapter, "The Pacific War", offers an interesting interpretation of the causes of the war between Chile and Peru. The author warns the reader that "one must look for causes as much in events as in the wishes of men, and it is hard to say whether it was the events which pushed the men; or the men who precipitated the events". In this part of the book an important point emerges — William

aided Peru by buying and shipping arms from the United States, with the goal of preserving the national territory, even when Peru lost some of that territory at the hands of the Chilean Army. Nevertheless as a businessman, his unconditional “love” for Peru did not prevent him from keeping good relations with Chile. On 19 October 1881 he opened a branch of Grace & Co in the port city of Valparaíso, despite the suspicions of the Chileans that the business was a “Peruvian company”. In the author’s words, “Grace considered that it was a good idea to maintain good relations with whomever would win, thus allowing him to keep a presence on the entire American coast (p.132)”.

American and European economic interests in Peru brought that country to put pressure on the American government to seek compensation from Chile. The hope was to reach agreement on the loss of the province of Tarapacá to Chile, a province rich in nitrate deposits and the guano production which Peru used as surety for foreign loans. However, the US left Peru at the mercy of Chile (p.134), causing Michael Grace, a Peruvian loyalist, to undertake the measures needed to help the Peruvian economy, following the economic disaster of the Pacific War.

Faced with the government’s difficulties in paying its foreign debt, in 1887 Michael Grace negotiated the debt owed to holders of English bonds by showing them the profits they could realise from acquiring Peruvian railways in payment on those bonds (p.137). With this negotiated solution, known as the Grace Contract (the title of this chapter) holders of bonds redeemed them for a value of 250 million US dollars. They received shares in the newly formed Peruvian Corporation, which took over the state’s ownership of the railway system. The agreement shows the Graces’ role in modernising Peru and freeing it from the burden of debt (p.167). For their part, the shareholders agreed to finish repairing the railroads within a fixed period, most of the contracts in this respect being under the direction of W.R Grace & Co. In Clayton’s judgment “the Graces did everything possible

to keep Peru strong and independent in the midst of the disasters of war—they helped to identify Peru’s aspirations with those of the United States (p.167)”.

In his final chapters the author describes how W. R Grace & Co maintained growth in its business activity. The continual drive for maximum economic return - the logical essence of capitalism — brought about strong growth in the company. It became an authentic business empire with the creation of the Grace Line, the principal transport for goods - later for passengers - between New York, Callao, Valparaíso and points between, on the route of the Panama Canal. When William Grace died in 1904, his son Joseph succeeded him. In 1929 Joseph became president of the board of W.R Grace. In collaboration with PanAmerican Airways they established the first international air service on the western coast of South America, PanAmerican Airways, also known as Panagra.

The author should be congratulated for his ability to provide a wide-ranging but easily understood study which at the same time shows a deep understanding of the subject matter. From the point of view of research and historical analysis, the text is firmly rooted in original documentation, both of the Grace family and the W. R Grace company. The publication of this book also provides an opportunity to congratulate the Asociación de Historia Marítima y Naval Iberoamericana for making it available to the Spanish-speaking public and for overseeing its distribution.

In “W. R. Grace & Co. Los años formativos: 1850-1930” we follow the dream and the adventure of William Russell Grace (1832-1904) an Irish immigrant who realised the “American Dream” by forming one of the most important international businesses in the US. As Professor Clayton puts it in his Epilogue: “In many respects their ability to accommodate themselves to rapid historical change is extraordinarily modern, and often they themselves were the agents of change. We should consider them as among the principal makers of the modern world (p.335)”. This is,

without a doubt, a book worth reading — I invite you to do so!

Fabián Gaspar Bustamante Olgúin

Author's Reply

I wish to thank Professor Fabián Gaspar Bustamante Olgúin for a thoughtful and extensive review of the book. The modernisation process has not always been smooth, but instead cluttered with controversy over how wealth is created and distributed. It goes on today, with the added factors of the environment, global terrorism and the other issues of how man manipulates his world. I think the prism of the historian is

indispensable to making wise and informed decisions on where we go from here, in every category from morality to economic resources, and I thank both Prof. Bustamante and the Asociación de Historia Marítima y Naval Iberoamericana for helping to highlight this fascinating chapter in history.

Notes

1. Fabián Gaspar Bustamante Olgúin. Primary degree in History, Universidad Diego Portales. Master's degree in the history of Chile, Universidad de Santiago de Chile (USACH)
2. Marrou, Henri Ireene, *El Conocimiento Histórico*, Idea Universitaria, Barcelona, España, 1999.
3. Guano is bird excrement. The word comes from the word for the bird known as the Guanay Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax bougainvillii*).

Review of: Diego Téllez Alarcia's *La manzana de la discordia. Historia de la Colonia del Sacramento desde la fundación portuguesa hasta la conquista por los españoles (1677-1777).*,

By Emilia Riquelme Cortés

Translated by Claire White



Barcelona: Ediciones Rubeo, 2008
198 pages, ISBN: 9788493635909, €16.50

Various social sciences, such as history and sociology, have always been attracted to the re-telling of certain periods of conflict. This is possibly due to the fact that in every conflict there are particularly important factors that are more significant than the events and processes themselves, and that lead us to key moments in order to understand the history of a certain place or a historic fact. For example, the study of the election of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970 was not only connected to Chile itself, but rather it was part of a conflict on a larger scale. It was during the Cold War and therefore it was an important part of history – among other reasons – not only for Chile, but in relation to the world as well. In the same way, we can focus on one period of conflict that has a wider impact than facts alone, by reading Diego Téllez's book. In this text he provides us with evidence of how Colonia del Sacramento, in the present-day territory of Uruguay, was a key area

in the policies of the Crowns of Spain and Portugal during the period which spans from the Portuguese discovery in 1680 to the definitive conquest by the Spanish in 1777. The intention of the text is to inform us in an organised manner about all of the processes developed around the colony – including how Colonia del Sacramento was named. It refers not only to local policies, but also to the colony's importance in the royal policies and international contexts of the monarchies of Spain and Portugal, conflicts between themselves and their neighbours, and how all this affected the colony. It therefore serves as an important record of the area's history.

In this book, Téllez focuses on the development of conflicts, attacks, treaties and other such related themes. As for the text's content, the first part is divided into sections in which the author presents the subject matter to be developed along with its contextualisation,

as well as focusing on the origins of the conflict for the possession of Colonia del Sacramento. Téllez emphasises the historical importance of the colony, as it can be considered a key location in relation to business and the process of smuggling. The location was indubitably a strategic point, which served, as the author informs us, as “a block of discord” between the Spanish and the Portuguese.

The author begins by emphasising that the key to understanding the historical development of Colonia del Sacramento is to know the root cause of the controversy: the Treaty of Tordesillas. The Treaty in no way clearly defined the limits of South American territory; it merely fuelled the already existing rivalry between both powers as far as discovering new territory was concerned.

When studying the historical development of the colony itself, the author stresses the importance of international interests and events that linked Portugal and Spain to the area. In order to give further detail about the subject at hand, the author maintains that the founding of Colonia del Sacramento “was the consequence of a political plan of action which had been seriously premeditated by the chancery of Lisbon for years (p.28)”. From the section that mentions the founding of the colony, we can note a change in the thematic focus leading to the central theme of the text. In this case, Portugal needed the aforementioned area in order to be able to recuperate what she had lost by putting an end to smuggling and by promoting commerce from that privileged position. The man put in charge of the mission of conquering and settling the area was Manuel de Lobo, an experienced soldier, who managed to arrive with his squadron on the stipulated terrain in January of 1680. From the beginning, Spanish policy disagreed with the location of the camp, as they wanted the same privileged position in the estuary of the River Plate and so they made their wishes clear, in that they believed that the Portuguese should move their camp as they did not want the said area to be within Portuguese jurisdiction. This dispute about whether or not the territory belonged to the Portuguese Crown is the central argument

of the series of treaties, agreements and attacks that have taken place in Colonia del Sacramento.

In the following sections, Téllez concerns himself with chronologically describing the historical development of the colony, identifying in each section the most important milestones. One of the most important factors of Iberian policies concerned the positions of Spain and Portugal in the European context, especially in relation to military confrontations and political strategies, which are reflected upon throughout Téllez’s work.

Initially, and after the Provisional Treaty of 1681, after the dynastic union, a period of Luso-Hispanic negotiation was commenced, despite the fact that neither of the two would renounce their rights to the American territories, which left open a breach of conflict. The text then starts reconstructing the important process of the Spanish War of Succession and what happened to the colony during this period, since in 1705 an assault was planned which resulted in the loss of the Portuguese dominion and Spanish take-over; however, this Portuguese setback was altered after the defeat of Spain in the war, which concluded with one Crown being severely damaged with a need to make concessions. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1715, in which Portuguese allies were concerned that the nation should also benefit, demanded the return of Colonia del Sacramento. This was stipulated in an article of the said treaty which again was not very clear and therefore resulted in different interpretations according to the convenience of each crown. The Portuguese policy that was the source of the misunderstandings was to conquer the whole area north of the River Plate. In response to these policies, Spain founded Montevideo, following a strategy to prevent the Portuguese from taking more territory away from them, and they also effectively took possession of strategic areas of the region which is today known as Uruguay. In this way, each and every stage of negotiations and attacks was a constant display of the Luso-Hispanic rivalry which materialised in the River Plate territory. The dispute was always tense

and again, like every important event, there was a contingency in Europe which decided the destiny of Colonia del Sacramento. After the death of King Joseph I of Portugal in February 1777, the successor to the throne, Mary I, was incapable of carrying out such strict policies as the previous monarch had done, and became easily manipulated. This was seen as a contributing factor to the Spanish triumphs that intimidated her and she decided, after so much prevailing tension, to negotiate with Madrid. These negotiations concluded with the First Treaty of San Ildefonso in October 1777, in which Spain achieved its aspiration, to seize Colonia del Sacramento from the Portuguese and annex it to its territory. This is the centre of the conflict analysed throughout the text.

As for the formal aspects of the text, it is well narrated and easy to read and understand by someone who may not have much knowledge of the theme, as it is very well structured and contextualised. It is not difficult to understand how this conflict arose – the text makes this clear, as in the initial stages of the book it provides precise information without going into too much detail about facts and dates which would make for tedious reading. In any case the use of documents throughout the text is something which stands out and seems to me excessive and many times unnecessary. A quote could have been provided of the important part of each letter or treaty, rather than presenting texts which are so extensive or repetitive. Transcribing two letters to the same page is simply too much and could have been reduced. I believe that this interrupts the continuity of the narration, and could be improved upon in other studies. However, the positive aspect of the use of documents should be taken into account, as they are useful to the reader. They provide the certainty of strict analysis of primary sources. After presenting the document, the text then continues to narrate based on the conclusion that the author makes of it.

It would, in any case, seem to be a tendency that those who research colonial history give so much relevance to documents; on the one hand it can be understood, since archives, letters

and/or treaties are the only sources that equip the historian for his study and research. Other sources, such as oral history, are obviously unobtainable due to the length of time which has passed since the event took place. However, it is possible to distinguish between using historical sources for a study, and quoting a great quantity of them in the same work. At the beginning of the work, as for the contextualisation that the author presents in order to discuss the subject, it seems to me that it is very focused on what it wants to describe, which makes the content digestible. However, with regard to the manner of describing the events in which the Crowns are involved and which are related to Colonia del Sacramento, the text begins to include more transcriptions than is perhaps really necessary.

As a significant contribution, this study presents the strategic importance of the location of the colony and creates metaphors that serve to help us understand Téllez's position as a historian: that of defending the relevance of this colony with regard to the Crowns of Portugal and Spain in terms of their intentions and conquests in the Americas. It details the campaigns, attacks and agreements that took place in the settlement. It also presents the extremely unclear Treaty of Tordesillas as a central theme of the beginning of the conflict, the treaty that all but required that no agreement should exist between the two Crowns about the limits of their expansion in America.

Colonia del Sacramento, today declared a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO for its very particular combination of styles, - it mixes Portuguese and Spanish legend in its architecture - makes us aware of the clash between the two nations that wanted to possess the territory. The history of the colony has given origin to this study which provides evidence of a clearly relentless search for information in a work exceedingly well supported by primary sources, and which presents a good version of the analysis of one strategic point of conflict in the colonial period, when Spain and Portugal were the great owners of our America. It is an excellent version to

have in order to learn about this key location and its relation to colonial politics.

Emilia Riquelme Cortés

Notes

[1] B.A. History and Social Sciences Education, M.A. Chilean History, University of Santiago, Chile

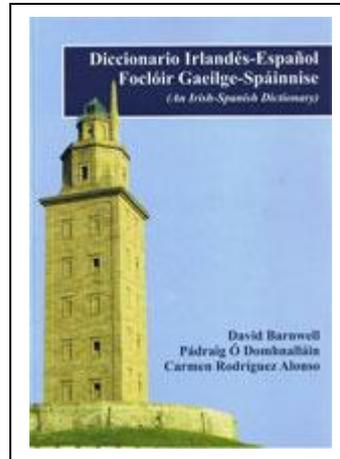
Author's Reply

I would like just to thank Emilia Riquelme Cortés for her comments and underline that there were other powers - mainly the United Kingdom - involved in the struggle for Colonia. This is an aspect that is not mentioned by Emilia.

Diego Téllez Alarcia.

Review of: David Barnwell, Pádraig Ó Domhnalláin and Carmen Rodríguez Alonso's *Diccionario Irlandés-Español / Foclóir Gaeilge-Spáinnise*,

By Thomas Ihde (1)



The introduction of an Irish-Spanish dictionary to the language tools available to linguists is unquestionably a positive sign. While a wide variety of English-Irish/Irish-English dictionaries exist, bilingual Irish dictionaries in other languages are still much needed. In fact, a search of available books at one online bookshop revealed 32 volumes with the word “foclóir” (dictionary) in the title and all but one were Irish-only dictionaries or Irish/English-English/Irish bilingual dictionaries [2]. That one volume was the text being considered here. Other Irish bilingual dictionaries published in the past sixty years mentioned in David Barnwell’s Irish language introduction (French, Breton, and Russian) are either only available from small bookshops or are out of print.

The bilingual dictionary in the volume under consideration numbers 322 pages. The book measures about 22cm by 15cm with 368 pages including introductions. This paperback volume is printed on high quality durable paper. Headwords appear in bold and pages are divided into two columns. The abbreviations for parts of speech and so on make use of Spanish and are listed on page 43. Following the headword and abbreviations, the Spanish

language equivalent(s) are listed. In some cases a sample phrase or sentence is given in Irish followed by a Spanish translation. For example, we find

*bris vt vi romper; cambiar moneda, **briseadh as a phost** é fué despedido de su puesto, **bhris an gasúr an fhuinneog** el niño rompió la ventana, **bhris mo charr síos ar an bhfána** mi coche se averió en la colina*

Abbreviations indicate the gender and case of nouns as in the following example:

***Náisiún** m1 *nación*, **na Náisiúin** *Aontaithe las Naciones Unidas**

Plural and genitive forms of nouns are not given. Nor is there a guide to regular verb conjugations. As a result, the dictionary will be helpful to many readers trying to decode texts, but those seeking to write in Irish will need to rely on additional resources.

A number of target populations will identify *Diccionario Irlandés-Español / Foclóir Gaeilge-Spáinnise* as an excellent resource and one that is most helpful. Immediately coming to mind are students studying Spanish at Irish language secondary schools throughout Ireland,

especially taking into consideration that the volume was published by Coiscéim in Dublin. However, this cohort of students, though finding such a resource helpful, would be undoubtedly small. Foreign language studies have not been mandatory in Ireland because most children study Irish and English, one being their home language and the other their second language. The most commonly studied “third” or “foreign” language in Ireland has traditionally been and continues to be French. However the number of students studying German has been notable as well. Less than 4 of every 100 students who sat Leaving Certificate examinations in foreign languages in 2005 chose Spanish [3]. As a result, with both the fact that “foreign” language study is not mandatory in Ireland and that only a small percentage of students who do study foreign languages take Spanish, it clearly must be the case that this extensive work was intended for a population other than Irish secondary students, Irish university students, or linguists in general.

Once one gets past the above-mentioned Irish language introduction (pp. vii-x), it becomes clear that this dictionary was in fact created for Spanish speakers learning Irish. Whereas the Irish language introduction extends four pages, the Spanish language introduction numbers fifteen pages with seventeen additional pages of appendices with Spanish language headings. Among other items in the appendices are a list of cognates (xix), Irish prepositional pronouns (xxviii), Irish comparative and superlative forms (xxix), Irish irregular verbs (xxx-xxxi), a bilingual list of proverbs (xxxv-xxxix), and placenames (xl-xlii).

The volume was begun by co-author Pádraig Ó Domhnalláin with his students as he taught Irish in Madrid. Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ - Linguistics Institute of Ireland) was involved in the project from the early stages when Ó Domhnalláin was awarded a European Union LINGUA grant to develop a bilingual lexicon. At the time, David Barnwell was affiliated with ITÉ and accepted the challenge of moving forward with the project. Co-author Carmen Rodríguez Alonso started out learning Irish with Pádraig Ó Domhnalláin

in Madrid and moved to Ireland where she studied Irish. She now teaches Irish and Spanish there. She joined David Barnwell on the ITÉ project and with the closing of ITÉ both Barnwell and Rodríguez Alonso continued working on the project at Barnwell’s new place of employment, the Department of Spanish at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The English subtitle to this dictionary is clearly only for marketing purposes. As one would expect in an Irish-Spanish dictionary, there is little English in the volume beyond that subtitle.

Both of the introductions are attributed to David Barnwell. The Irish language introduction briefly looks at ways that the Irish language and Spanish language have come in contact historically and in terms of publishing. Barnwell indicates that the volume contains over 19,000 headwords, making it a notable resource in terms of dictionaries available. The Spanish language introduction provides a history of the Irish language and also realistically documents the recent shrinking of native-speaking communities in relation to the population of the island as a whole. However, it must be noted that this description of the language and its current use does appear to be extremely Dublin- or urban-focused. While, as described, the language finds itself very much at the margins of Irish life, spending six months in Dublin and spending six months in Irish-speaking Connemara leave the traveller with two very different experiences of the language. Should a Spaniard be seeking to visit Ireland and learn Irish, they would be well advised to spend time in the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking region). And since some Irish-speaking regions have greater use of the language than others, it is recommended that such language experiences be carefully planned to maximise exposure to the language. As in the popular film, “Yu Ming is ainm dom (My Name is Yu Ming)” [4] the Chinese immigrant (Daniel Wu) found very little Irish in Dublin and had to seek out a Gaeltacht experience in the west. Just as an American would not travel to Vancouver to study spoken French, one would not recommend that a Spaniard travel to Dublin to acquire a dialect of spoken Irish.

While introductions comprising forty-three pages in a dictionary may seem excessive, the lack of Irish language learning materials for Spanish-speakers makes this one of the few Spanish resources concerning Irish. It appears as if the authors had two goals in mind, a booklet regarding the history and workings of the language in Spanish and an Irish-Spanish dictionary. While Mícheál Ó Siadhail's textbook *Learning Irish* (1980) was translated into German [5] providing similar detailed information about the history and use of the language in the introduction, none of the popular Irish language learning textbooks have been translated into Spanish. As a result, this volume serves obviously as a solid bilingual dictionary, but also as the first widely accessible resource for any Spanish speaker interested in the Irish language. Interestingly, however, much of the material in the introduction appears targeted for readers with a background in linguistics. The introduction does not provide information about the history of learning Irish in Spain or Latin America. It is not clear if that audience is primarily linguists seeking to become exposed to a Celtic language or students interested in Irish music and literature. Whatever the case, Spanish speakers are most fortunate to have this excellent resource and we look forward to Volume II, the Spanish-Irish dictionary.

Thomas Ihde

Authors' Reply

We thank Professor Ihde for his review of our dictionary. We appreciate the welcome he extends to the volume, and are grateful for the many positive things he has to say about it.

Ihde draws attention to the fact that our Introduction in Irish is much shorter than its counterpart in Spanish. The reason for this is simple. Information about Spanish - its structure, history, dialectology etc. - is readily available to anyone who wishes to seek it. Information about Irish, on the other hand, is by no means so easily available to the Spanish speaker, and what there is, often on the internet, is at times not reliable. To cite the

reviewer's own phrase, this is "the first widely accessible resource for any Spanish speaker interested in the Irish language". Perhaps related to this, Ihde wonders about the target audience for the dictionary; Irish speakers or Spanish speakers, linguists or "students interested in Irish music and literature"? We would like to think that all of these groups would find the dictionary of some value. Obviously a dictionary of Irish and another European language caters to a very limited market, but we find Ihde's depiction of the current status of Spanish in the Irish educational system a little inexact, in that the situation of Spanish is definitely stronger than he depicts. Lots of people in Ireland, be they children or adults, are learning Spanish.

We are not sure about what Ihde means in his comment that the dictionary is "Dublin- or urban-focused". Is he criticising the dictionary for using standard Irish (*An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*)? If so, we can only say that this has been the practice of Irish dictionaries such as *De Bhaldrathe* or *Ó Dónaill*. Of course we would urge Spanish-speaking learners of Irish to spend time in what remains of our *Gaeltachtaí*, but we think they might do well to pack a copy of our dictionary with other learning materials. And we remind readers that there is a large reservoir of Irish speakers (and learners) outside the shrinking borders of the *Gaeltachtaí*, in Dublin and elsewhere, indeed outside of Ireland. Some Spanish-speaking learners of Irish will never visit Ireland - we would hope our dictionary would be of service to them too. As to the short film recommended by Ihde, *Yu Ming is ainm dom*, its humour, such as it is, revolves around the fact that Irish is not widely spoken in Ireland, hardly an epiphany for anyone who knows the country.

Once again, our thanks to Professor Ihde, and our best wishes for his efforts and the work undertaken at the CUNY Institute for Irish-American Studies on behalf of Irish language and culture.

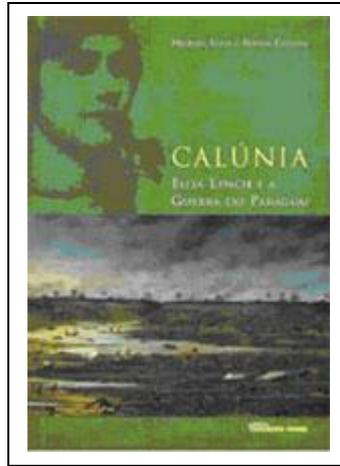
David Barnwell &
Carmen Rodríguez Alonso

Notes

1. Associate Professor of Irish, Lehman College, City University of New York (CUNY).
2. www.litriocht.com
3. Department of Education and Science, Language Education Policy Profile Country Report: Ireland (2005-2006), p. 23.
4. O'Hara, Daniel(director), *Yu Ming is ainm dom*, Dough Productions (2003).
5. Ó Siadhai, Mícheál. *Lehrbuch der irischen Sprache* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag GmbH, 2004).

Review of: Michael Lillis and Ronan Fanning's The Lives of Eliza Lynch, Scandal and Courage

By Tony Phillips (1)



English edition published by Gill & Macmillan Ltd, 2009

286 pages, ISBN 978 07171 4611 6, €19.99

This historical non-fiction biography includes historical maps, illustrations and the extremely difficult to find (and never before published in translation) *Exposición y Protesta*, a short book first published separately, now out of print and difficult to find even in Paraguay. *Exposition and Protest* is written by the protagonist herself, Eliza Lynch. In Lillis and Fanning, *Exposition and Protest* is included as an appendix (41 pages in English translation).

I was invited to São Paulo by the Author, former Irish ambassador to the United Nations Michael Lillis, to attend the book launch of the Brazilian Portuguese version of their book. It was refreshing to see that even in the twenty-first century, this shadowy heroine is still capable of eliciting a fiery debate. Both at the book launch and over cocktails afterwards in a fashionable São Paulo restaurant, it was my pleasure to participate with Irish and Brazilian intellectuals in passionate conversations over this scandalous heroine from Cork.

Unlike many other books on the subject, the focus of Lillis and Fanning's book is on Eliza herself. By comparison, most other works on

Eliza Lynch focus more on the sensational war years of the prolonged massacres of Paraguay's war against the Triple Alliance (Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay), and over-emphasise the sordid tales of high-class prostitution in Paris (much of which Lillis and Fanning believe were invented by her detractors). The authors in contrast de-emphasise the fetish interests in war and sex, and focus instead, perhaps understandably, on a more European focus on Lynch's family roots in Ireland, and her childhood and teenage marriage to the French military medic Quatrefages and her life after the war, again mostly back in Europe. Although there is more of a focus on Lynch's life outside South America than is common in biographies of the woman, this is not to say that the authors have a purely European mindset nor that their research is Eurocentric, as an extensive team of researchers collaborated on this work in various countries in South America. The authors have travelled extensively in South America and between them they speak both Portuguese and Spanish fluently, along with English.

The authors provide refreshing detail on Eliza Lynch's life back in Europe after the death of

her dictator husband Marshall Francisco Solano López, a part of Lynch's biography not focussed on by other biographers.

Immediately after the death of her husband and first-born son, (two bodies she buried with her bare hands in the Paraguayan soil of Cerro Cora), Lynch was taken prisoner by their Brazilian killers. While still in prison on the river Paraguay, under the eye of the victorious allies on board the Brazilian ship *Princesa*, Lynch began another war. The cunning alliance-building continued in Rio de Janeiro and led to litigation in the courts of Edinburgh, Scotland, and back in her beloved Paraguay. In this decade after the war we are led to discover many details of Lynch's considerable courage and dogged persistence in extensive legal battles to reclaim land rights and monies given to her by López for safekeeping. These claims on territorial ownership were quite considerable. Her claims on land in Paraguay amounted to some nine million hectares, more land mass indeed than the island of her birth. Also discussed are the monies lying dormant in accounts in British banks which for lack of documentation (destroyed in the war), Eliza was denied access.

Lynch was a woman who escaped cruel death from a Brazilian lance, protecting her remaining children and vast fortunes under the banner of the Union Jack. The Irish publishers had rejected the use of the word calumny to describe the societal reaction the life of this long-dead Irish woman still inspires. Later in 2009, an article written in the *Asunción La Nación* newspaper of Paraguay on the topic of the release of the Spanish edition of the book in the Law Faculty building of the University of Asunción (the former house of Eliza Lynch), shows how she still elicits debate in various languages:

<http://www.lanacion.com.py/noticias-276356.htm>.

The contents of the book are as follows: List of maps (4), List of illustrations (26), Prologue (9 pages discussing their research and the accidental death of their Brazilian co-researcher Comandante Rolim Adolfo Amaro, who died in a helicopter flight while travelling to

Paraguay to work with the investigative team in Cerro Cora, dated January 2009). [1] The body of the book consists of thirteen chapters: Ch. 1: The hunt for Eliza Lynch (twelve pages) Ch. 2: Monsieur Quatrefages and Mrs Quatrefages (ten pages) Ch. 3: Was she a Courtesan? (thirteen pages) Ch. 4 Enter Panchito (twenty-two pages) Ch. 5: Paraguay –Mohammed's Paradise (thirteen pages) Ch. 6: The Queen of Paraguay (twenty-six pages) Ch. 7: Triumph (fifteen pages) Ch. 8: Disaster (sixteen pages) Ch. 9: Inferno (twenty-eight pages) Ch. 10: Cerro Cora (eight pages) Ch. 11: In the Edinburgh Courts (nineteen pages) Ch. 12: The Last Betrayal: Return to Asuncion (fifteen pages) Ch. 13: 'A Heart Grown Cold' (twelve pages). Also included are Eliza Lynch's book, *Exposición y Protesta* as an appendix, Acknowledgements, Abbreviations, Reference notes, Select Biography and an Index.

Lillis and Fanning paint a frank, albeit positive picture in their loving biography of Lynch, a woman whose personal furniture adorned the presidential palace in Buenos Aires. This woman, whose calumny spread across the planet, beginning in the 1860s with her glory days in Paraguay for her association with the dictator Marshall Francisco Solano López, a man who is at once hated and beloved of his Guaraní-speaking Paraguayan people. For her loyalty to the death to her common law-husband, Lynch shares the calumny of the last great leader of this beautiful belly-button of a country.

Paraguay shares many things with the island on where Lynch is born. It has suffered the dreadful tyranny of its neighbours and the dictatorial actions of post-colonial leaders. The bilingual nature of its population has helped it to retain a deep sense of identity differentiating it from its neighbours, albeit in the context of extreme violence and tolerance of rampant corruption. The author's deep knowledge of a complex web of Latin American and European interplay in the life of Lynch has helped to bring alive the history of this remarkable woman. At the book launch in São Paulo, Lillis was accused of being in love with Elisa Alicia Lynch. It is an accusation he did not deny.

The same book was also published 2009 in Brazilian Portuguese: *Calúnia – Elisa Lynch e a Guerra do Paraguai* and in Spanish: *Calumnia. La historia de Eliza Lynch y la Guerra de la Triple Alianza*. The Spanish version was edited by the Taurus subdivision of the editorial 'Grupo Santillana' and in Brazil by 'Terceiro Nome' (all 2009).

Tony Phillips

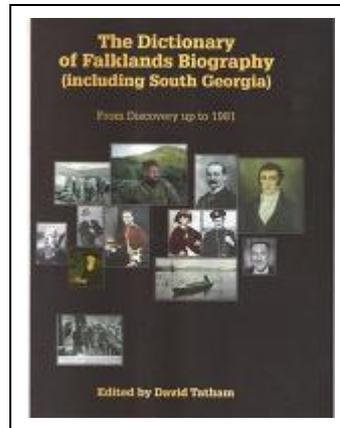
Director of the documentary film
Eliza Lynch, The Marshall's Favourite.

Notes

1. From *Between the Amazon and Andes or ten years of a lady's travels in the Pampas, Gran Chaco, Paraguay and Matto Grosso* (London: Edward Stanford, 1881), pp. 28-44. Marion MacMurrough Mulhall (née Murphy) was the wife of Michael Giovanni Mulhall, joint editor and co-founder and proprietor of *The Standard*. They were married on 19 June 1868 in Ireland. Marion died in Kent, England, on 15 November 1922. Text digitalised by Graeme Wall.
2. Rev Anthony Fahey, actually an Irish priest from Galway
3. Calle Belgrano
4. Still in existence, now the Opera Theatre.

Review of: David Tatham's (ed.) Dictionary of Falklands Biography (including South Georgia). From Discovery up to 1981

By Mariano Galazzi (1)



Hereford, U.K.: editor's edition, 2008

576 pages, 27.8 x 21.8 cm, hardcover

ISBN: 978-0-9558985-0-1, USD \$55 plus shipping

(Copies available from: Editor, DFB. South Parade, Ledbury, Hereford, HR8 2HA England, or: d_tatham@hotmail.com)

In his autobiographical entry in *The Dictionary of Falklands Biography*, Dublin-born governor Haskard says that he and his family ‘found the Falklands a place much to their liking. The austere beauty of the Islands had much in common with the exposed coast of south-west Ireland [...]’ (p. 275). Others mentioned in this new biographical dictionary also found similarities between the landscapes in Ireland and in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands (see pp. 105 and 306). It is interesting that these two places also coincide in a story of conflict and of British dominion.

David Tatham, former governor of the Falklands/Malvinas (1992-1995), who read history at Wadham College before entering the Diplomatic Service, has successfully undertaken an ambitious task: to collect into one volume the stories of hundreds of men and women whose lives are closely united, in one way or another, with the history of the Islands. Explorers and missionaries, businessmen and scientists, military men and politicians, appear

together with many ‘normal’ inhabitants: teachers, doctors, shopkeepers and housewives. And it is precisely this characteristic that makes these stories - ‘Lilliputian’ though they may seem - go ‘beyond the story of a British colony’ (p. 6).

When presenting this book, the result of a work of six years, Tatham warns us that he made ‘a deliberate decision to stop the volume before the Conflict of 1982. Not only did this war introduce literally thousands of new “players” into the Falklands scene, but it would have transformed a study devoted to the history of the Falklands and South Georgia into one dominated by conflict and international relations’ (p. 7). Another limitation admitted by the editor is that it is more detailed about the British period (p. 8).

The over four hundred entries allow us to take a look at the lives of people who were born there, lived in the Islands for some time, or at least are closely related to Falklands/Malvinas history at a distance. Also, the detailed

references to parents, spouses and children, as well as to their education and work in other places, are very useful in providing a more complete view of the lives of these people and their world. In some cases families have played an important part: there are articles on complete families, like the Pitalugas, or separate entries for father and son. There are also some collective articles, like the ones on the Condor Group [2] or on the first discoverers; and there is even a column devoted to St. Malo: one paragraph on the saint, and the rest on the city and the origin of the name 'Malvinas'.

The quality of this work is also reflected in the 368 images that accompany and enrich the text, although perhaps some captions are somewhat informal: 'Bill' (as George Thomas Dean was called, p. 191), 'Prudent?' (Governor William Grey-Wilson, p. 252), "such a fuddler..." (Governor Thomas Kerr, p. 315), or 'Getting the message: Chalfont in Stanley' (p. 147, where some Islanders can be seen receiving Minister Chalfont with a sign which reads 'Keep the Falklands British').

The five annexes provide very useful information for all readers –general or specialised–, particularly the list of 'Officeholders administering the Falkland Islands' (Annex B), the Glossary (Annex D) and 'Publications produced in the Falkland Islands' (Annex E).

Although they are not in the majority, many authors in the 'List of Contributors' have no academic background, or are just the sons and daughters of the biographee. This does not necessarily mean that all these articles are of an inferior quality (on the contrary), but might give cause to doubt their historiographical value. The autobiographical entries should also be mentioned; they present, at the same time, the risk of a certain lack of objectivity and the advantage of helping the reader to learn the opinion of those persons about themselves and their actions.

From the point of view of methodology, perhaps the absence of bibliographic or documentary references is more important: 'The need to keep the book as short as possible

meant there was no space for contributors to include their references' (p. 8). Although it was inevitable, it is a pity that they have been omitted. Apart from being customary in history books, perhaps a few lines about the sources might help further studies on the Falklands/Malvinas and the people related to them, both by specialists and by people simply interested in the Islands' history. Just to give two examples, and only in the field of Irish-Latin American studies, the books by Coghlan (*Los irlandeses en la Argentina*) and Hanon (*Diccionario de británicos en Buenos Aires*) show the importance of sources and the relatively little space they take. [3]

Through the pages of the Dictionary we get to know people born in the Falklands/Malvinas, as well as in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Also, as another proof that 'globalisation' is not completely new, there are many who come from other American and European countries (among the latter, especially from Norway and Spain), as well as from British colonies all over the world. These men and women carried out the most varied jobs, from that of governor to that of a simple peasant. Although in an indirect way, this also contributes to the further understanding of the internal dynamics of the British colonial empire.

The Dictionary carries entries for some twenty-three native Irish, from all occupations and social classes. There are governors, like Jeremiah Callaghan, William Robinson and Cosmo Haskard. Anglican clergymen appear, like Lowther Brandon, and Catholic priests, like Lawrence Kirwan or James Foran. [4] Some lived just for a short time in the Falklands/Malvinas, like Frances Howe-Hennis, who worked as governess for four years, and after moving back to Ireland and England became a botanical artist and wrote a book about her stay in the Islands. Others visited the Falkland/Malvinas Islands during their voyages, like Ernest Shackleton ('Anglo-Irish explorer', p. 484). And there are several whose roles, though less 'famous', helped the inhabitants of the Islands in essential aspects: teachers, like Donal Raphael Cronin; or

dentists, like William Russell Mahood. Some Irishmen stood out in other areas and under different aspects, like William Henry Moore, stipendiary magistrate, a heavy drinker and 'a caricature provincial lawyer' (p. 390); or Samuel Hamilton, a surgeon (in Governor Goldsworthy's words, 'Dr Hamilton is an Irishman, characteristically excitable, not also weighing what he has said in the heat of the argument, but withal an honest man': p. 265). Finally, there are seventeen who are listed as Irish among the thirty Military Pensioners (or Chelsea Pensioners), who were sent in 1849 with their families as settlers who could help in the defence of the Islands.

The Irish had disparate opinions about the Falklands/Malvinas. In Port William, W. H. Hynes was 'much reminded of the Shannon estuary' (p. 306). Others liked the Islands less, like Edward O'Brien, who went there on two occasions, once during his circumnavigation, and again to deliver the *Ilen*, a service vessel he had designed for the Falkland Islands Company: 'There is no soil, no warmth in the sun, no trees will grow' (p. 398).

Among the people related to the Islands, representatives of the Irish Diaspora are also present with some eighteen entries. Some were born in the United Kingdom: Prime Minister Callaghan; Governor James O'Grady; and naturalists Robert O. Cunningham, Robert McCormick, David Moore and Robert Murphy. Others came into the world in Australia, like Governor Herbert Henniker Heaton, and still others in the United States, like artist Duffy Sheridan and explorer Edmund Fanning. And others were from unusual places, like Alfredo Ryan (an 'Argentine entrepreneur', p. 473), born in Gibraltar.

And, of course, some came from Argentina, a country with a well-known Irish community: Sister Mary Jane Ussher and pilot Miguel L. Fitzgerald. [5] It would have been interesting to know the full list of the 'Tabaris Highlanders', a group of thirty-three 'volunteers from the Anglo-Argentine community' (p. 528) who went to help in the defence of the Islands at the beginning of the First World War: it is likely

that more than one of them was of Irish descent.

The presence of Irish-Argentines is an example among many of the great connection there has been between South America and the Falklands/Malvinas. [6] In the biographies, there are several references, for example, to maritime communication with Uruguay. Connections with Chile were not infrequent: Ernest Hobbs worked in his uncle's farm in the Falklands/Malvinas and then moved to Punta Arenas; from this same city came the Italian Roman Catholic sister Rosa Veneroni; some members of the Pitaluga family worked in Chile too. Others lived in Patagonia: camp manager Charles Robertson did a two year cadetship in a farm in Rio Gallegos; sheep farmer and landholder John Hamilton owned properties in Patagonia (he also married a Scotswoman who had been working in Buenos Aires; one of his daughters married an Argentine, and the other a Scotsman living in Chile). Others had commercial relations with Argentina, like farmer Thomas Gilruth, who visited that country, Uruguay and Chile to buy sheep. Also, some Islanders were born in Argentina: Ernesto Rowe, general manager of Estate Louis Williams property; sea captain and farmer Cecil Bertrand; and farm manager William W. Blake. Spiritual care was frequently dependent on Buenos Aires, as in the case of Cyril Tucker, 'bishop in Argentina and Eastern South America (...), the last local bishop to have jurisdiction over the Falkland Islands' (p. 535). On the other hand, the use in the Islands of the word 'camp' also coincides with its usage by the English-speaking population in Argentina. [7] Were it not for the specification that the place is the Falklands/Malvinas, the watercolours by William Dale (p. 181) might well represent life in the Pampas.

This tradition of links is also reflected by the inclusion of a few articles written by Argentine and Chilean authors, like Arnaldo Canclini, Edmundo Murray and Mateo Martini?. [8] Perhaps many others rejected an invitation to contribute to this useful work; but in any case it is a pity that there are no more articles by Argentine authors. On the one hand, this

would have avoided more-or-less serious mistakes, like calling Juan Manuel de Rosas 'president' (pp. 390 and 456), or speaking of the Churrua indigenous people (pp. 409 and 491) instead of Charrúa (p. 544), but mainly to show that history written from positions that are perhaps opposite can generate a respectful debate and a contribution to overcome hatred, confrontation and mistrust. [9] That is why the frequent repetitions of the lack of grounds for Argentine claims of sovereignty and of the Islander's desire to be British are surprising. Leaving aside any 'historical truth' and without attempting to initiate a debate on which position about the Falklands/Malvinas is the right one, it might be possible that there has been an underlying editorial line, highlighted even by the use of adjectives that are not common in history books: 'It is to be hoped

that they [the people of the Islands] will be allowed to determine their own future unhindered by the distinctly dubious historical claims of a predatory neighbour' ('Introduction', p. 8; my italics).

In the introduction something is mentioned that, if it could be materialised, would certainly be very positive: 'A website will be worth considering to update material and make available lists of references and suggestions for further reading, together with space for additional material' (p. 8).

This work, in helping us to learn more about the human wealth related to these Islands, is very welcome.

Mariano Galazzi

Notes

1. From Chapter Ten of Susan Wilkinson's *Sebastian's Pride* (London: Michael Joseph, 1988). Set in Argentina in the nineteenth century, *Sebastian's Pride* is the story of Sebastian Hamilton who, with his two brothers, leaves England to settle on a vast estancia in the pampas. In 1871 a disastrous yellow fever epidemic breaks out in Buenos Aires in which Sebastian's father and elder brother die. Sebastian too contracts yellow fever, but survives.

Eric Lambert (1909-1996), historian and intelligence officer

By Moises Enrique Rodríguez (1)

Lambert, Eric (1909-1996), was an Irish historian and former MI-6 intelligence officer who wrote the monumental *Voluntarios Británicos e Irlandeses en la Gesta Bolivariana*, a major contribution to the little-known history of British and Irish soldiers in the Wars of Independence of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

Born in Dublin, Lambert went to India in 1929, where he worked as a police officer and a colonial administrator until the end of the Raj in 1947. During the Second World War, he remained a civilian but contributed to the war effort against the Japanese in Burma (Myanmar), receiving the temporary Chinese rank of General and the honorary British rank of Major. Upon his return to Europe, Lambert joined MI-6 (or SIS, the British Secret Intelligence Service) for which he undertook several intelligence-gathering missions around the world, including assignments in Latin America and Afghanistan in the 1960s.

In 1962, during a visit to an army base in Ibagué (Colombia), Lambert came across a portrait of Colonel James Rooke, which occupied the place of honour in the officers' mess. Lambert's hosts belonged to the Infantry Battalion "Jaime Rooke", a unit named after a hero of Colombian independence who had died of his wounds at the battle of Pantano de Vargas in 1819. Rooke had been the commander of the "British Legion" of Bolívar's army and his name is still remembered in Colombia's history books. The Colombian officers were surprised to learn that Lambert had never heard of Rooke and asked him to research his background. Lambert undertook research at the National Library of Ireland and later published an article on Rooke in a Bogotá newspaper. The Colonel was in fact British in the nineteenth-century sense of the word: he

had been born in Dublin of an English father and an Irish mother.

After retiring from MI-6 (or, officially, from the British Foreign Office), Lambert dedicated himself to researching the history of the many British and Irish volunteers who had fought for Bolívar during the Wars of Independence. As well as the three volumes of his monumental *Voluntarios*, he published *Carabobo 1821* (a compilation of accounts in English about that battle) and a series of articles in the *Irish Sword*. He also contributed to other publications such as the *Southern Chronicle* and became a leading member of the Military History Society of Ireland.

Unfortunately, Lambert's *Voluntarios* was never made available commercially. Only a small number of copies (300-400) were ever printed, and they were distributed to a limited number of libraries mainly in Latin America and Britain and Ireland. The English draft was never published and the work is available only in Spanish.

The book was printed in Caracas (Volume 1 in 1981 and Volumes 2 and 3 in 1993), and led to Lambert being awarded the Order of the Liberator by the Venezuelan government. Publication was delayed partly because some South American historians believed that Lambert was saying that the British and the Irish had liberated their continent from Spanish dominion. Lambert never claimed such a thing, but showed that the foreign volunteers had made an important contribution!

Eric Lambert died on 20 November 1996. In his obituary, John de Courcy Ireland called Lambert's *Voluntarios* a model of deep and exacting scholarship. Lambert had no academic training as a historian but his police/intelligence-gathering background made

him uniquely qualified for the investigative work required in historical research. He worked from primary sources, purposely ignoring the books of his predecessors in the field: Alfred Hasbrook (whom he considered inaccurate)

and Luis Cuervo Marques (of whom he probably had never heard).

Author's Note

I relied upon Lambert's books and articles for my own work on the subject but was unable to meet him before he passed away. I was honoured, however, to have met his niece, Laragh Neelin, and the author of the foreword to his book, General Héctor Bencomo of the Venezuelan army. My conversations with them, as well as Neelin's article in the *Irish Sword*, are the sources of this biography.

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Patricio Lynch (1825–1886), naval and military officer

By Moises Enrique Rodríguez (1)

Lynch, Patricio (1825-1886), was a Chilean naval and military officer of mixed Irish and Latin American ancestry who played a distinguished part in the Pacific War between his country and the Allied powers of Peru and Bolivia.

Patricio was the great-grandson of Patrick Lynch, who had emigrated from Galway first to Spain and then to Argentina in the 1740s and had become a wealthy landowner. This makes him a distant relative of Ernesto “Ché” Guevara, who also descends from this man. Patricio’s father, Estanislao Lynch y Roo, arrived in Chile as a colonel in the liberating army led by San Martín and O’Higgins and settled in Valparaíso (Chile’s main port), where he became a wealthy merchant. Patricio was born on 18 December 1825 in Valparaíso, the son of Estanislao Lynch and Carmen Solo de Zaldívar y Rivera.

Patricio joined the Chilean navy in 1837, at the age of twelve, and took part in the war between Chile and the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation, in which his country was victorious. Interestingly, this naval service was led by an Englishman, Robert Winthrop Simpson (1799-1877).

In 1840, at the age of 15, Patricio Lynch joined the Royal Navy, in which he served for the next 7 years. He saw action in the First Opium War against China (1839-1842), during which he served as a midshipman on the HMS Calliope (a frigate) and was mentioned in dispatches for bravery. This period in the Royal Navy probably had nothing to do with Lynch’s Irish ancestry. The Chilean Naval Squadron had been led by British (including Irish) and US officers during the War of Independence and British influence remained strong in the Chilean Navy for a century and a half, with United Kingdom Naval Missions advising it until the

Second World War. As late as the 1970s, virtually all Chilean naval ships were of British origin. It became traditional for Chilean midshipmen to serve their apprenticeships on board Royal Navy vessels, but it is not known how this practice started. Scheina mentions that it began in 1839. Lynch was probably one of the first of these young men.

Patricio Lynch returned to Chile in 1847 and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Chilean navy. He fought in the naval war against Spain (1864-1866) and then held a series of peace-time appointments including that of Minister of the Marine. Lynch is remembered for his services during the War of the Pacific (1879-1884), a conflict between Chile and the Allied Powers of Peru and Bolivia which resulted in the latter losing her access to the sea. During this war, the Chileans conducted raids along the enemy coast, which caused considerable damage to the enemy’s economy. These operations were similar to those carried out by the Chilean navy and marines (led by Lord Cochrane and William Miller) during Peru’s War of Independence. As part of this economic warfare, the Chileans extracted ransom payments from civilians and this later led to accusations of pillage. Militarily, however, these actions were very successful and contributed to Chile’s victory in the war. The most important incursion of this kind was the Lynch Expedition: In September 1880, Patricio Lynch, at the head of 3,000 men, raided the Peruvian coast between El Callao and Payta (505 miles to the north of this port), creating a great deal of havoc in the local economy.

Soon afterwards, Lynch played an important part in the campaign that resulted in the capture of Lima (15 January 1881). During these operations, he led first a brigade and then a division of the Chilean Army and fought at

the battles of Chorillos and Miraflores (Chilean victories). He was then appointed Military Governor of occupied Peru until the end of the War. During the last 3 years of the conflict, the Chilean conquerors (under Lynch's command) faced determined opposition from Peruvian guerrillas, but Santiago emerged victorious from the war and was able to annex large areas of the Pacific coast, valuable because of the deposits of nitrate they contained.

Promoted to Rear-Admiral, in 1884 Lynch was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Spain. However, while in Madrid he fell ill and was given permission to return home. He died on 13 May 1886 during the return journey, off the coast of Tenerife.

Several Chilean ships have been named after him.

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