

History Skills Course

- Dr Tomas Mac Conmara
- January – February 2021
- LECTURE 3

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**IRISH
COMMUNITY
ARCHIVE**



The Fifty-Year Rule?



Key Skills

- Listen
- Hear
- Understand

**The biggest
communication problem
is we do not listen to
understand.**

We listen to reply.

Getting ready for your interview

A4 hard back copy book to write and retain all interview and research/field notes - **This will be your fieldwork journal!**



Write notes and memory prompts into your fieldwork journal



Write short biographical notes page on interviewee based on what information you have or can find about him/her.



You should have a clear knowledge of your line of enquiry. However, keep your bio notes to hand close by in the event that you draw a blank!

Joe Bloggs (Bio Notes)

Born in Dungarven 1930

Farming Background

Father: Michael Bloggs (Farmer and fisherman)

Moter: Eileen Doe. Her father was a blacksmith from Ardmore

Joe left school at 12 to work with his father on the farm

Emigrated to Scotland in c. 1950

Returned to Dungarven in c. 1958 (married)

Interested in placenames

Rembemers men who fought in War of Independence

Recalls a plane crash in Waterford in 1941

Has some funny stories about installation of electricity

Sings two local Dungarven songs

Joe Bloggs (Interview Line of Enquiry)

Family Background:

Parents/G parents - Older people

Childhood/Games/Interests

Describe house-townlands-street

Thatch - Common or sow? Thatchers?

Open hearth fire? Storytellers

Ghost Stories - Beliefs - rejections?

Schooldays:

Parents education - Emphasis?

Teachers/Subjects - Likes/dislikes

Walking to school - clothes/shoes/food

Fair days during school

Farming responsibilities and school

Expectations/ambitions as teenager

Landmarks - Communion/confirmation

Farming

Cattle breeds/Cow doctors

Equipment and machinery

Thrashing/meitheals

Going to the fair/deals/hawkers/first time

selling at fair/change to mark

Memories of compulsory tillage in 1940s

Sing local songs and explain background

Associative collection

- Photograph of interviewee
- Old associated photographs
- Items associated with interview

After the interview

- Consent Form
- Record interview context and additional information
- Make notes from interview (Stand out moments)
- Fill out relevant interview forms etc.



War of Independence: History and Memory – Local



Indelible Memories

‘What hope is there of peace in Ireland when the whole of Ireland is in this condition and every child goes to bed at night in terror, hearing shots and seeing murders. These ineffaceable and indelible memories will make them enemies of our country for the whole of their lives.’

- Rudolph Feilding, 9th Earl of Denbigh

Memory Triggers



Fieldwork



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- Image Courtesy of National Folklore Collection, UCD

—

‘A Secondary Opinion’?



Citing Oral Histories

Provide sufficient information to lead the interested reader to the physical location of the **cited** source

- Archive/Collection
- interviewer name
- place and date of interview
- type of interview material (i.e., audio cassette; open reel tape; compact disc, CD-ROM, DVD, transcript, etc.)
- Reference Code (if given)
- If different interviewer than author, specify
- If handwritten notes and not audio recording, specify
- Hyperlink to website (if relevant) RECORD DATE OF ACCESS

Sample Citations of Oral History

- Interview with Joe Bloggs, Gort, Co. Galway, 10 October 2020.
- University of Gort Oral History Collection (UGOHC), UGOHC00201, Joe Michael Bloggs, interview by AN Other, 10 October 2020 in Gort, Co. Galway, (compact disk).
- UGOHC, Bloggs, October 10, 2020.
- UGOHC, Joe Michael Bloggs, interview by AN Other, 10 October 2020 in Gort, Co. Galway, (transcript), Ref. UGOHC_TC_00201, available online <http://oralhistorycollection.gortuniversity.ie>.
- Bloggs, 10 October, 2020 (transcript).



'Ultimately, perhaps the greatest strength of narrative analysis, whatever its precise forms, is to encourage an acuter and more sensitive listening.'

- Paul Thompson

- visual clues
- aural clues
- linguistic clues
- narrative structure
- silence

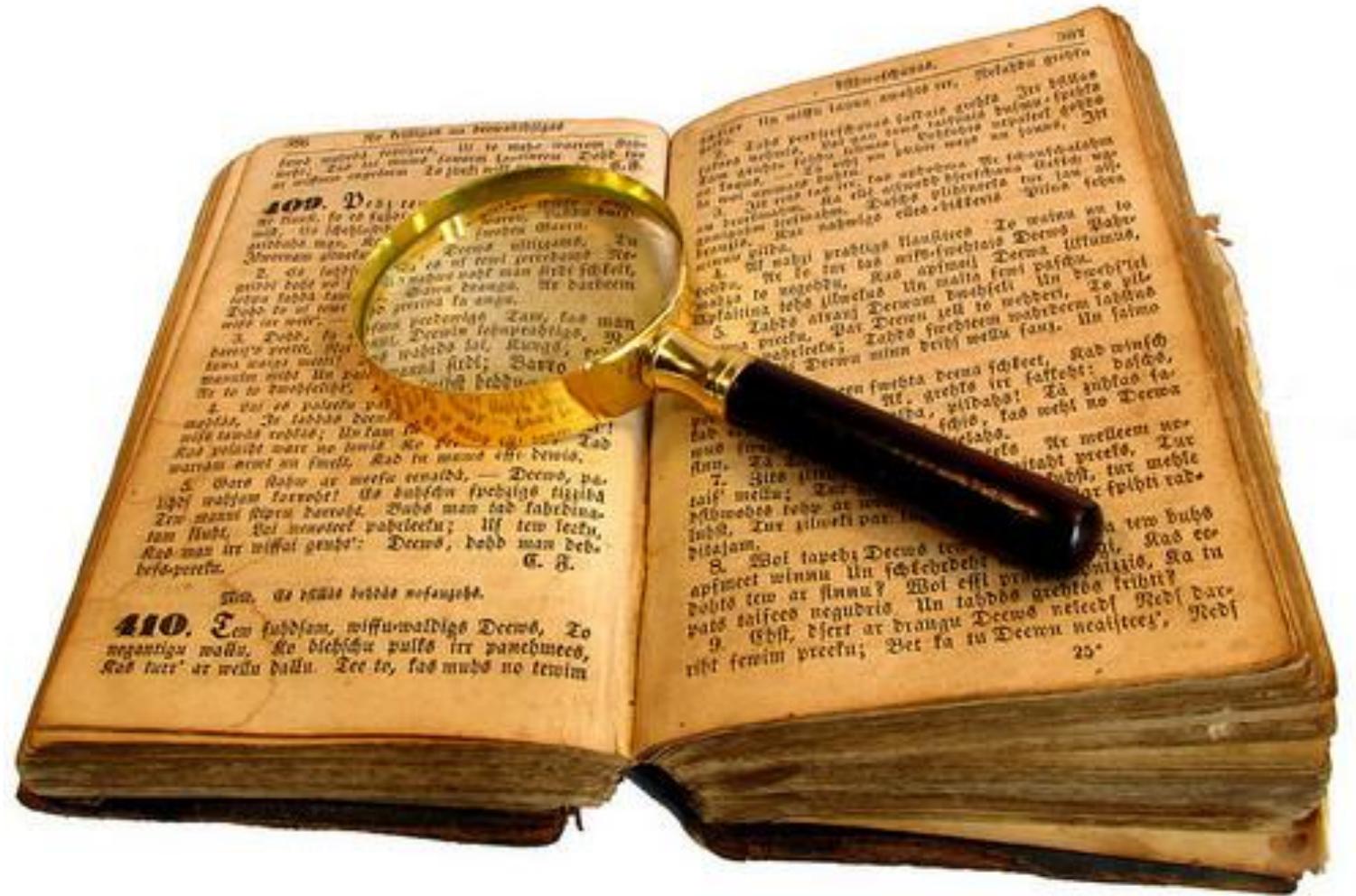
Interpreting Memory

- personal significance
- motivation
- cultural meanings
- provenance
- narrative relationships
- archival history

Interpreting Memory

- ✓ Positivist approaches to reliability & 'triangulation' – useful but can miss the point
- ✓ contrast other accounts by the same narrator
- ✓ contrast other people's versions of the same events / experiences
- ✓ contrast other types of sources / records about the same events / experiences
- ✓ check if and how the account matches or challenges the secondary literature
- ✓ Logic is a useful tool but must be framed in sound considered rationale

Sources



Should we
believe
everything
we read?



TOM REILLY
CROMWELL

An Honourable Enemy

"A terrific job of research to make a case for Cromwell
against the verdict of history."

IRISH INDEPENDENT

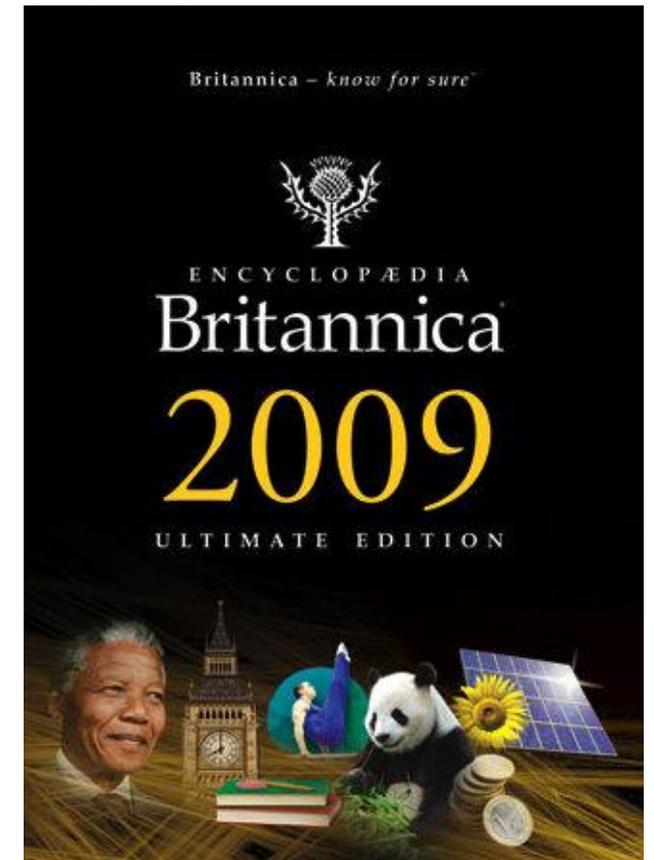
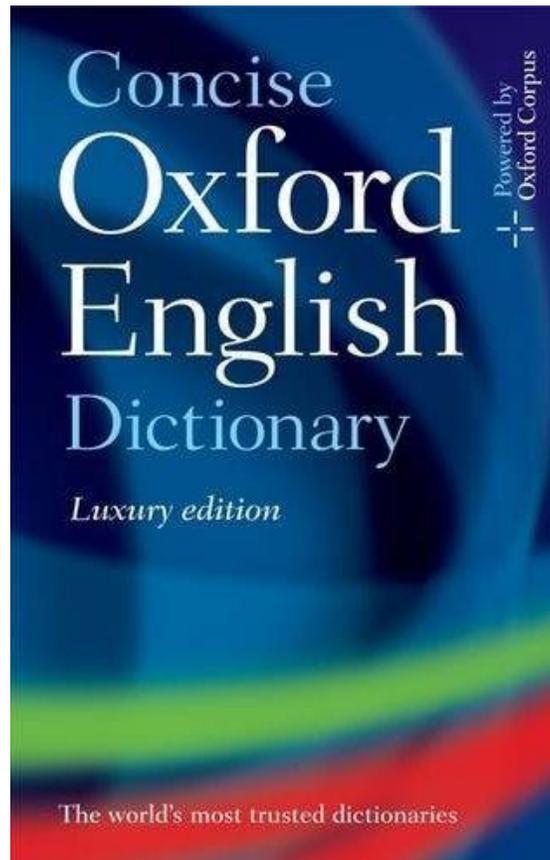
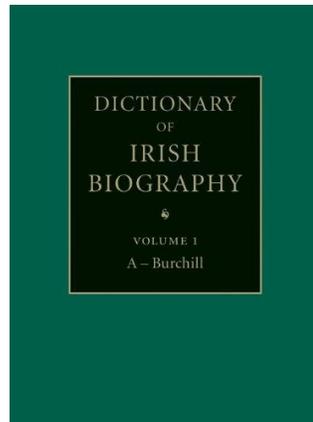


**GOD'S
EXECUTIONER**

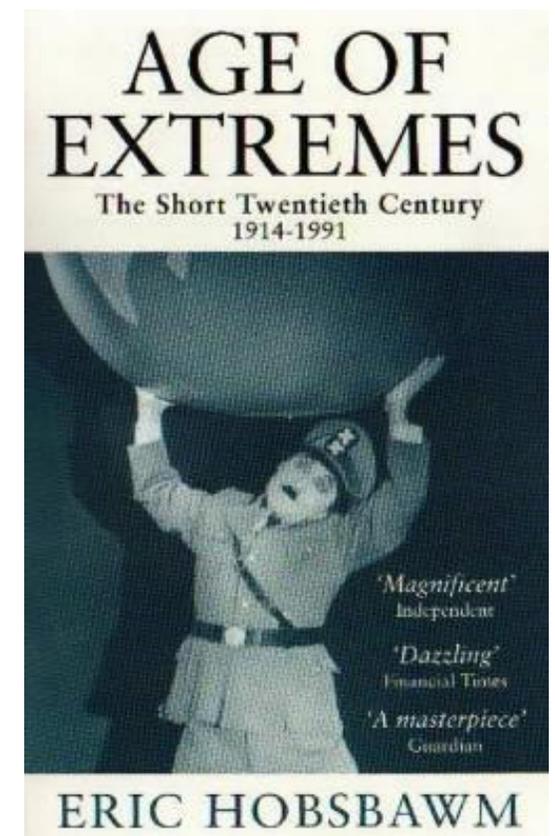
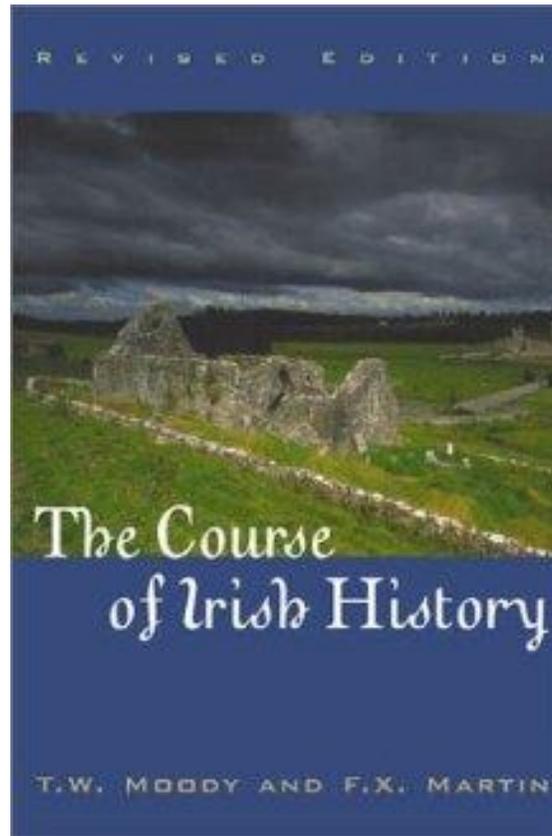
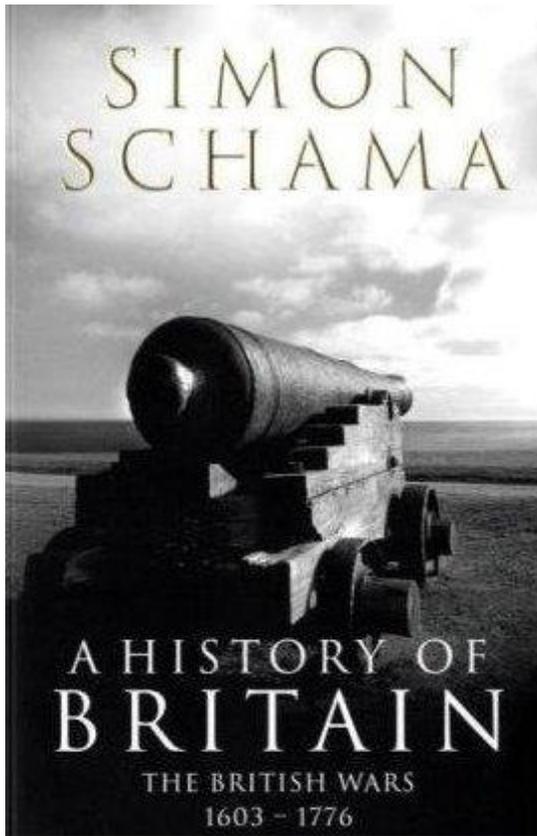
Oliver Cromwell and the Conquest of Ireland

MICHEÁL Ó SIOCHRÚ

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

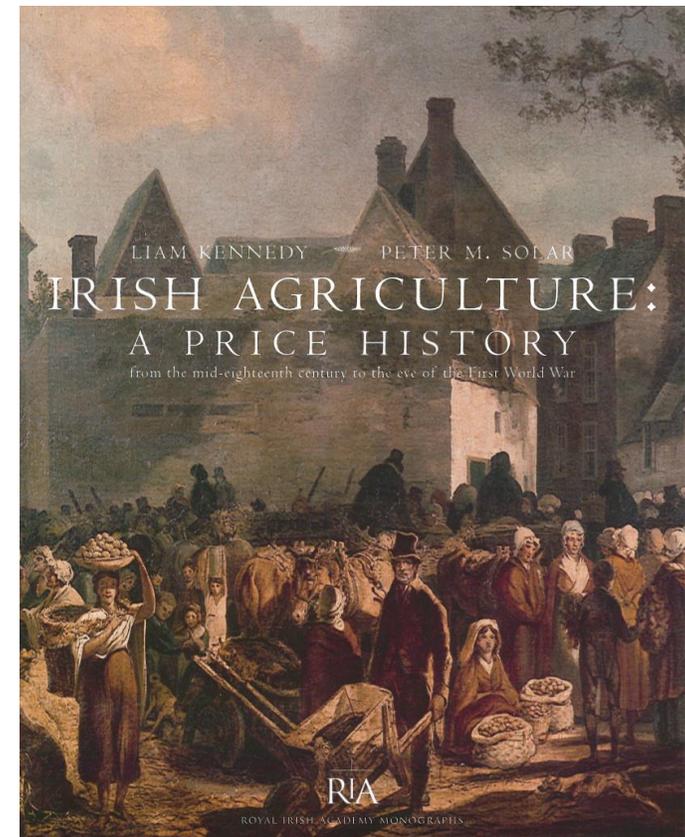
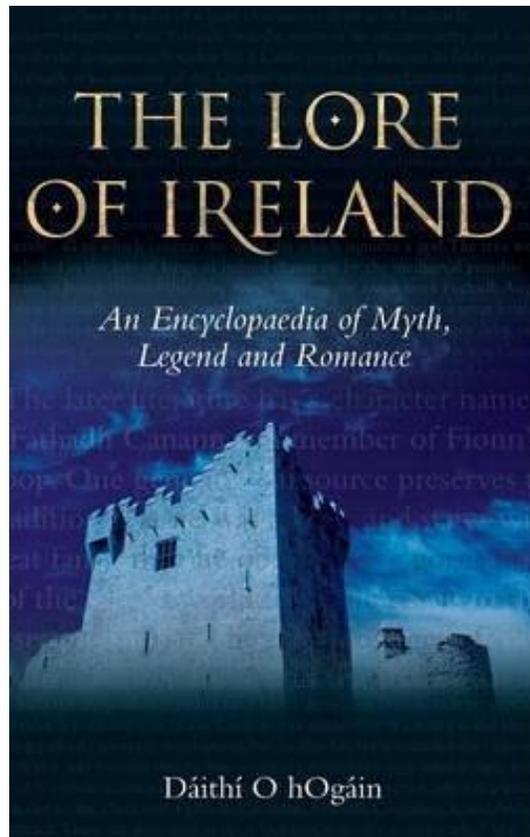


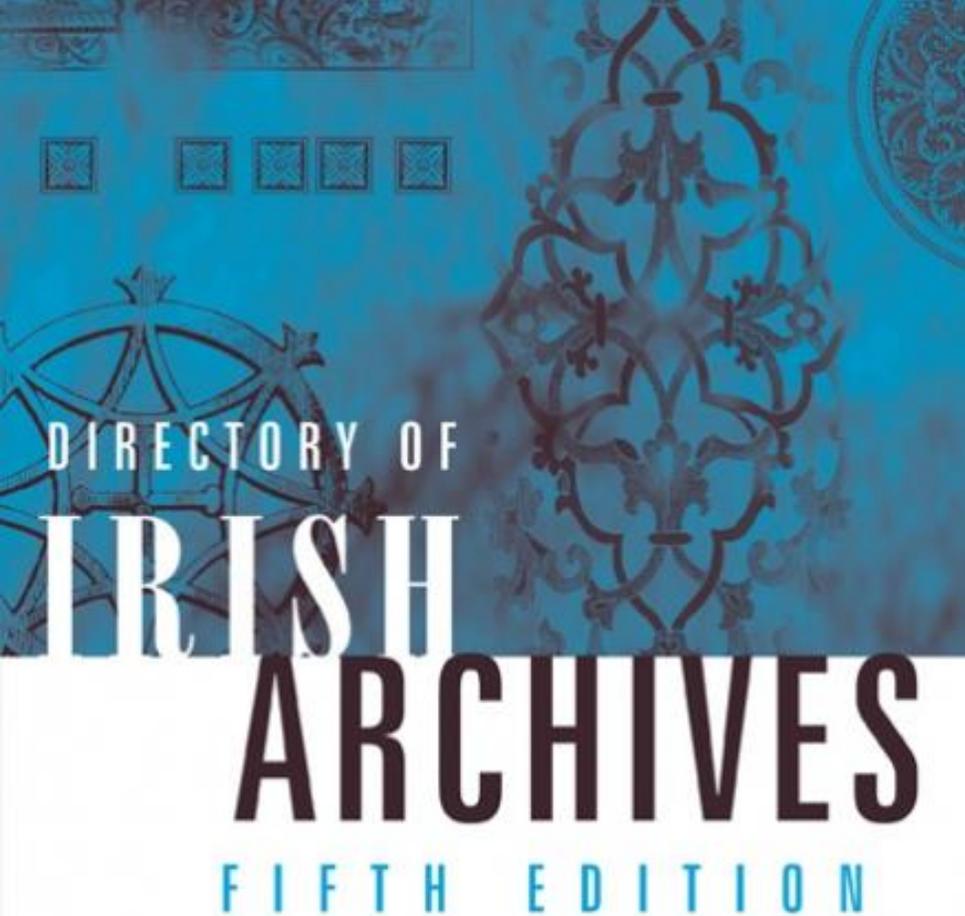
Works of reference



Surveys of general history

Monograph (book)

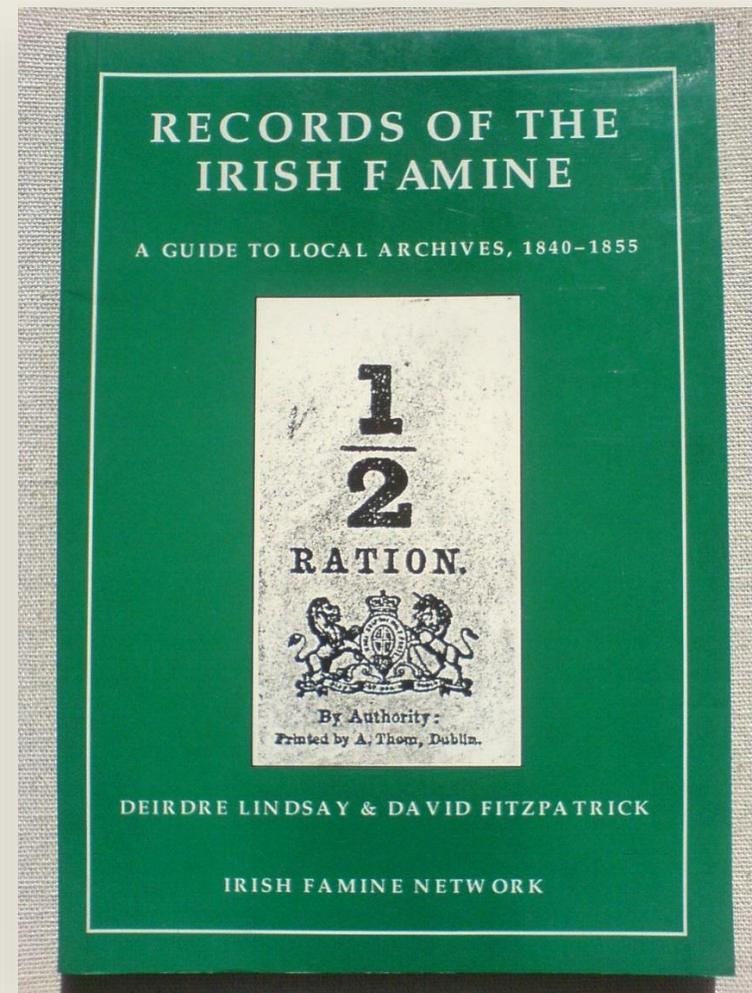
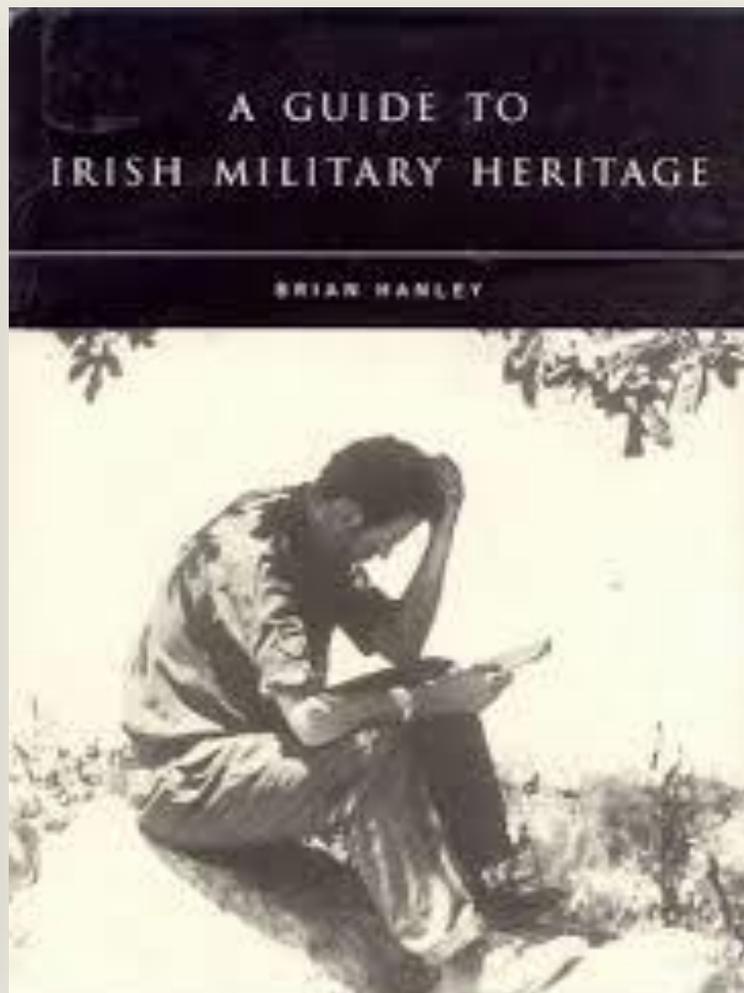
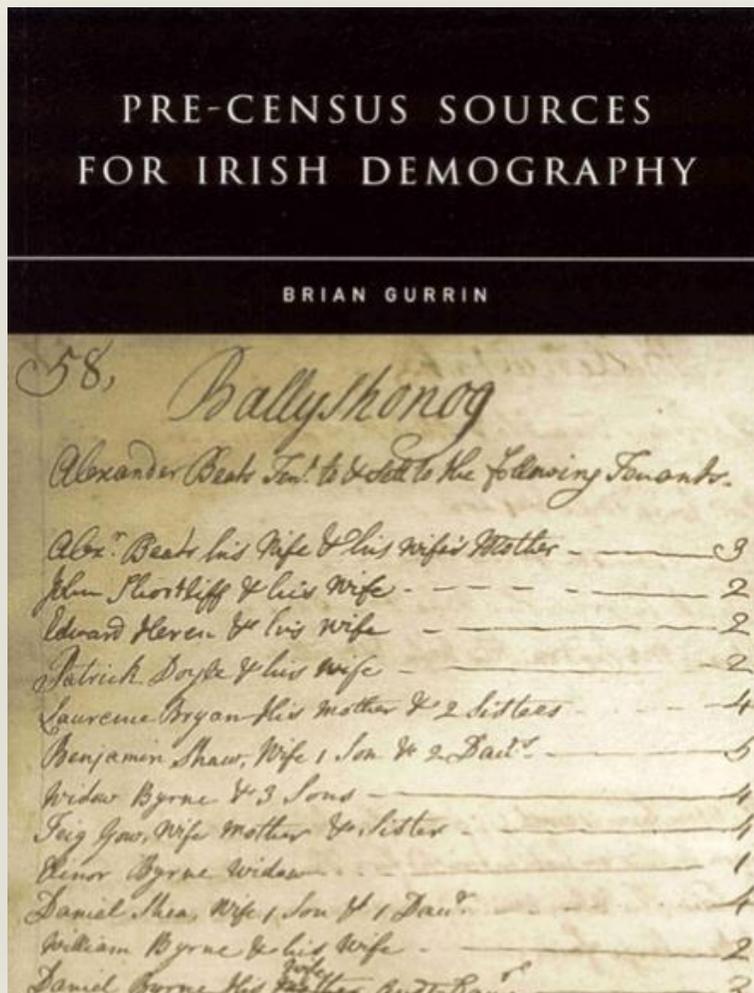




- S. Helferty and R. Refausse (eds), *Directory of Irish archives* (Dublin, 2004)

- www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon/ - directory of British, Irish and worldwide archives

Guides to Sources



Archive guides (sometimes know as libguides):

Landed Estate records

<https://www.nationalarchives.ie/article/guide-landed-estate-records/>

Multiple guides to the sources of The National Archives, London.

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/#find-a-research-guide>

Library of Congress research guides

<https://guides.loc.gov/>

German Archives Guide

<http://www.worldfuturefund.org/wffmaster/reading/Archives/germanarchivesnew.htm>

Finding primary sources in archives

Catalogues

- mostly online (but some only in hardcopy)
- Could be multiple types of catalogues
- Items not catalogued (ask)

Online catalogues

- <http://www.a2a.org.uk>
- Access to archives provides a searchable catalogue of archives in Britain and Ireland

- www.proni.gov.uk
- contains vast amount of Irish official and family papers

- www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- contains ten million descriptions of documents

- www.limerickcity.ie/archives
- mostly official corporation papers



SOURCES

A NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND
DATABASE FOR IRISH RESEARCH

BETA

All Fields ▾ **FIND**

Start searching the National Library's database for Irish research, or [find out more](#).

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How do you find sources?

Look for them

Now that you have found them?

Source interpretation: written sources

- Identify the source.
- Is it primary or secondary?
- Who wrote it?
- When was it written?
- What kind of document is it?
- Where was it published?
- How widely was it circulated?
- What is it about?

'Close Reading'

- What claims does the author make?
- What evidence does the author use?
- What language (words, phrases, images,) does author use to persuade the document's audience?
- How does the document's language indicate the author's perspective?

Contextualization

- Locate a document in time and place and to understand how these factors shape its content.
- When and where was the document created?
- What was different then?
- What was the same?
- How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?

Put it in its context

- What events had happened or were happening when this was written? Specifically, what was happening where this was written?
- Who was the intended audience and what bias might they have had?
- Consider their race, gender, religion, nationality, heritage, party affiliation, socio-economic class, and their job.
- Is the author trying to persuade, incite, enlighten, explain or deceive their audience?
- Why was it written and for whom?
- Was the author paid to write this? Or bribed or threatened?
- Where did it first appear: a newspaper, a diary, a letter or a propaganda flyer?

Using Images as sources

Pros

- Captures a moment in time in a visual medium
- Quickly and concisely informs about people, places, objects, and events
- Provides information that is difficult to convey through written formats (fashion, decor, art, etc.)
- Sometimes records details of everyday life of people that are not captured in written records
- Can evoke memories and/or emotions in the viewer

Cons

- People, place, date, and the name of the photographer are often not identified
- May reflect the bias or perspective of the photographer
- Photographs must be studied in conjunction with other evidence.
- Photographs are taken for different purposes. Not all photographs were taken with documentary intent and some are heavily manipulated

ANALYSING IMAGES

'Photographs have the kind of authority over imagination today, which the printed word had yesterday, and the spoken word before that. They seem utterly real. They come, we imagine, directly to us, without human meddling, and they are the most effortless food for the mind conceivable....The whole process of observing, describing, repeating and then imagining has been accomplished.'

- Walter Lippmann

When
examining
an image?

Content

Origin

Motive

Analysis

Considerations

- Identify the source.
- Was the artist an eyewitness or is this image secondary?
- Who created it?
- When was it created?
- What medium is it?
- What is it portraying?
- Where was it published?
- Who would have seen this image?
- How long after the actual event portrayed was the image created?
- Who was the intended audience and what bias might they have had?



Considerations

- Is there a caption or a title? Is it captured in a particular style? If yes, what associations can you make with this style?
- What does the scenery, the action, the people and the details tell you about this period in time?
- What is the overall theme?
- How similar is it to other images from the same period?
- If it is unusual for its period, why might the artist have chosen to be different? What assumptions does the author make?
- Is the author expecting any resulting action, feeling or opinion from the audience?

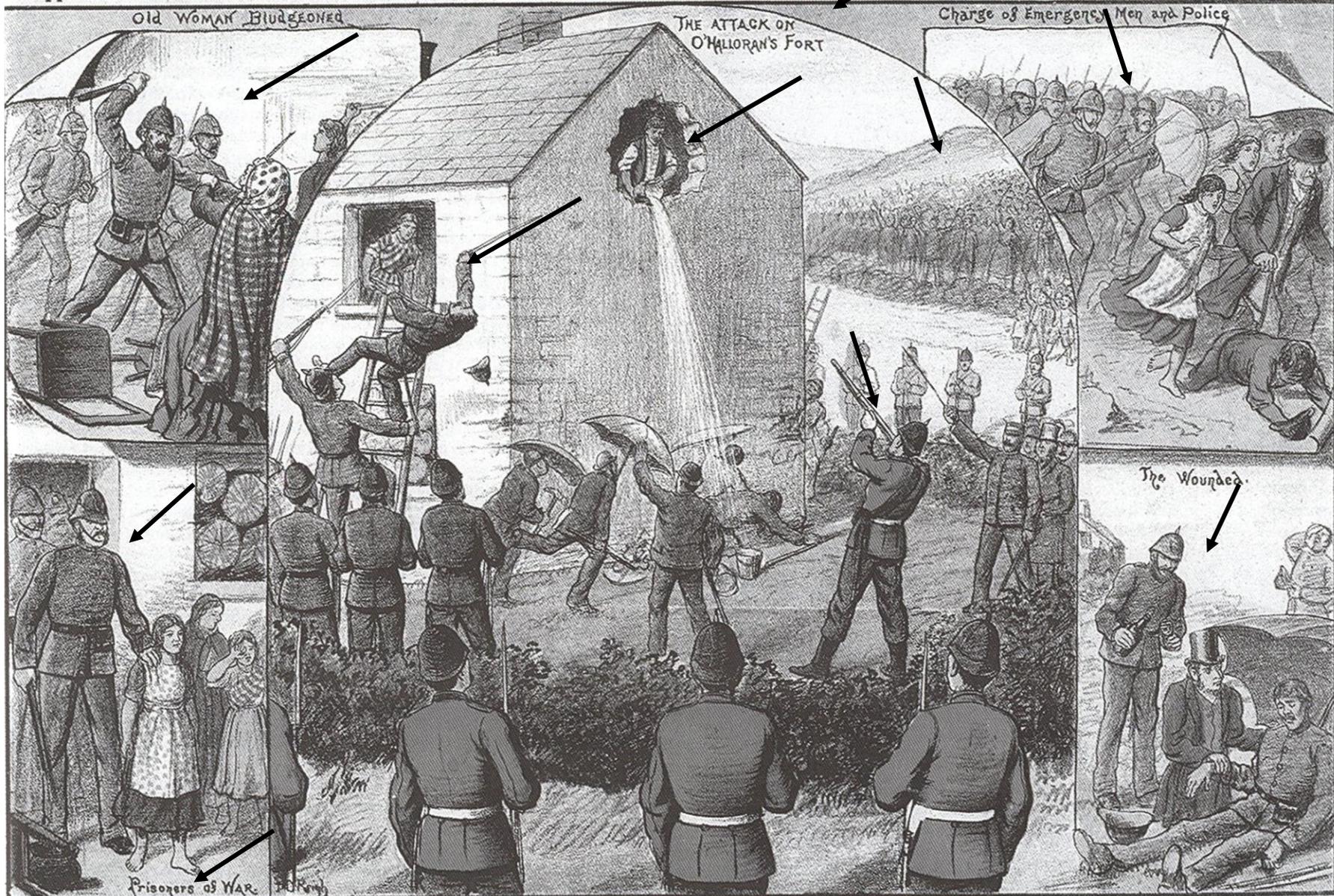


Lawrence Collection Eblana 2662

Supplement Gratis with

“UNITED IRELAND.”

Saturday, June 18th, 1887.



Old Woman Bludgeoned

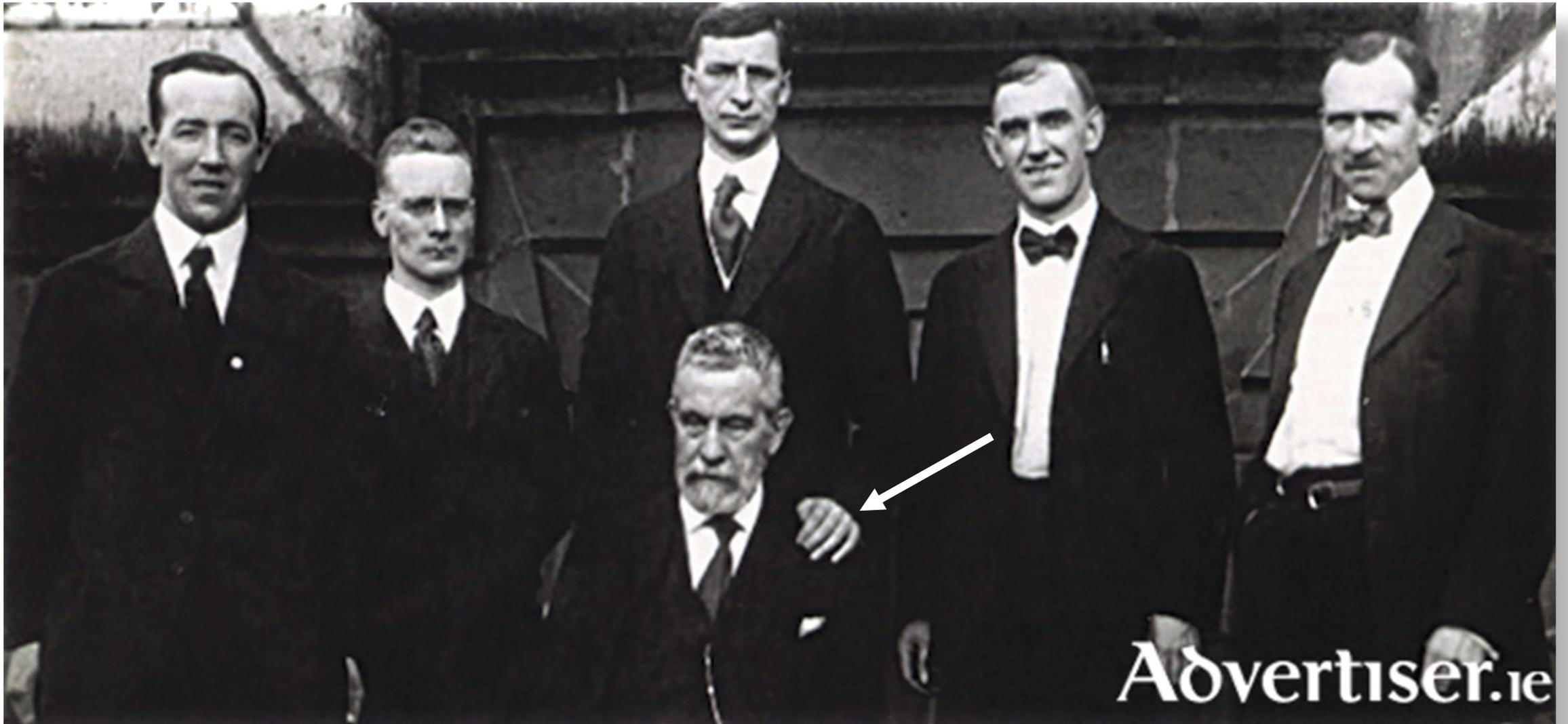
THE ATTACK ON O'HALLORAN'S FORT

Charge of Emergency Men and Police

The Wounded

Prisoners of War

BODYKE EVICTION SCENES.



Advertiser.ie

Referencing/Citations





Does your work and effort
justice



Does the subject your
explore justice



Undermines the work of the
historian by placing doubt in
the mind of the reader



Gives proper credit to the
authors of the words or
ideas that you incorporated
into your research.

Examples

- *Irish Historical Studies (IHS)* guidelines
- <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/57597b33fdacd191593ca09e/IHS-rules-for-contributors.pdf>
- Forename Surname, *Book title* (Place, Year), p. xx.
In Bibliography:
 - Surname, Forename, Book title, (publisher, place, year)
- If you are referencing a journal article, it will look like:
- Forename Surname, 'Article title' in *Journal title*, Volume (Year), pp xx-xx.



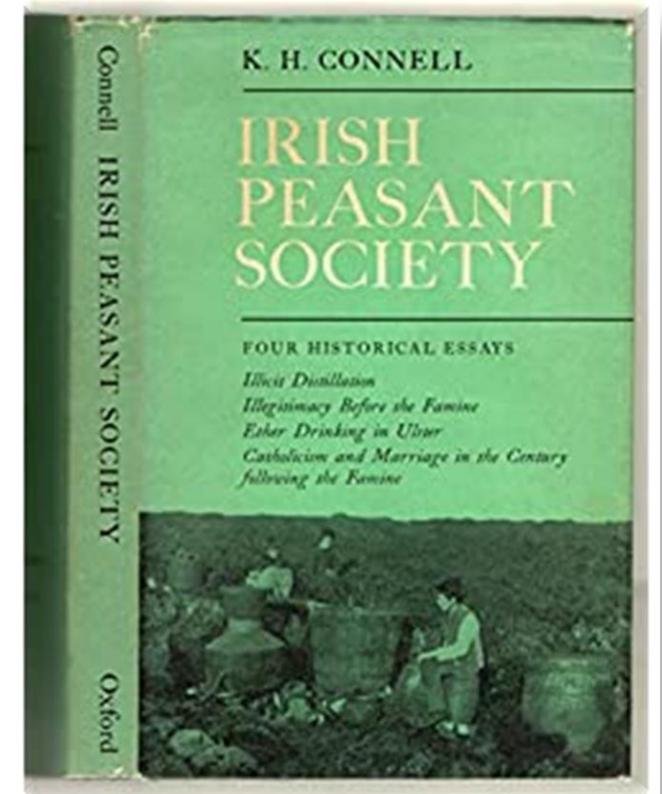
Example of footnoting a book

First name Surname, *Title of book in italics* (place, date of publication), p. numbers.

K. H. Connell, *Irish peasant society* (Oxford, 1968), pp 2-4.

Subsequent references of same source:

Connell, *Irish Peasant Society*, p xx



Footnoting an article

First name Surname, ‘Title of article in single inverted commas’ in *Title of journal in italics*, vol number, issue number (date), page numbers.

C. Whyte, “‘Freedom but nothing else’: the legacies of slavery and abolition in post-slavery Sierra Leone, 1928-1956’ in *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 48, 2 (2015), pp 231-50.

Subsequent references of same source:

White, ‘*Freedom but nothing else*’, p xx

Citing a web article or website

- Name of the author
- Year of publication
- Title - in italics followed by '[online]'
- Details of publication - volume number etc
- Website address (URL)
- Date the resource was accessed - e.g. [Accessed 7 October 2005].



Practical examples of Referencing/Citation