



International Headquarters
PO Box 1716 • Morristown, NJ 07962
Tel: 973-605-1991
www.iaci-usa.org

Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

Guest contributors are always welcome! Please note, the IACI is an apolitical, non-sectarian organization and requests that contributors consider that when submitting articles. The IACI reserves the right to refuse or edit submissions. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of the IACI or any/all contributors to this site. Please submit articles for consideration to cbuck@iaci-usa.org.

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On This Day in Irish History- November 2015

1 November 1884- The Gaelic Athletic Association, "for the preservation and cultivation of the national pastimes of Ireland," was founded at a meeting in Thurles, County Tipperary.

3 November 1854- The Catholic University of Ireland is opened. John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman is its first rector.

6 November 1649- Owen Roe O'Neill, military commander and victor of the Battle of Benburb (1646) died at Cloughouter Castle. Co. Cavan.

8 November 1847- Birth in Dublin of Bram Stoker, author of Dracula.

12 November 1952- The body of Patricia Curran(19), daughter of Mr. Justice L. Curran, was discovered on the grounds of the family home in Whiteabbey, Belfast. She had been stabbed 37 times. (See this month's Off the Shelf book review).

14 November 1823- W. B. Yeats receives the Nobel prize for Literature.

19 November 1913- The Citizen's Army, also referred to as the Irish Citizen's Army, was founded by James Connolly.

24 November 1922- Erskine Childers (52) anti-treaty republican, arrested a fortnight earlier and found to be in possession of revolver (a present from Michael Collins), was executed by a Free State Army firing squad.

25 November 1913- At a meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, the Irish National Volunteers, was established, 3000 men immediately enrolled- Eoin MacNeill was elected commander.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING

BY Colum McCann

Random House ISBN 978-0-8129-9672-2, 2015, 242 pp.

The stories in this book were primarily completed in 2014 on either side of an incident that occurred in New Haven, Connecticut on June 27, when McCann was assaulted, knocked unconscious, and then hospitalized, while trying to aid a woman who had been assailed in the street. McCann has become an international bestselling author and two of his books, Transatlantic and Let the Great World Spin were previously reviewed in IAN.

“Thirteen Ways of Looking” is the story of a retired Jewish judge in New York, previously married to an Irish woman who falls on snowy pavement in Manhattan on a winter’s afternoon and dies. Did he fall or was he assaulted? This selection is actually a novella (145pp). It will transfix readers with its precision, tenderness, and authority.

“Sh’khol”, the word means bereavement, is the story of the mother of an adopted son who endures days of torture after his disappearance on Christmas Day. It is totally riveting.

“Treaty” is the story of an elderly nun who, in the centre of London, confronts the man who kidnapped, abused, and raped her many years before in Columbia. Now, he is an important figure in peace talks and has conveniently forgotten his past.

Finally, “What Time is it Now”, the shortest of the stories, is the tale of a marine in Afghanistan calling home on New Year’s Eve, and a writer who questions the nature of his own fictionalizing.

All four stories demonstrate McCann’s profound empathy for his characters and make the book a TOP SHELF read.

Thomas James Clarke, An Irish Rebel

By

Raymond D. Aumack

The Irish are fond of “gatherings.” Be it a wake or a wedding or simply a night out at the pub there will be a gathering with stories, some funny and some sad. There will be remembrances of the people in our lives who have gone home to God with comments on every idiosyncrasy of their lives. There will be memories, “Do you remember when...?” There is always one in the group just a bit more extreme than the others. He might be the one identified as the “wild Irishman.” He is the one who drinks more, sings louder, talks faster. His views are more extreme in either direction from the center and sometimes in both directions. Such was our Irish hero of the month, Thomas James Clarke, at age 59, the oldest signatory of the Proclamation of Irish Independence.

He was arguably the person most responsible for the 1916 Rising. He was the reformer of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, that hotbed of political sedition where most of the rebels nurtured their vocation. He came to the cause after serving fifteen years in prison for his role in the London bombings, a reign of terror planned and developed in America and implemented throughout London.

Early Life

Clarke was born at Hurst Castle, Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire, England opposite the Isle of Wight to Irish parents. His father, James Clarke, was a sergeant in the British Army. In 1865, after spending some years in South Africa, Sgt. Clarke was transferred to Dungannon, County Tyrone, Ireland, and it was there that Thomas grew up. He was educated at St. Patrick’s national school. After his dad’s retirement from the Army, the family moved to Dublin.

The Irish Republican Brotherhood

In 1878, at the age of 20, he joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) while living in Dungannon. Only two years later he was the director of the local IRB circle. In August, 1880 after a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) had shot and killed a man during riots between the Orange Order and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) in Dungannon, Clarke and other IRB members retaliated by attacking some RIC men. The attack was repelled and Clarke, fearing arrest, fled to the United States where he was embraced into the Fenian fold.

In 1883, he was sent to England by the Fenians under the alias of Henry Wilson. His mission was to blow up London Bridge as part of the Dynamite Campaign orchestrated in America by O’Donovan Rossa. The London operation of the IRB was riddled with informers. It was this betrayal that resulted in his capture. After his capture, he was sentenced to imprisonment for life. He spent fifteen hard years in British prisons and after the fifteenth year, there were several meetings in Ireland advocating the release of the only five Fenians still serving sentences. A well-respected Parliamentarian, John Redmond, and a public figure as a

leader in the Parnellite League, wrote a letter of recommendation that sounds more like hagiography than a recommendation on behalf of the fictitious Henry Wilson.

A Gentleman Farmer

After his release Clarke moved back to Brooklyn, NY, where he married Kathleen Daly, twenty-one years his junior and the niece of John Daly, another Fenian who was his mentor in the IRB at Dungannon and whom he had met again in prison. Kathleen is the sister of Ned Daly who was also executed for his role in the 1916 Rising. Tom and Kathleen had three children.

On his return to America, he gave the appearance of being the gentleman farmer. Clarke worked for the Clan na Gael under John Devoy and served as assistant editor of a periodical published by Devoy. In 1906 the couple moved to a 30-acre farm in Manorville, New York and bought another 30 acres adjoining their property in 1907 shortly before returning to Ireland the same year. For whatever reason, he sold the farm and moved back to Dublin where he owned and operated a tobacconist shop.

The Irish Volunteers

When the Irish Volunteers were formed in 1913, Clarke took a keen interest, but took no part in the organization, knowing that as a felon and well-known Irish nationalist he would lend discredit to the Volunteers. He did, however, realize the value of the Volunteers for a possible rebellion. Nevertheless, with Sean MacDermott, Bulmer Hobson, and other IRB members such as Eamonn Ceannt taking important roles in the Volunteers, it was clear that the IRB would have substantial, if not total, control, particularly inducting Pádraig Pearse, already a leading member of the Volunteers, into the IRB at the end of 1913. Unfortunately, Clarke had a falling out with John Redmond. Redmond, demanded the Provisional Committee accept 25 additional members of the Party's choosing, giving IPP loyalists a majority stake. Though most of the hard-liners stood against this, Redmond's decree was accepted, partially due to the support given by Hobson. Clarke never forgave him for what he considered a treasonous act.

Planting the Seeds of the Rising

Following Clarke's falling out with Hobson, he and MacDermott became almost inseparable. The two of them, as secretary and treasurer, respectively, ran the IRB, although it was still under the nominal head of other men, James Deakin, and later McCullough. In 1915 Clarke and MacDermott established the Military Committee of the IRB to plan what later became the Easter Rising. The members were Pearse, Ceannt, and Joseph Plunkett, with Clarke and MacDermott adding themselves shortly thereafter. When the old Fenian Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, died in 1915, Clarke used his funeral and Pearse's graveside oration to mobilize the Volunteers and heighten expectation of imminent action. When an agreement was reached with James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army in January 1916, Connolly was added to the committee, with Thomas MacDonagh added at the last minute in April. These seven men were the signatories of the Proclamation of the Republic, with Clarke as the first signatory. It has been said that Clarke indeed would have been the declared President and Commander-in-chief, but he refused any

military rank and such honours; these were given to Pearse, who was more well-known and respected on a national level.

The Rising

Clarke was stationed at headquarters in the General Post Office during the events of Easter Week, where rebel forces were largely composed of Irish Citizen Army members under the command of Connolly. Though he held no formal military rank, Clarke was recognized by the garrison as one of the commanders, and was active throughout the week in the direction of the fight, sharing the fortunes of his comrades. Following the surrender on 29 April, Clarke was held in Kilmainham Jail until his execution by firing squad on 3 May at the age of 59. He was the second person to be executed, following Patrick Pearse.

Before execution, he asked his wife Kathleen to give this message. Message to the Irish People, May 3, 1916.

'I and my fellow signatories believe we have struck the first successful blow for Irish freedom. The next blow, which we have no doubt Ireland will strike, will win through. In this belief, we die happy.'

Clarke's widow Kathleen continued his legacy of revolutionary fervor. She was elected a TD in the First and Second Dáil, notably speaking against the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

Legacy

He was indeed one of the key leaders of the Irish Easter Rebellion and for that reason alone belongs in the Pantheon of Irish Heroes. He held no titles for fear that his ego somehow would diminish his passion for the cause. He preferred a low profile drawing on the experience of his previous betrayal by an imbedded informer. He preferred that Pádraig Pearse be the public face among the leaders. In addition, the following honors continue his memory

- Thomas Clarke Tower in [Ballymun](#) was named after him. The top floor was used as a short stay hotel before its demolition in April 2008.
- [Dundalk railway station](#) was given the name *Clarke* on 10 April 1966 in commemoration of Clarke's role in the [1916 Rising](#).
- He also [featured on postage stamps](#) in 1966.
- Dungannon Thomas Clarkes, a successful Gaelic Football team from East Tyrone in Northern Ireland are also named after him.
- Dungannon has a 1916 Society named in his honour, Cumann Thomáis ui Chléirigh, www.tomclarkesociety.com.



JOHN WALSH CHAPTER

AT THE JERSEY SHORE

IRISH CULTURAL NIGHT AT THE SEA GIRT LIGHTHOUSE 7 PM

SCHEDULE:	11/10/14	KEVIN WESTLEY	IRISH HISTORY IN SONG
	12/8/14	HENRY McNALLY	IRISH IN AMERICA
	1/12/15	MICHEAL OMAILLE	IRISH 9000 YEAR JOURNEY
	2/9/15	"GLENN CEOL"	TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC
	3/9/15	MICHEAL OMAILLE	SAINT PATRICK
	4/13/15	HENRY McNALLY	REBELLION TO REPUBLIC 1
	5/11/15	CHRISTINE KINEALY	FAMINE CONTRIBUTIONS
	6/8/15	KEVIN WESTLEY	IRISH HISTORY IN SONG PART II
	7/13/15	F. PETER HALAS MD SHANNON DUNNE	IRISH HISTORY FOR STUDENTS SONG AND SEAN-N'OS DANCE
	8/10/15	LIAM MURPHY	FENIAN BROTHERHOOD IN NY
	9/14/15	TIM McGRATH MIKE FARRAGHER THE MAY DARLINGS	IRISH MARITIME HISTORY BOOK LAUNCH <i>A DEVILISH PINT</i> MUSIC
	10/12/15	MICHEAL OMAILLE	ST. BRENDAN, THE NAVIGATOR IRELAND 2015, YEAR OF WOMEN
	11/9/15	HENRY McNALLY	REBELLION TO REPUBLIC 2
	12/14/15	CORMAC O'MALLEY	ERNIE O'MALLEY, IRISH REBEL 1916-1924 AND 1925-1957

2016

1/11/16

2/8/16

3/14/16

MICHEAL O'MAILLE

1916

4/11/16

HENRY McNALLY

REBELLION TO REPUBLIC 3

5/9/16

6/13/16

HENRY McNALLY

REBELLION TO REPUBLIC 4

7/11/16

8/8/16

9/12/16

10/10/16

11/14/16

12/12/16