

Book Review
Fortunate Son
By David Marlett

Fortunate Son is an historical novel revolving on the actual events encompassing the case of Annesley v. Anglesea (1743), which was one of the longest trials in Irish history. James Annesley (1715-1760), a peerage claimant, was born at Dunmore, County Wexford, the son of Arthur Annesley, 4th Baron Altham, the identity of his mother being of controversy. This was to furnish the focus in the lawsuit in the Irish court of Exchequer (a senior court of common pleas, one of the four courts which gave their name to the building known as the Four Courts in Dublin).

Richard Annesley, Arthur's brother, proclaimed himself the rightful heir to the peerage, due to the issue as to whom was James' mother, either Mary Sheffield, the second wife of Arthur, or Joan Lundy, a maidservant. Richard arranged for the kidnapping of James and his transportation to the American colonies as an indentured servant.

The story moves along at a brisk pace combining a blend of historical fact and details of adventure and peril with a bit of courtroom drama. One of the more interesting legal aspects of the case and the story is that the trial remains the basis of modern "attorney-client privilege."

After returning to England, and while perfecting his claims, James accidentally killed a poacher. Richard seized on the opportunity and tried to hire a leading criminal lawyer to prosecute James for murder and offering 10,000 pounds to get James hanged. The lawyer refused to accept the case. In the subsequent suit for title to the contested property, James called the lawyer to testify about Richards' communication with him to show that Richard was conscious of James' claims of title. In its holding, the court said that Richard's communication to the attorney in carrying out a prosecution was an "unnecessary" communication and thus allowed the lawyer to testify.

The denouement of the story will further pique the reader's curiosity. The author of the book is a lawyer and "self-taught" historian. I found the book of page-turning quality and rate it a TOP SHELF read.

Celebration is good nutrition for the soul
By Renee Gatz, Author of [Wise Words & Witty Expressions](#)
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Life is sweet no matter what and is meant to be celebrated at every opportunity.

When we think of celebrating, we usually think of life's mile markers—buying a home, getting married, having a child, or reaching a particular age. These and many other occasions are worthy of celebration with our family and friends. However, truly celebrating life means rejoicing in the many achievements attained along our journey. Some celebrations, if we are truly reveling in life, are not only with family and friends. Sometimes they are with those we work with, sometimes they are with complete strangers, and sometimes they are just private celebrations with our self--small moments when it occurs to us how beautiful nature is, how peaceful our child looks when sleeping, or remembering just *how many blessings we have to count*.

Like all celebrations large and small, a certain amount of work and sacrifice is involved--and the greater the work, the greater the celebration. However, in order to truly appreciate the celebration associated with meeting one of life's mile markers, we must be able to celebrate the small victories and the challenges we overcome. These small celebrations are stepping stones along the way to our larger accomplishments. For example, working to meet a professional objective is an example of a long-term goal. This desire will test you throughout your career, require you to make sacrifices, and call on internal resources to see you through unexpected challenges and unfair situations. Of course, at the time of retirement, a celebration with family and friends is most certainly in order.

However, in order to live joyfully throughout your career, you do not need to wait until you retire to celebrate. You would be well-served to recognize the many opportunities presented to you throughout your career worthy of celebration. These can include having a strong and personable team to work with each day, having the opportunity to develop professionally and personally, or perhaps having a job that is close to your home. Challenging career situations such as working through budget cuts, even if you are one of the cuts; delivering on a demanding challenge; or even changing your career entirely are also worthy of celebration. For these experiences caused you to have to *rise to the occasion* and show grace and strength in your ability to prevail.

Celebration means more than reveling in life's happiest moments. It also means congratulating our self and others for overcoming a challenge. Celebrating victory is the final step in our healing process. It tells the universe that we ready to welcome new opportunities.

Celebration is good nutrition for the soul. It feeds our optimism by reinforcing gratitude for our many gifts. It is a part of our most memorable experiences and permeates our daily life. It invites others to join us on our journey and share our experiences. It is contagious in its ability to help others see the beauty and joy in their own life. It is a

necessary component when seeing us through a challenging time. It is the counterbalance to feelings of loss.

Therefore, remember that life is meant to be celebrated not endured. Look for something to celebrate each day--regardless of the day. The happiest souls do not wait for a special occasion to celebrate. They take time to celebrate the small moments as much as the big ones. They celebrate victory over challenge. They celebrate in solitude, with strangers and, of course, with those that mean the most to them. This is how you build good memories, strengthen your spirit, see yourself through difficulties, show your gratitude and invite cause for more celebration.

In the year leading up to the centenary of the Easter Rising, I will present the stories of the Irish heroes each month.

O'Donovan Rossa, He Kept the Dream Alive. By Raymond D. Aumack

Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was an unlikely participant in the Easter Rising in April, 1916. He had died the previous year. It was at his gravesite as the Fenian leader was being buried at Glasnevin Cemetery after a large funeral procession, that Pádraig Pearse issued the call to arms during his funeral oration.

Family History

We are always charmed by those who are humbly born and who rise to levels of distinction, admiration, and even fame. O'Donovan Rossa was born on September 10, 1831 at Reenascreena, County Cork, Ireland, to a family of tenant farmers. He had the acknowledged royal heritage of the Donovan Clan dating back to the 10th century. His forebears were among the last families permitted to acknowledge their royal heritage after the implementation of the restrictive penal laws. The family held Letters of Patent at Kilmeen parish until the confiscations of the seventeenth century. Rossa was something of a nickname derived from the townland of Rossmore in Kilmeen Parish.

Starvation Survival

While a young boy, the failure of the main food crop of the Irish population which was the potato, in successive years between 1845 and 1847, led to a devastating famine which hit the West Cork area, in which he lived, particularly hard. The Great Starvation, as it became known, caused one million Irish people to lose their lives in those years and another million to emigrate. O'Donovan Rossa's own father died in 1847 of an illness related to severe malnutrition and the teenager moved to Skibbereen to work in his cousin's grocery shop in the town.

Beginning a Life

As a young adult, he made his living at this shop in Skibbereen, very close to the place of my own family heritage on the island of Ringaroga. It was here that he founded the Phoenix National and Literary Society that had a statement of purpose that was "the liberation of Ireland by force of arms." Two years later this organization merged with the Irish Republican Brotherhood colloquially known as the Fenians.

In December 1858, he was arrested and jailed without trial until July 1859. In 1865, he was charged with plotting a Fenian rising, put on trial for high treason, and sentenced to penal servitude for life due to his previous convictions. He served his time in Pentonville, Portland, and Chatham prisons in England.

Rossa was a defiant prisoner. He was manacled for 35 straight days for throwing a chamber pot at the prison's warden and thrown into solitary confinement on a bread-and-water diet for three days for refusing to take off his cap in front of the prison's doctor. For most of his time in prison Rossa was denied the right of correspondence with his associates in the outside world for his violation of prison rules.

During his incarceration he was elected to the British Parliament for the Tipperary Constituency. However, the election was declared invalid because he was a convicted and imprisoned felon.

Banished to America

After giving an understanding that he would not return to Ireland, in effect his exile, O'Donovan Rossa was released as part of the Fenian Amnesty of 1870. Boarding the *S.S. Cuba*, he left for the United States with his friend John Devoy, the greatest of the Fenians and three other exiles. Together they were dubbed "The Cuba Five".

Gaelic Charm

O'Donovan Rossa was something of an enigma. He did not have the demeanor of the wild-eyed revolutionary. He was really a good natured, gregarious Irishman with a penchant for storytelling and jokes. He was also a musician and a very agile dancer. In truth, he was filled with Gaelic charm reflective of the great tradition of Gaelic charmers down through the centuries. He could lift a pint and he sang a good song. He was also something of a literary artist and penned several books including an autobiography of his prison memories. He also penned many hundreds of inflammatory newspaper articles. His passion and fire for the Irish cause and his Irish good nature generated popularity on both sides of the Atlantic that is still celebrated a century later. I am certain that it was the balance of the warrior and the artist that attracted the attention of Pádraig Pearse. To say he was a fierce warrior would certainly be true. He was on the extreme left of the extremists of his day. However, he was also a man of Irish wit and Gaelic culture. He not only wanted Ireland to be free; he wanted Ireland to be Gaelic. This was just the kind of person to be the patron saint for an admirer who was a revolutionary poet, a school master, and a passionate martyr for Irish freedom.

The Rebellion Continues

O'Donovan Rossa took up residence in New York City, actually in Staten Island, where he joined Clan na Gael and the Fenian Brotherhood. Rossa became editor of a newspaper dedicated to the cause of Irish national liberation from British rule, *The United Irishman*. In it Rossa advocated the terroristic use of dynamite bombs as a means of overthrowing the British occupation. His paper was used to raise a so-called "resources for civilization fund," presumably for the purchase of dynamite and other armaments for the Irish struggle. He also owned and ran the Chatham Hotel in Chatham Square, at the notorious five corners now part of Chinatown in

New York City. That was the area immortalized by Martin Scorsese in the film, *The Gangs of New York*.

He ran for the New York State Senate opposing Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall. He lost the tightly contested election decided by some strange circumstances, but it was his rhetoric, passion, intelligence, and fire that were noticed on both sides of the Atlantic.

Rossa organized the first ever bombings by Irish republicans of English cities in what was called the "dynamite campaign". The campaign lasted through the 1880s and made him infamous in Britain. The British government demanded his extradition from America, but without success.

In 1885, he was the victim of an assassination attempt. Rossa was shot outside his office near Broadway by an Englishwoman, Yseult Dudley, but his wounds were not life-threatening. It was thought at the time that she was an assassin hired by the British Government. However, to no one's big surprise, the British government claimed she was mentally unstable and not acting on its behalf. Rossa's supporters and even many of his detractors found this hard to believe. She stated that, she was incensed at the fund he organized (the so-called "Skirmishing Fund") which was intended to support the arming of those who would fight the British.

The British lifted their banishment policy permitting Rossa to visit Ireland in 1894, and again in 1904. On the latter visit, he was made a "Freeman of the City of Cork."

Personal Life

Rossa was married three times and widowed twice. In 1853, he married Nora (Nanno) Eager of Skibbereen, who bore him four sons. She died in 1860. In 1861 he married Ellen Buckley of Castlehaven. She died during childbirth in July 1863 and was survived by one son. In November, 1864 he married, for the third time, to Mary Jane (Molly) Irwin of Clonakilty. They had thirteen children together.

Legacy

Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa is commemorated in Ireland by a bridge over the river Liffey named in his honor, a monument in Saint Stephen's Green in Dublin City center, a park named after him in Skibbereen, County Cork, compete with a statue, and several Gaelic football and hurling teams named in his honor, including the Skibbereen G.A.A. Club O'Donovan Rossa.

Heritage is far more than being named on a bridge, having a statue in St. Stephen's Green, or a citation from one of the principal cities of one's homeland. Ireland was at war with England and the writing, verbal rhetoric, and leadership of Rossa kept the fight alive. Many Irish people of his time were content to let the politics take their course realizing that independence was eventually inevitable. In fact the revolutionaries of 1916 were jeered as they were marched off to prison. In their arrogance, the British decided to execute most of the leadership. They effectively became martyrs for Ireland and through their blood, the people of Ireland mobilized, and a nation was

born. Rossa was part of that battle for independence for most of the 19th century even though he lived most of it in New York. His writing and his oratory kept the pot of rebellion boiling. His military leadership kept the English alert to issues close to the heart of Ireland, especially after the debacle of the Starvation. He is a genuine Irish hero whose long arm of influence reached all the way across the Atlantic.

Death and Burial

Rossa was seriously ill in his later years, and was finally confined to a hospital bed in St. Vincent's Hospital, Staten Island, where he died at the age of 83.

The new republican movement in Ireland was quick to realize the propaganda value of the old Fenian's death, and Tom Clarke cabled to John Devoy the message: "Send his body home at once."

His body was returned to Ireland for burial and a hero's welcome. The funeral at Glasnevin Cemetery on 1 August 1915 was a huge state type of funeral, though Ireland was not yet a state, with thousands parading through the streets of Dublin. It had its desired effect. It garnered substantial publicity for the Irish Volunteers and the IRB at time when rebellion (later to emerge as the Easter Rising) was being actively planned. The graveside oration, given by Pádraig Pearse, remains one of the most famous speeches of the Irish independence movement stirring his audience to a call to arms. It ended with the lines:

They think that they have pacified Ireland. They think that they have purchased half of us and intimidated the other half. They think that they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but, the fools, the fools, the fools! — They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.

This oration has become a treasure in Irish literature and oratory. It was literally the call to arms.

The rest of the story begins the history of modern Ireland but it all began with the life and death of an Irish rebel with an overabundance of Gaelic charm as well as talent. He kept the dream alive, though in exile, a warrior with little more weaponry than a pen, for more than half a century. He truly deserves his place in the pantheon of Irish heroes.