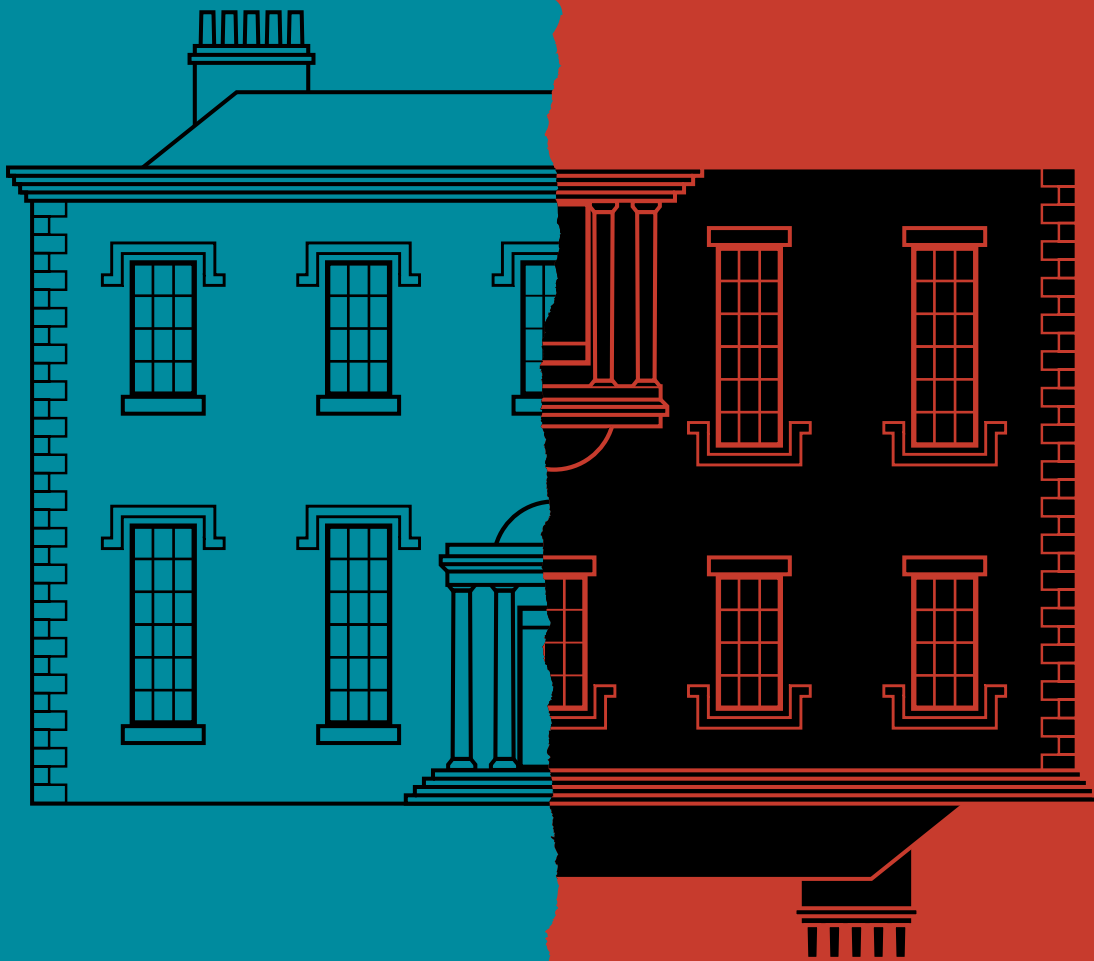


# THE COUNTRY HOUSE AND LANDED ESTATE IN TIME OF REVOLUTION



**Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses and Estates,  
History Department, Maynooth University**

**14th Annual Conference, 9-10 May 2016**

## DAY 1: 9 MAY 2016

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- 16.45-17.30 Registration Renehan Hall
- 17.30 Welcome Address: Dr Jacinta Prunty, Head of Department of History, Maynooth University
- 17.50 Opening of Conference: Professor Philip Nolan, President, Maynooth University
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### SESSION 1: ESTATES AND REVOLUTION: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE CHAIR: CHRISTOPHER RIDGWAY

- 18.15 Annie Tindley  
*'Neither Forgotten nor Forgiven': the Dukes of Sutherland, the Highland Land War and the Historical Revolution in the Scottish Highlands*
- 18.35 Philip Bull  
*A Wexford House and Estate in the Era of Revolution in Ireland*
- 18.55 Andreas Boldt  
*The Lodersleben Estate and Revolutionary Change in Germany*
- 19.15 Elizabeth Macknight  
*Protecting Property during the French Revolution*
- 19.35 Q & A
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### 20.00 CSHIHE AND MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY PRESENT



## DAY 2: 10 MAY 2016

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08.30 Registration Renehan Hall

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### SESSION 2: 1798 REBELLION AND THE COUNTRY HOUSE CHAIR: ANNIE TINDLEY

09.00 Claire Bradley  
*The Goff Family of Horetown and the 1798 Rebellion*

09.20 John Hussey  
*Blessington House, County Wicklow, and its Defence*

09.40 Fiona White  
*John Moore of Moore Hall, Reluctant Patriot*

10.00 Q & A

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10.10-10.40 Tea/Coffee

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### SESSION 3: THE COUNTRY HOUSE IN WAR AND REVOLUTION CHAIR: LAR JOYE

10.40 Ida Milne & Declan O'Keefe  
*Educating for Nationhood? Clongowes and Revolution*

11.00 James Durney  
*Captain Harry de Courcy Wheeler and the 1916 Rising*

11.20 Donal Hall  
*The Bellingham Family of Castlebellingham, County Louth 1914-24*

11.40 Edward Bujak  
*The English Country House in Time of War and Revolution, 1914-18*

12.00 Q & A

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12.15-13.40 Lunch – Pugin Dining Hall

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### SESSION 4: LAND AND REVOLUTION CHAIR: CIARÁN REILLY

13.40 Jacqueline Crowley  
*'Hunger Breeds Revolution': the Role of European Revolutions in the Introduction of Radical Land Legislation for Ireland, 1848-49*

- 14.00 Peter Mullaney  
*Changes in Land Ownership in the Barony of Burrishoole, County Mayo, 1857-1930: the Influence of the United Irish League*
- 14.20 Jonathan Cherry  
*'If I Were You I Would Get Rid of Every Bit of Land I Could as Soon as I Could': the 'Fall' of the Farnham Estate in County Cavan, 1919-31*
- 14.40 Brendan Scott  
*Arthur Kenlis Maxwell, 11th Lord Farnham, and the Maxwell's Estates in Cavan 1912-23*
- 15.00 Q & A
- 

**SESSION 5:**  
**THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IRISH COUNTRY HOUSE 1919-23**  
CHAIR: TERENCE DOOLEY

- 15.20 Olga Sinitsyna  
*The Russian Country House and Revolution After 1917*
- 15.40 Philip McConway  
*'We Applied the Torch': a Reappraisal of the IRA's Burning of Country Houses in North Offaly During the Civil War*
- 16.00 Glascott Symes  
*The Cappoquin Estate during the War of Independence and the Civil War*
- 16.20 Ian d'Alton  
*'No more Autumns' – the Anglo-Irish and the Death of the House, 1919-23*
- 16.40 Q & A
- 17.00 End of Conference
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- 17.30 Bus Departs for Carton
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- 18.00 Plenary – Christopher Ridgway  
*The Country House: a Fixed Point in a Revolving World?*
- 19.00 Conference Dinner

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## SESSION 1

### ESTATES AND REVOLUTION: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

**Annie Tindley** is a Senior Lecturer in History, based at the School of Humanities, University of Dundee. Her research interrogates the changing position of aristocratic and landed families in nineteenth and twentieth century Scotland and Ireland and she is also interested in how this translated into the imperial context.

#### ***'Neither Forgotten nor Forgiven': the Dukes of Sutherland, the Highland Land War and the Historical Revolution in the Scottish Highlands***

By the 1880s, the earls and dukes of Sutherland were among Britain's richest patrician landowners. Supported by well over 1 million acres of land, principally in the northern Scottish Highlands, as well as shrewd investment in industry and imperial portfolios, they enjoyed four country houses, their great London palace, Stafford House, friendship at the royal court and political and social prowess.

However, the early years of the 1880s brought revolt and crisis to their Sutherlandshire estates, as the Highland Land War gathered apace. Rent strikes, land raids, destruction of property and political upheaval were all brought to the door of the Sutherland family and estate managers – but a yet greater threat loomed. This was the shadow of their historical reputation as great clearance landlords, a reputation that stemmed from the early nineteenth century. The Sutherland Clearances were among the most notorious of all the great Highland Clearances, the defining event for rural Scotland in the nineteenth century.

This paper will trace the nature of the 'afterlife' of the Sutherland Clearances, and how it was the sense of *historical* grievance, as much as contemporary issues, which proved the undoing of the Sutherland family. It will examine the ways in which competing and sometimes contradictory constructions of the recent past of the Highlands more broadly, and Sutherland in particular, formed the basis for a 'historical revolution' in the 1880s – a revolution that can be traced through the Sutherland estate and family, and through land reform legislation.

**Philip Bull** is an Adjunct Professor at La Trobe University, Melbourne and a Visiting Professor at the National University of Ireland Maynooth. The author of *Land, Politics and Nationalism: A study of the Irish Land Question* (Gill & Macmillan, 1996) he has also written numerous articles on 19th and 20th century Irish history. He is currently organising and cataloguing the large archive of papers at Monksgrange, County Wexford and plans to write a history of that house and its occupants from the mid-18th to the mid-20th centuries.

#### ***A Wexford House and Estate in the Era of Revolution in Ireland***

In the years 1880 to 1925 Monksgrange in County Wexford, in common with such houses and estates throughout Ireland, had to navigate its way through events that fundamentally changed the political, economic and social environment within which it operated. From the transformation of social, economic and political relationships associated with the Land War and land tenure reform to the consolidation of the Irish Free State following the Civil War three generations of the occupying family reacted, responded and eventually came to terms with the changes imposed upon them. How they did this, and with what effects on the fortunes and survival of this property, is the subject of this paper. The story of this family through these years is one that comprises resistance to attacks on its position and interests but also a readiness to engage positively with the inevitability of change when necessary. Attention will be paid in the paper to the individuals who faced these challenges and account given of the actions and attitudes displayed across the three generations of proprietors. The paper will be based on detailed reference to documentation contained in the archive at Monksgrange. Three foci of the paper will be how Edward Moore Richards responded to land agitation and changes in tenure laws in the 1880s; the crises faced by Adela and Goddard Orpen during the War of Independence and the Civil War; and the longer term responses to change by Edward and Margaret Richards-Orpen following the Civil War.



**Andreas D. Boldt** originally from Bremen, Germany, has finished his PhD at Maynooth University with the topic on Leopold von Ranke and Ireland. He is currently working at Maynooth University where he teaches in various departments, and has published widely on Leopold von Ranke, the Graves family in Ireland and European history. His research interests lie in modern European historiography, European history, historical theory and environmental history.

### ***The Lodersleben Estate and Revolutionary Change in Germany***

The paper will present the history and development of a small rural gentry's estate in Eastern Germany: Lodersleben. Originally built by the family of Von Kotze, servants for the Prussian military, this small estate is an example of the famous Prussian Junker-tradition. During the first years of the estate's existence a comfortable country house was erected, in close proximity to the local church where the Von Kotzes family crypt was situated. Lodersleben, is locally renowned for the famous personality who stayed there for a number of weeks: the German historian Leopold von Ranke. His daughter Maximiliane married into the Von Kotze family and from the late 1860s the young family stayed for longer periods of time at Lodersleben in order to run the estate. After the passing of Ranke's wife Clarissa in 1871, he was invited numerous times to Lodersleben to stay with his daughter. It is the park which is the location of one of the mysteries surrounding Ranke; that he had a 'famous' conversation with a pear tree. Wilhelm von Kotze passed away in 1885 and Maximiliane was forced to run the estate by herself through the difficult years of the First World War and the Weimar Republic. It was due to her actions that the estate remained untouched in the early years of the republic; however the changed social conditions during the war and the republic changed the labour market situation for running the estate. The Ranke descendants managed the estate through the Third Reich but were forced by the Communists to leave the estate within an hour in 1945. Only a few belongings were saved, amongst them a grandiose painting of Ranke now in Syracuse University, USA. The estate was split up into smaller parts of land given to the local peasants but these were transformed into 'LPGs' during Communist Germany. The building at first fell into disrepair, was then used as a school for a few years before it was abandoned.

**Elizabeth Macknight** is Senior Lecturer in European History at the University of Aberdeen and a Scottish Crucible alumna of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Educated in Australia and France, her primary field of research is the history of European nobilities with particular interests in gender, power, and emotion.

### ***Protecting Property during the French Revolution***

This paper presents a wealth of new evidence from private archives in France on nobles' actions and attitudes during the French Revolution. During the decade 1789-99 various forms of property, and documentary evidence of ownership, were destroyed or removed from nobles' possession, which threatened nobles' capacity to transmit economic, cultural, and symbolic capital to the next generation. Letters, wills, receipts, account books, certificates, passports, and petitions reveal how the effects of multiple decrees played out in personal and familial histories. For the nobility the rapid evolution of legislation meant that the consequences of any one revolutionary law became entangled with the consequences of another. Some 85 per cent of the noble *émigrés* were of the male sex, so their wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters who remained in France very often bore huge responsibilities in trying to defend the material interests of kin. The records of these noblewomen's experiences, conveyed through personal documents, bring fresh insights and understanding to issues often over-looked in historical writing weighted toward aristocratic male military and political involvement.

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## SESSION 2

### 1798 REBELLION AND THE COUNTRY HOUSE

**Claire Bradley** is a professional genealogist and independent scholar. She originally graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA in Ancient History and Russian but later shifted focus to family history, completing a FETAC level 7 Certificate in Genealogy at UCD in 2011.

#### ***The Goff Family of Horetown and the 1798 Rebellion***

The Goff family of Horetown House in Wexford were unwillingly involved in the 1798 rebellion when two rebel camps set up near their home. For weeks in May and June, the family was daily plagued with demands for supplies and subjected to terrors. Their youngest daughter, Dinah Wilson Goff, then 14 years old, wrote a chronicle of their first-hand experience with the United Irishmen and Crown soldiers during that summer. The family suffered greatly through the theft of their animals, food and other supplies as well as damage to their house, of which some evidence survives today. The father, Jacob Goff, was more than once made to believe he would be executed for not being more useful to the rebels. Despite these indignities, their strong Quaker faith maintained them, and indeed allowed them to stand up to their oppressors. The present Davis-Goff family, descendants of those at Horetown, retain Dinah's manuscript document. Using this unique text as a main source, along with original letters written to and from family members at the time, this paper will trace the family and house's involvement with the rebellion from start to finish. The presentation will also draw on the main historical sources and standard works on the subject.

**John Hussey** has degrees in Geography and in Civil & Environmental Engineering. His research adopts an historical-geography approach and has focused on west County Wicklow, examining its human settlement and its industry, including its Quaker community, its granite quarrying and its weaving industries.

#### ***Blessington House, County Wicklow, and its Defence***

During the 25-year reign of Charles II (the Carolean period), which followed the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, the castle and the fort gave way to the 'defended house'. These houses reflected continental architectural principles of the time and were more comfortable than a castle to live in, but retained some defensive features. Carolean houses were the precursors of the houses of the Georgian era when house design virtually abandoned defensive features and espoused architectural design principles, especially those of Palladio.

Only a relatively small number of Carolean houses were built in Ireland, one of which was Blessington House, County Wicklow, built in 1672 and 1673 by Michael Boyle, who was then Archbishop of Dublin.

This paper will outline the general principles that were adopted to defend Carolean houses and will look in detail at Blessington House, County Wicklow. The paper will examine the specific physical defensive features and defensive measures implemented to protect it and the progress of events which led to the house being burned in the Rebellion of 1798.

**Fiona White** is a native of Galway. She was educated at the National University of Ireland, Galway, where she received a BA in History and Archaeology and an MA in Archaeology. She lectures on the Heritage Studies programme at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Mayo Campus. She is currently researching a PhD entitled 'Moore Hall Estate: Perspectives on its History and Heritage'.

#### ***John Moore of Moore Hall, Reluctant Patriot***

John Moore, eldest son of George, the builder of Moore Hall, County Mayo, was educated in France and later pursued the study of law in London, where he seems to have lived the wild irresponsible life of many of the young men of his class at the time. On returning to Ireland, he settled at this father's home, Moore Hall and

was living there when the French expeditionary force under General Humbert landed on the Mayo coast in the autumn of 1798. This paper will critically assess the role of John Moore during the Year of the French in 1798, drawing on primary sources to elicit the circumstances surrounding John Moore's involvement in the rebellion. The town of Castlebar was occupied by a considerable number of adherents to the French cause, including, it is believed, John Moore. During the week that the town was in Humbert's hands, the title of 'President of the Connaught Republic' seems to have been conferred on Moore. On the approach of a large English force, the Franco-Irish army marched out of Castlebar. Moore seems to have been the only representative of the landed Catholic families left in the town. Moore's subsequent arrest and imprisonment, the challenges for the British administration of dealing with a man of his profile, in addition to the circumstances surrounding Moore's death, will be addressed. The role played by John Moore in the western insurrection is clouded in some mystery as there are indications that he had not voluntarily joined the French and was forced to accept the position of 'President of the Connaught Republic' under pain of death. This paper will attempt to demonstrate that he was a reluctant patriot not a rebel general.

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## SESSION 3

### THE COUNTRY HOUSE IN WAR AND REVOLUTION

**Ida Milne** is an Irish Research Council Marie Curie Elevate fellow, based at Queen's University Belfast and Maynooth University. She is a social historian with interests in medical humanities, the history of childhood disease and the 1918-19 influenza epidemic, and in class history.

**Declan O'Keefe** is Head of Communications in Clongowes Wood College, where he also teaches history and edits *The Clongownian*. Declan is currently researching the role and influence of Jesuit publications in Ireland in order to examine the intellectual mission of the society and the process by which it was established, developed and propagated prior to the First World War.

#### ***Educating for Nationhood? Clongowes and Revolution***

Clongowes Wood College, the elite Jesuit boarding school in north Kildare, might seem like an unlikely hothouse for revolutionaries; in fact, it was a remarkable cauldron for producing nascent politicians and revolutionaries of many different shades, as well as vast numbers of soldiers, medical doctors and lawyers. From amongst its classrooms came not only moderate nationalists such as the Redmond brothers, leading lights of the Irish Parliamentary Party, but also revolutionaries Tommy Dillon, scientist and 1916 rebellion bomb maker and The O'Rahilly, Director of Arms of the Irish Citizen Army. This paper will explore the milieu of the college in the context of the emerging nationalism in the 1910s, looking at the sometimes surprising political networks formed within its walls.

**James Durney** works in the County Kildare Local Studies and Genealogy Department. He is the author of seventeen books on local and Irish history. His essay 'From defiance to defeat: the Curragh internees 1916-24', won the 2011 Lord Walter Fitzgerald Literary Award. *Hearth and Home – a history of social housing in Kildare Town 1881-2012* won first prize for the Nilson Heritage Award at the Listowel Writer's Festival 2013.

#### ***Captain Harry de Courcy Wheeler and the 1916 Rising***

At the outbreak of war in Europe in August 1914 the Robertstown Company, Irish Volunteers, conveyed their good wishes to Capt. Henry Eliardo de Courcy Wheeler, of Roberstown House, on his call up to active service with the British army. And when Capt. 'Harry' Wheeler departed Robertstown House the local Irish Volunteers promised him they would look after his home and no harm would come to it. Little did these Irish nationalists know that two years later Harry Wheeler would play such a prominent part in the 1916 Easter Rising.

On 29 April 1916 Harry Wheeler was in Room 13, the communications centre at the British military headquarters in Park Gate, Dublin, when reports came in that the rebels wanted to surrender. When the Rising



began Harry had been enjoying a peaceful bank holiday Monday, putting his papers in order prior to spending the day with his wife and six children in their house and garden at the Curragh Camp. He had been about to leave his office when a telephone call from Dublin alerted the Curragh Camp that the capital was in revolt. Capt. Wheeler made an entry in his diary: 'Sinn Féin Rising reported in Dublin'.

Days later Capt. Harry Wheeler accompanied Nurse Elizabeth O'Farrell as she brought the surrender document to many of the city's rebel garrisons. He accepted the surrender of the rebel garrison in the Royal College of Surgeons from Countess Markievicz, who was a cousin of his wife.

**Donal Hall** was awarded a PhD by Maynooth University in 2011 for his study *Violence and political factionalism and their effects on North Louth 1874-1943*. His book, *World War 1 and Nationalist politics in County Louth 1914-1920* (Maynooth Local History series, 2005), linked the local narratives of the Great War and the Irish Revolution. He is currently working on the County Louth volume of *The Irish Revolution, 1912-23* series (Four Courts Press, series editors Professor Marian Lyons and Dr Daithi O Corráin).

### ***The Bellingham Family of Castlebellingham, County Louth 1914-24***

By all that is now accepted, the Bellingham family of Castlebellingham, County Louth, should have been victims of the cataclysmic overthrow of the political and social ascendancy that occurred between 1912 and 1922. Sir Henry Bellingham was Lord Lieutenant of County Louth, a position which his eldest son Edward, a general in the British army, inherited at the height of the War of Independence. His youngest son Roger, was also a serving officer in the army, and a doyen of the Dublin Castle administrative and social scene. The family were at the centre of the administrative and legal system in Louth, and they visibly and volubly supported the British war effort, campaigning for recruitment and providing for the well-being of soldiers and their families. They publicly took a nationalist stance in the Home Rule campaign of 1912-14, but by supporting Redmond they had ultimately backed the wrong side in the internecine war within nationalism, and compounded the misstep by publicly excoriating the 1916 Rising. However, the Bellingham family somehow managed to find a way through the political minefield of early 20th century Irish politics, seemingly without compromising their own principles, without alienating those who disagreed with them, and more than that, by retaining their local popularity and a positive national profile.

**Edward Bujak** is Senior Lecturer in British Studies and History at Harlaxton College. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Royal Society of Arts and the Higher Education Academy, he is the author of *Reckless Fellows: Gentlemen of the Royal Flying Corps* (I.B. Tauris, 2015) which explored the relationship between pilot training and the country house in WWI.

### ***The English Country House in Time of War and Revolution, 1914-18***

Before 1914, the fear among the owners of country house estates had been the nationalisation of their land given the Land Enquiry of 1912 and Lloyd George's land reform campaign of 1913. In response, in 1914, the aristocracy flocked to the Colours. In fighting for their country, they were also fighting to defend their estates from any possible confiscation after the war. Nonetheless, in 1916, the Defence of the Realm (Acquisition of Land) Act made land nationalisation a reality as land was compulsorily purchased for the aerodromes needed by the War Office. Meanwhile, the Board of Agriculture, under the 1917 Defence of the Realm Act, empowered the War Agricultural Executive Committees to take control of farming. But, could foxhunting or shooting, country pursuits integral to the ownership of a country house, continue during the war? Or, were they curtailed by the oftentimes competing needs of government departments? Was the tragedy of losing an heir, accompanied by the realisation that in 'doing their bit' to win the war the aristocracy was losing the countryside they had gone to war to defend?

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## SESSION 4

### LAND AND REVOLUTION

**Jacqueline Crowley** is a final year PhD student at Maynooth University. Her current research examines the workings and impact of the Incumbered Estates Court legislation in Ireland from 1849 to 1855 under the supervision of Professors Terence Dooley and Raymond Gillespie.

#### ***'Hunger Breeds Revolution': the Role of European Revolutions in the Introduction of Radical Land Legislation, 1848-49***

The term revolution is commonly associated with bloodshed and barricades; however this is not always the case. Revolutions can be almost silent. This paper will examine the introduction of the Irish Incumbered Estates legislation in 1848, a year which saw many parts of Europe consumed by violent revolution while Ireland continued to be ravaged by the Great Famine. The overthrow of the French monarchy in February 1848 served to heighten anxiety amongst European monarchs. Ireland posed a particular threat, determinedly dissatisfied with the Union and historically sympathetic to the French cause, the polarised society of Ireland became a significant source of anxiety for the British government. As the Famine continued, the fiscal burden of relief had drained the already depleted resources of Irish land owners and an attempted rebellion by the Young Irelanders at Ballinagary in July 1848 saw the rhetoric of an imperial calamity gain popularity in the press. Many in parliament criticised the 'precipitate haste' with which the legislation was brought forward. Others accused government of harbouring a desire to 'get rid of the present race of Irish landholders'. This paper will examine the legislation's introduction, as Westminster sought to pacify Ireland, create a discernible middle-class and perhaps prevent a revolution.

**Peter Mallowney** is a former employee of the Department of Agriculture. He retired in January 2015 and has since devoted a lot of his time to the study of landed estates in Mayo. He obtained an MA in Local History from Maynooth University in 2002 on 'The Expansion and Decline of the O'Donel Estate Newport, County Mayo 1785-1852'.

#### ***Changes in Land Ownership in the Barony of Burrishoole, County Mayo, 1857-1930 and the Influence of the United Irish League***

In 1857, there were 37 landlords in the Barony of Burrishoole including the Marquis of Sligo, who owned 59,000 acres. In 1884 the first three townlands to be purchased by the tenants were on the estate of Jonathan Pim, a Quaker M.P. for Dublin City.

By 1906 only 10% of the land had been purchased and by 1915 only 30%. It was not until 1925 that almost 100% of the land had been transferred to tenants.

The U.I.L. was formed in Westport in January 1898 by William O'Brien. Its main objective was the breakup of large grazing ranches and their redistribution amongst small uneconomic holders. Pressure was put on landlords and the Congested Districts Board through mass meetings, marches to landlords' houses and cattle drives. The police kept U.I.L. organisers under strict surveillance.

This paper will look at the influence of the U.I.L. on the breakup of landlords' estates in the Barony of Burrishoole and the eventual distribution of lands by the Congested Districts Board and Irish Land Commission.

**Jonathan Cherry** is a lecturer in geography at the School of History and Geography, DCU. His main research interests are in historical and cultural geography, with a particular focus on Ireland. He is particularly interested in the role of landlords in the evolution of the Irish landscape.

***'If I Were You I Would Get Rid of Every Bit of Land I Could as Soon as I Could': the 'Fall' of the Farnham Estate in County Cavan, 1919-31***

This paper based on estate papers and the records of the Irish Land Commission charts the 'fall' of the Farnham estate in county Cavan during the period 1919 to the early 1930s. By 1919 the finances on the Farnham estate were in sharp decline and attempts were made to alleviate some of this stress by selling commodities from the estate. As levels of agrarianism increased in 1922 and uncertainty surrounding future land legislation prevailed the sale through private treaty of demesne lands was initiated in a desperate attempt to raise much needed cash while also preventing the occupation of these lands by landless men. Under the terms of the 1923 Land Act the Irish Land Commission ear-marked parts of Farnham demesne for compulsory purchase in 1924. A period of wrangling between the estate solicitors and the Land Commission ensued over the following years. The final settlement reached in 1930 saw a reduction in the area of land acquired by the Commission, illustrating how, when challenged persuasively they could be forced to review and modify compulsory land purchase decisions. While a relatively intact demesne at Farnham was retained, the process of transferring ownership of the remaining tenanted estate to the Land Commission was simultaneously underway from late 1923. By May 1931 this process was complete and the landed basis enjoyed by the Farnham family over the previous three centuries was gone. This paper concludes by assessing the impact of the loss of the estate on the family socially and financially.

**Brendan Scott** holds a PhD in early modern Irish history. He worked on the Farnham archive at Cavan County Museum and is editor of the *Breifne* local history journal. Among Brendan's publications is *Farnham: images from the Maxwell's estate, Co. Cavan* (Wordwell, 2010).

***Arthur Kenlis Maxwell, 11th Lord Farnham, and the Maxwells' estates in Cavan, 1912-23***

Arthur Kenlis Maxwell, Cavan's wealthiest land owner in the early twentieth century, inherited the title of Lord Farnham along with the Farnham estate from his father in 1900 and held it until his own death in 1957. An avid supporter of the Ulster Covenant, Maxwell was later a POW in Germany during World War I. Made chairman of the Irish Unionist Alliance in 1919, Lord Farnham spoke out vociferously against partition in Ireland, and later left Ireland and his estate for a new life in England (although he returned some years later).

Although the house and immediate estate at Farnham itself were not attacked during the War of Independence/Civil War period, both Arley and Fortland, other Maxwell properties in Cavan, were attacked in January 1923, and threatening letters from the IRA were sent to Josiah Blakely, bailiff on the Fortland estate, in 1924. The house of another Maxwell employee, Travers Blackley, estate agent for Arthur Kenlis Maxwell, was attacked by Republican forces and he and his family were forced to leave Ireland. Blackley later experienced difficulty in claiming compensation, and indeed he never received any recompense for the losses which he incurred during the early 1920s.

This talk, through an examination of Arthur Kenlis Maxwell's life and the attacks on Maxwell estates and employees, provides a microcosmic case-study of Maxwell estates in Cavan, their owners and employees during a period of tension and change.

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## SESSION 5

### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IRISH COUNTRY HOUSE 1919-23

**Philip McConway** is an independent historian and a graduate of NUI Galway, UCD and TCD. He has edited a volume for the Mercier Press series *'The Men Will Talk to Me': North and Mid Tipperary IRA leaders Interviews by Ernie O'Malley* (forthcoming). He works in Tullamore Central Library.

#### ***'We Applied the Torch': a Reappraisal of the IRA'S Burning of Country Houses in North Offaly During the Civil War***

This paper examines the torching of country houses by the IRA's North Offaly Brigade in the Civil War. Shifting the focus from the victims to the understudied perpetrators, the paper briefly explores the prevalence of arson during the Revolutionary period. The IRA's raids on country houses for arms, the collection of levies, the commandeering of accommodation, the use of estate grounds for training camps, and the protection of owners from agrarian agitators is detailed.

The paper challenges conjecture that the IRA conspired to grab land in Offaly. Convincing evidence for this atavistic narrative is seldom cited by historians. Complicating factors such as the instrumental role of IRA leaders who were not Offaly natives is overlooked. The pervasive morality tale which caricatures and denigrates local IRA units does a disservice to the subject.

The IRA commanders responsible for burning the mansions at Rathrobbin, Tubberdaly, Greenhills, Ballyburley and Durrow Abbey are identified for the first time. Their guerrilla records, social status, and subsequent careers are profiled. Why the above targets were selected for the controversial arson tactic is analysed. Unease and opposition within Republican ranks to the IRA's incendiary campaign is also highlighted.

**Glascott Symes** is science graduate of TCD and a history graduate of NUI, Maynooth. He was deputy headmaster of The King's Hospital, Dublin. On retirement he pursued his life-long interest in architecture by studying for a MA at CSHIHE, Maynooth.

#### ***Sir John Keane and the Cappoquin Estate During the War of Independence and the Civil War***

This paper will outline Sir John Keane's management of the Cappoquin estate in County Waterford in time of revolution. He was on active service throughout the First World War leaving the management of the estate in the hands of his wife Eleanor. Having inherited at the age of 19 in 1892 he had promoted new agricultural developments and become a strong supporter of Horace Plunkett's Co-operative Movement. He was also elected to Waterford County Council where he was allied to William O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League promoting Home Rule by conference, conciliation and consent.

On his return to Waterford he was a leader of the Irish Farmers' Union during a protracted farm workers' strike which overlapped with the War of Independence and left a bitter legacy. Keane was committed to public service and on the establishment of the Free State he accepted W.T. Cosgrave's nomination to the first Senate. On the outbreak of the Civil War all deputies, senators and their properties became targets of the Republicans. Keane had moved his family to London and stored the furniture before Cappoquin House was destroyed by fire on 19 February 1923.

However Keane set about claiming compensation and employed the architect Richard Orpen to rebuild his home, with Keane himself acting as contractor and using estate labourers. Nearly all of the other independent senators, who had suffered the same fate, also rebuilt. The Cappoquin estate remains in the Keane family today.



**Ian d'Alton**, MA (NUI), PhD (Cantab.), FRHistS, is currently a Visiting Research Fellow in the Centre for Contemporary Irish History, Trinity College, Dublin. Awarded the Royal Historical Society's Alexander Prize in 1972, he was an editorial advisor and contributor to the Royal Irish Academy/Cambridge University Press's *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (2009), writing, *inter alia*, the entries on Elizabeth Bowen, Molly Keane and Iris Murdoch. In 2014 in Cambridge, he was a Visiting Fellow at Sidney Sussex College, and a Senior Research Associate, Peterhouse. His latest publications include "'In a comity of cultures" – the rise and fall of The Irish Statesman, 1919-1930' in F. M. Larkin & M. O'Brien (eds) *Periodicals and journalism in twentieth century Ireland* (Dublin, 2014). He is currently writing a chapter for a book on Church of Ireland historiography, to be published in 2017.

### **'No More Autumns' – the Anglo-Irish and the Death of the House, 1919-23**

Writing of the firing of the fictional Danielstown in the Irish War of Independence, Elizabeth Bowen speaks of the house's destroyers as its 'executioners'. Humanising the house in this way illuminates its centrality to the gentry's cultural world as a sort of a permanent member of the family. Thus, there is the trauma of loss in the revolutionary period, as houses did not naturally decline and decay but suffered a death of violent destruction, a resonance perhaps with the just-finished Great War – 'they shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old'. The trope is deeply engrained in the literature of the 1920s and later (fictional and otherwise), ranging through the likes of Mrs Victor Rickard, Edith Somerville, Lennox Robinson, Bowen of course, Daisy Fingall and into more modern writing from such as Barbara Fitzgerald, William Trevor, Iris Murdoch, John Banville and Jennifer Johnston. This paper, sweeping through that literature, is an evocation of how the Anglo-Irish saw their houses in a time of revolution. It interrogates the psychological impact of their ruining on the gentry – individuals, families, communities. It asks if there was a species of 'survivor guilt'. Using the human stages of loss – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance – as pegs, it poses some questions. Was the house an organic part of 'being', of what they were – their 'gentry DNA', so to speak – in a way that land, money and status was not? If so, would they become something other than 'gentry' on its loss? And did they?

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## **PLENARY SESSION**

**Christopher Ridgway** is curator at Castle Howard and chair of the Yorkshire Country House Partnership, a collaborative research project between the University of York and the country houses of Yorkshire. He is an Adjunct Professor attached to the Department of History at Maynooth University, and sits on the Lord Chancellor's Forum on Historical Manuscripts and Research. His most recent publications are *The Morpeth Roll, Ireland Identified in 1841* (2013) and *Duty Calls, Castle Howard and The Great War* (2014).

### **The Country House: A Fixed Point in a Revolving World?**

Revolutions come and go, sometimes violent and cataclysmic, sometimes slow and barely perceived as part of a larger cycle of change. This talk looks at how the country house has weathered such changes across the centuries. Rarely out of the crosshairs of history, whether under military attack or more subtle forms of intrusion and pressure, the country house is many things: a building and estate, a caste of society inhabiting these places, as well a framework of power and culture that is an institution in itself. These elements may be interlinked but their complex histories can also witness their fracture. This is a narrative of challenge, loss, and destruction, as well as one of resilience and adaptability. Looking at examples in the UK, Ireland, Europe, and North America, Prof Ridgway will ask just why and how does the country house endure?



# Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses and Estates

## 14th Annual Historic Houses of Ireland Conference (RIAI CPD approved)

### Maynooth University, 9-10 May 2016

#### REGISTRATION OPTIONS

TO REGISTER ON LINE (WHERE PAYMENT CAN BE MADE BY CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD) PLEASE GO TO  
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#### BOOKING FORM

Conference Registration Fee €100 per person      Number of attendees

Conference Dinner €50 per person      Number of attendees

Total amount enclosed €       Payment must be made in euro only.

Payment method:       Payment must be made by cheque or bank draft only.

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PLEASE NOTE: Paid parking (the only type available to non-permit holders) is VERY restricted on campus. However, parking at a rate of €5 a day is available off Leinster Street (Google Maps lists it incorrectly as Newman Pl.), past the Garda Station. It is a short five minute walk to the main gates of the South Campus where the conference is being held.

#### Booking Information

**\* Places will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis for the conference and dinner.** Payment of conference registration fee and/or conference dinner fee must be received to guarantee a booking. Receipt of payment will be acknowledged by e-mail unless otherwise requested. Refunds for cancelled bookings will not be made.

Please note that information provided above (name, institutional affiliation and e-mail address only) may be compiled into a delegates listing to be distributed at the conference. Please tick here if you do not wish your information to be included in the delegates list

**Enquiries: E-mail [cshihe@nuim.ie](mailto:cshihe@nuim.ie) Telephone + 353 (0) 1 708 6706**