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GENEALOGY
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VEXILLOLOGY
SOCIAL HISTORY
Heritage Matters
Book Reviews
Open Meetings
News & Queries



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CONTENTS

Troubled Waters	2
National Library acquires Ship's Pass	2
Words We Use	2
James Scannell Reports..	3
Précis of August Lecture GSI Lectures 2010	3
Diary Dates GSI Board News	4
Mayo Ancestors	4

The New History of 'Britain'

The main article in the May 2007 issue of the *Gazette*, 'Television Creates a New and Much Older History for 'Britain'' looked at television's misapplication of the name 'Britain'. However, British television stations and programme makers continue to churn out series after series with the same absurd notion, both geographical and historical, of a 'Britain' that simply never existed. Some would argue that these programmes are made for a popular rather than an academic audience and therefore, we cannot expect too much detail or any in-depth analysis. Indeed, the 2007 article, published to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Great Britain, offered a number of examples to show how 'Britain' is portrayed as an ancient nation with its roots stretching back to prehistory and covering the entire archipelago, including the island of Ireland. The latter point is very evident in the ITV Studios 2009 production of 'Martin Clunes: Islands of Britain' which was billed as a three part series where the actor, Martin Clunes, explores 'hidden Britain'. In episode two Rathlin Island off the Co. Antrim coast is a part of this 'hidden Britain'. Then we have National Geographic's 'Birth of Britain with Tony Robinson' which explores the geological evolution of 'Britain'. In the programme Robinson explains how movements in the earth's tectonic plates hun-

dreds of millions of years ago 'brought the four parts of Britain together – England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland'. In 2007 we mentioned the BBC documentary 'A History of Britain' presented by Simon Schama which constructed a history of 'Britain' that was overly London-centric both in its timeline and narrative which culminated in some fictional 'manifest destiny' of the inevitable stability, success and unity of 'Britain'. This was followed by Channel 4's 'Seven Ages of Britain' presented by Bettany Hughes which sought to 'explore the lives and times of the ordinary people of the British Isles'. However, even given the unfortunate use of the outdated geopolitical term 'British Isles', the programme, once again, reinforced a fictional notion of an ancient 'Britain' encompassing the two larger islands of the archipelago as if to convey that some natural unity or homogeneity exists between the peoples of these islands. 'Britain BC: Life In Britain And Ireland Before The Romans' presented by Francis Pryor is described as 'an authoritative and radical rethinking of the whole of British history before the coming of the Romans, based on remarkable new archaeological finds'. Prof. Drewett of the University of Sussex in a review in 'British Archaeology' (March 2004) included the following quotation from Pryor - 'I regard the nations of the British Isles as having more that unites than divides

them', says Pryor, 'and as being culturally peculiar when compared with other European states'. What an extraordinary statement given that any 'unity' was only achieved through invasion, conquest, cultural destruction, dispossession, religious discrimination and maintained through military might. The title of Pryor's book, upon which the series was based, also contributes to the distortion of the historical narrative in two ways, firstly in its reiteration of the notion of a fictional 'Britain' encompassing the two islands and secondly, as the Romans never arrived in Ireland and indeed, left the province of Britannia before Christianity arrived in Ireland in the 5th century, its inclusion in the title is misleading to say the least. We cannot ignore the implications, both politically and culturally, of the spread of this fictional notion of 'Britain' by British academics and TV producers. Besides being historically absurd, it seems ridiculously irredentist and could be open to political exploitation. But more importantly it ignores the fact that Ireland has its own historical, mythological and cultural narratives which cannot be subsumed into this notion of an all-encompassing 'Britain'. In other parts of the world such a distortion of the historical narrative would have diplomatic consequences, indeed, at the very least, it is simply discourteous and, of course, it's sadly reminiscent of an older cultural imperialism.

GSI at the RDS

This Society, widely acclaimed as 'Ireland's Most Active Genealogical Organisation' will host a stand at the **Senior Times Over 50s Show** to be held at the RDS in Dublin between October 15th and 17th 2010. GSI Cathaoirleach, Pádraic Ingoldsby, who is also the Ireland Representative of the UK based **Guild of One-Name Studies**, has arranged for the two organisations to co-host Stand 176 at the Show. This is an important milestone in the promotion of the study of surnames in Ireland. The

GSI will be promoting the study of genealogy and heraldry as open access educational leisure pursuits available to all in the community irrespective of socio-economic circumstances, age or educational qualification. This is the core objective, for which, the Society was founded in October 1990. The RDS event will have a dedicated Genealogy section so visitors can browse through the many services, both commercial and voluntary, that are available to those wishing to embark on tracing their ancestors in Ireland.

Senior Times
Over
50's
show
Ireland's
Lifestyle Event
for Older People

Troubled Waters

A Social and Cultural History of Ireland's Sea Fisheries

Once in a while, genealogists and local historians are fortunate to discover real gems and, without doubt, *'Troubled Waters—A Social and Cultural History of Ireland's Sea Fisheries'* by **Jim Mac Loughlin** (ISBN: 978-1-84682-258-2 : 414pp : h/bk Price €55.00) falls into that category. Published by Four Courts Press in July 2010, this book is wonderfully written by a political geographer who has published widely on migration, colonial history, racism, ethnic conflict, nation-building and social theory. Therefore, it comes as no surprise to the genealogist and local historian that the author has produced such a comprehensive study of the history of Ireland's sea fisheries and the fishing communities around our coasts. The author argues that the subject of Irish sea fisheries has been generally neglected by historians and social commentators. Many local historians studying areas along our coasts will, no doubt, agree with Dr. Mac Loughlin on the dearth of published material on the history of the communities involved in the in-shore and deep-sea fishing industries and, certainly in this new publication, the author seeks to remove that lacuna in our written histories. Mac Loughlin's ten chapters are accompanied by three maps and over seventy illustrations and photographs. The first chapter deals with the neglect of the maritime in Irish history, explaining the under-development of the Irish fishing industry and exploring fisheries and the maritime communities in the wider historical and cultural narratives. Mac Loughlin makes the point that whilst farming, even subsistence farming, was 'considered morally uplifting and wholesome in nineteenth century nationalist Ireland, where as fishing and coastal foraging were associated with hardship and poverty'. He also sees remnants of this

'outsider' view of the coastal communities in the twentieth century in films like Robert Flaherty's *'Man of Aran'* (1934) and in David Lean's *'Ryan's Daughter'* (1970). In the second chapter the author explores the archaeology of fishing, fishing methods and of the early communities of coastal Ireland. Interestingly, he states that 'Viking proficiency in boat-building and seamanship meant that the country's indigenous coastal dwellers were also able to learn from these new intruders on the Irish maritime scene. The clinker-built boats of the Vikings were widely imitated.' Chapter three looks at the socio-religious awareness of the sea and fish consumption in medieval Ireland and makes the point that from the manuscript evidence fish was very important in the diets of Early Christian monks. The construction of weirs during the early medieval period forms part of the archaeological evidence for this industry, while he states that the Arab scholar Al 'Udhri from Moorish Spain referred to an important whale fishery off the south coast in the eleventh century. Chapter four explores the development and exploitation of the fisheries of pre-colonial Ireland roughly c. 1300-1600. Anglo-Norman controlled trade with the west coast of England and north west France exported salted herring and other fish from around the Irish coastline. The author explains that while the fishing fleets of Dublin, Drogheda and other east coast ports largely controlled the Irish sea fishery, the south coast tended to draw fleets from Spain, Portugal, France, England and Holland. Indeed, towards the end of the period mapping evidence is crucially important in identifying the extent of the maritime activity. Chapter five has an intriguing title 'Imposing order on the maritime fringe' and deals with the local ordinances concerning

fish shambles and the emerging societal attitudes towards persons involved in the industry. Attitudes, he observes, 'towards vagrancy, 'foul language', aggression, filth, cruelty and suffering' hardened with 'groups such as fishmongers, street vendors, vagrants, butchers, cattle drovers, horse dealers and those who 'fouled up' city streets' typically targeted and officially segregated from polite society. Chapter six is exceptionally important to the local historian and genealogist as it deals with the seafarers and fisher folk—their world, their lives and how such were captured by writers down through the years. For example, Peadar O'Donnell described close-knit island communities on Arranmore, Tory Island, Cape Clear and the Blaskets as 'a special kind of townland'. Chapter seven brings us into the early modern era with the plantations and the securing of the colonial project, including the expansion of the market economy. The investment by men like William Petty (1623-87) who developed the lucrative pilchard fishery around Kinsale, including the building of ice-houses at Kenmare and Ballinskelligs, is also examined thoroughly by the author. Chapter eight deals with the coastal geography of sea-fishing in the period 1750-1880 and therefore, brings the subject into an era accessible in the genealogical record which is of immense importance to researchers. Chapter nine looks at the industry as it enters an era of global commerce, competition and the 'official' response to developmental issues in the nineteenth century. The author also tackles some myths surrounding the impact of the Great Famine on fishing communities. He concludes with a sometimes hard-hitting commentary on the marginalisation of Ireland's sea fisheries. An excellent read! **MM**

National Library Acquires Ship's Pass

On Thursday August 5th a 17th century ship's pass for the vessel *Mary of Cork* signed by King James II and Samuel Pepys was formerly presented to the National Library of Ireland by Enda Connellan, CEO of the Dublin Port Company, formerly the Dublin Port and Docks Board. In presenting the pass which was acquired by the Dublin Port and Docks Board in 1924, Mr. Connellan said that the Dublin Port Company was delighted to present this interesting and rare historical document to the National Library of Ireland as this will ensure that it will be appropriately conserved and displayed and will be more accessible to the public in its new home. The pass is one of the few known examples of the 17th century ships' passes in the world with other examples held by the National

Archives in Kew and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. The pass presented to the National Library of Ireland was issued to the *Mary of Cork* to provide it passage free from English warships or warships of states maintaining diplomatic relations with England. The *Mary of Cork*, under Captain Zachary Peebucket and manned by a crew of five, by sailed from Dublin in late 1687 bound for the Canary Islands which at that time were major exporters of sugar and *Malvasia*, a fortified white wine which travelled well and was extremely popular in Britain. It's believed that the vessel may have been trading in these food-stuffs in exchange for products such as salted Irish beef. The pass was issued at the Court of Whitehall, London, on September 29th 1687

and signed by King James II (Lord High Admiral 1685 to 1688) and Samuel Pepys in his capacity as Secretary to the Admiralty. On April 18th 1688 the ship's pass was returned to Ireland where Thomas Williamson entered it into the registry of the High Court of Admiralty of Ireland. In the near future the pass will be displayed in the National Library of Ireland's Department of Manuscripts. **James Scannell**

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by **John Grenham**

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'Words We Use'

Diarmaid Ó Muirithe is well known in Ireland for his ever popular *'Words We Use'* column in the *Irish Times* where he provides both the etymology of some every day words and some anecdotal information on the words. His column never fails to fascinate in his illuminations of the origin of our vernacular languages. Now in a recent publication by Four Courts Press, Ó Muirithe traces the remnants of the Viking raids and settlements in the everyday speech of the peoples of Britain and Ireland. *'From the Viking Word-Hoard—A Dictionary of Scandinavian Words in the Languages of Britain and Ireland'* (ISBN 978-184682-173-8 : 342pp : h/bk €50.00) is a captivating read by any standards. Ó Muirithe opens by providing a background to the Scandinavian influence on the various parts of these islands which ranged from sporadic and violent raids to the establishment of settlements, trade and, in some

cases, governance. The effect on the Celtic languages varied considerably from extensive in the case of Scots Gaelic (Gàidhlig) and Manx (Gaelg), to very minimal in the case of Irish, Welsh and Cornish. In Irish, for example, most of the words of Viking origin relate to shipping and trade, whilst in Gàidhlig and Gaelg Viking words penetrated every facet of life and now are most evident in the landscape of the Western Isles and the Isle of Man. As a dictionary Ó Muirithe's work is also of immense value to study of placenames and, in many cases, surnames—especially those derived from nicknames. His treatment of the Norse and Danish influence on their sister Germanic languages of Scots (incl. Ulster-Scots) and English, is extensively referenced which is excellent for students of literature, especially poetry. This new dictionary is a wonderful resource for studies in many disciplines. **MM**

WHAT ABOUT YOUR RECORDS?

As genealogists, heraldists and local historians we naturally amass a huge amount of paper and computer records during our many years of research. We love these records, we've worked hard to collect the information—it's of great value. Books, photographs, charts, interview notes, copy certificates, parish register and census transcripts—all lovingly collected over many years. But how many of us have made provision for the preservation of our own records, files and notes after we die? Don't let your hard work end up as landfill or your genealogy, heraldry & local history books be sold off piece meal after you've gone. Why not make provision in your Will to donate them to the Society's Archive for future generations?

James Scannell Reports...

GLASNEVIN MUSEUM & TOURS

Glasnevin Cemetery was opened in the 1830's and is the largest cemetery in Ireland containing the remains of over 1.3 million people spread over 109 acres and is operated on a non-profit basis. In April this year Glasnevin Cemetery Museum was opened and is an excellent and wonderful introduction to the wealth of national history within the walls of the cemetery. This interactive visitor attraction offers the visitor a fascinating view of Ireland's necropolis and the many renowned figures that shaped the country we live in today. Glasnevin Museum also offers guided tours of the cemetery which is a unique opportunity to learn more about Ireland's complex history. Glasnevin Museum is a must see for anyone interested in Irish Heritage and Genealogy. The exhibitions over two floors, show the social, historical, political and artistic development of modern Ireland through the lives of the generations buried in Ireland's necropolis. The tour includes a visit to the crypt of Daniel O'Connell – other Museum facilities include the Tower Café which offers a wide and varied menu and the Glasnevin Trust Shop which stocks exclusive gifts and souvenirs. Glasnevin Cemetery is the largest cemetery in Ireland was first opened in 1832 and was established as a

place where people of all religions and none could bury their dead with dignity and with the passage of time the cemetery has grown to become a national monument and a vital part of the Irish heritage story. The Glasnevin Trust which operates the museum and the cemetery is an independent charity. Opening Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday & 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Cemetery Tours are daily at 10.30 a.m., 11.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. – additional tour on Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

COTTAGES GIVEN TO COUNCIL

On August 23rd two 18th Century artisan cottages which originally housed employees of Slane Castle were presented by Lord Henry Mountcharles to Meath County Council. The two cottages which were located in a lane just off Main Street had been unoccupied for many years and will require total refurbishment by the County Council which intends to use them as a tourism and heritage centre. Accepting the cottages Meath County Council Manager, Tom Dowling, said that he was pleased to officially inherit another part of Slane's heritage and looked forward to the challenge of tuning them into a home for the preservation of the heritage

of the villagers. 2010 is the 250th anniversary of Slane as a village and Lord Mountcharles said that he thought that the time was right to kick start the rehabilitation of Slane which is a village of enormous historical importance as following the opening of the Brú na Boinne centre through which all visitors to Newgrange, Dowth and Knowth must travel and is on the opposite side of the River Boyne to Slane, he said that he was trying to revitalize Slane as a tourist destination.

BOOK LAUNCH

The Prospect Gallery in Glasnevin Cemetery was the setting on Tuesday August 24th for the launch by Seán Whelan, Chairman of the National Graves Association of Ray Bateson's latest book *'They Died by Pearse's Side'*. Ray Bateson had written a number of books on those buried in Dublin cemeteries with *'Dead and Buried in Dublin'* being one of his best-known books on this subject. **EDITOR:** On Sept. 1st 2010, Liam Mac Alasdair, FGSI and Máire Bean Mhic Alasdair presented a signed copy of this book to the Director of Archival Services, Séamus O'Reilly, FGSI, for the Society's Archive. It's a wonderful resource for researchers and the GSI is very grateful for this donation.

Précis of the August Lecture

On Tuesday August 10, 2010 our members heard a very interesting lecture on the fascinating topic of *'The Lawrence Photographic Collection in the National Library of Ireland'* by long-time member of the Old Dublin Society, **Brian Siggins**. William Mervyn Lawrence (1840-1932) opened his photographic studio in his mother's toys and fancy goods shop at 5-7, Upper Sackville Street (now O'Connell St.), Dublin in 1865. According to Brian Siggins, Lawrence himself was more businessman than photographer and besides running his very successful studio in Dublin, he was a collector of photographic glass negatives of scenes from all around Ireland. These photographs were a sort of photojournalism of the day, however, many were staged 'after event' views due to the limitations of the technology at the time. How-

ever, others were of the 'post card' type depicting scenic views and tourist attractions. Though, all of his portrait negatives were destroyed during the Easter Rising of 1916, his main collections were stored away from the fighting in Rathmines. This very fortunate set of circumstances has bequeathed to the Irish nation a collection of approximately 40,000 glass negatives and 15,000 photographic prints. This extremely important collection is housed in the National Photographic Archive, Temple Bar, Dublin, which is a part of the National Library of Ireland. Some of this hugely important collection is made available to the public on-line through the website of the National Library of Ireland www.nli.ie Brian Siggins's lecture not only provided information on this collection but also covered the art of photography involved.

GSI LECTURES 2010

Tues. September 14th 'Irish Newspaper Archives as a Resource for the Genealogist' by Philip Martin; **Tues. October 12th** 'The Medlar's Gotcha – the story of a Dublin family' by Pól Ó Duibhir; **Tues. November 9th** 'Irish Convict Transportation – Damnation or Salvation?' by Seán Solan; **Tues. December 14th** '1916 to 1921 Casualties' by Dáithí Ó Corráin.

MEDAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

GSI Members researching ancestors or relatives who served in the Irish, British, Commonwealth, American or other armed forces or in the mercantile marine will find the publications and meetings of the Medal Society of Ireland of interest. Find out more about those medals so cherished by the family and handed down through generations. For further information please visit the Medal Society's website at: www.msos.ie

Membership of the Genealogical Society

In the annual review of the Membership Packages the Board agreed, under **Res: 09/11/718** to maintain the Annual Subscription for 2010 for Irish and Overseas Members at the level agreed in 2007 of €40.00 to include the following: Member voting rights; optional second household member with voting rights; Membership Card (s); right to use GSI post-nominal; copy of the Annual Journal; monthly newsletter; use of the Society's Archive; monthly meetings/lectures; special prices of up to 50% off selected Society publications; right to register your own assumed Arms or emblems with the Society free of charge; right to have your Club,

School or Institutions assumed Arms or emblems registered with the Society free of charge to a maximum of ten registrations; occasional group projects; Members' internet forum; genealogical, heraldic and vexillological advice; and the facility to publish your research in the GSI Journal. This Membership Package shall be applied as and from Jan. 1st 2010 and be subject to annual review, however, existing Membership Packages shall be honoured until their annual renewal date. Also under **Res: 08/11/636** persons under twenty-five years can still avail of 50% reduction on the membership fee. **NEW:** At the August 2010 meeting of the

Board of Directors, **Sharon Bofin**, MGSII Director of Membership Services & Publications, has agreed to offer a 50% reduction for persons joining with six or less months due before the end of the year. This will give these Members full entitlements, however, the full rate is payable on renewal in January 2011. **Day Membership** at €5.00 is available for persons visiting the Society's Archive at the Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire. Membership can be renewed on-line or, if you prefer, simply download the form and forward it with your remittance to the Society's Director of Finance, **Mr. Tom Conlon**, MGSII, 24, Carrickbrennan Lawn, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

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*The Society is a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann***Board of Directors 2010-2011**

Pádraic Ingoldsby (Cathaoirleach : Chairperson); **Gerry Hayden** (Leas-Chathaoirleach : Vice Chair); **Michael Merrigan** (General Secretary : Company Secretary); **Tom Conlon** (Finance); **Sharon Bofin** (Memberships & Publications); **Séamus O'Reilly** (Archive); **Barry O'Connor** (Cemetery Projects); **Séamus Moriarty** (Lecture Programme); **Fiona Tipple** (Education & Social Inclusion) **Bartosz Kozłowski** (Poland) (Internet Services); **John Hamrock** (National Projects) and **Pat Feenan** (Sales & Marketing).

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www.familyhistory.ie/shop**DIARY DATES**

Tuesday Sept. 14th & Oct. 12th 2010

Evening Open Meeting

Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education
Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire
20.00hrs—22.00hrs

Wednesday Sept. 22nd & Oct. 27th 2010

Morning Open Meeting

Weir's, Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire
10.30hrs—12.30hrs

Contribution €3.00 p.p.

(Coffee/Tea included at Morning Meetings)

GSI Board News

The Board of the Society at its monthly meeting conducted a review of membership revenue matters and in particular, more effective and efficient methods of managing membership records. Reports were received from the Director of Finance, **Tom Conlon**, and the Director of Membership Services, **Sharon Bofin**. Therefore, it was agreed, under *Res: 10/09/785*, to alter the existing calendar year membership for Irish based Members to one of renewals due on the anniversary of the last payment. This will bring the Irish based Members into line with the system currently applying to Overseas Members. This alteration was back dated to include all persons renewing or joining since July 1st 2010. The Membership Package is reviewed each year at the November meeting and it is envisaged that a number of innovative and exciting amendments to the existing (2009) Membership Package will be brought forward in November. It was also clarified, under *Res: 10/09/786*, that any memberships granted under the 2008 student journal articles scheme (*Res: 08/11/636*) will expire on December 31st 2010 as this particular scheme was discontinued. As part of a new marketing strategy, Director of Sales & Marketing, **Pat Feenan**, recommended a special promotion at the RDS, therefore, under *Res: 10/09/788* it was agreed that persons attending the **Senior Times Over 50's Show** and renewing or joining at the RDS will receive a special €10.00 reduction on the current Membership Package (see page 3). **Sharon Bofin**, Director of Publications, presented the final draft of the 2010 Annual Journal and advised the Board that it should be published at the end of the month. The Director of Education & Social Inclusion, **Fiona Tipple**, presented an outline of the Members' Survey which will be sent to each Member with the Annual Journal. The Directors of Internet Services, **Bartosz Kozłowski**; Finance, **Tom Conlon** and Sales & Marketing, **Pat Feenan**, are to assess the effectiveness of our on-line publicity, marketing and sales strategies to ensure a more effective coverage at home and overseas. Leas-Chathaoirleach, **Gerry Hayden**, who is heading up the 20th Anniversary Celebrations and organising the Official Opening has advised the Board that for operational reasons that these events have been put back to November 2010. **Séamus O'Reilly**, Director of Archival Services, advised the Board that the Society's Archive will be open on Tues. 09.30hrs to 12.00hrs and on Weds. 10.30hrs to 16.30hrs (with the exception of the 4th Weds when it will open at 13.00hrs) at the Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire Harbour. **General Secretary**

FOUR COURTS PRESS*Irish History, Genealogy, Local History and much more***www.fourcourtspress.ie***Checkout the Sale Items - 10% Reduction On-Line***MAYO ANCESTORS**

Brian Smith, *Tracing Your Mayo Ancestors*, 2nd edition, 160 pages, Flyleaf Press, Dublin 2010, ISBN 978-0-9563624-3-8, retail price €13.00

As an avid family historian whose paternal grandfather hailed from County Mayo, and as a professional genealogist helping clients trace their Mayo roots, I highly recommend Brian Smith's *Tracing Your Mayo Ancestors*. This compact and well organised guide serves as an indispensable tool for both new and experienced Mayo family history researchers. The cover illustration appropriately depicts the poignant scene of an emigrant ship leaving the shores of Mayo for North America or Australia watched by silent onlookers. Mayo was a Connacht county badly impacted by the Great Famine of 1845-1847, its population devastated by starvation, disease and emigration. A new table introduced in this second edition shows the population decline of each barony by decade from 1841 through to 1891. In 1841 the total population of County Mayo stood at 388,887. By 1891 the population had fallen to 219,034. Each chapter is dedicated to a particular area of research such as civil registrations, church records, census returns, wills and administrations, and land records. The introduction provides a concise, but excellent history of the county describing that Mayo families were a mixture of native peoples who arrived in the Neolithic period, Gaelic families, Cambro-Norman, English, and Scottish settlers. There is also a chapter devoted to the 1798 Rebellion in County Mayo. The chapter on church records shows that in the 1861 Census of Ireland, 96.8% of the Mayo population was

reported to be Roman Catholic and 2.6% belonging to the Church of Ireland. It provides detailed information on each parish's extant baptism, marriage and burial records. There is also a chapter devoted to Mayo surnames, family names and histories. One useful map shows by barony the 20 most numerous surnames which occur in the Primary Valuation of Ireland, also known as *Griffith's Valuation* (1855/1857). Of particular help to less experienced researchers, this book contains numerous extracted reproductions from works such as *Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, the 'Ordnance Survey Field Name books', the 1851 'Townland Index of Ireland', maps showing the individual Baronies and Civil Parishes, birth and marriage registers, extracts from estate tenant rental ledgers, an extract from the Tithe Applotment Composition Book, evicted tenants notices, census returns, and other historical documents. The author also provides detailed information about the available primary and secondary source material and where these source documents are located, whether online or in archives or libraries. The font size and line spacing layout makes it easy on the eyes and like the original edition, it contains a comprehensive index. I highly recommend *Tracing Your Mayo Ancestors* for both amateur and professional genealogists. It is a meticulously researched and attractively presented book. The extracted document and manuscript illustrations presented throughout the book help the reader to envisage what they can expect to find through their own research. It is a reliable companion whether one is researching from home via the internet or in a library or archive. It is a must have for serious genealogists on the quest for Mayo ancestors. **John Hamrock, MGSII**, Ancestor Network Ltd.

SÉAN LESTER REMEMBERED

Between 1934 and 1937, John Ernest 'Seán' Lester was League of Nations High Commissioner for Danzig, now called Gdansk, which was placed under League of Nations supervision after WW1. Though completely surrounded by Poland, this city had a German majority and a Polish minority. Germany wanted Danzig reincorporated, but Poland was completely opposed. The only issue that both agreed on was Lester's removal and an end to the League's control of the city. Throughout his period in office Lester warned of the threat that the Nazis posed to this city and to the peace of Europe. He was not afraid to condemn them and their practices. In 1937, following pressure from Hitler, Lester's term of office was terminated and he returned to Geneva as Deputy Secretary General and then later Secretary General, the last holder of this office. He guarded the League's assets and files until handing them to the United Nations. He died in Connemara in 1959. On Weds. August 26th his daughter Ann returned to Gdansk to accept on honour on his behalf in the City Hall which was the residence of Dr. Lester and his family and from where she had seen Nazi party parades march past on Saturdays and Sundays. In the main meeting room, now called the Seán Lester Room, Mr. Brogan Oleszek, Chairman of Gdansk City Council, said that Seán Lester was unique in those difficult times when it was hard to oppose the Nazis. The attendance at the ceremony also included Declan O'Donovan, Ireland's departing Ambassador to Poland, and Lester's biographer Paul McNamara. **James Scannell**