The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were an era of continuity as well as change. Though properly portrayed as the era of ‘Protestant Ascendancy’ it embraces two phases – the eighteenth century when that ascendancy was at its peak; and the nineteenth century when the Protestant elite sustained a determined rear-guard defence in the face of the emergence of modern Catholic nationalism. Employing a chronology that is not bound by traditional datelines, this volume moves beyond the familiar political narrative to engage with the economy, society, population, emigration, religion, language, state formation, culture, art and architecture, and the Irish abroad. It provides new and original interpretations of a critical phase in the emergence of a modern Ireland that, while focused firmly on the island and its traditions, moves beyond the nationalist narrative of the twentieth century to provide a history of late early modern Ireland for the twenty-first century.

James Kelly is Professor of History at Dublin City University. He is a member of the Irish Manuscripts Commission, and President of the Irish Economic and Social History Society. His publications include That Damn’d Thing Called Honour: Duelling in Ireland, 1750-1860 (1995); Henry Flood: Patriots and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Ireland (1998); Poynings’ Law and the Making of Law in Ireland, 1660-1800 (2007); and, as editor (with Martyn Powell), Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland (2010); (with Mary Ann Lyons), The Proclamations of Ireland, 1660-1820 (5 vols. 2014), and (with Elizabeth FitzPatrick) Food and Drink in Ireland (2016). His book Sport in Ireland, 1600-1840 (2014) won the special commendation prize offered by the National University of Ireland in 2016.
This authoritative, accessible and engaging four-volume history vividly presents the Irish story – or stories – from c.600 to the present, within its broader Atlantic, European, imperial and global contexts. While the volumes benefit from a strong political narrative framework, they are distinctive also in including essays that address the full range of social, economic, religious, linguistic, military, cultural, artistic and gender history, and in challenging traditional chronological boundaries in a manner that offers new perspectives and insights. Each volume examines Ireland’s development within a distinct period, and offers a complete and rounded picture of Irish life, while remaining sensitive to the unique Irish experience. Bringing together an international team of experts, this landmark history both reflects recent developments in the field and sets the agenda for future study.

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VOLUME III
1730–1880

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Dublin City University
Contents

List of Illustrations   page ix
List of Figures     xii
List of Tables     xiii
List of Maps     xiv
List of Contributors     xv
General Acknowledgements     xvii
Acknowledgements     xix
List of Abbreviations     xxi
General Introduction     xxiii

Introduction: Interpreting Late Early Modern Ireland   1
JAMES KELLY

PART I
POLITICS

1 · Irish Jacobitism, 1691–1790   23
VINCENT MORLEY

2 · The Politics of Protestant Ascendancy, 1730–1790   48
JAMES KELLY

3 · Ireland during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1791–1815   74
THOMAS BARTLETT

4 · The Impact of O’Connell, 1815–1850   102
PATRICK M. GEOGHEGAN
Contents

5 · Popular Politics, 1815–1845
MAURA CRONIN

PART II
ECONOMY AND DEMOGRAPHY

6 · Society and Economy in the Long Eighteenth Century
DAVID DICKSON

7 · The Irish Economy, 1815–1880: Agricultural Transition, the Communications Revolution and the Limits of Industrialisation
ANDY BIELENBERG

8 · Population and Emigration, 1730–1845
BRIAN GURRIN

9 · Women, Men and the Family, c.1730–c.1880
SARAH-ANNE BUCKLEY

PART III
RELIGION

10 · The Catholic Church and Catholics in an Era of Sanctions and Restraints, 1690–1790
THOMAS O’CONNOR

11 · The Re-energising of Catholicism, 1790–1880
COLIN BARR

12 · Protestant Dissenters, c.1690–1800
IAN McBRIE

13 · Protestantism in the Nineteenth Century: Revival and Crisis
ANDREW R. HOLMES
Contents

PART IV
SHAPING SOCIETY

14 · Language and Literacy in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries 353
AIDAN DOYLE

15 · Futures Past: Enlightenment and Antiquarianism in the Eighteenth Century 380
MICHAEL BROWN AND LEISA NÍ MHUNGAILE

16 · Art and Architecture in the Long Eighteenth Century 406
CHRISTINE CASEY

17 · Civil Society, c.1700–c.1850 465
MARTYN J. POWELL

18 · Sport and Recreation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries 489
JAMES KELLY

19 · Bourgeois Ireland, or, on the Benefits of Keeping One’s Hands Clean 517
CIARÁN O’NEILL

20 · The Growth of the State in the Nineteenth Century 542
VIRGINIA CROSSMAN

PART V
THE IRISH ABROAD

21 · The Irish in Europe in the Eighteenth Century, 1691–1815 569
LIAM CHAMBERS

22 · ‘Irish’ Migration to America in the Eighteenth Century? Or the Strange Case for the ‘Scots/Irish’ 593
PATRICK GRIFFIN
Contents

23 · Ireland and the Empire in the Nineteenth Century  617
  BARRY CROSBIE

PART VI
THE GREAT FAMINE AND ITS AFTERMATH

24 · The Great Famine, 1845–1850  639
  PETER GRAY

25 · Irish Emigration, c.1845–1900  666
  KEVIN KENNY

26 · Post-Famine Politics, 1850–1879  688
  DOUGLAS KANTER

27 · Afterword  716
  TOBY BARNARD

Bibliography  731
  Index  815
Illustrations


3. Little Red-Riding Hood’s (John Russell, 1st Earl Russell) meeting with the Wolf (Daniel O’Connell), 1835. Lithograph by ‘HB’ (John Doyle), published by Thomas McLean, 3 April 1835 (National Portrait Gallery) (NPG reference d41319)  118

4. Paul, Cardinal Cullen (1803–78), archbishop of Dublin, 1852–78, and Ireland’s first cardinal (1866). Portrait (copy), Irish School, nineteenth century. Oil on canvas (Belvedere House, St Patrick’s Campus, Dublin City University)  292


7. Elevation of the parliament house, Dublin, by Roland Omer (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  409

8. Plan of the parliament house, Dublin, by Roland Omer (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  409

9. Entrance front of Castletown House, County Kildare, begun c.1722 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  411

10. Plan of Castletown House, County Kildare, by John Stewart (Courtesy of J. Stewart and the Irish Architectural Archive)  411


12. Monument to William and Katherine Conolly by Thomas Carter (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  415
Illustrations

13. Sir Henry Cheere, monument to the 19th Earl of Kildare (d.1744), Christ Church Cathedral (Courtauld Institute neg. b75.1766) 416
14. James Latham, Charles Tottenham. Oil on canvas, c.1731 (National Gallery of Ireland) 418
15. The Long Room, Trinity College Dublin, by Thomas Burgh with busts by Scheemakers and Roubiliac (Trinity College Dublin) 419
17. Richard Castle, elevation of Kildare (Leinster) House begun 1745 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive) 421
18. Richard Castle, Belvedere House, County Westmeath, c.1740. Drawing of original elevation by David Griffin (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive) 422
19. Carton, County Kildare, eating parlour, Paolo and Filippo Lafranchini, 1738 (Photo by Stephen Farrell) 423
20. Russborough, County Wicklow, plan by John Stewart (Courtesy of J. Stewart and the Irish Architectural Archive) 424
21. Russborough, saloon with inlaid floors and plasterwork by the Lafranchini brothers (Photo by Stephen Farrell) 425
22. The Conolly folly, Castletown, County Kildare, attributed to Richard Castle, 1741 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive) 427
23. George Barret, Powerscourt waterfall. Oil on canvas, c.1760 (National Gallery of Ireland) 429
24. Thomas Roberts, A sheet of water at Carton, with the Duke and Duchess of Leinster about to board a rowing boat. Oil on canvas, 1775–6 (private collection) 430
25. Kildare toilet service, David Willaume, c.1720 (Ulster Museum) 431
26. Kildare wine cistern, Thomas Sutton, 1727 (Dallas Museum of Art) 431
27. St James, Grange, Cooley peninsula, 1762 (Courtesy of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) 433
28. Mid-eighteenth-century Chinoiserie altarpiece frame, St Andrew’s, Westland Row, Dublin 435
29. John Hogan, The dead Christ, Church of St Theresa, Clarendon Street, Dublin, 1829 (Carmelite Community, Clarendon Street, Dublin) (Courtesy of Denis Mortell Photography, Dublin) 435
30. John Van Nost, bust of Samuel Madden (Courtesy of RDS Library and Archives) (Courtesy of Ann Egan Photography) 437
31. Christopher Hewetson, monument to Provost Richard Baldwin, 1771–83, Public Theatre, Trinity College Dublin (Trinity College Dublin) 438
32. Simon Vierpyl, terracotta portrait busts after originals in the Capitoline Museum, begun 1731 (Courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy) 439
33. Edward Smyth, riverine head, Custom House, Dublin (Courtesy of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) 440
34. Joseph Tudor, Sackville Street and Gardiner’s Mall, c.1750 (National Gallery of Ireland) 442
35. Henrietta Street, Dublin (Courtesy of Ann Egan Photography) 443
36. Stairhall, no. 20 Lower Dominick Street, Dublin (Photo by Stephen Farrell) 444
Illustrations

37. Carlisle Bridge with D’Olier and Westmoreland Streets, c.1880
   (Davison Associates)  

38. Samuel Byron, ‘A bird’s-eye perspective plan of Trinity College park and gardens’, 1780 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  

39. Trinity College Dublin, Provost’s House, 1760 (Photo by Stephen Farrell)  

40. Unexecuted design by Thomas Sherrard for Mountjoy Square, Dublin, 1787 (Dublin City Library and Archives)  

41. Davis Ducart, Castletown Cox, County Kilkenny, c.1767
   (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  

42. Sir William Chambers, the Casino at Marino, begun 1759 (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) (© National Monuments Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs)  

43. James Wyatt, Castle Coole, County Fermanagh, 1789–96 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  

44. Francis Johnston, Townley Hall, County Louth, completed c.1798
   (Courtesy of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage)  

45. Thomas Cooley, Royal Exchange, Dublin, from 1769 (Courtesy of the Irish Architectural Archive)  

46. James Gandon, The Custom House, Dublin, begun 1781
   (Courtesy of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage)  

47. James Barry, ‘Crowning the victors at Olympia’ (detail) from The progress of human culture, (1777–83) Great Room (Royal Society of Arts), London  

48. James Barry, Self-portrait as Timanthes, 1783–1802 (National Gallery of Ireland)  

49. Hugh Douglas Hamilton, Richard Mansergh St George, c.1795
   (National Gallery of Ireland)  

50. Louth County Courthouse, Dundalk, 1813–19 (Courtesy of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage)  

   (NPG reference n36947)  

52. Michel van Loo, Ricardo Wall (1694–1777), Spanish ambassador to Great Britain, 1746, and chief minister to King Ferdinand VI (1746–59) and Charles III (1759–88). Oil on canvas, 1746 (National Gallery of Ireland)  

   (NPG reference n6982)  

   (NPG reference n7687)  

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Figures

1. Net revenue from hearth tax, 1719–20 to 1750–1  
2. Reworked national population estimates, 1732–1845

page 211

229
Tables

1. Irish beef and butter exports, 1683–1780 p.a.  page 157
2. Provincial population growth-rate estimates, 1753–1821  177
3. Irish agricultural output at current prices, 1840–76  185
4. Forestry acreage in Ireland, 1841–91  188
5. Employment shares in the Irish economy, 1841–81  190
6. The number of houses returned in different classes in the census years 1841–81  201
7. Reworked national population estimates, 1687–1753 and 1791  207
8. Provincial population estimates, 1732  208
9. Number of religious households by province, 1732  209
10. Contemporary national population estimates, 1767–88  215
11. Provincial population levels, 1753 and 1791  217
12. Provincial populations, 1821  220
13. Urban and rural populations, 1821, by province  221
14. Principal employments, 1821  223
15. Provincial populations, 1821–41  224
16. National population estimates, 1821–51, and 1791  225
17. Religious adherents by province, 1831  225
18. Irish-born in Britain, 1841  227
19. Distribution of Irish communities in England and Scotland, 1841  228
20. Relative strength of Irish populations in England and Scotland, 1841  228
21. Known English-language titles published in Ireland, 1750–1800, as a percentage of total number of titles to 1800  497
22. Emigration from Ireland to overseas destinations (not counting Great Britain), 1841–1900  667
23. Party affiliation of MPs returned for Irish constituencies, 1852–74  693
Maps

1. Map of Ireland   page xxiv
2. Rural population density, 1821, by county   222
3. Racecourses, Ireland, 1731–60   492
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Thomas Bartlett, MRIA
General Editor, The Cambridge History of Ireland
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Abbreviations

AAI       Art and architecture of Ireland, A. Carpenter gen. ed., 5 vols.
          (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014)
AAS      Archives of the Archdiocese of Sydney
Add. MS   Additional Manuscript
AICP     Archives du Collège des Irlandais, Paris
BL       British Library
Bodl.    Bodleian Library, Oxford
b.       born
circa    circa
CP       Cullen papers
dep.     deposit
d.       died
DDA      Dublin Diocesan Archives
DSE      Dublin Stock Exchange
edn      edition
GDP      gross domestic product
HO       Home Office
HMC      Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMSO     Her Majesty’s Stationery Office
IAA      Irish Architectural Archive
IIP      Independent Irish Party
IRB      Irish Republican Brotherhood
ITS      Irish Texts Society
MP       Member of Parliament
MS(S)    Manuscript(s)
NAI      National Archives of Ireland
NGI      National Gallery of Ireland
NLI      National Library of Ireland

xxi
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>NLS</td>
<td>National Library of Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>no date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKP</td>
<td>New Kirby papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPG</td>
<td>National Portrait Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>new series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td><em>Pennsylvania Gazette</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICRA</td>
<td>Pontifical Irish College, Rome, Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRONI</td>
<td>Public Record Office of Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDS</td>
<td>Royal Dublin Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIA</td>
<td>Royal Irish Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>State Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCD</td>
<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>The National Archives, Public Record Office</td>
</tr>
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<td>UCC</td>
<td>University College Cork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCD</td>
<td>University College Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVF</td>
<td>Ulster Volunteer Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSC</td>
<td>Wide Street Commission</td>
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General Introduction

The aims of this four-volume History of Ireland are quite straightforward. First, we seek to offer students, and the general reader, a detailed survey, based on the latest research, of the history of the island from early medieval times to the present. As with other Cambridge histories, a chronological approach, in the main, has been adopted, and there is a strong narrative spine to the four volumes. However, the periods covered in each volume are not the traditional ones and we hope that this may have the effect of forcing a re-evaluation of the familiar periodisation of Irish history and of the understanding it has tended to inspire. A single twist of the historical kaleidoscope can suggest – even reveal – new patterns, beginnings and endings. As well, among the one hundred or so chapters spread over the four volumes, there are many that adopt a reflective tone as well as strike a discursive note. There are also a number that tackle topics that have hitherto not found their way into the existing survey literature. Second, we have sought at all times to locate the history of Ireland in its broader context, whether European, Atlantic or, latterly, global. Ireland may be an island, but the people of the island for centuries have been dispersed throughout the world, with significant concentrations in certain countries, with the result that the history of Ireland and the history of the Irish people have never been coterminous. Lastly, the editors of the individual volumes – Brendan Smith, Jane Ohlmeyer, James Kelly and myself – have enlisted contributors who have, as well as a capacity for innovative historical research, demonstrated a talent for writing lucid prose. For history to have a social purpose – or indeed any point – it must be accessible, and in these volumes we have endeavoured to ensure that this is the case: readers will judge with what success.

Thomas Bartlett, MRIA
General Editor, The Cambridge History of Ireland
MAP 1. Map of Ireland.