

1912 - 1923: Reflecting on a decade of war and revolution in Ireland

Votes for the people: 1918, Ireland's first democratic election?



ULSTER UNIVERSITY
The Conor Lecture Theatre

25 - 51 York Street
Belfast BT15 1ED

Saturday 1st December

#historians1918

universities
ireland
Promoting Irish Universities

1912-1923: Reflecting on a decade of war and revolution in Ireland

Votes for the people: 1918, Ireland's first democratic election?

Saturday 1 December 2018 – Ulster University, York Street, Belfast

PROGRAMME

9.00 Registration

9.45 Official opening and introduction: **Ms Ruth Taillon**, Secretary, Universities Ireland and Director, Centre for Cross Border Studies

10.00 Chair: **Dr Katherine Byrne**, Lecturer in English, Ulster University

Dr Diane Urquhart, Reader, Institute of Irish Studies, University of Liverpool

'A very different thing from freedom: unionism, equality and the 1918 election'

Ms Claire McGing, Athena SWAN Project Officer, Maynooth University

'Becoming gendered citizens: Women's political representation in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Southern Ireland'

Q&A

11.15 Refreshments

11.45 Chair: **Dr Darragh Gannon**, Research Fellow, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast

Dr Colin Reid, Lecturer in Irish and British History, University of Sheffield

'The past as destiny: history, democracy and the republican mind, c. 1918'

Dr Helga Woggon, Independent Historian

'Winifred Carney and the 1918 elections – A microhistory of her election stand for women and a workers' republic'

Q&A

13.00 Lunch (£10 Charge)

14.00 Chair: **Dr Margaret O'Callaghan**, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast

Lord Bew, Chair, The House of Lords Appointments Commission

'Being posted for a fool: the story of the Irish revolution'

Professor Michael Laffan, Emeritus Professor, University College Dublin

'Perfect organisation and infinite audacity: Sinn Féin's incomplete triumph'.

15.15 Refreshments

15.30 Chair: **Professor Graham Walker**, Professor of Political History, Queen's University Belfast

Professor Fearghal McGarry, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast

'Irish self-determination: the global context'

Dr Éamon Phoenix

'How the West was won: Devlin, de Valera and the 1918 contest in Belfast Falls'

Q&A

16.45 Conference Close

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Ms Ruth Taillon is Director of the Centre for Cross Border Studies. She has many years' experience working with a range of public and community-based organisations in both jurisdictions. Prior to joining the Centre, Ruth was Research Coordinator for Border Action, a partnership between Pobal and the Combat Poverty Agency, working on European funding programmes Peace and INTERREG. She was Director of the West Belfast Economic Forum and involved with the management of a number of community-based initiatives throughout the 1990s. She has also worked as an independent research and evaluation consultant, specialising in gender, equality and peace and conflict issues. She is currently a member of the Irish Government's Oversight Group for the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and a member of the expert advisory group for a EU Commission study on obstacles to cross-border cooperation. Ruth also writes and lectures on Irish women's history, about which she has a strong personal interest.

Dr Katherine Byrne is a Lecturer in English at Ulster University, where she teaches nineteenth and twentieth century literature and women's writing. She has published on Victorian fiction and medicine and on adaptation and television, especially on the adaptation of Elizabeth Gaskell for the small screen. Her previous monographs include *Tuberculosis and the Victorian Literary Imagination* (CUP, 2011) and *Edwardians on Screen: From Downton Abbey to Parade's End* (Palgrave 2015). She is also the co-editor of *Conflicting Masculinities: Men in Televisual Period Drama* (IB Tauris 2018).

Dr Diane Urquhart is a Reader in Modern Irish History at the Institute of Irish Studies of the University of Liverpool and a fellow of the Royal Historical Society. A graduate of Queen's University Belfast, she is a former postdoctoral fellow of the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's and has worked as a researcher for the Women's History Project. She has published extensively on Irish women's history, gender and politics including *Women in Ulster Politics, 1890-1940* (2000) and *The Ladies of Londonderry: women and political patronage* (2007) as well as five edited/co-edited international collections. She has just completed *Irish Divorce: A History*, the first full-length history of Irish divorce, which will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2019. Diane has also co-

written with Lindsey Earner-Byrne *The Irish Abortion Journey* which will be published as part of Palgrave Macmillan's Pivot series in 2019.

Ms Claire McGing is based in the Social Sciences Institute and the Department of Geography at Maynooth University. She has published widely on gender, electoral democracy and politics in Ireland, including chapters in the 2011 and 2016 *How Ireland Voted* series (Palgrave Macmillan) and a forthcoming contribution to the *International Human Rights of Women* collection (Springer, 2019). Claire is currently Maynooth University's Athena SWAN Project Officer, a project which seeks to advance gender equality and intersectionality in higher education institutions. She is a regular media commentator on Irish politics and gender politics.

Dr Darragh Gannon is a modern historian with research expertise in the Irish in Great Britain and the Irish revolution. He has published widely on the revolutionary decade in British historical context and is currently finalising a monograph entitled *Conflict, diaspora and empire: Irish nationalism in Great Britain, 1912-22*. He has previously lectured in British and Irish history at Maynooth University and University College Dublin. Further research interests include museums, material culture and commemoration. He served as Curatorial Researcher to the National Museum of Ireland exhibition 'Proclaiming a Republic: the 1916 Rising' and authored its accompanying volume *Proclaiming a Republic: Ireland, 1916 and the National Collection*. Most recently he was appointed Historian-in-Residence to Dublin City Council's commemorative project 'Dublin Remembers'. He is currently Research Fellow to the AHRC-funded project 'A global history of Irish revolution, 1916-1923'.

Dr Colin Reid is a lecturer in Irish and British history at the University of Sheffield. He is currently writing a book about ideas of representative government in Ireland from the 1790s to 1922. He is the author of *The Lost Ireland of Stephen Gwynn: Irish Constitutional Nationalism and Cultural Politics, 1864-1950*, which was published by Manchester University Press in 2011, with a (cheaper!) paperback edition in 2015.

Dr Helga Woggon is a biographer of James Connolly (1990) and Winifred Carney (2000, enlarged edition in preparation), ILHS member since 1974, Visiting Research Fellow at Institute of Irish Studies, QUB and German Historical Institute London (1979-81) and Moore Institute and Irish Centre for the Histories of Labour and Class, National University of Ireland, Galway (2017). She also worked on Afro-Central American Garifuna culture. Her focus was on Holocaust studies, co-curating exhibitions of the Topography of Terror Foundation, Berlin (1993-2006) and quality-managing transcriptions and translations of Shoah survivor testimonies for the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive at Freie Universität Berlin (2008-11). She is now a sworn translator of English and Spanish and an independent historian based in Berlin.

Dr Margaret O'Callaghan is an historian and political analyst at the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, Queen's University Belfast. Amongst her publications are *British High Politics and a Nationalist Ireland; Criminality, Land and the Law under Forster and Balfour* and 'Women and Politics in Independent Ireland, 1921-58' in Vol 5 of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*. Some of her works have been on history-writing and the Troubles, republicanism, the role of the state in nineteenth century Ireland and Roger Casement. She has co-edited with Mary E Daly *1916 in 1966; Commemorating the Easter Rising* (Royal Irish Academy, 2007) and published more recently on the commemoration of the Easter Rising in 1966 and 1976 and Conor Cruise O'Brien and the Rising. Her most recent publication is 'Women's Political autobiography in Independent Ireland' in Liam Harte

(ed) *A history of Irish autobiography* (CUP, 2018). She is working on a book on Alice Stopford Green and her national and global networks.

Lord Bew joined Queen's University Belfast in 1979 and was made Professor of Irish Politics in 1991. He acted as historical adviser to the Bloody Sunday Inquiry between 1998 and 2001 and was appointed as a non-party-political peer by the independent House of Lords Appointments Commission in February 2007 following his contributions to the Good Friday Agreement. He has served on a number of committees including the Joint Committee on the Defamation Bill, which addressed key issues of academic freedom, and the Joint Committee on Parliamentary Privilege which produced its report in July 2013. Lord Bew chaired the 2011 independent review of Key Stage 2 (SATs) provision in England. He is a Visiting Professor at King's College London. Among Lord Bew's many publications is the Ireland volume of the *Oxford History of Modern Europe*.

Professor Michael Laffan studied in University College Dublin (UCD), Trinity Hall Cambridge and the Institute for European History in Mainz. He lectured briefly in the University of East Anglia in Norwich, and then, for over three decades, in UCD. He served as head of the UCD School of History, he was president of the Irish Historical Society between 2010 and 2012, and he is now an emeritus professor. His writings include *The Partition of Ireland* (1983), *The Resurrection of Ireland: the Sinn Féin Party, 1916-23* (1999), and *Judging W. T. Cosgrave* (2014). He has also edited *The Burden of German History, 1919-1945* (1988). He has lectured widely throughout Ireland and across the globe.

Professor Graham Walker is Professor of Political History at Queen's University Belfast. He has authored various works in the field of modern Irish history including 'A History of the Ulster Unionist Party: Protest, Pragmatism and Pessimism' (2004). His latest book is 'The Labour Party in Scotland: Religion, the Union, and the Irish Dimension' (2016).

Professor Fearghal McGarry is Professor of Modern Irish History at Queen's University Belfast. He has written widely on twentieth-century Irish history. He is the author of *The Abbey Rebels of 1916: A Lost Revolution* (2015) and, with Richard Grayson, editor of *Remembering 1916: the Easter Rising, the Somme and the Politics of Memory in Ireland* (2016). He is currently leading a major AHRC-funded project, *A Global History of Irish Revolution, 1916-23*, which explores how the Irish republican struggle for independence was shaped by, and impacted on, wider international currents. He is interested in public history and has been extensively involved in commemoration of the Decade of Centenaries including the development of An Post's GPO Witness History permanent exhibition.

Dr Éamon Phoenix is a former Principal Lecturer in History and Head of Lifelong Learning at Stranmillis University College, Queen's University Belfast. A political historian, his books include *Conflicts in the North of Ireland 1900-2000* (Four Courts Press, 2010) and *Northern Nationalism* (1994). He is a daily columnist for the Irish News and a regular broadcaster and commentator. He is a member of the Taoiseach's Expert Advisory Group on Centenaries.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE

This conference is organised by Universities Ireland, the network of university presidents and vice-chancellors from Ireland and Northern Ireland founded in 2003. Universities Ireland runs North-South scholarship schemes (including one for PhD students working in the 1912-1923 period); links

Irish universities with their counterparts in Britain and Africa; supports persecuted scholars from countries where freedom of expression and inquiry is under threat; and undertakes a number of other initiatives to bring Irish and Northern Irish universities closer together. It is managed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies.

The Universities Ireland Historians Group was started in 2011. This conference is the seventh in a series of annual conferences that will continue until 2023, and is part of a multi-annual programme of activities led by the Universities Ireland Historians Group to reflect on the 1912-1923 period in Irish history. The aim is that this will be a scholarly and sustained initiative, and thus a unique contribution to reflection on a decade of history-changing events by the island's intellectual leaders, the 10 universities (and, in particular, their Departments of History). The programme includes research scholarships for young historians; lobbying British and Irish museums and archives to enhance access to key historical materials from the period; collaborative history teaching initiatives, and joint conferences and seminars.

Following on from last year's 'Propaganda and Mobilisation' conference, the focus of this year's session is the post-war general election of December 1918. This was one of the most important events in Ireland's modern history. Constitutional nationalism was swept away by the reborn republicanism of Sinn Féin in three of Ireland's four provinces. It was not, however, an unvarnished triumph for the more radical Irish nationalism forged by Easter 1916 and the conscription crisis of 1918. The unionist position in North-East Ulster was further entrenched and the outlines of a future partitioned island became apparent from the electoral map.

While the revolutionary outcomes of the election have dominated historical analysis, it was also the most democratic election seen in Ireland up to that point. For the first time all men could vote, as could most women over 30 years of age. The electorate swelled from 800,000 to two million voters, providing a unique opportunity for radical political change.

The aim of this conference is to explore both the high politics of the moment and its wider social context. Why did Sinn Féin triumph? How did the enfranchisement of women shape the election and the status of women in society? How did unionists and Britain respond to the republican challenge? How was the election shaped by local and global concerns during a period of rapid revolutionary change?

CONTACTS

The Secretary of Universities Ireland is **Ruth Taillon** and its Administrator is **Eimear Donnelly**. They can be contacted at the **Centre for Cross Border Studies**, 39 Abbey Street, Armagh BT61 7EB.

Tel: 028 (048 from Republic of Ireland) 3751 5292

E-mails: r.taillon@qub.ac.uk and eimear.donnelly@qub.ac.uk

Websites: www.universitiesireland.ie and www.crossborder.ie