

of McGarty, who concludes that, despite the significant and fundamental political change that took place in Leitrim during the Irish Revolution, there ‘was little alteration in the structure of society’.

Both books, as characteristic of the wider Irish Revolution series by Four Courts Press, are well-structured, providing a clear narrative of events between 1912 and 1923. That narrative is interspersed with frequent digressions during which particular aspects of each county’s history are analysed. Taken together, the books give a voice to a couple of the quiet counties and make a valuable addition to the historiography of the Irish Revolution.

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BIRTH OF A STATE: THE ANGLO-IRISH TREATY. By Mícheál Ó Fathartaigh and Liam Weeks. Pp 272. Dublin: Irish Academic Press. 2021. €19.95.

The decade of centenaries is moving toward its final stages. With various events reaching their one hundredth year it is to be expected that the fresh contributions relevant to those events are released from the presses. Ó Fathartaigh and Weeks’s comprehensive account of the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations and deliberations, one hundred years subsequent to its signing, provides a timely contribution to the scholarship on this crucial document which was foundational for the Irish state.

In six chapters both authors explore the multitude of responses to their introductory enquiry as to why the Treaty itself has received such scant analytical treatment within historical and contemporary scholarship over the past century. As Ó Fathartaigh and Weeks concede, the Treaty, all of 1,800 words, would completely recondition the potent forces which had rendered Anglo-Irish relations so lethal for centuries. The authors’ quest for rationality in this bitterly impassioned period, spanning from December 1921 and ultimately culminating in the Civil War in June 1922, succeeds in comprehending not only the personal but also the ideological motivations of the pro- and anti-Treaty factions and the destructive spell under which the Treaty’s advocates and detractors were suddenly cast. Therefore, this is a task that could only have been undertaken with the collected distance that one century brings.

Precisely why the Treaty became the site of unending contention is a starkly obvious question — a question which has rendered disservice to the ability to understand the ideological nuances of those who advocated and criticised the Treaty settlement. Thus, the authors succeed in prying into the darkened reaches of long-neglected Treaty opinion and the extent to which such divisions within the Sinn Féin movement had lain latent since the reorganisation of the party in the wake of the 1916 Rising. The 1917 convention, billed as the commencement of Sinn Féin’s rise following the Rising, had precariously camouflaged divisions of principle in the new and advancing nationalist movement. When the Treaty was finally signed in the early hours of a foggy December London morning, those hastily concealed cracks had an outlet for emergence, between Republican ideologues and pragmatists such as Arthur Griffith, Sinn Féin’s original founder and arguably according to Virginia Glandon ‘the forgotten man of Ireland’, to whom the substance of independence took precedence over its constitutional form. The dynamics of personalities are also examined. Those personalities are not just limited as previous accounts of the events which wedged the characters of Collins and de Valera and the strategic duplicity notoriously deployed by the latter who could be said to have exhibited at best insufficient leadership qualities. Instead, the internal relations within and between the Irish and British Treaty delegations undergo thorough assessment.

Both authors also address the reception the Treaty received within the existing dominions of the British Empire and how a fledging, albeit wholly unconventional, dominion would be received by the populations of those states. The preponderant discourse on the Treaty has overlooked this broader aspect of imperial opinion, which, particularly in Australia and Canada, included significant populations of Irish descent. From the authors’ survey of dominion

opinion on the Treaty is the note of optimism which signals that the Free State — the restless dominion as it would be latterly christened — would go on to occupy an authoritative position for the advancement of a new post-war era of imperial affairs.

The year 1921 was and remains something of a quintessentially complex and contested year for Ireland's affairs. The Government of Ireland Act had been in place since the latter part of 1920 and the apparatus of the new Northern Ireland was being fashioned into being. The southern twenty-six Irish counties remained in a state of war. The British government had set upon negotiation within the spring of 1921 with Sinn Féin, the grouping Lloyd George the substance had derisively dismissed as a murder gang. The Anglo-Irish Treaty, granting the southern portion of Ireland self-governing dominion status within the British Empire, has rightly been viewed through the lens of being the second Irish settlement. The Ulster question had been set to one side and although far from certain for all sects of Irish political opinion — nationalist, republican or unionist, north or south — the British establishment was confident partition would remain for the foreseeable.

Ó Fathartaigh and Weeks interrogate the ambiguity which has hitherto been inherent in the Treaty's negotiation, scope and effects. The Anglo-Irish Treaty represented one of several initiatives to address the issues which had for so long divided Ireland. With disparate political actors in the frame then and now courtesy of the Good Friday Agreement, Ireland's future path remains to be settled. In their reappraisal of this turbulent yet crucial period in Ireland's history the authors remind readers that it will be the art of diplomacy alone which will ultimately decide Ireland's future. Although the signing of the Treaty does not represent a national day of celebration in Ireland, which one might expect it to be, importantly both authors stress the central proposition that the Treaty presented the basis for Ireland's first substantive independence — an independence which it has successfully preserved and guarded for one hundred years.

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HAUGHEY. By Gary Murphy. Pp.716. Dublin: Gill Books. 2021. £25.99/€27.99.

In 2009 the family of Charles Haughey, who died in 2006, donated his private papers to Dublin City University (D.C.U.). The destination was a natural fit not only because it was only a mile and a half away from Haughey's childhood home in Belton Park off Collins Avenue. But no doubt it may have seemed a more likely home than his alma mater across the city, University College Dublin, which — not withstanding its guardianship of the papers of Eamon de Valera and of the Fianna Fáil — was always more closely identified with Fine Gael and Garret FitzGerald who was a contemporary of Haughey when they were undergraduates in the 1940s. FitzGerald, of course, taught there afterwards and remained an integral part of the Dublin 4 establishment.

FitzGerald's accessibility, even ubiquity, was sharply at odds with the man who sat opposite him as taoiseach and leader of the opposition during the 1980s. In contrast, Charles Haughey, who died in 2006, remained more aloof in his retirement. Though not entirely unforthcoming to those who sought him out — he facilitated several scholars with interviews on certain subjects — he was not prone to volunteering his views unsolicited and there were several areas on which he would not speak to anyone. Unfortunately, these were usually the matters about which people were most curious: first, among them the arms crisis of 1970 when Haughey, then minister for finance, was accused of illegally importing arms for the use of northern nationalists. He was sacked from the government, brought to trial twice and, though ultimately acquitted, the allegations stuck to him thereafter.

Another factor in his reticence to speak to researchers or journalists, as Gary Murphy notes towards the end of his exhaustive scholarly biography of Haughey, was the inevitability with which attention would turn to financial matters. Speculation over how he funded his