

THE BATTLE OF KINSALE: STUDY AND DOCUMENTS FROM THE SPANISH ARCHIVES. Edited by Enrique García Hernán, Pp xviii, 737, illus. Valencia: Albatros Ediciones. 2009. €50.

The Battle of Kinsale has gone down in history as the decisive showdown of the Anglo-Irish Nine Years War, bringing about a conclusive victory of the English at the expense of the confederate Irish and Spanish forces, and leading to far-reaching consequences for the future make-up of Irish demography, politics, society and culture. Until recently, historians interested in the triangular relationship between the English, the Spaniards, and the Irish rebels, during this time, have largely relied on the incomplete and abridged versions of the original documents as they have been published in the *Calendars of State Papers*. Accordingly, the great achievement of García Hernán's new book is to publish for the first time Spanish documents that have been previously glossed over, if not completely discarded for their supposed marginality, by both Irish and Spanish scholars. These documents were collected from four repositories: the Archivo General de Simancas (which provides the greatest bulk of the documentation), the Archivo Histórico Nacional, the Real Academia de la Historia, and the Instituto Velencia de Don Juan.

The book contains a study by García Hernán, giving a contextual background to the Battle of Kinsale and explaining the wider significance of the documental collection, the original 610 documents, and some maps and illustrations. One point of criticism, in this respect, regards the editorial choice of having the introductory study translated and published in English, which presumably also justifies the book's English title. One can only assume that this is an attempt to appeal to an international readership. However, failing to translate the most important and voluminous part of the book – the original Spanish documents – seems to contradict that purpose. That being said, this should not detract from the great merits of this publication.

García Hernán's thorough study makes extensive use of the collections' documents in order to emphasise their importance in casting new light on the events that surround the Spanish intervention in Ireland. He starts by trailing the origins of the battle to the Spanish survivors of the failed Armada campaign of 1588, who remained in Ireland to serve two local nobles, and future collaborators – Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell. The study goes on to illustrate the solid alliance formed between the Spaniards and the Irish rebels, starting from the first formal contact in 1593, during Philip II's time, down to Philip III's decision to embark on a full military operation early in 1601. The study then describes how in the next few months the Spaniards went on to appoint the various officers for the mission, to draft the troops, and to gather supplies and ammunition. The Spanish Armada of twenty-five ships, led by Don Juan de Águila and Don Diego Brochero, eventually landed at Kinsale on 1 October 1601. García Hernán goes on to explore the reasons for choosing Kinsale as the landing location, as well as to evaluate the consequences of this choice. Indeed, when the Irish confederates heard of the landing destination they voiced their displeasure about Juan de Águila's positioning, estimating it to be enemy territory, where little collaboration with friendly allies could be expected, and explained their difficulty in joining forces there. This was corroborated by Águila's complaints of the precarious conditions in which the Spaniards found themselves after their landing, without enough food and warm clothes for the Irish winter (although García Hernán warns us to take Águila's complaints with a pinch of salt, since alternative documentation seems to indicate that his situation was not as bad as he claimed it to be). In fact, little relief would be provided by the local population owing to the terrorising tactics of the English troops, which succeeded in discouraging them from collaborating with the Spaniards. The subsequent English siege proved to be too much for the Spaniards, and Águila capitulated at the beginning of 1601. Nevertheless, García Hernán points out that Philip III did not give up on his Irish project, planning to send, somewhat substantive, relief forces to Águila in the following months, with the hopes of reversing the situation in Spain's favour. Ultimately, though, the subsequent effort concentrated on returning as many troops and victuals back home, as well as supporting the Irish exiles who made their way

to Spain in the aftermath of the failed campaign. Except for a few typos – collaborated instead of corroborated (p. 29), coronel instead of colonel (p. 37) – this fine essay succeeds very well indeed in arguing for the importance of the documental collection that follows.

As for the documents themselves, these are ordered chronologically, starting from the first contacts between the Irish and the Spaniards in 1593 (p. 43 ff.), to 1605 with the last reports concerning the return of the troops and munitions from Ireland (pp 576–664). The great majority of the documents concentrate on the military, political, and material realities related to the Spanish intervention. Indeed, owing to the meticulous descriptions of Spanish administrators in charge of supplies and ammunition it is possible to learn in great detail about the military and humanitarian aid envisaged by the Spaniards for their Irish allies. An illuminating set of documents are those gathered by a secret commission established by Philip III, and entrusted to the Council of War, to learn the causes of defeat at Kinsale (e.g. see pp 564–7). The great amount of material unearthed by this investigation opens a window into the various military phases of the campaign, as well as allowing a rare glimpse into the auto-critical mechanisms of early modern regimes.

The present book will go a long way in debunking some misconceptions related to the Spanish strategy, leadership, and planning, and most importantly, the amount of effort and commitment on behalf of the Spanish side, which proves to be considerably greater than has been thought until now. This book will be of interest not only to students and scholars of early modern Spain and Ireland, but also to specialists in military history and imperial history.

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ULSTER SINCE 1600: POLITICS, ECONOMY, SOCIETY. Edited by Liam Kennedy and Philip Ollerenshaw. Pp xv, 355. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013. £35 hardback.

In 1985 Manchester University Press published Liam Kennedy and Philip Ollerenshaw's *Economic history of Ulster, 1820–1939* to great scholarly acclaim. The reception was deserved and understandable: interest in Northern Ireland, in the era of the hunger-strikes and the Anglo–Irish Agreement, was immense, and the concomitant – and burgeoning – literature was as yet heavily skewed towards politics. Kennedy and Ollerenshaw's edited collection offered a set of new and refreshing takes on an area which (for all the wrong reasons) was under global scrutiny.

After nearly thirty years the two scholars have now revisited their earlier collaboration, and have co-edited a new general history of the northern province. How does this new work compare with the old? The 'shock of the new' which was achieved in 1985 is of course harder to replicate in the context of a much more developed – a larger and thematically more sophisticated – historiography. The impact of the earlier volume was also consolidated by a tight conceptual and chronological focus: this was indeed largely an economic history, though with some social dimensions; and it was anchored in the century and a quarter between Waterloo and the beginning of the Second World War. Kennedy and Ollerenshaw's new collection is markedly more ambitious than its predecessor, offering a much wider chronology, and a more generous thematic embrace. This is a work which addresses 'politics' and 'society' as well as the 'economy', and which seeks to provide a coverage from the era of intensive colonisation in the early seventeenth century through to the present day. There are some echoes of an older historiography, which were not present with the 1985 collection: indeed the title evokes the earlier effort (in the 1950s) to examine the northern province undertaken by J. C. Beckett and T. W. Moody through the media of print and radio (*Ulster since 1800: a political and economic survey* (1954) and *Ulster since 1800: a social survey* (1957)).