

HISTORIOGRAPHER'S REPORT 2023

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Covid 19 had an unprecedented impact on historical writing as scholars found so many of their sources inaccessible. This did not, however, prevent the preparation of at least two major works of importance for students of Church of Ireland history. 2023 saw the launching in Dublin and Armagh of Michael O'Neill's *An architectural history of the Church of Ireland* (Church of Ireland Publishing) which, in the author's words, is a study 'which attempts to use the documentary sources created by the Church of Ireland over several centuries to provide an outline of the architectural and artistic inheritance of the institution'.

Another aspect of the Church's history is promised for later in the year when Four Courts Press brings out *The Church of Ireland under the Stuarts* (ed. Patrick Little, an assistant editor of the History of Parliament Trust, London). The publishers say that the 'long eighteenth century was a time of enormous religious and political change in Ireland, but that there has never been a satisfactory study of the Church of Ireland throughout this turbulent period and that this book fills the gap. Alan Ford writes on Trinity College, Dublin, from its foundation to mid-seventeenth century, Mark Empey tackles 'Manuscripts, history and the Protestant community', Raymond Gillespie discusses an aspect of parochial life in Restoration Dublin and Kerry Houston gives an account of cathedral musicians in seventeenth-century Ireland. The breadth of interest in the Church's history is shown by the inclusion of contributors from Oxford (Toby Barnard), Liam O'Rourke (Trinity College, Dublin), Joan Redmond (King's College, London) John McClafferty (University College, Dublin), Joel Halcomb (University of East Anglia), Coleman Dennehy (Dundalk Institute of Technology) and Jessica Cunningham (an independent scholar).

The Established Church of Ireland inevitably occurs in Mary Ann Lyons & Brian Mac Cuarta SJ (eds.) *The Jesuit mission in Early Modern Ireland, 1560-1760* (Four Courts Press) as it does in Thomas J. Morrissey's *Irish Jesuits in penal times 1695-1811* (Messenger Publications).

Historians were aware that the latter years of the Decade of Centenaries, encompassing as they did the establishment of devolved government in Northern Ireland and the eruption of civil war in the Irish Free State posed problems, but those readers who sought guidance and comments on the events of those momentous years could find considerable help in the publication by the Historical Centenaries Working Group of its bibliographical guide *Divided states: Irish independence and its aftermath 1918-1923*. Many Church of Ireland families figure in Terence Dooley's *Burning the big house: the story of the Irish country house in a time of war and rebellion* (Yale).

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In the local history sector, Canon David Crooks (whose work has been appreciatively noted by researchers on Irish religious censuses) has produced clerical, baptismal and burial lists for the parish of Cloncha (diocese of Raphoe).

On a more contemporary note, the latest volume of the Braemor Studies series has been produced. The author of Braemor Studies Vol 14 is Andrew Hay and the study is entitled *Discipling on Church Street*.

I am again grateful to the Representative Church Body Library for its assistance. Its online accession lists, like those of the Royal Irish Academy, are of enormous assistance, not least where local histories are concerned. The book reviews carried by *Search*, a *Church of Ireland Journal*, (Reviews Editor, Dr Raymond Refaussé), ensures coverage of books of historical interest.

Canon Dr Kenneth Milne