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Coláiste Náisiúnta
Ealaíne is Deartha

POLITICAL PROCLAMATIONS

And Their Derivitives

in

IRELAND

1898—1948

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of History of Art and Design and Complementary Studies, in candidacy for the Degree in Bachelor of Design, Faculty of Design, Department of Visual Communications, in March, *1988*.

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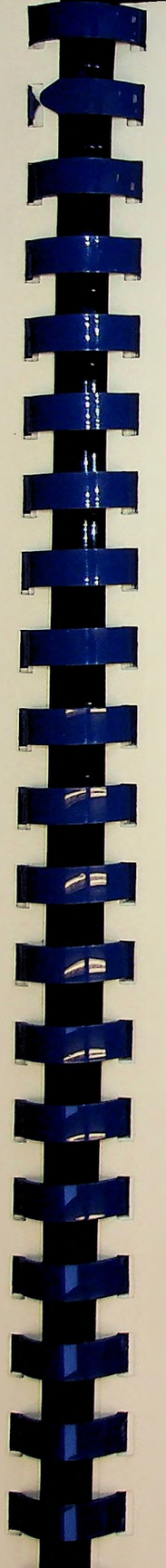

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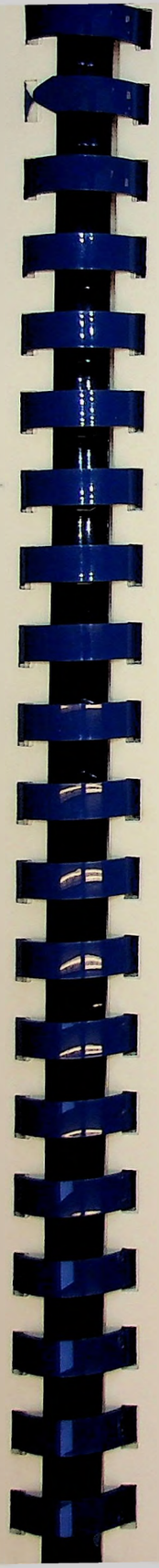


POLITICAL PROCLAMATIONS, AND THEIR DERIVITIVES IN IRELAND 1898-1948

INTRODUCTION

In 1898 the celebration of the centenary of Robert Emmet's ill-fated rebellion added considerable impetus to the revival of nationalism and republicanism in Ireland. Exactly fifty years later the government of the Irish Free State declared Ireland a republic - the cause for which Emmet had died. That half-century was the country's most intense period of political turmoil and consequently it was also an era of intense political propaganda with numerous politically motivated organisations attempting to win general public acceptance for their various causes, either by praise of their cause itself, or by vilification of its alternatives. Neither of these two fundamental propaganda techniques were necessarily respectful of truth, reason, or the human intellect. During the period which will be covered in this thesis propaganda from the different interest groups spread through the various forms of printed media, through the spoken word, and in latter years through radio. The effectiveness of the propaganda of particular newspapers and books has been studied by historians, but other forms of the print media have been largely forgotten. In terms of their value as part of Ireland's visual heritage the printed ephemera of past political struggles has been ignored by historians of Irish art and design. This thesis examines a popular genre of Irish printed political propaganda which evolved considerably during the fifty years following Emmet's centenary, ie, the proclamations, and the many styles of posters and handbills which derived from them. Produced at a time when Irish nationalists were striving to establish a new united independent nation, they reflect not just the concern of the many parties involved, but a long and lively tradition of skilled printing in Ireland.

The printed proclamation is the earliest form of mass-produced political propaganda. From it evolved less formal posters and handbills which essentially remain a form of proclamation because their function is to publicly proclaim their message. They are a visual by-product of history and as such are an important part of a nation's visual heritage.

Only four archives in Ireland have collections of proclamations, all of which are rather meagre, poorly catalogued, often in poor condition, and badly preserved. Trade unions and political parties also have collections of posters etc, which they published, but these tend to be extremely modest and incomplete.

The aims of this thesis are:

(1) To define the tradition from which these printed items evolved.

(2) To define the context and evaluate the efficacy of these items, within the period covered.

(3) To trace the evolution of format and style from the original proclamations to its derivitives.

(4) To assess their value as part of our visual heritage.

(5) To shed some light on this largely forgotten genre of Irish design.

The objectives of this thesis are:

(1) To trace the history of proclamations, with specific emphasis on Ireland, and demonstrate their use as a political device up to 1898.

(2) To identify the interest groups that used proclamations (and their derivitives) between 1898 and 1948, and examine how they used them and their reasons for so doing.

(3) To examine factors that influenced design and production, ie:

i) technology - the print workshops, how they were organised, and the printing processes they used,

ii) tradition - design formats and styles of text that were slow to change, and the political slogan,

iii) innovations - large wooden poster types, colour printing, illustrated posters, photography, and foreign design influences,

and to show how new design formats became popular, and how traditional formats continued nonetheless.

(4) To highlight characteristics which are peculiar to Irish proclamations and their derivitives, to show how they have reflected Irish culture and history, and to identify the most successful solutions.

CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PRINTING OF PROCLAMATIONS IN IRELAND UP TO 1898

PART ONE : THE ORIGINS OF THE PROCLAMATION

Aristotle defined "politics" as the art of controlling and reconciling diverse interests within a state. Since then few definitions which have attempted to encapsulate the concept have neglected the relevance of "interest-groups" which reflect interests and divisions in the community and express the aspirations and demands of their members. Interest-groups make claims and defend privileges against the claims of others. Their function is essentially to promote their own aims and conserve their own interests. To do this effectively they must have a good system of communication channels through which they can communicate not only with their own members but also with those whom they wish to influence.

Since 13 October 1517 the publicly displayed proclamation has become one of the most popular forms of political communication. On that date Martin Luther, Professor of Biblical Literature of Wittenberg University nailed his 95 points of dissent from the teachings of the Church to the door of Wittenberg Castle church. Although a single handwritten notice, its significance here lies in the fact that it is the earliest recorded publicly displayed propaganda announcement. Luther charged that the money received from the sale of indulgences was going to Rome for the building of a new basilica for St. Peter's.

From the time that writing was first developed as an instrument of communication, it was used by those in power as a symbol of their authority. Important events such as the making of laws or declarations of war, were

made official by the very act of being written down and stamped with the "official" seal. In European feudal society news of such events was usually communicated by messengers who carried hand written (and later, printed) copies of the original document to read aloud at public gatherings. In England these documents were called "proclamations" and the hand written format is still used today by the British monarchy to make things "official". Figure 1 shows the proclamation of the abdication of Edward VIII in 1936, (the official seal is on a separate attached sheet, not shown in Figure 1, with many more signatures).

Whether or not Luther's document began this genre of publicly displayed propaganda is unclear, but throughout the following century the posting of proclamations, became more and more common in Europe, as the medium gladly married into the revolutionary technology that would ensure its survival for centuries - ie, printing with moeveable type. From their debut both the proclamation and the printing press were immediately associated with those who held positions of power. Indeed the skill of literacy was in itself an indication of high office during the sixteenth century. The art of writing was the private skill of a powerful minority of religious leaders and lay aristocracy. It was logical for the ordinary people to equate the skill with the power that went with it. To the common people the printed proclamation was a kind of visible extension of the ruler, to the ruler it was a means of mass producing his authority. In Luther's time the Catholic Church was the strongest political interest group in all of Europe. Its laws were enforced in every state and, much to Luther's disgust, its methods of taxation were equally pervasive. It was mainly through the Church that literacy had survived the turmoil of the Dark Ages, and in the Middle Ages literacy was very much associated with religion. The profound effect of the printed word has survived to the present day as is well illustrated by the common phrase, "I saw it in black and white". To the illiterate in the days of the early printed

proclamations it must have been quite magical, perhaps even divine. To rebel against public demands made through proclamations was a useful instrument of public control.

Johannes Guttenberg (1398-1468) a goldsmith from Mainz, invented a method of printing with movable type circa 1440. Considering the pace of progress in the fifteenth century, printing spread rapidly. It had established itself in nine countries on the European mainland by 1476 when it was brought to England by William Caxton (b.1422). The inherent political power of the printed word had been well demonstrated in England by 1550 when King Edward the VI sent one Humphrey Powell to establish a printing press in Dublin to serve his representatives there. Powell had worked as a printer in London from 1548-49 and McClintock Dix states that in the 3rd volume of the Acts of the Privy Council of England a warrant is issued "unto Powell the printer given him by the King's Majestie towardes his setting up in Irelande", dated 18th July, 1550. This was more than a century since Guttenberg's invention.

The written word had thrived in Ireland since the coming of christianity, and as elsewhere it had been inextricably linked to the Church, as virtually all writing was related to religious affairs. Although early printers were very much aware of the common esteem for the written word, and took great pains to make type that would resemble the letters of a skilled scribe, the letter forms used by Powell would have been alien to the Gaelic Irish of that time. Powell's "black letter" or "gothic" typefaces were of Northern-European origin (Dutch or German), while the letterforms of the Irish scribes had evolved into a local style from the Roman manuscript style. Nevertheless, in 1550 the English language was established in most Irish towns, and while the Gaelic language was dominant over most of the country many native Irish aristocrats were literate in English. It is quite significant that Powell's first

assignment was not to print a proclamation, but a "Book of Common Prayer" (1551). That the first use of the printing press in Ireland was aimed at establishing an alternative religion, demonstrates that the crucial political implications of religion were well known to the aristocracy of the sixteenth century.

The earliest record of a printed proclamation in Ireland is some eleven years after Powell's arrival. On the 8th June 1561, (under the reign of Queen Mary), the Earl of Sussex, Lord Lieutenant General of Ireland, had Powell print "A PROCLAMACYON" against Shane O'Neill, one of the most colourful leaders of the Gaelic-Irish, (Fig. 2). It shows Powell to have been an excellent exponent of his craft, setting high standards for those who would continue after him.

The standard of the design and printing of a proclamation was most important because the appearance of the work greatly affected its air of authority. In Figure 2 the authority of the Queen is clearly symbolised by her seal of office and reinforced by adding the names of twenty-six of her representatives. Even Powell's own name adds to the officiousness. Another factor is the use of rather laboured and always stern language, the purpose of which was to command respect. In outlawing Shane O'Neill the Lord Lieutenant describes him as a "presumtuous, arrogant felonious, rebellious, and traitorous" person.

Only two other proclamations were known to have been printed in Ireland in the sixteenth century. The first of these is dated 16th August 1564, and was issued by the Lord Justice of Ireland against the rebellious O'Connors, and the second from 1595 was issued by Queen Elizabeth herself "against the Earl of Tyrone and his adherents in Ulster". It is most unlikely that these were the only proclamations published in Ireland in the sixteenth century,

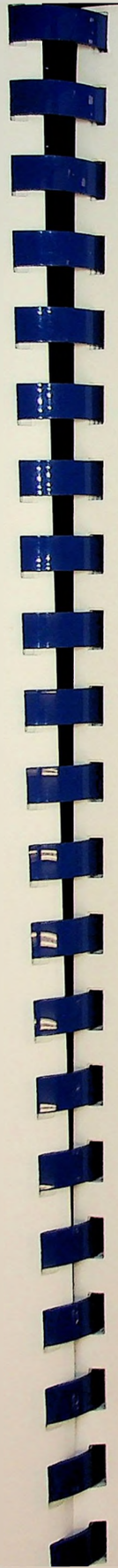
but as few records have survived from that period it is impossible to say how frequently the device was used. A few more proclamations of a similar vein were printed during the early decades of the seventeenth century. Two of these were printed in Kilkenny, where the second printing press was established in Ireland. From 1649 onwards however, proclamations were definitely quite common. On the 23rd August of that year Oliver Cromwell issued a proclamation calling on the mayor of Dublin and other civic officials to enforce laws "against offences to God's will". This was the first of a steady stream of governmental proclamations aimed at the implementation of a variety of Puritan Statutes historically referred to as the Penal Laws. Due to the hardship and discrimination suffred under these laws, consciousness of social class and traditional rivalries reduced considerably amongst Catholics, and by the end of the eighteenth century events in France and America had sewn the seeds of nationalism and republicanism in Ireland. Unsuccessful rebellions in 1798, 1848 and 1967 were followed with proclamations offering rewards for information which would lead to the arrest of rebel leaders. 1929 is seen as the date that marks the end of the Penal Laws with Daniel O'Connell becoming the first catholic to secure entry to parliament at Westminster. With many catholics seeking election from that date onwards, the competition they posed to the protestant ascendancy who had held power in Ireland since Cromwell, resulted in keenly fought elections with both factions issuing proclamations and elections posters (which up to the late 1800's remained close in style to the old proclamation format). By 1885 it was clear that the vast majority of catholics and some Irish protestants also, were not in favour of being governed from England. In that year the Irish Parliamentary Party, which sought Home Rule, (ie an Irish government based in Dublin) held 80% of all Irish seats at Westminster. Another Irish group which issued a great number of proclamations towards the end of the nineteenth century was the Land League, a small-farmer's

organisation founded in 1879, whose aim is summed up in the slogan - "the land of Ireland for the people of Ireland", which commonly appeared on their proclamations. It is also from Land League proclamations which espoused the tactic of non-cooperation with farmers who leased land from which another farmer had been evicted, that the word Boycott was added to the English language. Throughout the 1870's and 1880's the British authorities in Ireland issued proclamations announcing emergency laws and offering rewards in an effort to subdue the wave of violence which resulted from a growing militancy amongst the Irish peasantry. Though neither the Land League nor the Parliamentary Party favoured any use of violence to achieve their aims, many Irish people believed that the ideas which they had so successfully popularized in Ireland, (ie, self-government and land ownership for farmers), could only be achieved through physical force. This view had led to the formation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1856, a secret oath-bound society dedicated to armed revolution. Much rural violence and many unsigned proclamations threatening violence, were due to IRB infiltration in the Land League. Understandably the Irish protestant population feared the prospect of being governed by a catholic majority Dublin parliament. Many proclamations issued by protestant groups carried the slogan "Home Rule is Rome Rule", during the 1880's and 1890's, and into the twentieth century. In 1886 the Conservative Party began their policy of "killing Home Rule with kindness". The economic prosperity that resulted from the many reforms and social improvements brought about by that policy, coupled with the collapse of the Parliamentary Party (caused by a scandal over a divorce case involving the party leader, C.S. Parnell, in 1890), created a climate of general political stability in Ireland during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Thus during this period, the printing of political propaganda (other than in the form of occasional books and newspaper and magazine articles, which are outside the scope of this study), tended mainly

to occur at election times in the form of posters and handbills.

Political proclamations, from the very first, were used in Ireland as a means of communicating messages which were essentially political. Their use as a means of public control is most obvious in proclamations issued through the British government, (especially during the Penal Laws), as public control is a major aspect of maintaining power. The representatives of the crown in Ireland continued to used proclamation for this purpose throughout the nineteenth century. When opposition to British rule made itself heard through the medium of the parliamentary system with the lifting of the Penal Laws, it gave rise to a constant flow of proclamations, posters and handbills, from various groups dissatisfied with their lot under British government. These proclamations were likewise aimed at public control for they demanded acceptance of the message they carried and often threatened repercussions on anyone who did not act in accordance with them. So too did the proclamations issued by interest groups worried by the prospect of catholic government equally hoped to succeed as instruments of public control.

Obviously with proclamations being commonly used by a variety of political interest groups by the 1890's, the use of the printing press had become quite widespread throughout Ireland. In fact by this time there was a printer in almost every town in Ireland. The drastic reduction of the population in Ireland after the famine in 1845-46, coupled with the general prosperity of the British Empire and the policy of "killing Home Rule with kindness" had led to considerable prosperity in many parts of Ireland by the 1890's. A noticeable result of this prosperity according to historian Eamonn MacTomais was that there were more comics and papers written and printed in Dublin at that time, than in London. He refers to the



Thomas Directory (a catalogue of British periodicals) published in 1917, which lists more than 127 Dublin papers and pamphlets covering "every aspect of life and religion" during the 1880's and 90's. The main stay of a printer's income, especially in small towns, wasearned from printing a weekly technological progress since Powell.* This income was supplemented by order for posters, handbills, tickets for social events and such like. Obviously with so much printing taking place the level of literacy was generally high and with the popularity of newspapers and other periodicals it is obvious that the printed word had a considerable social significance. With the lifting of the Penal Laws, publishers suffered relatively few restrictions under British law, and many newspapers representing various political interest groups in Ireland tended to cover political issues in great detail. Through the printing of proclamations, newspapers and other related media, the printing press (since its introduction in 1550) had become a political device of major importance in Ireland by the end of the nineteenth century. These were good conditions for which printed propaganda could flourish.

* The technological progress in printing relvant to this study are discussed in later chapters.

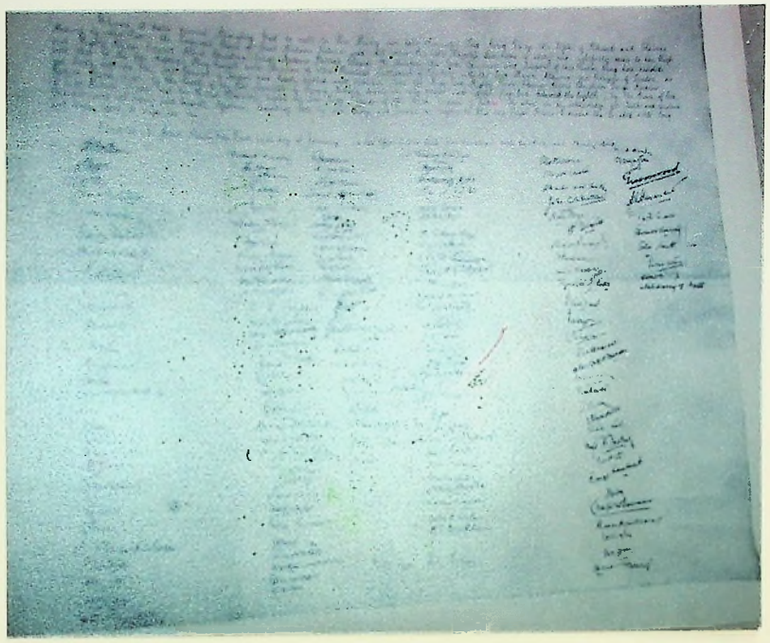


Fig. 1

A PROCLAMACYON

Set fourth by the Ryght Honorable Erle of Sussex Lord Leutenant Generall of the Quenes Maiesties Realme of Jerland, with thassent, and consent, of the Nobelytie, and Counsell, of the same Realme.

THE Quenes most excelent maiestie, calling to remembrance the presompteuos, arrgant, fellonios, rebelliōs, & trayterōs, deads of Shan Onell, since the first coming into this Realme of Therle of Sussex her highnes lord Leutenāt general of this Realme, and how smal effect, her gentil fauorable and mercyful dealyng with him hath wrought in his cankerd & trayterōs stomake, hath therfore thought good to open to her good and loueing subiects, the some aswell of her gratius & mercyful proceding with him to reduce him to the acknowleging of the true obedience & dutie of a faythful subiect, as also of his arrogāt false & trayterous deuises, cōspiracis, enterprisis, & facts to the subuerting of the vniuersal quiet of this Realme, the disturbance of all her maiesties good and faithfull subiects, and the great parrell and daūger of her maiesties Royall estate, Dignitie, & Crowne, of this Realm, contrary to his dutie to almightie god and his allegance to his soueraine Lady the Quene.

Fyrst apon an Hostyng called and a Jorney made by her maiesties said Leutenāt, Anno 1556
agaynst James mac Connell and his Brethern, forren enemys then reputed: Shane dyd not only refuse to repayre to her maiesties said Leutenāt, but also falsly & trayterously dyd with all his force & power of men of warre repayer to James mac Connell conspiring & combyning with him agaynst our late soueraine Lady Quene mary, and therin persisted so fare as he most vnnaturally & traiterusly Joyned in battell with the said Jamis (then an opē enemy) agaynst her maiesties said Liuetenānt & the Nobylitie of this Realm then assembled with him, and the same fight out til god geuing the victory he was forced to flight, at the retorn of her maiestis said Leutenānt & humble sute made by shanne for his pardon with his promise & othe openly taken to be a true and faithfull

abuse and wrast hyr clemencie so ofte shewed to hym in respecte of the quiet of hir good subiectes to sarue to his dyuelishe pourpose in getting of tyme, the rather to plage and disstroye them, hir highnes as forced therto and as the last remedye hath thought it nessessary to vse the sharp scorge of hir swords and iustice to ponyshe his faulse and trayterous desertes whoes wicked dysease will not be cured with any, gentell medesin: And therfore hir highnes doth by this hir proclamacion publish, pronounce and proclayme Shane Onele to be a ryotus and fellonious disturber of the vnyuersall quiet of this Realme & the subiects in the same, and a faulse permred sedisious and parnicious conspirer, rebell, and traitor aganst hir Maiestie, and hir Royall Crowne of this Realme, and doth also publyshe all others to be traytors in like sort that after knowldge of the proclayminge herof shall ad here vnto him or by any means, aide mayntayn, succor or support hun or any of those that shal ad here to him, and so doth aduise all hir good and faythfull subiects that by hys tyranye hath benne forcebly orawne to hym, to refuse and forsake hym as a faulse, arrogant, and detestable traytor and to adhere to hir Maiestye and truly e and faythfully to sarue hir as they tender hir Maiestys grace and fauour, and will ouoyde the ponishment that in contrarye doynge dothe by the lawes of thys Realme to suche offendors belonge and apparteyne.

GOD SAUE THE QUENE.

H. D. Cancell.	T. Ormōd. & Ossery.	Gerrald, Desmond.	Jenic. Vic. Gormāston
Rowland. Baltiglas.	Richard. Montgaret.	James. Slane.	Christofer. Donsany.
P. B. of Trymlettestō.	James. Kylline.	Christofer. Houthe	John. Curraughmore
W. Fitz. Wyllams.	Henry. Radeclif.	George. Stanley.	Jaques. Wyngfyld.
John. Plonket.	Robart. Dillon	Jamis. Bath.	John. Parker.
Thomas. Cusake.	John. Trauers.	Fraunces. Harbart.	Fraunces. Agard.
Humfrey. Warne.	John. Challoner.		

Imprynted in Dublyn, by Humfrey, Powell.

Fig. 2.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL INTREST-GROUPS THAT USED PROCLAMATIONS AND THEIR DERIVITIVES IN IRELAND, 1898-1948.

It would be incorrect to attempt an overall assessment of any print genre either in terms of design and production merits and demerits or in terms of its value as part of a national heritage, without examining its products in the context of (i) the purposes for which they were produced, and (ii) the social and historical conditions surrounding their production. Both contexts are inter-related and in the case of this study they form the fabric of the most complex and unstable period of Irish history. Thus an insight into the motives for the publishing of the propaganda which will be examined here can only be obtained through knowledge of the aims and objectives of the interest-groups that published them, and an awareness of the historical background from which the interest-groups emerged.

From a broad perspective of political thought prevalent in Ireland from 1898 to 1948, one sees three basic political outlooks:

(i) Unionism, Unionists supported British rule in Ireland, and held the view that prosperity in Ireland would always be dependant upon the union with Britain.

(ii) Nationalism. Nationalists sought self-determination through parliamentary means.

(iii) Republicanism. Republicans advocated complete independence from Britain to be achieved through physical force if necessary.

Essentially each of these outlook espouses democracy (ie. literally, government by the people as a whole rather than by any section, class, or interest-group within it), as

the ideal form of government. In Ireland the theory of democracy has proved immensely complicated, partly because of difficulties in understanding who "the people" are and which acts of government are truly theirs.

Unionists believed that democratic freedom could only exist for them so long as "the people" meant the inhabitants of the "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland". Over most of Ireland Unionists were landlords, merchants, and members of the middle class and were a tiny minority. Most of them were protestant. The "Kullucan and Kinnegad Parish Almanack, 1916" (Fig. 3) though one of the last examples of overt unionist propaganda in the south of Ireland, demonstrates the strong link, between protestantism and the merchant class, with unionism. Included with an address from the local Church of Ireland clergyman and advertisements from local businesses are most prominently displayed two photographs of leaders of the British military campaigns during the Great War. Unionists were strongest in Ulster, where they included farmers, labourers and factory workers, and made up about half the population. Ulster unionists not only feared "Rome Rule", but feared also for their linen and shipbuilding industries which depended upon British patronage. In 1912 Ulster unionists, alarmed at the strong possibility that a Dublin government would be established by 1914, signed "Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant" (Fig. 4). Through it each signatory publicly proclaimed to use "all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule parliament in Ireland". The format of this is strikingly close the 1561 proclamation against Shane O'Neill (on whose lands many of their ancestors had settled). Perhaps this proclamation, more than any other, demonstrates the social and political power which can be generated through this genre of propaganda. Over 400,000 unionists signed it, many in their own blood. Through the "Orange Order" in Ulster and the "Irish Unionist Alliance" in the rest

of Ireland, unionists were well organised into many local and regional clubs. Thus they did not need to communicate their political views to each other through posters or handbills to the same extent as other Irish political factions. After the 1895 election when unionists won just one seat outside of Ulster (ie. Dublin University) they decided not to waste their considerable funds for propaganda on convincing catholics of the virtues of the Union, but as F.S.C. Lyons puts it, on "propaganda designed to persuade British voters and British politicians that the Union must be preserved". Meanwhile southern unionists sought election in British constituencies. Thus posters issued by Irish unionists represent a mere fraction of those used in Ireland during the period covered here. Nevertheless proclamations issued by the representatives of the British government in Ireland up to 1922 (when the Free State was established in the twenty six counties) can be viewed as unionist propaganda, for they were in themselves symbols of British rule in Ireland and could not exist without the Union.

The contexts of proclamations, posters, and handbills published in the name of parliamentary nationalism were often complex and changeable. They appear first in the period of this study in 1900 when John Redmond forms the Home Rule Party, the rebuilt ruins of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Redmond's party was supported by virtually everybody in Ireland, (other than unionists), up until 1918. The term "nationalism" in the context of Irish history is generally associated with the parliamentary tradition and the belief that physical force is not an acceptable method of solving Ireland's political problems. In 1915 however, the Home Rule Party feared that if Irishmen did not help Britain win the Great War, the promised Home Rule delayed by that war, might be endangered. Figure 5 shows a poster that helped recuit over 200,000 Irishmen. As the number of fatalities rose to over 60,000 before the end of the war, Irish popular opinion turned strongly against the introduction of conscription. The campaign against conscription was led by Sinn Fein, a political party founded by Arthur Griffith, (himself a printer by trade), in 1905.

His party advocated non-cooperation with Britain by simply setting up an Irish Stat without war. Figure 6 shows a poster of which over 5,000 appeared one morning, pasted to walls and telegraph poles, all over Dublin, soon after war was declared against Germany in 1914. This poster which launched Sinn Fein's "anti-conscription pledge" that was to unite all sections of opposition to the Union, is according to Rickards* probably the earliest anti-draft propaganda compaign of its kind. Although Griffith was himself a republican at heart, he conceded that most Irish people were not, and thus Sinn Fein's policy was to continue to recognise the British monarchy after setting up an Irish government. Therefore the nationalist tradition is represented by Sinn Fein up to 1922 when there was a split in the party. The split resulted from dissatisfaction with the partition of Ireland into north and south and other conditions of a Treaty reached with Britain after the Anglo-Irish war of 1919-21. This war was sparked off by the republican factions within Sinn Fein which though in the minority, were in practice the more influential sector from 1919, when Sinn Fein set up a government in Dublin, to the end of the Anglo-Irish war. The row over the treaty clearly divided the nationalists and repblicans into "Pro-Treaty" and "Anti-Treaty" factions respectively. This was an extremely bitter split which resulted in civil war from April 1922 to May 1924. During the Anglo-Irish war the British authorities issued many proclamations against Sinn Fein and the rebels, who in turn used the same propaganda tool against the British. During the civil war both sides also used proclamations. In 1923 the "Pro-Treaty" faction began a new political party to continue the nationalist tradition. This party called Cumann na nGaedheal and its first leader was W.T. Costgrave, (Fig. 7). It issued many very interesting political posters etc, up to 1933 when it joined with the "Farmers Party" and the "Blueshirts" (a short-lived fascist group) to become Fine Gael. To the

* See Bibliography.

present day Fine Gael continues to represent a sizeable section of Irish nationalism.

Though never representative of the manority of Irish opinion, the republican tradition has been represented by more factions than either nationalism or unionism, and certainly has a longer history. Due to much overlapping of ideals, and involvement of political interest groups, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish republicans from nationalists. The most obvious characteristic differences have been that republicans have traditionally a strong tendancy towards militancy and (like unionists) an aversion to political compromise. In 1898 the Emmet centenary revived intrest in the history of Irish republicanism. It had been at a very low ebb since the ceassation of the land agitation of the 1880's and by 1898 only one organisation existed which advocated complete independence from Britain. This was the Irish Republican Brotherhood (also known as the Fenians). The IRB was a secret oath-bound society which had dwindled since the failure of its 1967 rebellion. By 1898 it was no more than "a few old men meeting in the back rooms of pubs", according to T.W. Moody. Evidence of the new lease of life afforded Irish republicanism through the Emmet centenary is visible in publications of the time. In a newspaper called the "New Ireland Review" D.P. Moran (whose writings had a highly influential effect on republican politics during the years covered here), wrote a series of articles for the centenary arguing that Ireland should not only have its own government, but that it should renounce every English influence. In that year also Arthur Griffith founded a newspaper, the "United Irishman" named after an organisation called the "United Irishmen" from which the IRB had evolved. Centenary posters were printed and sold on a commercial basis, (Fig. 8). A number of inspired young men began to filter into the IRB and reorganise it. By 1916 the ranks had grown to such an extent that the new young leadership were confidently planning a rebellion.

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Though the IRB do not seem to have issued posters during this period, two other armies with which they were later to unite, did. The Irish Citizen Army was founded by trade unionists to protect Dublin workers during a six month "lock-out" when employers tried to destroy trade unions in 1913. The Irish Volunteers was also founded in 1913. It was set up to counter the possibility of the British revoking their promise of Home Rule, thus the majority of its men were nationalists at heart and followed Redmond's request to fight Germany in the Great War. Nevertheless it was the IRB infiltration into both these armies that led to the Easter Rising of 1916, and subsequently to the formation of the Irish Republican Army (which in one form or another has represented extreme Irish republicanism ever since). The I.R.A. published many interesting and important proclamations and posters. Arguably the most extreme face of republicanism between 1898 and 1948 was Cumann na mBan (the women's army), who were unanimously opposed to the Treaty after the Anglo-Irish war. They too issued proclamations and posters. Following the Treaty split, the republican faction formed a new Sinn Fein party which in turn split in 1926 when Eamonn de Valera (the senior survivor of the 1916 rising, and president of the 1919 Sinn Fein government) convinced a sizeable section of it that a thirty-two county, unpartitioned republic could only be achieved through the Irish parliament (or Dail), as it existed after the Treaty. De Valera formed the Fianna Fail party which to the present day claim to represent the republican tradition. They grew to be the largest political party in Ireland and formed a government in 1932 (Fig. 9) which held power continuously up to 1948.

Other political interest groups which used this form of propaganda were (i) the "Labour Party" founded 1912, which represented the trade unions and did not wish to become embroiled in the republican versus nationalist conflicts, and (ii) "Clann na Poblachta" founded 1948, which was made

up of republicans who despaired of ending partition by force and also others who hoped to improve social conditions, (Fig. 10). The founding of Clann na Poblachta made it possible for a coalition to form a government and break Fianna Fail's monopoly on power. It was due to pressure from Clann na Poblachta within that coalition that led to the declaration of an Irish Republic in 1948.

The visual imagery which was used in nationalist and republican propaganda was highly influenced by symbolism which became popularized through the publications of cultural organisations that where theoretically apolitical. The Gaelic League founded in 1893 to preserve and spread the Irish language was immensely successful and gave rise to countless publications in Irish and to the revival of decorative "Celtic" design. The majority of those who fought in the Easter Rising were members of the Gaelic League. Another important movement was the Gaelic Athletic Association, founded in 1884 to encourage native sports. It fostered a considerable amount of anti-English racism, a trait which is sometimes evident in Irish political proclamations. The GAA was an important recruiting ground for the IRB. A substantial amount of visual imagery was also generated through the Anglo-Irish literary revival, which developed Irish literature in the English language. Figure 11 shows a poster that was directly inspired by Sean O'Casey's play "The Shadow of a Gunman", and in Figure 12, Ireland is symbolically personified as a woman as it was in Yeat's play Cathleen Ni Houlihan. The Anglo Irish literary revival, the Gaelic League and G.A.A. were the products of a cultural revolution in Ireland which evolved from the political endeavour to establish the right of the Irish people to self-determination, which in turn posed the question: what is "the Irish people?". The cultural revolution was an attempt to find the answer.

Finally, this chapter would have failed to properly set the context for the subject matter of this thesis without

some allusion to the Catholic Church. That the Church has been continuously a powerful political interest group is evidenced by the fact that until the passing of the 1985 "Family Planning Act" no legislation opposed by the hierarchy had succeeded in becoming law. Its power, according to Inglish, lies in its ability to "limit what its members, and others, do and say to what falls within the rules and regulations of the Church". Inglis also says: "The vast majority of Irish politicians and civil servants have been formed and educated by the Catholic Church and, consequently, have limited legislation in matters that fall within the general ethos of the Church's teachings". Nevertheless the Church has always exercised caution in openly showing support for, or opposition to, any of the interest groups discussed in this chapter. Whether under British rule or during the years of the "Free State",the Church has remained the supreme diplomat of Irish politics. Dr. Noel Browne maintains that by 1950 "the hierarchy had become the factual instrument of government on all important social and economic policies in the Republic". If one looks at Figure 13 which demonstrates the success of Sinn Fein's anti-conscription pledge, it is easy to believe Dr. Browne's assertion. It shows the political leaders of republicanism, nationalism and trade unionism, all placed below two princes of the Church and the seminary of Maynooth. Very rarely does the Church issue any form of printed proclamation, - the pulpit has proved a more efficient political device, but it has often voiced its opinion through the political proclamations of other interest groups.

The political interest groups discussed in this chapter form the substance of Irish history from 1898 to 1948, and the proclamations, posters and handbills, etc, which they issued were part of the weaponary they used in attempting to promote their aims and conserve their interests.

Fig. 3.

Fig 4.

Fig 5.

ANTI-CONSCRIPTION PLEDGE.

The following is a copy of the Pledge:—

"Denying the right of the British Government to enforce Compulsory Service in this Country ***we pledge ourselves solemnly to one another to resist Conscription*** by the most effective means at our disposal."

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7

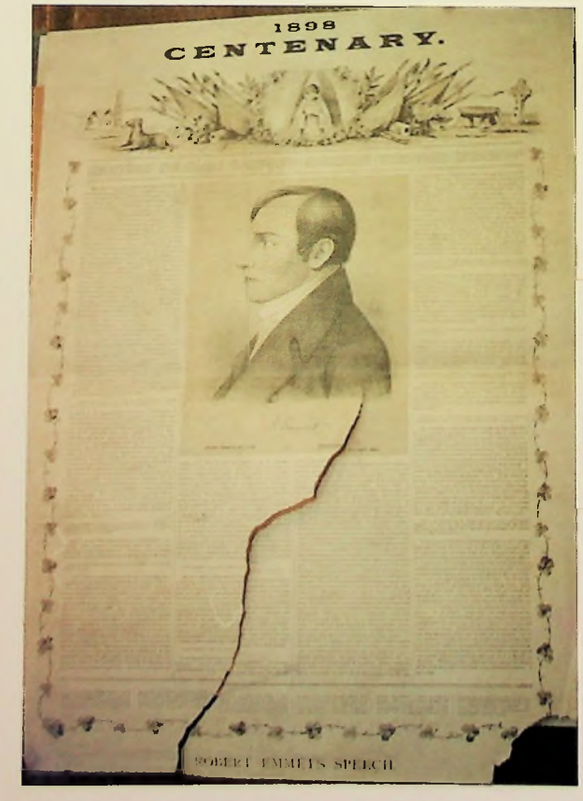


Fig. 8.

Fig. 9.

CLANN NA POBLACHTA

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY

Foundations

1. **Elimination of Jobbery,** Political preferment and **Corruption** from public life.
2. A **Social** and economic **system** based on Christian principles.
3. **A Comprehensive Social Insurance** scheme on the basis of the Plan drawn up by Most Rev. Dr. Dignan, Bishop of Clonfert.
4. **Full Employment** for full production by the equation of Currency and Credit to the nation's needs.
5. Nationally-financed Non-profit-making Building programme for the provision of decent houses for all citizens, and the **abolition of slums.**
6. **Immediate reduction in cost of living** achieved by subsidising the production of essential foodstuffs.
7. **Provision of Sanatoria** and facilities for post-sanatoria care for those afflicted by **tuberculosis.**
8. **Free** primary, secondary and University **Education** for all the children of the Nation fitted to avail of it. The raising of the school-leaving age to 16.
9. **Freedom** and **Independence** for **all Ireland** as a Democratic Republic.

THE CLANN NA POBLACHTA CANDIDATES IN YOUR AREA ARE :—

BARRON JOSEPH (National Teacher)

BRADY JACK (Brewery Employee)

LEHANE CON (Solicitor)
Vice-Chairman, Nat. Executive
Clann na Poblachta

VOTE FOR THEM IN THE ORDER OF YOUR CHOICE

Fig. 10.

Fig. 11.

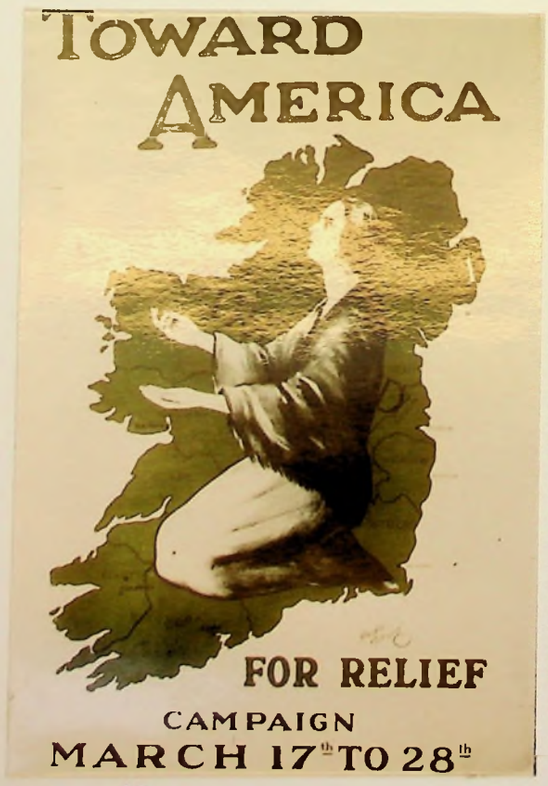


Fig. 12.

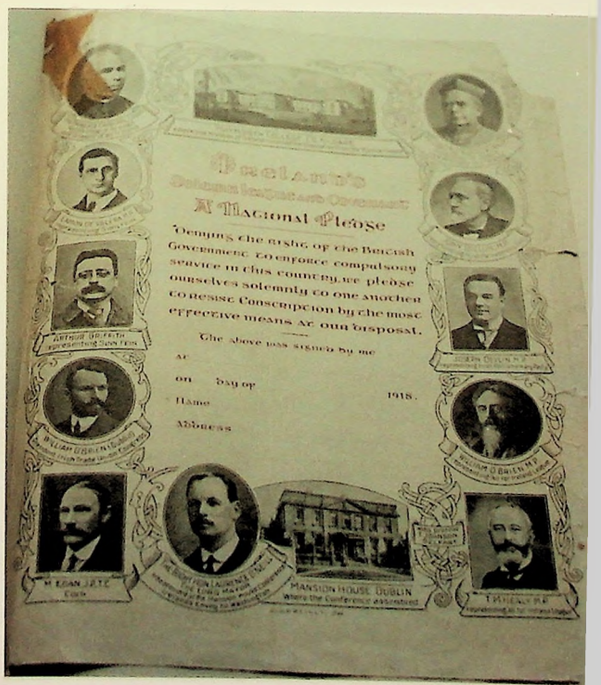


Fig. 13.

CHAPTER 3

THE TRADITIONAL PROCLAMATION

Even in Humphrey Powell's proclamations some of the conventions which became standard practice throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are apparent. Most obvious of these characteristics are:

(i) The word "PROCLAMATION" as heading.
(ii) The royal seal.
(iii) The large initial of the first paragraph.
(iv) 1The use of paragraphs.
(v) The slogan "God save the Queen/King".
(vi) The use of signature.
(vii) The printer's imprint, (though a standard element of most proclamations, it was often neglected and certainly declined in significance as printers became more common)

The proclamation issued by Lord Ivor Churchill Baron Wimborne declaring martial law throughout Ireland in 1916 (Fig. 14) is a direct descendant of that issued by the Earl of Sussex in 1561, (Fig. 2). A comparison of the two clearly demonstrates the strong tradition of this print genre in Ireland. Both were issued by men who hold the same political office, that of Lord Lieutenant, an authority which like the style of language used, had changed little in more than three and a half centuries. The changes which evolved to form the standard format are relatively slight:

(i) The royal seal was placed 'above' the heading.

(ii) The headings were usually one of three:

(a) "PROCLAMATION"; this was a general declaration, and usually signified power from the throne.

(b) "ORDER"; this usually meant an emergency law, through military authority.

(c) "NOTICE"; was used for less important general public information.

(iii) Generally the first paragraph began with the word "WHEREAS", the "W" as a large initial and the rest of the word in capitals, or alternatively it began with "By virtue of the powers vested in me", or "In exercise of the powers conferred upon me".

(iv) Divisions such as paragraphs, sections and sub-sections, had become more obvious (as in Figure 15.)

(v) Just one signature became the norm.

(vi) "God save the Queen/King" was printed 'after' the signature.

Although the format had only slightly changed since the sixteenth century, the typography had become more legible. This was arguably achieved at the expense of beauty, but any aesthetic values in th traditional proclamation were coincidental to their function which was to give weight to the authority of those in power. The man floating down a river on the back of a swan in the beautiful large initial in Figure 1, does not lend the same strength of power as the bold angularity of the type in General Maxwell's 1916 "ORDER", (Fig. 15.

Royal proclamations always took the format shown in Figure 4, however those issued through other agencies of British rule varied slightly in style. Printers took pains to create a style appropriate to the issuer, and this was achieved through quite subtle typographic treatment. The elongated capitals and the generous spacing of the text set in a simple dignified Roman typeface, give the Wimborne proclamation a noble appearance suit to its regal origins. Likewise the bold officious, and somewhat intimidating typographic treatment of the Maxwell "Order" is quite appropriately militaristic. In both cases the style of design

is rather classical, a feature which adds to their power of authority. Political proclamations issued to deal with less prestigeous problems of public control were appropriately less pretentious in both style of language and typographic treatment, though the basic traditional format was almost always adhered to. In Figure 16 the royal seal is replaced with the name of the governmental agency responsible for the particular problem - in this case the planting of potatoes to avert a possible food shortage. As a heading the word "NOTICE" has none of the pomposity inherent in "PROCLAMATION", and likewise the text is appreciably less consequential. The notice in Figure 17 was circulated just a week after that in Figure 16 demonstrating that this was a standard and frequent means of governmental communication and control.

It was not only official government bodies that used the traditional proclamations format, it also had its exponents among interest groups opposed to British rule in Ireland. The very issuing of one such proclamation had greater consequences on the course of modrern Irish history than any other political act in this century, (Fig. 18). The conflicts which resulted with the printing of that proclamation have given rise to the production of most of images discussed in this study. Its visual printed form has become so strong a symbol of Irish independence that it is referred to in Ireland simply as "the proclamation". It was printed hurriedly the day before the 1916 Easter Rising broke out in Dublin. Despite its subsequent fame it was to, (according to F.S.L. Lyons) "a sparse and almost completely uncomprehending audience", that P.H. Pearse proclaimed the "Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State". The following day an attempt to explain what was taking place was made through the publishing of the "Irish War News" (excerpt in Figure 19), which was itself in format a hybrid of the proclamation handbill and the newspaper, as it was issued as a single folded sheet and was sold, priced one penny.

Judging from the type used in its front page heading it probably originated from the same printshop as "the proclamation". It firmly acknowledges the contribution of political proclamations to Irish history when it states: "The Irish Republic was proclaimed by a poster, which was prominently displayed in Dublin".

From a design point of view the 1916 Easter week proclamation successfully uses "Poblacht na hEireann" to boldy replace the traditional royal seal, and the heading visually serves to replace the word "proclamation" which, because of its "royal" connotations, would have been inappropriate. The typographic treatment of the heading and the use of multipal signatures is ironically reminiscent of Humphrey Powell's format.

During Easter week 1916 a second proclamation was pulled from the same printing press (Fig. 20). In harmony with the general confusion of that week the format is slightly different from the first proclamation. "Poblacht na hEireann" is not used at all and the arrangement of type in the heading is less clear than in the first proclamation. This time there is only one signature. Understandably, this proclamation shows signs of having been produced under pressure. Maurice Rickards points out that in typographic posters "the heat of the moment is often most poignantly apparent. In the Irish proclamations, perhaps above all others, it comes through unmistakably."

The language used in the text of these proclamations is also noteworthy as having a style of its own, attributable mainly to Pearse, but also probably to MacDonagh and Connolly in the case of the first one. "From whichever side of the political or military fence the Pearse manifestoes are viewed" writes Rickard, "their central core of courage and conviction is inescapable".

Dissatisfaction with the treaty which restored self-determination, but in so doing partitioned Ireland, resulted in civil war. With both sides claiming the legal right to govern, there was a national identity crisis. Simultaneously the redundancy of the symbolism and visual trappings of British rule brought with it the responsibility of establishing a corporate identity for all the new State. Due to the traditionally sorry state of the visual arts in Ireland and the general lack of interest and awareness of what little there was to draw from our visual heritage, this difficulty was made well nigh impossible by the acute scarcity of skilled artists and designers, and moreover by the general ignorance of the importance of visual aspects of national identity. As regards the proclamations, broad-sheets and pictorial posters issued by the nationalists and republicans we shall see there were no serious attempts to achieve recognisably individual styles, though new symbolism did emerge.

Rather than achieving anything close to an Irish style or format for proclamations, the most the printers could achieve was making them not look British. The thick border and the so called "Egyptian" type of Commander O'Maolchatha's "OFFER OF AMNESTY" (Fig. 21) at first glance seems like a product of the American wild-west. Dan Breen's Appeal (Fig. 22) has likewise no design format or element of symbolism to differentiate it from opposition propaganda. Differentiation could only be made through the content of the text.

The only noticeable progress toward a national style for official proclamations had been the use of gaelic in headings such as "Poblacht na hEireann" (Fig. 18), and more significantly the use of words like "FOGRA" (Fig. 23) which could be used as a standard feature of Irish proclamations. Despite this slight innovation, the roots of all official Free State government proclamations continued to lie in

the traditional format imported from London so long ago. That the old format had aged so well is proof of its effectiveness. Notwithstanding its seeming staid rigidity it proved a most flexible political device. Its continued popularity in the Free State, at a time when the reproduction of imagery was within the technical capability of most printers, surely establishes its stature as a major element of Ireland's visual communications heritage.

This point is well demonstrated in one of Fianna Fail's first election posters (Fig. 24). At first glance it is quite amazing that the name of De Valera's new party is given no prominence whatsoever, yet the choice of format and style of text reveals a keen understanding of the nature of propaganda in Irish politics. Considering the political tensions prevalent in 1927, the modest gentle typography exploits the format to perfectly set the tone of the text. The inclusion of any symbolism or imagery would most probably adversely affect the credibility of the textual earnestness.

No synopsis of the use of the traditional proclamation format in Irish propaganda would be complete without reference to the use of "counter proclamations", a direct offshoot of that tradition. This form of propaganda was an excellent vehicle for polemics and rhetoric, and was often the most articulate voice of opposition to British rule. During the Great War this tactic was in large measure responsible for turning public opinion against conscription in Ireland. The colourful language in Figure 25 lends itself well to the traditional format which is meticulously executed to the extent of using a fictitious printer's imprint. The style of the proclamation issued by the Minister for Justice in 1931 (Fig. 26) shows how closely the new Free State administration embraced the traditions of the former administration, a point which is reiterated cheekily in Figure 27.

In proclamation and, (albeit in jest) counter-proclamations alike, the phraseology always aspires to "legalize" the content of the test. They exude a fulsome sense of their own justification, establishing their status, qualifications and antecedends as a means of justification for the declaration itself. The origins of the proclamation are, as Rickards points out, "close to the origins of law, order, government and the hierarchy of power". In Ireland they have certainly been visual expression of strong social and historical forces.

ORDER

I, GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR J. G. MAXWELL, K.C.B.; K.C.M.G.; C.V.O.; D.S.O., Commanding-in-Chief the Forces in Ireland, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me as Competent Military Authority by Regulation 30 of the Defence of the Realm (Consolidation) Regulations hereby prohibit the manufacture, sale, transfer or disposal of fire-arms, part of fire-arms, Military arms, parts of Military arms, ammunition (including sporting ammunition for use in rifled guns) or explosive substances or any class thereof, within the Area of IRELAND, except subject to the following conditions, viz :—

(1) That my consent in writing or the consent in writing of an Officer authorised by me for the purpose has been obtained for the proposed manufacture, sale, transfer or disposal of the said articles or any of them, after a full and true disclosure of the particulars of the proposed manufacture, sale, transfer or disposal of the said articles or any of them outside the Dublin Metropolitan Police District to the District Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary for the District, and inside the Dublin Metropolitan Police District to a Superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Police.

The Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Chief Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and County and District Inspectors of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and Superintendents of the Dublin Metropolitan Police are Officers authorised by me for the said purpose, and

(2) That any person selling the said articles or any of them shall provide and keep a Register showing the full particulars, description, and amount of all such articles purchased or sold by the said person, or which he or she has in his or her possession for sale, giving the names and full addresses of the persons from whom the said articles were purchased or to whom the said articles were sold and the dates of each transaction, which entries must be made within twenty-four hours after the sale or purchase; and the said Register shall be open for inspection at all times by the District Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary in each District, or by some member of the Royal Irish Constabulary authorised by him, or, in the Dublin Metropolitan Police Area, by any Superintendent or Inspector of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, or any member of the said Force authorised by such Superintendent; and any person so selling or keeping for sale or having in possession for sale any such articles as aforesaid shall at all times when so required by the aforesaid Police Authorities, show to the said Authorities all stock on hand of any such articles; and in case the purchaser is not known to the Vendor, the Vendor shall require the purchaser to furnish satisfactory particulars of identification which shall be entered in the Register of sales, and to sign his name and address in the Register of sales.

The ORDERS of the Competent Military Authority for IRELAND made under Regulation 30 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations and dated 8th December, 1915; 25th February, 1916; and the 30th March, 1916, are hereby CANCELLED.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND THIS 20th day of SEPTEMBER, 1916.

J. G. MAXWELL, General Competent Military Authority.

Fig. 15.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS in different parts of Ireland certain evil disposed persons and associations with the intent to subvert the supremacy of the Crown in Ireland have committed divers acts of violence and have with deadly weapons attacked the Forces of the Crown and have resisted by armed force the lawful authority of His Majesty's Police and Military Forces and Whereas by reason thereof several of His Majesty's loyal subjects have been killed and many others severely injured and much property has been destroyed

WIMBORNE

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Fig. 14.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD FOR IRELAND.

NOTICE.

FOOD PRODUCTION.

Con-acre Lettings on Congested Districts Board's Farms for

GROWTH OF POTATOES.

In view of the possibility of a shortage of food in consequence of a prolongation of the War, the Congested Districts Board have decided to offer portions of such of the grass farms in their possession for the growth of potatoes during the year 1917, under con-acre lettings.

Land which the Board expect to distribute before the 31st March, 1917, will not be let for con-acre.

Occupiers of holdings exceeding £7 Poor Law Valuation or members of their families residing with them on the holding or elsewhere, who have not arranged to have at least one-fifth of the arable portion of their own holdings under cultivation, will not be eligible for con-acre on any of the Board's farms.

On and after Monday, the 8th instant, eligible applicants for land should attend on any of the Board's farms on which they desire to rent conacre and make agreements with the Board's herd as to the land to be cropped by them on the terms stated in the agreement which has been supplied to the herds.

J. R. O'BRIEN,

Secretary

Fig. 16.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD FOR IRELAND.

NOTICE.

FOOD PRODUCTION.

Con-acre Lettings on Congested Districts Board Farms.

J. R. O'BRIEN,

Fig. 17.

POBLACHT NA H EIREANN.

The Provisional Government of the IRISH REPUBLIC

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE.
SEAN Mac DIARMADA.
P. H. PEARSE.
JAMES CONNOLLY.
THOMAS MacDONAGH.
EAMONN CEANNT.
JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

Fig. 18

STOP PRESS!

THE IRISH REPUBLIC.

(Irish) "War News" is published to-day because a momentous thing has happened. The Irish Republic has been declared in Dublin, and a Provisional Government has been appointed to administer its affairs. The following have been named as the Provisional Government :—

Thomas J. Clarke.
Sean Mac Diarmada
P. H. Pearse.
James Connolly.
Thomas MacDonagh.
Eamonn Ceant.
Joseph Plunkett.

The Irish Republic was proclaimed by a poster, which was prominently displayed in Dublin.

At 9.30 a.m. this morning the following statement was made by Commandant-General, P. H. Pearse :—

The Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 24th April, at 12 noon. Simultaneously with the issue of the proclamation of the Provisional Government the Dublin Division of the Army of the Republic, including the Irish Volunteers, Citizen Army, Hibernian Rifles, and other bodies, occupied dominating points in the city. The G.P.O. was seized at 12 noon, the Castle was attacked at the same moment, and shortly afterwards the Four Courts were occupied. The Irish troops hold the City Hall and dominate the Castle. Attacks were immediately commenced by the British forces and were everywhere repulsed. At the moment of writing this report, (9.30 a.m., Tuesday) the Republican forces hold all their positions and the British forces have nowhere broken through. There has been heavy and continouus fighting for nearly 24 hours, the casualties of the enemy being much more numerous than those on the Republican side. The Republican forces everywhere are fighting with splendid gallantry. The populace of Dublin are plainly with the Republic, and the officers and men are everywhere cheered as they march through the streets. The whole centre of the city is in the hands of the Republic, whose flag flies from the G.P.O.

Commandant General P. H. Pearse is commanding in chief of the Army of the Republic and is President of the Provisional Government Commandant General James Connolly is commanding the Dublin districts. Communication with the country is largely cut, but reports to hand show that the country is rising, and bodies of men from Kildare and Fingall have already reported in Dublin.

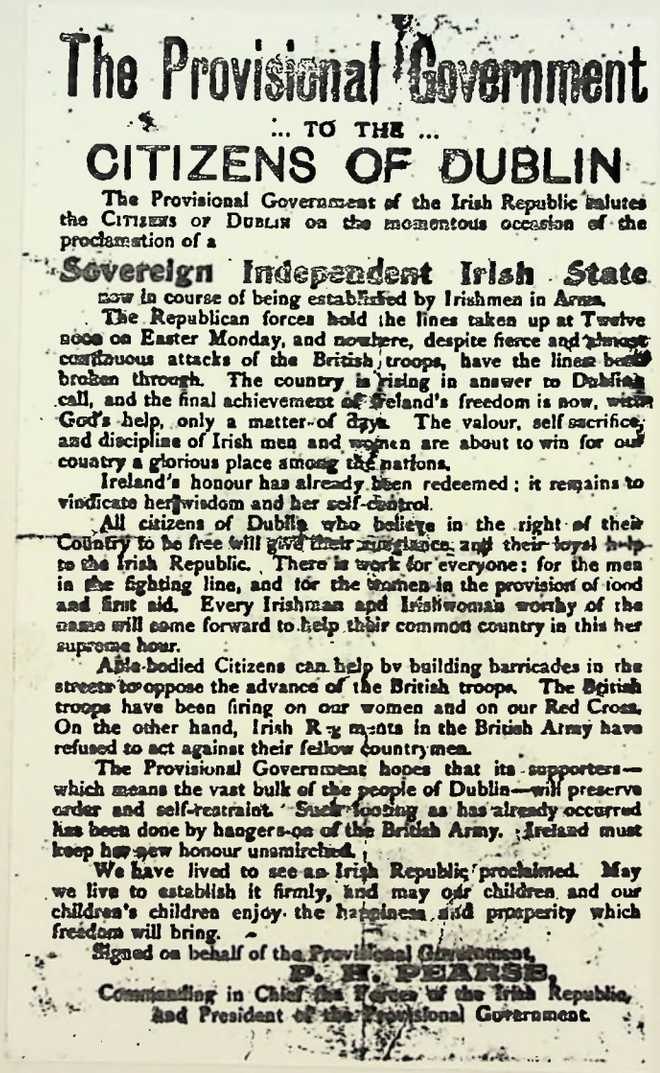
—❖—

IRISH WAR NEWS

THE IRISH REPUBLIC.

VOL. I. No. 1 DUBLIN, TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1916. ONE PENNY

Fig. 19.



The Provisional Government

... TO THE ...

CITIZENS OF DUBLIN

The Provisional Government of the Irish Republic salutes the CITIZENS OF DUBLIN on the momentous occasion of the proclamation of a

Sovereign Independent Irish State

now in course of being established by Irishmen in Arms.

The Republican forces hold the lines taken up at Twelve noon on Easter Monday, and nowhere, despite fierce and almost continuous attacks of the British troops, have the lines been broken through. The country is rising in answer to Dublin's call, and the final achievement of Ireland's freedom is now, with God's help, only a matter of days. The valour, self sacrifice, and discipline of Irish men and women are about to win for our country a glorious place among the nations.

Ireland's honour has already been redeemed; it remains to vindicate her wisdom and her self-control.

All citizens of Dublin who believe in the right of their Country to be free will give their allegiance, and their loyal help to the Irish Republic. There is work for everyone: for the men in the fighting line, and for the women in the provision of food and first aid. Every Irishman and Irishwoman worthy of the name will come forward to help their common country in this her supreme hour.

Able-bodied Citizens can help by building barricades in the streets to oppose the advance of the British troops. The British troops have been firing on our women and on our Red Cross. On the other hand, Irish Regiments in the British Army have refused to act against their fellow countrymen.

The Provisional Government hopes that its supporters—which means the vast bulk of the people of Dublin—will preserve order and self-restraint. Such looting as has already occurred has been done by hangers-on of the British Army. Ireland must keep her new honour unsmirched.

We have lived to see an Irish Republic proclaimed. May we live to establish it firmly, and may our children and our children's children enjoy the happiness and prosperity which freedom will bring.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government,

P. H. PEARSE,

Commanding in Chief the Forces of the Irish Republic, and President of the Provisional Government.

Fig. 20.

PROCLAMATION

OFFER OF AMNESTY

(1) Bearing in mind the acceptance by Liam Deasy of an immediate and unconditional surrender of all arms and men, and McGANN ing that the reasons dictating to him that acceptance must weigh also with many leaders, and many of the rank and file, who have found themselves led step by step into a destruction that they never intended, but which has been the sequel of the line of policy adopted by those to whom they looked for leadership.

(2) NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that with a view to facilitating such a surrender the Government are prepared to offer amnesty to all persons now in arms against the Government who, on or before Sunday, 18th February, 1923, surrender with arms to any Officer of the National Forces or through any intermediary.

Risteard Ó Maolchatha, General,
Commander-in-Chief.

Dublin.
8th February, 1923.

Fig 21.

DAN BREEN'S APPEAL

D. BREEN'S APPEAL TO HIS OLD COMRADES NOW IN THE FREE STATE ARMY.

Comrades,

ARE YOU AWARE that you are fighting against the Republic that you fought to establish in 1916, and that was maintained and is going to be maintained?

ARE YOU AWARE that England tried to disestablish the Republic through a reign of Black and Tan terror?

ARE YOU AWARE that she is now using the so-called Provisional Government to try where she failed?

ARE YOU AWARE that YOU are the Black and Tans of to-day, the only difference is the uniform?

ARE YOU AWARE that the death of CATHAL BRUGHA is a damnable and eternal stain on the uniform?

ARE YOU AWARE that CATHAL BRUGHA died as my comrade, SEAN TREACY, died?-- no surrender to enemies of the Republic was their cry.

ARE YOU AWARE that there are hundreds of MEN who will die as Brugha and Treacy died in defence of the Republic?

ARE YOU AWARE that I did my best to maintain the army for the Republic, but I failed because your section took orders from our only enemy--England?

Comrades, I thought my term of soldiering was over, but duty again called me to defend the Republic, which I will do or die in the attempt.

Will you again stand with me as my comrades in arms, or will you continue to fight with England against me?

Dan Breen.

Fig. 22.

FOGRA

Oglaigh na h-Eireann
IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

General Headquarters, Dublin,
28th November 1922.

SPIES

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Notice is hereby given that the death penalty will be inflicted upon any person or persons found guilty of conveying or circulating or aiding and abetting in the conveyance or circulation of information to the Free State forces or to any member or official of its usurping Government, where such information may lead to:

(a) THE DEATH
(b) THE WOUNDING
(c) CAPTURE OF ANY MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN FORCES, THEIR GOVERNMENT OR LOYAL ADHERENTS.

Drastic penalties will also be inflicted upon any person or persons found guilty of conveying or circulating or aiding and abetting in the conveyance or circulation of information which may lead to the raiding for, or capture of, any arms, munitions or documents, the property of the Republican forces or their Government.

This Notice includes members of Free State Defence Committees, Touts, "National" Reserves, and all other persons aiding or abetting the enemy as aforesaid.

BY ORDER

ARMY COUNCIL

Fig. 23.

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND

By its recent action in entering the Free State Dail, Fianna Fail has already given earnest that in the pursuit of its ideals it is prepared to face and accept existing realities.

If returned in a majority at the coming election and entrusted with power, it hopes to prove that hard-headed common-sense is not incompatible with true national idealism.

The slightest design or aiming at bringing about a sudden revolutionary upheaval with which our opponents choose to credit us is altogether foreign to our purpose and programme. We do not believe in attempting to practise sleight-of-hand on the electorate. We shall proceed as a responsible constitutional Government acknowledging without reserve that all authority comes through the sovereign people and that before any important step likely to involve their safety is taken the people are entitled to be taken into the fullest consultation.

The stubborn political and economic facts are of necessity the base from which any successful advance must be made. To ignore them would be to court defeat. A nation cannot march on an empty stomach. Our first and most strenuous effort must accordingly be devoted to repairing the present economic ruin. Some effort and successful achievement are necessary to restore the old confidence. Unity in the national ranks will quickly follow and with it will come back the old spirit of national courage and self reliance.

These are our convictions. Fianna Fail was founded in the belief that the national instincts of the people would ultimately assert themselves. If the people give us a majority we will be the faithful guardians of their interests.

Ennis, September 11th, 1927.

Fig. 24.

G. R.

A PROCLAMATION!

By GEORGE V., King of England

To Our Faithful Irish Subjects,

We are at present engaged in war With Our first cousin, the Emperor of Germany. We hate the Germans, because Our father, Our grandfather, Our grandmother, and all our ancestors were Germans, and every sensible man now-a-days hates his ancestors!

YOU, ALSO, OUR BRAVE IRISH, HAD ANCESTORS blood-thirsty rebels, who wanted to own Ireland for themselves, and be separated from Our Glorious Empire; but our predecessors on the Throne of England (who were all Germans by birth or by descent) got rid of these narrow-minded savage ancestors of yours. They flogged, hanged, and burned them in '98. They starved them in '48, and brought the food across to feed our Free-born Britons (for Ireland was England's larder then as now). They shipped a few millions who survived the Famine out in Coffin-ships across the Atlantic, and most of them were thrown overboard, and their bones lie whitening at the bottom of the ocean. A few weeks ago, in Dublin, We managed, with the aid of Our Own Scottish Borderers, to let all who had any recollection of ancestors left, know that We were prepared to clear them out root and branch, and to spare neither women nor children in the clearance.

NOW, OUR BRAVE IRISH, We know you don't want to be reminded that these men were your ancestors, anymore than Our Royal Self do that We are German by blood.

WE WANT MEN TO FIGHT THESE GERMANS, and We know from history that the Irish are a Fighting Race. A large number of your Countrymen have been sent to the Front to fight the Germans. THE MOST OF THEM HAVE BEEN KILLED, BUT THEY DIED NOBLY FIGHTING FOR US AND OUR EMPIRE. We want more to fill their places, and ONLY IRISHMEN WILL GET THE POST OF HONOR. Come and volunteer for the Army at once and We will arrange that you will be sent to the Front and Killed; if you are not killed, when you are no longer of any use for fighting, Remember the British Laws—the Poor Laws—have provided for your upkeep in the Workhouses of Ireland.

Remember the Empire comes first and the Poorhouse after, if you survive the War. GEORGE R.I.

GOD SAVE THE KING

GALE & POLDEN, ALDERSHOT. 1906 5,000,000 8|14

Fig - 25.

SAORSTAT EIREANN

PROCLAMATION

I, JAMES FITZGERALD-KENNEY, Minister for Justice, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by sub-section (2) of Section 24 of Article 2A of the Constitution do hereby prohibit the holding at any time on Tuesday, the 10th day of November, 1931, or on any other day within three days thereafter, at any place in the City of Dublin, of the public meeting proposed to be held in College Green by the Anti-Imperialist League at or about 8 o'clock in the evening on Tuesday, the 10th day of November, 1931.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS,
DUBLIN
9th November, 1931.

JAMES FITZGERALD KENNEY.

Fig. 26.

PROCLAMATION

I, JAMES FITZGERALD-KENNEY, Minister for Justice in exercise of the powers conferred on me by sub-section 2 section 98 of Article 2a of the Constitution (Amendment No. 17) Act do hereby order all loyal citizens of the Irish Free State to take active part in the Procession and Commemoration organised by by the British Legion, on Wednesday, he 11th day of November, 1931, in thanksgiving for the favours received by our country from England all through the centuries and particularly for the blessings of peace and prosperity at present enjoyed by this faithful Dominion of the great British Empire.

All loyal citizens w ll rally to the call of the Empire which is being severely threatened by foreign and domestic foes.

JAMES FITZ-GERALD KENNEY.

Government Buildings, Dublin,
10th November, 1931.

GOD SAVE THE KING!

Fig. 27.

CHAPTER 4

LETTERPRESS BROADSHEETS

INTRODUCTION

Countless books have been published about posters which used illustration, but the history of purely typographic posters, in particular that of the letterpress broadsheet, has been largely ignored by historians of art and design. The letterpress broadsheets evolved from the early proclamations and are unquestionably part of the same tradition. This chapter deals with the influences that brought about changes of format from the proclamation style and within the broadsheet style, and also examines the technological and design background of the letterpress process.

LENGTHY TEXT FORMATS DIMINISH AS SLOGANS PROLIFERATE

During the evolutionary period when printing was still getting into its stride, the tendency was to impress the rank and file with wordiness, but as the traditional proclamation branched into numerous styles to suit the needs of the ever growing variety of interest groups, there was a compromise between wordiness and impact which resulted in brevity. Adherence to the old conventions of format became less and less rigid and as the use of the word "proclamation" became the exception rather than the rule, the term "broadsheet" was applied to most printed posters.

In the broadsheet the emphasis moved away from text more and more as the slogan increased in importance. Modern political slogans such as the common "VOTE FOR" are the ancesters of the original "God Save the King/Queen". In competitive situations such as elections, the brevity afforded by the use of slogans has the advantage of getting

the message across quickly without risking the loss of the readers attention. In Irish political posters the move towards the short slogan was apparent in the nineteenth century and was well established in Britain and the United States by the turn of the century. Figures 28 and 29 from 1917 and 1922 respectively, proclaim their message without the use of either paragraph or section. The format of Fig.30 which begins with the name of the party and constituency, follows with the slogan and then lists the numerous candidates, is typical of election posters of the larger political parties since the foundation of the State. However, with so many candidates mentioned the emphasis is on the size and strength of the party in the particular constituency, and as a result the impact of the slogan is weakened. Slogans in election posters which seek support for just one candidate benefit greatly from the visual simplicity of so few words as can be plainly seen in Figures 31, 32, 33 and 34. Where an election poster seeks general support for a political party as opposed to any particular candidate, the slogan can become the main feature, as in Figures 35, 36, and 37, which look visually very far removed from the tradition of the old proclamations.

Some slogans, because of their proliferation on printed propaganda, became popular catchphrases. The more abbreviated the message in the slogan, the greater its chance of becoming a kind of political 'battle-cry' and a part of the living folklore.* By the late 1920's in Ireland, "God save the King" was on some posters replaced by the five characters of "Up Dev". (Modern slogans like "Brits Out" and "Up the I.R.A" are proof of the continued popularity of this device - albeit more common as grafitti than as posters). Short slogans encapsulate the maximum of meaning into the minimum of words and have the advantage of fast

* Perhaps the most famous example of this in the English speaking world is the word "Boycott" used as a slogan on Irish posters in the nineteenth century.

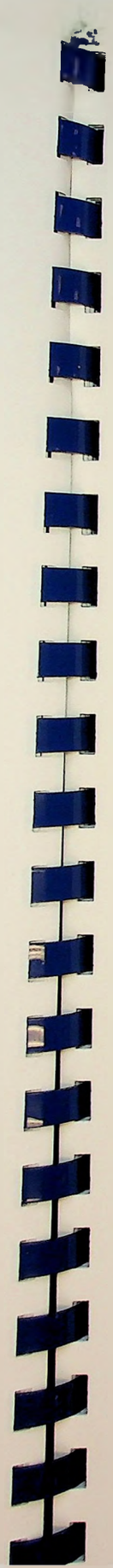
and cheap execution for the printer. The impact of short slogans is always more emotional than intellectual, and in complete contrast to the traditional proclamation, are usually in ordinary forms of familiar speech. Nevertheless the vast majority of political slogans did not enjoy lasting popularity and when viewed out of context with the passing of time they often become vague as in Figure 28 and 29, and sometimes even completely meaningless.

Despite the development of the slogan, many of those who sought election continued to combine the use of slogans with quite lengthy text, as in Figures 38 and 39. The purpose of such lengthy text was the same as in the early proclamations, to establish status and justification for the issuer. Sometimes this was carried to ridiculous extremes as in th 1932 Cumann na nGaedheal poster (Figure 40) which is so cluttered that it is doubtful if anyone would have the patience or inclination to read it all.

Finally one other format which was used both by Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fail demonstrates that both parties considered the broadsheet to be an important progaganda device. Figure 41 is an example of this format which is a form of counter-proclamation. Within a broadsheet, another, from the opposition party, is reproduced in order to discredit it with counter accusations.

PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY OF THE LETTERPRESS BROADSHEET

The fundamental technological principles of the "letterpress" printing process were established by Guttenberg in the fifteenth century. That process had changed little until the nineteenth century when many improvements were made, both in the manufacture and design of types and printing presses.



Until the invention of the punchcutting-machine by the American Linn Boyd Benton in 1884, all types were cast by hand, letter by letter, in hand held moulds. The shape of the letter was obtained by cutting its shape, in relief (and in reverse) on the end of a bar of steel, called a punch, which was then struck into a soft bar of copper, thus creating the matrix into which the molten type metal would be poured. In 1886 the first mechanical process for the casting and composition of type was invented.* However this process only accounts for some of the very small type on posters and handbills, such as long paragraphs of type and printers' imprints, because it was a system chiefly designed for the production of books, magazines, and newspapers.

As most of the type used on posters was larger than ordinary book types, it continued to be manufactured by hand until the introduction of film-setting in the 1960's. Most metal type used in Ireland was imported from a variety of English manufacturers, and the main suppliers in Ireland were Miller Printing Suppliers Ltd, and Walter Nash & Co. both of Dublin and still operating today.

With rare exception all type over an inch in body height, and many a lot smaller, were made of wood, not metal. (Wooden type is discussed in detail in the next section of this chapter). Figure 42 shows a selection of mainly wood types of various faces and sizes, (with some metal type to be seen in the bottom right hand corner). Each face and size of type was stored in a separate case in the "composing room" of the print workshop. The "compositor" (who "composed" or designed the layout of the type), knowing the limitations of the available stock, chose the typefaces that he knew to be available in sufficient quantities to

* The "Linotype" system on which the "copy" (or text) was typed on a keyboard and cast mechanically by the machine was invented by Ottmar Mergenthater who was an American.

fit the text, and would also be appropriate for the particular headings and text. He took each letter of every word from the different cases of type and arranged them line by line on a metal tray until the text was complete, (as in Figure 43). The finished composition was then lifted carefully by hand from the tray into the "bed" of the printing press, (as in Figure 44) and "locked" into place with pieces of metal known as "furniture" and "keys". Ink is then spread across the rollers with a spatula and applied t o the surface of the type as the rollers pass over. Behind the rollers is a "cylinder" (Figure 45) onto which the paper ios fed by hand one sheet at a time, and held in place by "grippers". The cylinder moves over the type after the rollers have inked the type and thus an impression is made jon the paper. To apply another colour to the design the rollers have to be wiped clean with methylated spirits (because the inks are oil based), and because this is quite a lot of work most posters were simply printed in black. If thre was a likelihood that more copies of a particular poster would be required at some later date, especially if it was very wordy, the type would have been locked into an iron frame called a "chase" and stored. When the printer had finished printing, it was the compositor's responsibility to return each letter of type to its proper case.

White newsprint paper was usually used for printing broadsheets, though coloured paper, especially blue, green, yellow and purple, were quite commonly used. Smaller posters were often pasted onto card and tied to telegraph poles and railings. Large posters were pasted onto prescribed bill board sites, but these were commercially operated and were seldom used for the posting of political progaganda posters. In Ireland political posters have been pasted to almost every imaginable surface; walls, windows, horse-drawn carts, cars, road signs, bridges, dust bins, trees, etc. As newsprint was the most common paper used it dictated the sizes of paper on which broadsheets were printed. The largest size was twice the standard newspaper sheet size. It is naturally on this size that the largest types were

used. By far the most common size is half the standard newsprint sheet size.

Other sizes were dictated by format. In 1943 and 1948 general elections, and in the presidential election of 1945 the brochure format was widely used (Fig. 47). The most common proportions for this was one quarter of the regular newsprint sheet size, (which was then folded in half). This format was a hybrid between the tradition of the proclamation and the magazine format. Small handbills came in a wide varity of dimensions. They were often printed on irregular sizes, known in th trade as "bastard" sizes, which were usually the surplus of other irregular size jobs when trimmed. Other handbills were printed on stationery sizes which were part of the "Imperial" system of measurement. Figure 47 shows a handbills which is one third of the Imperial "Foolscap" size. This handbill is of interest also as it was one of many issued by the "Dublin Typographical Provident Society" (the predecessor of the modern Irish Print Union) during the lock out of workers by employers in 1913. (The origins of this society predates the Emmet rebellion, when iot served as a cover up organisation for Emmet's army, the "United Irishmen". The notable involvement of Irish printers in political activities is one of the ironies of this study, though when one considers the amount of political material which they produced, it is perhaps not so surprising at all).

Finally, apart from the typographical technology of the letterpress process, it should be noted that it was also used to print black and white line illustrations, and photographs. Line illustrations were simply etched onto metal to give a relief surface from which an impression could be made. To print photographs the image had firstly to be "screened" (ie: photographically broken into a mass of tiny dots) and then etched into metal from which it too could be printed. Printers did not carry out the etching process themselves, but had the metal relief plates made

by specialists. In Dublin the main firm which offered this service to printers during the period covered here, called Irish Photo Ltd, still serves the print industry today.

WOODEN TYPES

It is clear from illustrations already shown in this study that the political poster in Ireland evolved from lengthy texts set in small types to the proliferation of short slogans set in large types. The first large types started out as initials and later were used for headings and only became popular as poster types in the nineteenth century. It was in advertisements that large types first appeared for use in the main body of text. This happened in 1803 when an English typefounder, Robert Thorne designed his "Fat Face" type especially for the broadsheet. The types designed by Thorne and his successor William Thorowgood had a remarkable and immediate impact. Their designs were not just elegant and full of character, but most importantly these types were designed to be seen from a distance and were far more legible than any types which preceded them. Virtually all types being designed up until then had been intended for use in books. Of the many poster types that were inspired by Thorne's designs the slab faces known as "Egyptians" became particularly popular (as in "WHY YOU SHOULD..." Figure 38). Finally, in 1816 another Englishman, William Caslon, introduced the first sans-serif face which he called "Gothic", thus not only furthered legibility of poster types but also revolutionised all areas of typographic design.

At first the large poster types were made of lead which was awkwardly heavy and rather expensive. In 1827 Darius Wells, an American, developed an engraving machine which made it financially viable to manufacture wooden poster types on an industrial basis. The process was further improved by a pantograph (an instrument for the mechanical copying of designs), designed by George Lavenworth in England in

1934. Using the pantograph, semi-skilled workers could cut faces from 3-line pica (12 mm) to 25 inch capitals (60 mm). Usually the wood used was maple from Canada or French hornbeam. Occasionally sycamore, boxwood and lignum were also used. When the timber was cut into boards it was planed to the desired height of the type, then polished with polyurethane polish and cut into strips the width of the individual type letters. Individual letters are then cut one by one on the engraving machine. Patterns for the cutting of different sizes of type are called "templates" and are made from plywood or metal. As the milling heads of the engraving machine can only cut round corners, the counters have to be recut, (eg. the five inside corners of a capital "A" or the acute angle of a "V"). Thus the price of a typeface not only depends on its size but also on its shape. The main suppliers of poster types used in Ireland were Robert De Little of York and Stephenson Blake & Co. of Sheffield. De Little's, who still manufacture wooden types, have five price castegories based on the shape of typeface available in a wide range of sizes, as well as rules, borders, brackets, stars, arrows and other ornamentation.

The convenience and simplicity of wooden types made the job of printing large headings both cheap and fast. With the increased legibility and boldness of the new typefaces, these innovations must have influenced the movement away from the traditional proclamation format towards the rise of the short slogan on political broadsheets.

THE COMPOSITOR AS EDITOR AND DESIGNER

Compositors were often expected to act as editors and it was common practice for customers to present themselves at the printers workshop without the benefit of a prepared text, verbally outlining the main points to be made and leaving the rest to the compositor's discretion. Because of the nature of political propaganda however, the copy for the

text or slogan was usually well thought out in advance, of the visit to the workshop. Nevertheless, the technical limitations of the printing press often forced the compositor to edit the text to make it fit the shape of the paper or to achieve a balanced visual effect. Occasionally the choice of wording for any particular job had to accommodate shortages of certain letters in the stock of typefaces. A line might be set in a larger size than it merited, only because a smaller size was not available, or to fill it out to the full width of the poster. Such limitations which were part and parcel of all small printshops, must often have dictated not just the technical layout of the design, but to some extent the emphasis and wording of the text.

"Limited by the size of the chase - the metal frame in which he sets his type, and the availability jof types and sizes", writes Rickards, "the logical jobbing printer became familiar with the range of effects he could produce from a given stock of materials." These limitations resulted in the mixing of various typefaces on the same poster, occasionally even in the same word. Fourteen typefaces, (all of different sizes used in both upper and lower case), were used in Count Plunkett's election poster in 1915 (Fig.48).* Despite the multiplicity of types the finished result has an immediate recognizable order in its design. Irish printers followed a few simple rules for composition of text. In almost every letterpress broadsheet the composition was centered. Although asymmetrical designs did not become popular in Ireland until photo-mechanical printing presses began to replace the letterpress printing process, a visual asymmetry often accidentally occurred on centred broadsheet designs because of the effect created by the mixing of type-faces. Generally the text was clearly arranged into specific sections of information such as what?, when? and where?, in the case of public meeting announcements such as the Cumann

* Fleishmann shows that the 1915 Plunkett poster was printed with the same type still used by Thomas Morahan of the Strokes-town Democrat, up to his death in 1976 on a hand operated Wharfedale Press.

na mBan poster of 1914/15, (Fig.49). Experienced compositors did not usually plan out their design on paper before placing the type in the chase, but rather relied on their own style of composition which they had developed from the limitations of their stock. Different printers tended to produce quite different results while at the same time all printers followed as a guideline the principles of centered composition.

One fairly common device used by compositors was to make first and last letters of titles and names bolder than the other letters, thus endowing the word with greater visual impact. As the large wooden typefaces have no small capitals*, compositors used bolder letters of the same size as in the "W" and "S" of "WORKS" in the 1931 Cuman na nGaedheal poster in Figure 36.

At first glance many typographic broadsheet posters give the impression that the printer chose simply at random the most convenient typefaces and sizes at hand, and hastily filled up the poster. On closer examination it becomes obvious that most are well structured designs determined by the limited possibilities of the small stock of typefaces in the average print shop, combined with the compositors personal style. Far from being products of a design genre of rigid rules the printed broadsheets despite their technical limitations had a lot of scope for creativity. Though most compositors saw the job as little more than working with the type until they achieved something "that looked right", many of these typographic posters show a great sensitivity for balance, rhythm, and form, and in comparison to most of their modern counterparts, they are most aesthetic objects. Indeed, the ageing process itself often greatly enhances the aesthetic qualities of the letterpress broadsheets.

Because of the nature of the information it relayed the letterpress political posters developed styles of format that differed from posters printed for commercial purposes

* Most book typefaces have a second font of capitals of body height equal to that of the lower case letters.

such as for bands or carnivals, etc. This is especially true of election posters which are virtually unmistakable, but generally speaking the difference between political and commercial broadsheets is immediately recognizable because of differences in format. A notable exception to this however was a 1932 Cumann na nGaedheal poster (Fig.50) which as a parody on a contemporary circus poster is a fine example of a typical commercial poster format, strikingly different from that of political posters. The propaganda tactic of this poster is linked to the tradition of the counter proclamation.

In many of the illustrations of this chapter there are examples of ornamentation in the form of decorative rules and borders these like the large type, were printed from engraved pieces of wood. Some compositors obviously preferred not to bother with unnecessary trimmings and only used rules as a means of separating text, but many posters had some degree of ornamentation. Figure 51 which was printed in Ennis, Co. Clare, in 1927 is unusual in its extent of decoration, yet its design structure remains very simple and the overall result is full of character. It is likely that compositors were reluctant to use much ornamentation simply because it was too much work. Another plausible reason is that ornamentation tends to look a little fussy, and in many ways the directness of a purely typographic solution is more appropriate for political posters.

Although many political posters in this period were a combination of typography with illustration or photography, the vast majority were typographic solutions, printed by the letterpress technique. No single reason can account for this, but of the many factors involved, tradition must have had the overriding influence. Since printing was introduced to Ireland, both design and production methods have by and large followed pace with the British tradition.

Until recently British political parties declined to establish any sort of visual corporate identity for publicity purposes, likewise political parties in Ireland have demonstrated similar reserve. The continuing association of political symbolism with fascism has prolonged that traditional reserve. It is extremely rare for election candidates to use any form of illustration other than photography, and even photography, with few exceptions, was reserved as the special privilege of the party leader. Candidates presumably feel safer with purely typographic campaign posters because they are less likely to be accused of extravagance or vanity. An illustrated poster might also run the risk of attracting counter productive graffiti or other defacement.

Ever since newspapers became popular the majority of posters printed for political propaganda in Ireland have been election posters, and the responsibility for designing them usually fell on compositors who had little reason or incentive, or indeed opportunity to change their production methods or to improve their design skills. Thus it is no wonder that the letterpress poster survived so long in Ireland.

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS
HAVE DEMANDED
AND
HAVE SECURED
INDEPENDENCE

CANNOT YOU BE AS TRUE TO IRELAND
AS THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS ARE
TO CZECHO-SLOVAKIA?

YOU CAN ASK FOR INDEPENDENCE BY
VOTING FOR SINN FEIN

Fig. 28.

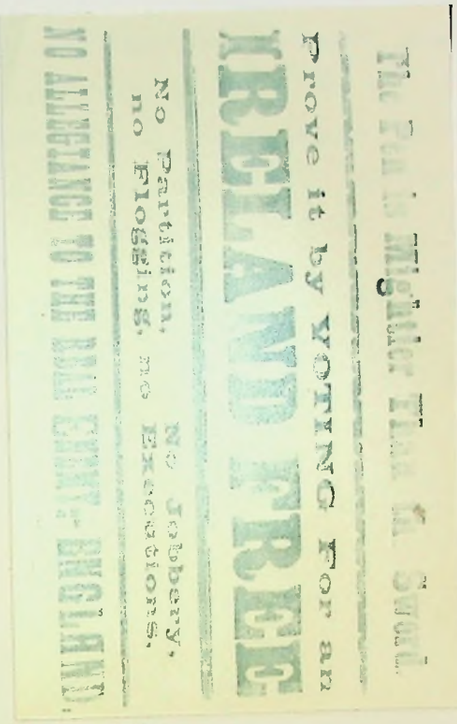


Fig. 29.

CUMANN na nGAEDHEAL
DUBLIN CITY, NORTH

WORKERS!
GET RID OF THE UNCERTAINTY
BY MAKING COSGRAVE A CERTAINT

Vote in the order of your choice 1. 2. 3. 4. 5 for

BELTON, PATRICK, T.C.
BYRNE, JOHN JOSEPH
COLLINS O'DRISCOLL, M
MULCAHY, RICHARD
RICE, VINCENT, K.C.

THE CUMANN NA nGAEDHEAL CANDIDATES

Fig. 30.

DUBLIN SOUTH CITY DIVISION
(St. Stephen's Green & St. Patrick's)
GENERAL ELECTIONS—JUNE, 1922

VOTE 1
ALDERMAN WILLIAM
O'BRIEN
General Treasurer, I.T. & G.W.U.
LABOUR CANDIDATE

Fig. 31

Fig. 32.

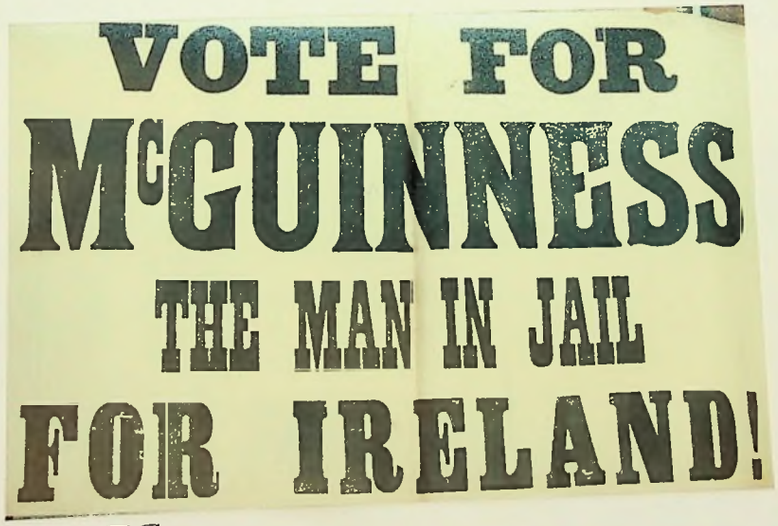


Fig. 33.

Fig. 34.

DUBLIN TRADES UNION COUNCIL AND CENTRAL LABOUR BRANCH

DUBLIN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

VOTE LABOUR

WE LIVE TOGETHER
WE WORK TOGETHER
WE STRIKE TOGETHER
WE STARVE TOGETHER

WHY NOT
VOTE TOGETHER!

Fig. 35.

COSGRAVE
WORKS
WHILE
DE VALERA
SWEARS

VOTE
Cumann na nGaedheal

Issued by Cumann na nGaedheal and Printed by Browne & Nolan, Ltd., Nassau Street, Dublin.

Fig. 36.

EASTER
WEEK
REPEATS
ITSELF

THE I.R.A. STILL
DEFENDS THE
REPUBLIC

Fig. 37.

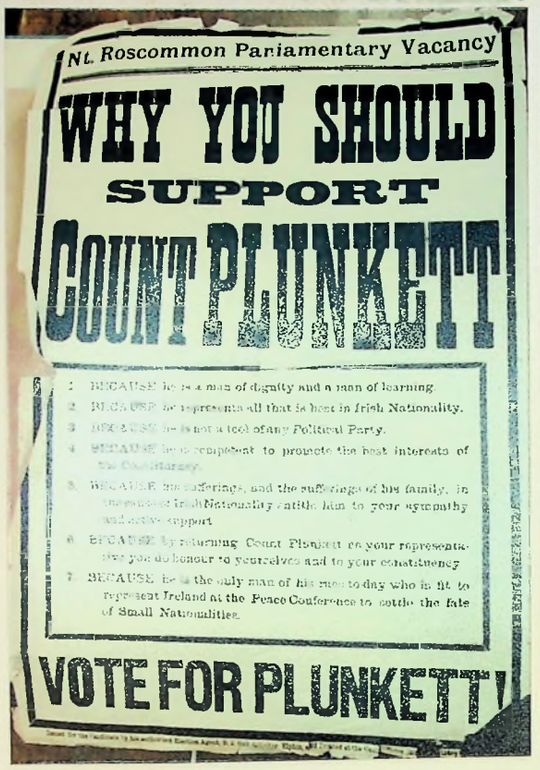


Fig. 38.

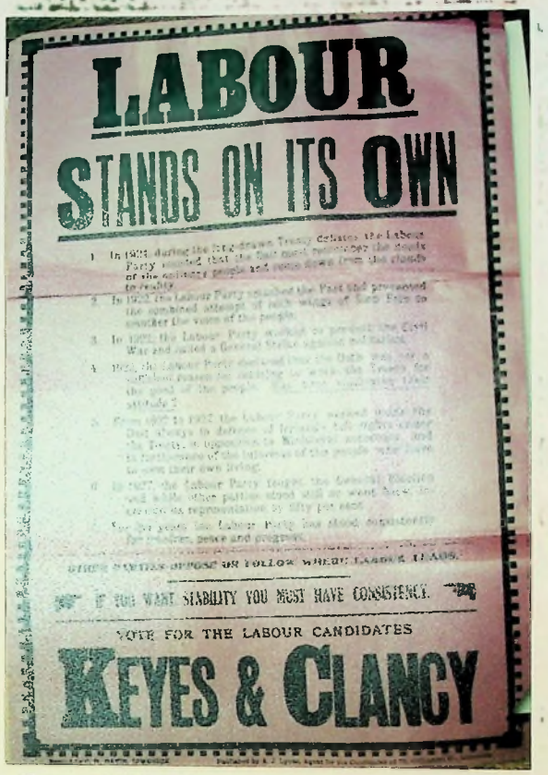
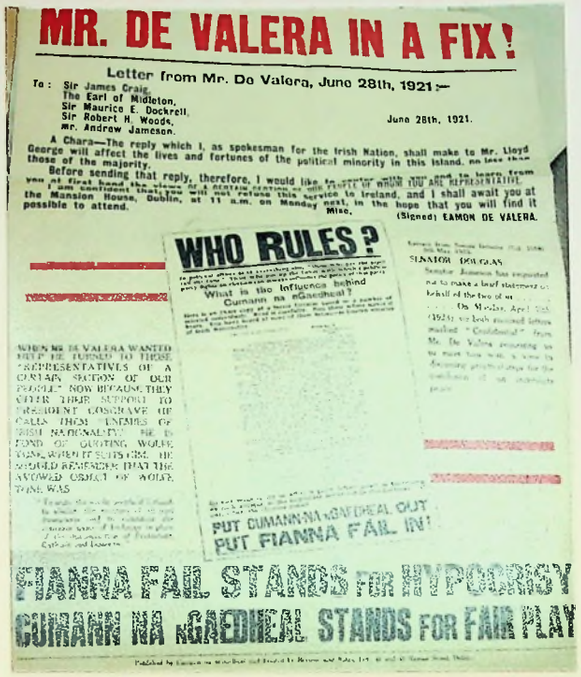


Fig. 39

Fig. 40.



MR. DE VALERA IN A FIX!

Letter from Mr. De Valera, June 28th, 1921 :—

To : Sir James Craig,
The Earl of Midleton,
Sir Maurice E. Dockrell,
Sir Robert H. Woods,
Mr. Andrew Jameson.

June 28th, 1921.

A Chara—The reply which I, as spokesman for the Irish Nation, shall make to Mr. Lloyd George will affect the lives and fortunes of the political minority in this Island, no less than those of the majority.

Before sending that reply, therefore, I would like to confer with you and to learn from you at first hand the views of a certain number of the people of whom you are representative. I am confident that you will not refuse this service to Ireland, and I shall await you at the Mansion House, Dublin, at 11 a.m. on Monday next, in the hope that you will find it possible to attend.

Misc.

(Signed) EAMON DE VALERA.

WHO RULES?

What is the Influence behind Cumann na nGaedheal?

WHEN MR DE VALERA WANTED HELP HE TURNED TO THOSE REPRESENTATIVES OF A CERTAIN SECTION OF OUR PEOPLE" NOW HE ASKS THEY OFFER THEIR SUPPORT TO PRESIDENT COSGRAVE HE CALLS THEM "ENEMIES OF IRISH NATIONALITY" HE IS FOND OF QUOTING WOLFE TONE, WHEN IT SUITS HIM. HE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE AVOWED OBJECT OF WOLFE TONE WAS

SENATOR DOUGLAS

PUT CUMANN NA nGAEDHEAL OUT
PUT FIANNA FÁIL IN!

FIANNA FAIL STANDS FOR HYPOCRISY
CUMANN NA nGAEDHEAL STANDS FOR FAIR PLAY

Fig 41.

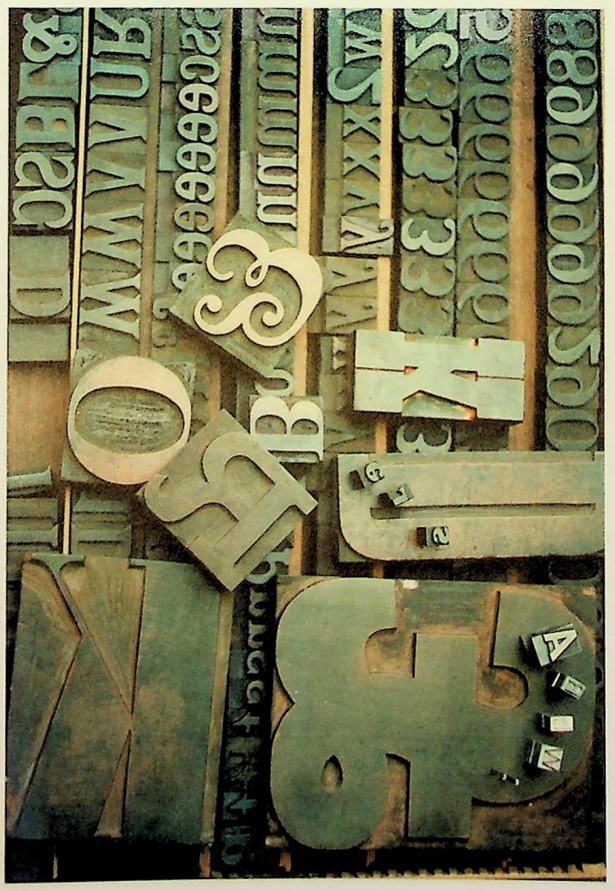


Fig. 42.

Fig. 43.

Fig. 44.

Fig. 45.

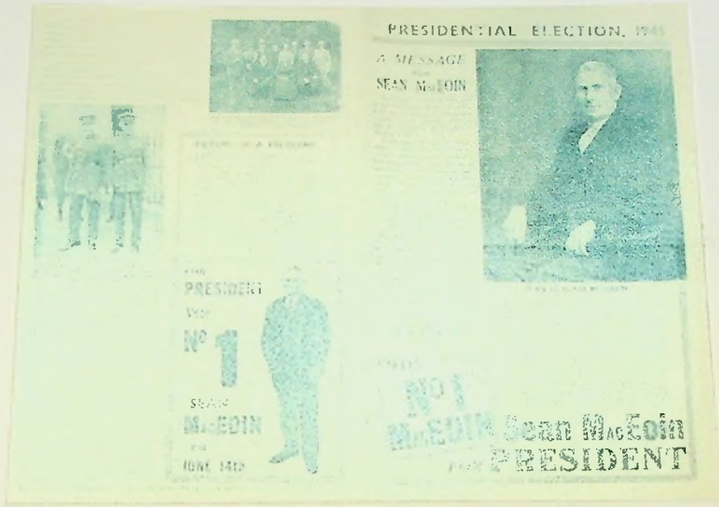

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 1945
A MESSAGE
SEAN MacEOIN
PRESIDENT
No 1
MacEOIN
Sean MacEoin
PRESIDENT

Fig. 46.

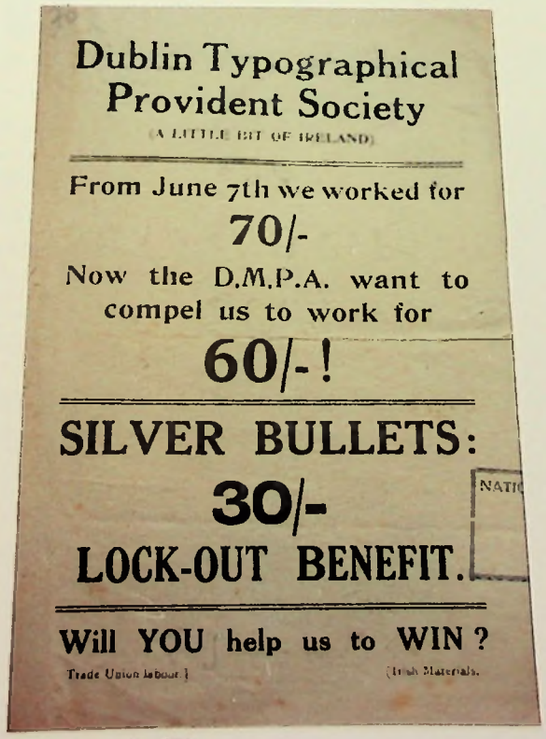

Dublin Typographical
Provident Society
(A LITTLE BIT OF IRELAND)
From June 7th we worked for
70/-
Now the D.M.P.A. want to
compel us to work for
60/-!
SILVER BULLETS:
30/-
LOCK-OUT BENEFIT.
Will YOU help us to WIN?
Trade Union labour
Irish Materials.

Fig. 47.

THE WEST'S AWAKE!

MEN OF NORTH ROSCOMMON,

Ireland Expects You

To STRIKE a BLOW

FOR OUR SMALL NATIONALITY

AND RETURN

COUNT PLUNKETT,

As YOUR REPRESENTATIVE, and FREE HIM from EXILE, and his Children and your Countrymen from

Prison Chains.

Will **North Roscommon Loosen** their **Bonds** or act as **Gaolers** over **Irishmen.**

The EYES of IRELAND are ON YOU!!

The eyes of your sons and daughters beyond the seas, and of your countrymen scattered all over the world are on you.

ALL true LOVERS of IRELAND TRUST NORTH ROSCOMMON, and WELL THEY MAY,

To Return **COunt Plunkett.**

"Democrat Print," Strokestown

Fig. 48.

CUMANN NA mBAN

IRISHWOMEN'S COUNCIL

A PUBLIC MEETING

TOWN HALL ATHENRY

Thursday Aug. 26

For the purpose of establishing a Branch of Above

The Meeting will be addressed by

MISS E. BLOXHAM

Organizer DUBLIN

Women of Athenry come and join the Irishwomen's Council

And take your place in the fight for Ireland's Liberty

Chair will be taken at EIGHT o'clock, sharp

A Dhia Saor Eire

Fig. 49.

Fig. 50.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

Ennis,
September 7th, 1927.

We, the members of the National League Committee, who voted for the National League Candidate three months ago, are now supporting the Government Candidates in the present campaign, because we believe we could not offer a better service to our Country.

(SIGNED).

THOMAS SHERIDAN.
MARTIN LYNCH.
THOMAS MALONE.
ALF. GUY.
MARTIN HEHIR.
J. F. McHUGH.
JOHN MORONEY.
GEORGE O'BRIEN.

Fig. 51.

CHAPTER 5

THE EMERGENCE OF PICTORIAL POLITICAL POSTERS IN IRELAND

Although various techniques for the printing of Illustrations and photography had been developed prior to the twentieth century their appearance in Irish political posters was extremely rare. Even in British and American political posters, it was still very much the exception rather than the rule to use anything other than the purely typographic solutions. Illustrations were first used in large numbers on political poster propaganda during the World War I recruitment drive in Britain, France, America and Germany, where the pictorial poster had superseded the newspaper and the broadsheet as a medium of commercial advertising. The most dynamic use of illustration and colour in political posters was in Societ Russia from 1917 onwards and in Cuba during the 1950's and '60's, when both these campaigns were aimed at spreading propaganda to largely illiterate populations. Religious orders of the Irish Catholic Church had eradicated the problem of illiteracy in Ireland by the late nineteenth century, and influences on Irish vidual communication design came almost exclusively from Britain and the United States. Thus the Irish political posters which used illustration, photography and colour are of more interest in how they reflect the politics of the time than in terms of the development of a uniquely Irish design genre.

Of the few pictorial posters with political content which were printed in Ireland prior to 1914, most seem to have been produced commercially for sale as souvenirs, (eg. the 1898 Emmet Centenary poster, Figure 8). One of the rare exceptions to this is the delightful depiction of a stalwart unionist schoolboy defending Belfast from Home Rule in 1912. (Fig. 52). The little boy stands boldy, feet apart, fists clenched, ready for a fight. The slogan reads "WHO SAID WE'LL HAVE HOME RULE? COME TO BELFAST AND WE'LL SHEW 'EM". Visually this poster is remarkably

different from any of the proclamations or broadsheets which were the norm at the time. Both the style of design and the process by which it was printed were in the tradition of contemporary commercial advertising. It was produced by chromo-lithography, a process that had been invented in 1827 and involved drawing or engraving on stone slabs or metal plates. This process had been quite primitive until the 1890's when technical advances and improved inks helped designers achieve a greater range of tonal qualities. The unionist poster of the schoolboy is almost certainly the first full colour pictorial poster issued by any political interest group in Ireland. Its charm and appeal masks a sinister propaganda aimed not solely at adults but also at the very young. It marks not only a new era of political poster designs in Ireland, but also the beginning of the chain of political events that led to the 1916 rising in Dublin. It was published simultaneously with the Ulster Covenant (Fig. 4, Chapter 2), arguably the best planned combined use of the medium for political propaganda in Ireland.

As unionist propaganda was centered on the British mainland after the posting of the 1914 Home Rule bill, its only significant influence on nationalist and republican poster propaganda after that was in the "Anti-Conscription Pledge" (Fig. 6, Chapter 2) which in 1918 was issued in a form modelled on the "Ulster Covenant". The main influence on nationalists and republicans to produce pictorial propaganda posters was to come from the British Army recruiting posters from 1914 onwards.

The famous World War One recruiting poster which depicts the British Army's recruiting-general, Lord Kitchener, (pointing at the viewer) accompanied by the slogan "Your Country Needs You" was so successful in Britain that it was compied with "Uncle Sam Needs You" in the U.S.A. Impressed with the effectiveness of these illustrated posters the recruiting agencies of many countries became the first patrons of pictorial poster design for political purposes. In Ireland, British opposition to Sinn Fein's "Anti-Conscription Pledge" resulted in a series of full colour lithographic posters specially designed to make Irishmen feel guilty

and cowardly for refusing to defend the Empire. The design and production of these posters was of exceptional sophistication for that period, matching the best of commercial advertising standards. As few Irish people would have seen anything quite like them before, their visual appeal must have been considerable. Because of the seriousness of war, the lightweight element associated with household grocery posters was felt to be out of place. As an alternative, the designers (who were most likely English, though no artist's signature or printer's imprint were printed on these posters) chose styles of narrative painting associated with fine art, hence this poster. Genre is generally known as the "art-poster". One of these posters used by the British in Ireland in 1915 depicts an Irishwoman with a rifle in one hand and with her other hand pointing over the sea towards Belgium which can be seen buring in the distance. She reproaches an Irishman (whose Irishness is symbolized by a shillelagh under his arm) with the slogan "Will you go or must I?" Above the illustration is the heading "FOR THE GLORY OF IRELAND", (Fig. 53). This kind of propaganda is highly provocative. Apart from iots primary function as a recruitment poster it served also to widen the gap between nationalists and republicans by implying that the opposition to conscription was mere cowardice, and so diminish the credibility of Sinn Fein, the organisation under which both traditions had begun to unite. As a colonial power the British had become skilled exponents of this propaganda tactic based on the old maxim "divide and conquer". The strong insult to Irish people inherent in the "Will you go or must I go?" poster, would have caused some to make amends for Sinn Fein's implied cowardice, and others to renounce Sinn Fein's passivist approach towards independence and to retaliate against the insulting propaganda through armed rebellion. Ironically such posters may have helped to recruit people into the Irish Republican Brotherhood as well as the British Army. Another remarkable poster of the same vein, also issued in 1915, was more subtle

in approach but the illustration was strikingly dramatic, (Fig.55). Under the slogan "IRISHMEN, AVENGE THE LUSITANIA", is an image of the great passenger ship sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Co. Cork in that year. At first glance the viewer is struck by th dramatic vision of the flames and smoke billowing from the tilting ship, but then the eyes are drawn downwards towards the lifeboats in the water and towards men, women and children clinging to floating wreckage. In the foreground is a man trying to stay afloat while holding a baby girl to his back. this poster does not overtly accuse Irishmen of cowardice but in the light of the "Anti-Conscription Pledge" the accusation is nonetheless implicit. This poster was designed to elicit feelings of guilt from the viewer, to make him feel that he is committing a dishonour to the victims on the Lusitania if he does not "join an Irish regiment today".

The typography of the chromo-lithographic posters is also notably different from that of the letterpress broadsheets. These letters were drawn by hand from stencils jonto the stone. Only a very limited number of typefaces were used, usually they were elongated and condensed in form. Interestingly no serif faces ever appeared on these posters, a feature which in 1915 would have been very visually striking in comparison to the common broadsheets, and which adds greatly to the sophistication of the full colour image.

Political interest groups within the nationalist and republican traditions did not have the financial resources for large full colour poster campaigns for many years after the recruitment drive launched by the British Army in Ireland from 1914 to 1918.* Even the recruitment poster that depicts John Redmond (Fig. 5, Chapter 2) was issued as part of the Army's recruitment campaign, (not by the Home Rule Party).

* Some two and three colour litographic posters were printed in America to raise funds for the Republican cause after the 1916 rising. These are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Good conditions for the printing of illustrated posters did not exist during the turmoil of the Anglo-Irish war and the civil war, though in 1922 a simple but visually effective poster design was used for various pro-Treaty candidates still in British jails for their part in the Anglo-Irish war. An illustration of a man in prison uniform and the slogan "PUT IN IN TO GET HIM OUT" (Fig. 55) accompanied the usual "VOTE FOR" and the candidate's name. This design is one of the boldest combinations of illustration and typography to be found on political posters in Ireland despite the almost primitive simplicity of the illustration. (During the Paris rising in May 1968, students produced hundreds of very effective posters by deliberately producing primitive illustrations, which were effective because of their boldness and contrast to commercial advertising design, and the same principle though to a lesser degree accounts for the visual strength of this poster). It achieves a direct impact of word and image, a fundamental principle of good poster design.

The first pictorial poster campaign launched by the anti-treaty republican faction was during the 1927 election. Figure 56 is one of a series of at least four illustrated posters depicting the Free State Government as an instrument of oppression. All four images are particularly gorey scenes of the horrors of the civil war. The tyupography and the illustrative drawing style are of no great merit and if anything only serve to lessen the credibility of the intended propaganda, which, as in the Lusitania poster, is intended to elicit guilt from the viewer. These posters are however, most significant to our visual heritage as visual traces of the bitterness that resulted from the civil war.

The formation of Fianna Fail in 1926 represented the first major parliamentary challenge to the Cumann na nGaedheal Free State government. De Valera, the leader

of Fianna Fail had since his presidency of the 1919 Sinn Fein Dail established himself as the effective leader of Irish Republicanism. With the defeat of the republican faction in the civil war many people believed that De Valera and Fianna Fail offered the most promising route towards a thirty-two county republic. Amongst republicans De Valera was affectionately referred to as "the uncrowned King of Ireland". Thus most of the propaganda put out by Cumann na nGaedheal to this challenge was aimed more at discrediting De Valera than Fianna Fail. One of the earliest posters of this kind was designed especially to reidicule the notion of De Valer as King of Ireland. Issued in 1930 it caricatures his head (on which is placed a laurel wreath) on a gold sovereign and asks if it is "worth its face value?". The caricature is quite well drawn and is obviously the work of a trained commercial artist. (Fig. 54).

Fianna Fail provided a lively opposition, and Cumann na nGaedheal knew that they would need a strong propaganda campaign if they were to win the 1932 general election. They produced a series of many cartoon illustrated posters the main theme being De Valera's links with the I.R.A. and his responsibility for the civil war. Most of the posters in this series, were rather stylistic line drawings, such as in Figure 58, which depicts an I.R.A. man holding a gun to De Valera's back, and others (not shown) which amongst other things depicted him as a crooked card player cheating the honest citizens of the Free State by slipping an I.R.A. man cards under the table, and also as a supplier of arms to the I.R.A. These were printed by the Temple Press, who would have commissioned the commercial artist to dod the drawings, (they are not signed). The posters which concentrated on portraying De Valera as the real cause of the civil war were of exactly the same format, ie: simple line illustrations with slogans printed in the large wood type, (Fig. 59). Though these drawings are not so stylistic and are in fact the work of another illustrator, they are

very much the same kind of illustration, using the same illustrative devices most notably the use of labels to identify the characters and message portrayed. This device is still quite common in modern political cartoons and is a means of adding to the speed of comprehension of the illustration, but often, as in the case of the 1932 election posters, it betrays a lack of imagination and inventiveness. It is also significant that the posters linking De Valera to the civil war were printed by McConnell's Advertising Service. Still operating today, McConnells is one of the longest established advertising agencies in Ireland. Fianna Fail also used professional design consultants to organise their poster campaign in the 1932 election. They chose the Fodhla Printing Co. which had a distinguished record as a publisher of books in Gaelic, however, the poster designs they produced were in exactly the same view as the Cumann na nGaedheal caricature posters. Only one illustrator was commissioned by Fodhla and he signs himself "Fearganaim" ("Man-without-a-name") which appropriately echoes the almost childish simplicity of his illustrative style, (Fig.. 60). However the tone of the propaganda message of the Fianna Fail posters was markedly different. Theydo not refer to the civil war in any direct manner, but rather concentrate on the common perception of Cumann na nGaedheal as being too submissive to Britain, and perhaps more importantly they offer a better future, which is essentially what every electorate wants. The Fianna Fail posters promised to improve the national standard of living and to create a more equal society. After the "Wall Street Crash" in 1929 thse issues were more important to many people than the rights and wrongs of the civil war, and the view that Cumann na nGaedheal was controlled by a wealthy elite was widely accepted. Cumann na nGaedheal's reaction to this was to accuse Fianna Fail of adopting socialist principles to mislead the poor and to win the support of people who would normally vote for the Labour Party. In so doing Cumann na nGaedheal hoped to win the support of the Catholic hierarchy, most of whom would make no distinction between socialism and communism, associating all leftish politics with godlessness and sinfulness.

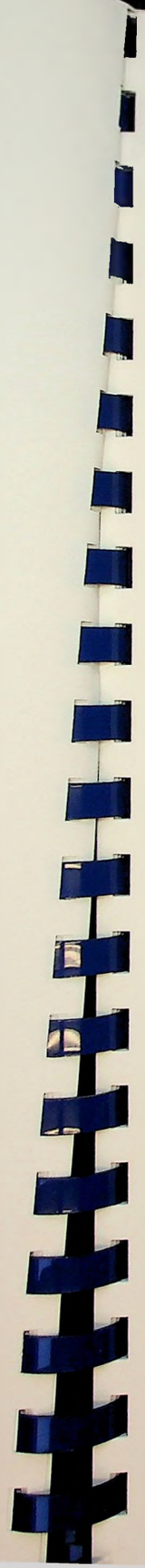
One of their posters began with the slogan "WE WANT NO REDS HERE!" (Fig. 61). This poster and "THE SHADOW OF A GUNMAN" poster (Fig. 11, Chapter 2) are also of interest as the first colour lithographic political posters issued in Ireland since the British Army World War One recruitment posters. They were printed in Dublin by Hely's Limited who have since closed down. They are the first full colour posters designed by professional designers (as opposed to printers or compositors) to have been issued by a political interest group within the Free State parliamentary system. In comparison to the British Army recruitment posters they are not quite so elaborate in either design or production, but because of their boldness and greater refinement of the most important visual elements they are slightly more effective at relaying the message while nonetheless are equally attractive visually.

The desire for new styles of political posters is also evident in another unusual Cumann na nGaedheal poster of the 1932 election. Entitled "A HOT RECORD" (Fig. 62), it has many of the hallmarks of commercial advertising design of the period. The style of rendering, the use of arrows, and the typography of the words "songs for the.." is in stark contrast to the looseness of the cartoon illustrations. The boldness of the illustration itself is quite effective and unusual for black and white letter-press posters but there is too much text to make it an effective election poster because the simpler solutions competing with it communicate to the viewer in a faster way.

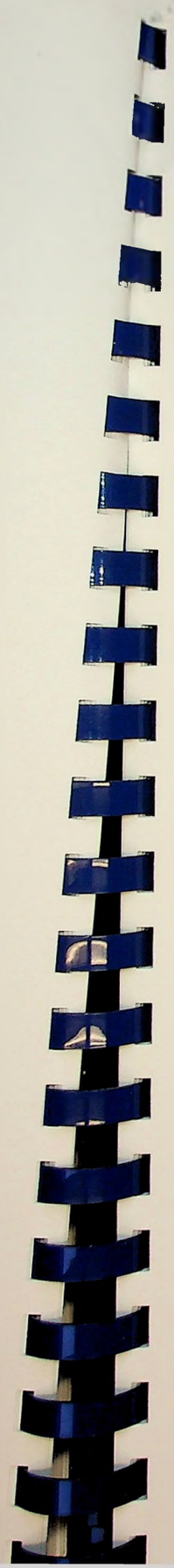
After the 1932 election the use of illustration on Irish political posters declined almost completely and from then on pictorial posters generally had photographic images. Photographs had been widely printed in books by the letterpress method towards the end of the nineteenth

century, but only became common in newspapers in the early twentieth century when certain papers specialised in conveying news through the new medium. One such paper called the "Daily Sketch", was printed in London and was popular throughout the British Isles. It was common practice for most newspapers to issue front pages as posters for display outside points of sale. Figure 63, is a Daily Sketch front page display poster showing the Viceroy's state departure from Dublin in 1915. Historically this is of interest as it visually reflects the substantial public support for an Irish connection with Britain before 1916. These kind of posters would have encouraged the use of photography in political posters issued by the political interest groups in Ireland. The 1927 election seems to have been the first in which candidates had their photographs on their election posters. The first party to use the device was the Labour Party whose candidates Morrissey and O'Brien* issued a joint poster which had photographic portraits of them framed in oval shapes (Fig. 64) - previously the traditional way of framing miniature portrait paintings. The device which had been popular in the U.S.A. many years previously, caught on fast in Ireland and in the 1932 election the leaders of all the political parties contesting seats in the Dail used portrait photographs on their campaign posters, (eg. Fig. 7, Chapter 2). This still remains the only form of pictorial imagery that individual candidates have used on their posters at election times and even this had tended to be the almost exclusive privilege of party leaders up to the 1970's. Photographic images on political posters in Ireland always appear as regular shapes. The practice of printing cut-out shapes from photographs, or more complex photo-montage techniques, or of printing text over the photographic image area do not occur on Irish political posters during the period covered here, except in a rather

* Willie O'Brien was for some time the president of the Irish Trade Union Congress and was himself a collector of the printed ephemera of the Labour movement in Ireland.

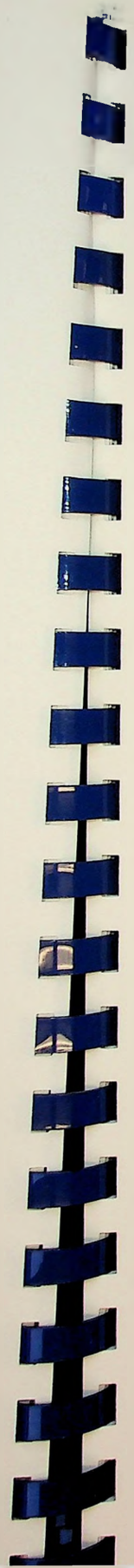


timid way on the borchure format from time to time. This is mainly because they were produced by the letterpress method. To print text over a photographic image would have involved two print runs, and would only have been possible where the image had large areas of white. Generally speaking it was against the custom and practice of the letterpress method to print text on the image area of a photographic or illustration. The plates from which photographs were printed were set by the compositor with the rest of the type and the poster was produced in one printing. The design practices of letterpress compositors changed very little in Ireland during the period covered here. Likewise Irish printers were slow to change their production methods or to purchase more advanced machinery. While many advances had taken place in the United States and Europe with regard to design and production, Ireland was plagued with economic difficulties since the civil war, and under the De Valera regime had become culturally very insular. The influences of art movements such as Dada and De Stijl had revolutionised poster design in many European countries but hardly had any effect on Irish advertising design, and had none whatsoever on the design of political posters. Thus, the use of photography on posters continued to be very simplistic throughout the period covered here. Until an Irish television station was established in 1962 photographs were the most visually realistic way of communicating current events in Ireland. (The cinema occasionally offered news from abroad, but cinematic coverage of Irish current affairs was exceptionally rare. In 1948 Clann na Poblachta were the first Irish political praty to use the medium when they had a short promotional film made). Photographs in themselves were used in Ireland as symbols of modern progress when in other countries they had lost all novelty value. A Cumann na nGaedheal poster in 1931 used ten different photographs to show what a good job they had been doing in redressing



the economic ills that resulted from the violence of the early 1920's (Fig. 65). One photograph depicts "the finest road in the world - Carrigrohane, Co. Cork", and the others are boastful of social and economic improvement. The novelty value of so many photographs on one poster may have made this effective to the Irish people in 1931, (if it caused people to stop, look, and read it was an effective poster) but in design terms it is sadly unimaginative, and with the passing of time looks very dated.

The 1932 general election was arguably the most important in modern Irish history. It was certainly the most hard fought and bitter Irish election, with no party winning an absolute majority and Fianna Fail forming a government only with the support of the Labour Party who were swayed by Fianna Fail's attitude to social policy. The emotive nature of the 1932 election is well reflected by the posters which were a major element of the resultant propaganda battle. Exactly to what extent the posters played a part in deciding the final result is impossible to say because political science was as yet in its infancy and no studies or pre-election polls were made during the period. However, the scathing attack launched by Cumann na nGaedheal against De Valera in person (albeit through a mass of derogatory cartoon illustrations on posters), resulted in De Valera getting more publicity throughout the country than T.W. Cosgrave of Cumann na nGaedheal. Many nationalists saw Fianna Fail as a progressive parliamentary force and many republicans believed that De Valera was being unfairly victimised by Cumann na nGaedheal propaganda. The old maxim "no publicity is bad publicity" held true once again and during the following sixteen years of Fianna Fail government De Valera was held in higher esteem by republicans and nationalists alike, (and simultaneously with greater contempt by many Free State civil war veterans) than any Irish politician since Parnell.



Of all the political interest groups that issued political posters in Ireland from 1898 to 1946, those issued by the agencies of British rule, and later those of Cumann na nGaedheal, were the most elaborate and sophisticated in terms of design and production. Generally speaking this is as true of the typographic letterpress proclamations and broadsheets they issued, as it is of their pictorial posters. The explanation for this is simply that both these groups had good financial resources and could afford to spend more than other interest groups on propaganda campaigns. When De Valera came into power in 1932 he used Radio Eireann, the Free State national radio service to great effect as a propaganda device and consequently Fianna Fail had no great need of elaborate poster campaigns by the 1948 coalition. Following the disbandment of Cumann na nGaedheal in 1933, the consequent formation of the Fine Gael party does not seem to have resulted in any interesting or innovative approaches to the use of posters as a propaganda device. Neither the Fine Gael party nor the National Library of Ireland have any Fine Gael posters up to 1948 in their possession, and no examples are to be found reproduced in illustrated Irish history books. As collectors of printed ephemera usually choose to preserve posters with illustrations, or with interesting slogans, the lack of Fine Gael posters in the archives would suggest that what they did print were mainly typographic broadsheets with unexceptional slogans.

It is obvious from the pictorial posters discussed in this chapter, that while specific interest groups had poster campaigns in which they issued a series of a particular style, there is no evidence in any series that any interest group evolved its own style of visual expression. All the pictorial political posters have borrowed their style of illustration (or use of photography) from previously established styles in other media. It has been a common feature of rebellions and revolutions in may countries

that new forms of popular visual expression emerge from the posters issued by the rebels. It has happened in countries as diverse as France, China, Cuba, Germany, and Russia. However in all these cases the new styles of poster design were based on a connection with an older traditional folk art with which the people were able to identify. These countries had strong traditions of visual art forms, a necessary condition that was not prevalent in Ireland. Ireland's poor tradition in the visual arts is partly due to geographical isolation, but more the the deliberate policy of eradicating the Gaelic culture by the British. It is also a feature of revolutions that gave rise to new poster styles that the political leaders encouraged the arts. For example, in 925 Lenin said: "Art belongs to the people. Its roots should penetrated deeply into the very thick masses of the people. It should be comprehensive to these masses and loved by them". Enthusiasm for the visual arts amongst leading Irish politicians has amounted to little more than lip service. Also the 1916 rising and the Anglo-Irish war were far more politically motivated than cultural. They do not represent a cultural revolution, and consequently in terms of art and design there is little that can be considered revolutionary in Irish pictorial political posters.

Fig. 53.

Fig. 52.

Fig. 54.

Fig. 55.

Fig. 56.

Fig. 57.

Fig. 58.

Fig. 59.

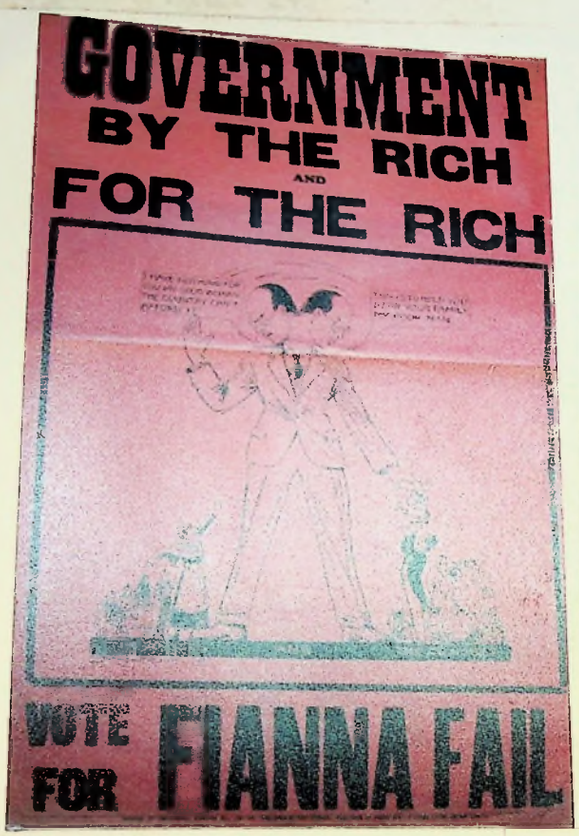


Fig. 60.

Fig. 61.

Fig. 62.

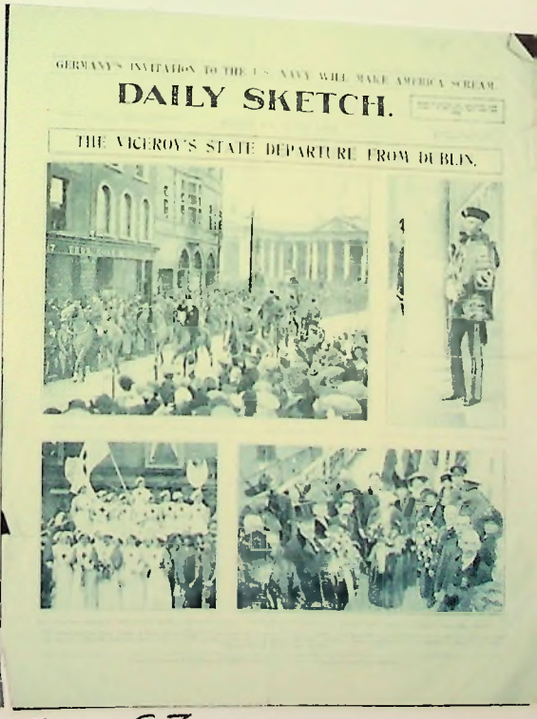


Fig. 63.

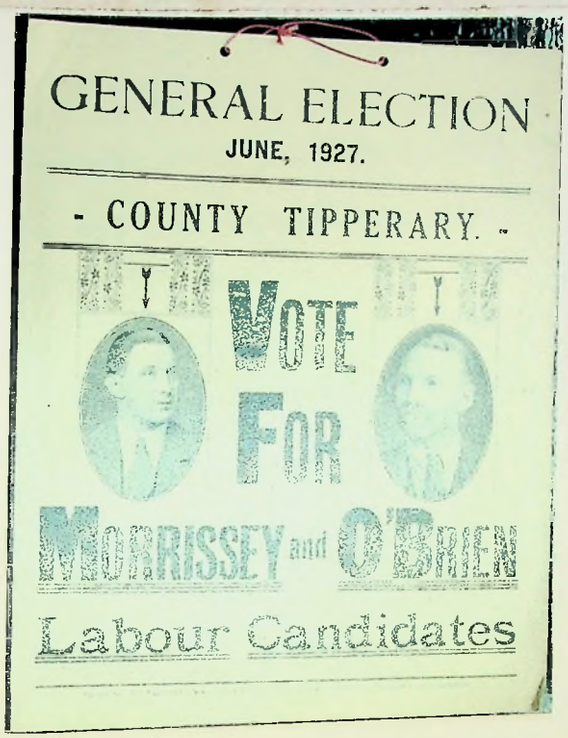

GENERAL ELECTION
JUNE, 1927.
- COUNTY TIPPERARY. -
VOTE FOR
MORRISSEY and O'BRIEN
Labour Candidates

Fig. 64.

Ireland Remade
By President Cosgrave's Government

Fig. 65.

CHAPTER 6

Symbolism in Political Proclamations and their derivitives in Ireland 1898 - 1948.

It has already been shown in Chapter Three that proclamations in themselves were symbols of the power of the interest-groups that issued them. It has also been shown that interest-groups often took great pains to establish their credentials, and that this was done not only through legalistic wording but also through symbols. A symbol as used in a political proclamation means any visual element that stands for, represents, or recalls something else, not by exact resemblance but by suggestion or association in thought, especially if it represents an abstract political philosophy.

In Ireland the first symbol to be used on a political proclamation was the English royal seal. Proclamations issued by native Irish political interest groups up to the last decades of the nineteenth centry usually had no symbolic elements because to most Irish people their gaelic culture had come to symbolise poverty. Thus occasionally some proclamations which advocated resistance to British rule in Ireland actually used the English royal seal to lent weight to it's authority, to make it look "official".

However in the early 1880's there began a strong revival of interest in Ireland's celtic past, and as earlier mentioned, this gave rise to many cultural organisations, which in turn produced visual imagery that often provided symbolism for nationalist and republican propaganda. The 1898's Emmet centenary poster (fig.8) has a great deal of the symbolism spawned by the celtic revival, i.e, shamrock, a round tower, an Irish wolfhound, pikes, a dolmen, and a celtic cross. Though these symbols are still used to represent things Irish they have been most estensively used for commercial ventures such as the promotion of tourism and Irish industry, they have been largely rejected by political parties. Even the harp, the official symbol of the Irish Government is very rarely found on political posters, (fig.51, chapter 4, is one such rare example). Though republicans and nationalists embraced the celtic revival with equal fervour it is clear from the posters they issued that they wanted any symbolism they used to reflect a new sense of national awareness more than simply a past heritage. The most common symbolic device used to link the modern political movements with the gaelic tradition was to write celtic ornamentation with photographic images. It was a very common format for "in memoriam" posters which were sold commercially as celebratory souvenirs of dead heros such as Sean MacDiarmada (fig.66), a signatory of the 1916 Easter week proclamation.

More than any other Irish interest-group, it has been the overtly militaristic republican faction that has developed the use of symbolism on political posters. Virtually all of this strain of symbolism stems from the 1798 and 1916 rebellions, and is more correctly representative of Irish repbulicanism than of Ireland as a whole. It's most elaborate manifestations on posters were not designed or produced in Ireland, but in the United States. Printed in New York in 1918 a poster entitled "WHO FEARS TO SPEAK OF EASTER WEEK" was one of many produced to raise funds for the republican cause, (fig.67). It has no text of the usual kind that proclaims, announces, orders or informs, but is entirely composed of symbols. A song sheet with the words of the unofficial national anthem "A Nation Once Again" is the center piece. The two Easter week proclamations issued by the Republicans are also displayed as prominent symbols of Ireland's right to self determination. Irish manhood is symbolised by some fifteen minuet photographic portraits of the leaders, and Irish womanhood is symbolised by a picture of Countess Markievicz in classical pose. The buildings in which the 1916 battles took place are also used symbolically, (the General Post Office and the Four Courts have in particular become symbols of Republicanism). There is also a large shamrock, the traditional symbol of Irish Christianity, and a man with a pike, a symbol of the 1798 rebellion. Visual elements in another American poster published during the Anglo-

Irish war, symbolised that war as simply as a struggle for liberty, and as can be seen from the smouldering ruins of a Church in the background, as a fight for Christianity, (fig.68). In 1918 a Cumann na mBan poster encouraged the wearing of an "Easter Lily" to symbolise the desire for an independent Ireland, (fig.69). The most dramatic use of symbolism was undoubtedly the illustrated posters which often greatly exagerated or romanticized reality. The most outstanding example of this is a 1927 republican poster in which Ireland is symbolised as a young woman, and England is symbolised by a pair of bloody hands about to molest her, (fig.70). It also symbolises Irish history as a series of hanged men, an English firing squad, a graveyard and once again, a burning church (in the right bottom corner of illustration).*

Of the few symbols commonly used by Irish people to symbolise their nationality, the Irish flag is the most common. This too is originally a republican symbol, it's inspiration is closely linked to the French revolution. Many modern political posters simply use areas of green and orange, and this is common to parliamentary parties and militant factions alike. The I.R.A. have always used the Irish tri-colour to symbolise freedom, and the British "Union Jack" to symbolise oppression, as in a 1933 I.R.A. recruitment poster, (fig.71).

*Figure 6D is also of interest for it's production process. The red for the blood was coloured in by hand after printing. This practice was fairly common for short print runs.

The use of the gaelic lettering lettering in "Oglaigh na h-Eireann" in the 1933 I.R.A. recruitment poster is also symbolic in nature. Indeed the development of a specifically Irish typeface for use in print was the most scientific attempt of all to develop a symbol of modern Ireland that was essentially Irish. The first font of gaelic type was ironically commissioned by Queen Elizabeth in 1571, to publish a Protestant catechism, and was in no way intended to promote Irish culture. This provoked Irish Monks in exile in Belgium to make another Irish type, which greatly improved on the first design and became the accepted model for future designs. To counteract the publications coming from Catholic sources, the Church of England in 1680 commissioned a farther improved design, used for the printing of more Protestant catechisms. "The contest for the souls of the Irish people", writes E.W. Lynam, "has at least produced one result for which we may be entirely grateful". The reason for the subsequent decline of the gaelic type from the 1750's onwards is also ironic. When the Irish Catholic Church were legally permitted to print in Ireland, they began to use Roman type. By 1897 however the Gaelic League revived Irish literature so much that there were demands for new fonts of Irish type. A London firm, Messers Figgins, produced a type designed by a professor O'Brien, which became the standard Irish type since 1900. Messers Figgins, later called R.H. Stevens & Co., manufactured all the modern Irish book faces, but Lynam makes no mention of the large wood type that was used on many posters, including the 1933 I.R.A.

recruitment poster. The "Leinster Leader" of Naas used the same wood type on many of their posters, but unfortunately no longer possess any of their old letterpress stock. The manufacturer's name is almost always stamped on the side of the wood letters. However, one small piece of celtic wood type ornamentation from the National College of Art and Design's print workshop has the initials of the "Irish Print & Engraving Company" stamped on it. Once based in college Green, Dublin, that company no longer operates, but it may have manufactured gaelic type as well as ornamentation. But Owen Curren, Research Officer with the Irish Print Union says that as far as he has been able to assertain no wood type was ever manufactured in Ireland and that De Little's definately manufactured some gaelic wood type.

In 1913 the I.R.B.'s director of arms known as "The O'Rahilly" changed the design of the letters "R" and "s" in the traditional gaelic type, and made other slight reforms that greatly eased legibility. It was used in the Republican newspaper "An Cliadheamh Soluis" and manufactured by the "Lanston Monotype Co." in London. He also designed a gaelic display face, which would necessarily have been manufactured in wood, so it is possible that this too was manufactured in wood, so it is possible that this too was manufactured by the Lanston Monotype Co. The O'Rahilly was killed in the fighting during the 1916 insurrection, and his colleague Joseph Plunkett, one of the 1916 proclamation signatories, and also a designer of gaelic type, was later executed. By 1940 (at least) there was

a wide range of Irish type designs, as can be seen in a Connradh na Gaedhilge* poster from that year, (fig.72). However after a great deal of time and effort by Irish Governments to revive gaelic as the working language of the country, it was finally decided in the 1960's to discontinue the use of gaelic type in the hope that Irish people would find it easier to read gaelic in the Roman types and so take more interest in it. That policy had no noticeable effect other than the extinction of the gaelic type, which was the most sophisticated and genuinely Irish product of our visual communications heritage.

The agencies of British rule in Ireland have also made a contribution to the establishment of Irish symbolism. Apart from ensuring for posterity the survival of the gaelic letter forms by producing it's first type, it was also the British who first used the harp as a symbol of Ireland when they introduced it to Anglo Irish coinage in 1509. The First World War British Army recruitment posters in Ireland sometimes used Irish symbolism. One of these entitled "THE REAL IRISH SPIRIT" depicts a young Irish country gentleman in horseriding attire, telling his friend who is wearing a British Army uniform, "I'll go too". In the foreground is a cluster of shamrocks and in the background is a round tower and church, (fig.73).

*Connradh na Gaedhilge evolved from the Gaelic League and continues to promote the Irish language. It is also worth noting that typewriters with gaelic type were also manufactured.

The symbolism that has been used on political proclamations and their derivitives in Ireland has come from a variety of sources. Celtic ornamentation, wolfhounds, and dolmens are essentially symbols of Ireland's celtic and earlier heritage. The shamrock, round towers, churchs, celtic crosses and gaelit type are derived from early Irish Christianity. The harp as a symbol, was introduced by the British pikes, the tri-colour, the 1916 proclamation, the General Post Office, the Four Courts, the Easter Lily and the faces of the leaders of the 1916 rebellion, especially that of Pearse, are all derived from the Republican tradition. Ireland symbolised as a woman (usually wearing a tiara inscribed with the work Eire) was developed through the Anglo-Irish literacy revival.

Ironically the tradition of parliamentary nationalism can make no claim to have contributed anything to Irish national symbolism, except indirectly through it's occasional use of celtic ornamentation and other symbolism which it borrowed from celtic revivalism, and also from British sources. It can however be argued that his is much to the credit of the parliamentary tradition as it si philosophically difficult to justify the use of symbolism in propaganda aimed at achieving the acceptance of democratic principles amongst various interest groups. The reality of the stress and strain of life that occurs in any community with many interest gropus occurs in always highly romanticized and dangerously simplified when reduced to symbolism. Throughout history the emotive usages of symbolism in propaganda have resulted in extreme self-

rightousness and superiority complexes amongst political interest groups. Consequently symbolism posses a serious threat to democracy when used in propaganda towards political ends, especially by groups that espouse violence as a solution to political problems.

Nevertheless the use of symbols is the most basic and fundamental form of human communication upon which speech, literacy and numeracy are based. Every culture is constantly creating new symbols that typify aspects of it's form of civilization, without which it could have no cultural or national identity. Some symbols however are essentially artificial especially those which are the premeditated representation of an abstract idea. For example the Irish tri-colour symbolises a national and political unity of Ireland's gaelic culture and Ulster Protestantism despite the fact that Ireland is only slightly gaelic and Ulster Protestants have no desire for such a unity. This kin of symbolism is morally suspect because through it ideas become so abstracted that they enter the realm of romantic fantasy while simultaneously they are presented as emperic reality.

The cautious use of symbolism in political posters issued by Irish parliamentary parties (with the exception of the propaganda that resulted from the Civil War during the maturing years of Dail Eireann), reflects the fundamental philosophical difficulty of the concept of a united Ireland; that is, to define who the Irish people are. There are so many interest-groups divided by class, culture, religion, and politics, that

the use of symbolism on political posters usually emphasises these divisions. Political parties usually want at least to appear to be open to all sectors of society. For political parties intent on the promotion of democracy and political unity on the island of Ireland the appropriate use of symbolism is a permanent dilemma.

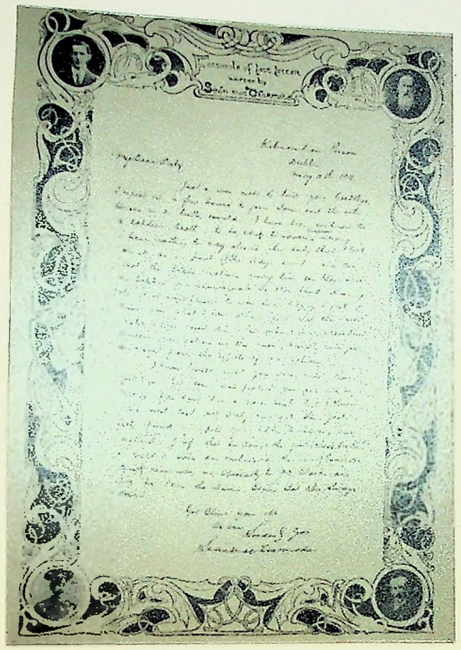


Fig. 66.

Fig. 67.

Fig. 68.

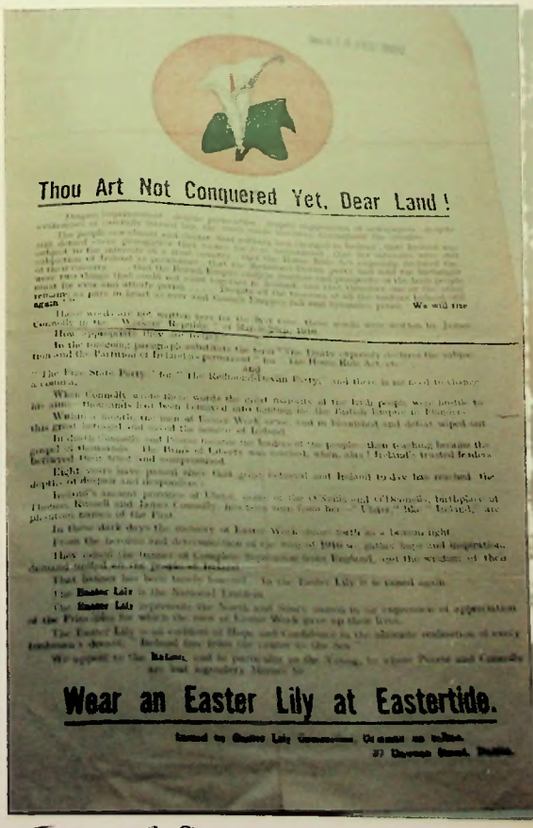
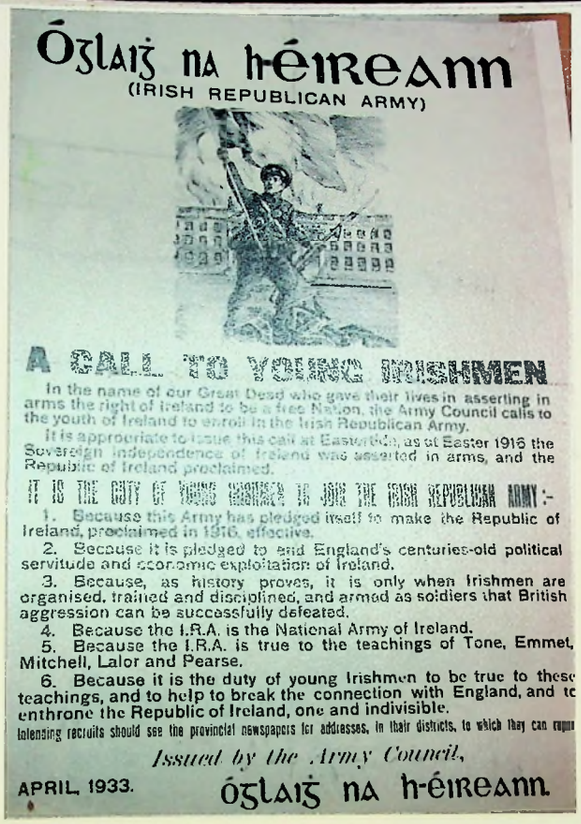


Fig. 69.



Óglaiż na h-éireann
(IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY)

A CALL TO YOUNG IRISHMEN

In the name of our Great Dead who gave their lives in asserting in arms the right of Ireland to be a free Nation, the Army Council calls to the youth of Ireland to enroll in the Irish Republican Army.

It is appropriate to issue this call at Eastertide, as at Easter 1916 the Sovereign independence of Ireland was asserted in arms, and the Republic of Ireland proclaimed.

IT IS THE DUTY OF YOUNG IRISHMEN TO JOIN THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY:-

1. Because this Army has pledged itself to make the Republic of Ireland, proclaimed in 1916, effective.
2. Because it is pledged to end England's centuries-old political servitude and economic exploitation of Ireland.
3. Because, as history proves, it is only when Irishmen are organised, trained and disciplined, and armed as soldiers that British aggression can be successfully defeated.
4. Because the I.R.A. is the National Army of Ireland.
5. Because the I.R.A. is true to the teachings of Tone, Emmet, Mitchell, Lalor and Pearse.
6. Because it is the duty of young Irishmen to be true to these teachings, and to help to break the connection with England, and to enthrone the Republic of Ireland, one and indivisible.

Intending recruits should see the provincial newspapers for addresses, in their districts, to which they can repor

Issued by the Army Council,

APRIL, 1933. Óglaiż na h-éireann.

Fig. 71.

Fig. 70.

Fig. 72.

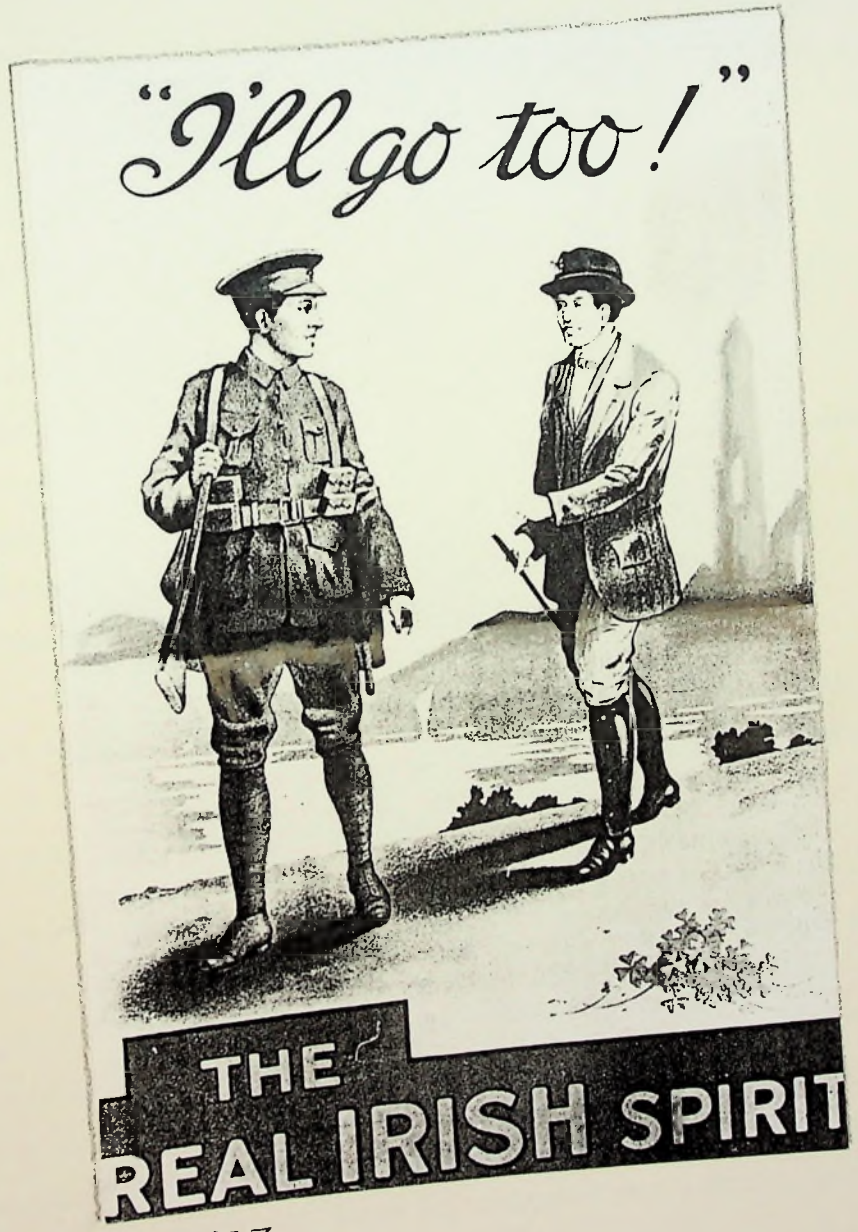


Fig. 73.

CONCLUSIONS

Proclamations, and the broadsheets, handbills and pictorial posters that derived from them have been used in many ways and by many interest-groups in Ireland between 1898 and 1948. Amongst other things they have been used to establish authority, to promote law and order, to recruit soldiers, to oppose conscription , to publicise injustice, to raise funds, to call meetings, to threaten and to subdue, to insight violence and rebellion and to appeal for peace. The most politically significent use of a proclamation in Ireland was the declaration of a Republic by the leaders of the 1916 rebellion. By far the most common use has been to seek votes at election times. This must rank as the second most politically significent use because the choosing between interest groups (in itself a political act) involves almost the entire adult population and more than any other factor decides the political structure of the country.

The tactics employed for all the various uses of this medium, as mentioned in the introduction, are (i) self promotion (ii repudiation of opposition. Initially these tactics were practised through intimidating legalistic language, but this gave way to the use of emotive slogans and symbolism. This change took place in Ireland during the period covered in this study. At 1898 long texts predominated but judging from the collection in the National Library of Ireland (which is the largest of it's kind) it would seem that the use of the

proclamation format for political propaganda ceased sometime during the 1930's*. By the 1920's long texts were already less common than short slogans which to the present day are still the most popular format. Following the 1916 rising the use of symbolism flourished on political posters especially those of a republican nature. The caustic sarcasm and blatant irreverence displayed by republicans and nationalists towards one another during the decade following the civil war, gave rise to the most intense use of symbolism through illustrations ever seen in any period of Irish political posters. In comparison to the vague messages so prevailent in political posters of the 1980's, these seem quite incredible and can only be appreciated and understood in the context of the bitterness so prevailent in Ireland in the wake of the Civil War.

*Neither the Government Publications Office, the library in Dail Eireann, nor the Department of Communications, keep records of proclamations issued by the Government. They have no record of any form of proclamation issued to celebrate or announce the foundation of the Irish Republic in 1948. It is highly improbable that any was issued, not just because the practice of issuing proclamations seems to have ceased in the 1930's, but also because any such proclamation might have been viewed as a dishonour to the "original" foundation of a republic through the 1916 proclamation. The proclamation format is occasionally still found on public notices warning people against entering army rnages, or hunting in wild life sanctuaries, but most of these tend to have survived because they are in the form of enamel signs.

The 1932 election marks the peak of the illustrated political poster in Ireland. The 1937, '43 and '48 elections were fought mainly with typographic psoters. Of the pictorial posters that did occur, most were large photographic images of DeValera and Cosgrave. Subsequently elections have been portrayed through political posters and other media, to have become for the voter more an option between party leaders than between political philosphies. Today the only form of illustration to be found on the political posters, of the main parties is colour photographs of the politicians themselves.

Thus in terms of design formats there are three basic categories. Firstly there was the proclamation from which evolved the second category, the broadsheet, and thirdly there was the illustrated poster. All are unquestionably part of the same tradition. The products of that tradition are of significant value as part of Ireland's visual heritage. Ireland's contribution to the arts is commonly perceived to have been strongest in the written and spoken word, thus the very colourful language so often found on Irish political posters (especially up the the 1932 general election) is reason enough to argue the importance of preserving these items. It is more important however to recognise that they are the visual by-products of Irish history and that prior to the development of mass media in Ireland they functioned as the broad disseminator of the ideas and images that have not only reflected but have also played a part in forming Irish history. It is not known how great or small an impact this genre of

propaganda has had on Irish politics and history except in specific ases such as the 1916 proclamation, the anti-consctiption pledge, and the Ulser covenant. However as this kind of propaganda still exists it is obvious that politions at least believe it does affect popular opinion. As political posters were never intened to be precious or unique they have been regarded as novelties that simply become rubbish once their purpose become redundant with the passing of an election or the ending of a war, etc. How may interesting posters have vanished without trace is merely open to conjecture. Luckily, enough survive to represent all the major periods and most of the important events. They are the remenents of design practices and production technology that is now obsolete due to the emergence of photo-typesetting and other high-technology printing processes, and of specialist design practices. Many of the old political posters have very pleasing aesthtic qualities and some have a remarkably strong visual impact. In other words their visual force often trancends their function. This is especially true when the message they carry has been reduced to a short slogan or an uncomplicated image, for this usally afforded the designer the opportunity to use bold type and images. The traditional proclamation however, is an exception to this because it's format was specifically suited to long texts.

Ironically it is the characteristics that are peculiar to Irish political posters that most people today would find least attractive. Gaelic type and republican symbolism are still occasionally used, but they are so synonymous with the Irish language and with republicanism, both of which are associated with controversial minorities, that most Irish people have mixed feelings about them. The reasons for this are quite complex but the main influences are the continuing confusion of attitudes towards the 1916 rising, the civil war, the revival of the I.R.A. in the 1960's and also the somewhat oppressive manner in which (until very recently) the Irish language has be taught in schools.

Since 1848 the tradition of Irish political posters has been affected by new forms of media. The main political partis nwo onlu issue posters at election times, and use newspapers, magazines, radio and television for the bulk of their propaganda. However as milatent republicanism and milatent unionism is banned from the popular media, these factions continue to produce other forms of visual propaganda. Graffiti, especially in Northern Ireland, has flourished and is often very elaborate. Black flags are synonymous with the mourning of a member of the I.R.A. The I.R.A. still occasionally issue posters (though it is an offence for a printer to print for them), and new emotive symbols and slogans have evolved. The most well known is the symbolic use of the face of the famous hunger-striker Bobby Sands, and the slogan "Tiocfidh ar La!" (i.e, "Our day will come").

The political events that occured between 1898 and 1948, combined with the advances in the production and design of political proclamations and their derivatives, gave rise to many new propaganda styles within the medium. Though the tactics will always remain the same, i.e, praise of a cause or vilification of it's alternatives, new styles and formats will continue to be visual reflection of Irish history at least for as long as political interest-groups fail to find a mutual agreement on the issues of nationalism, republicanism and unionism. However, it may happen that printing as we know it today, through books, newspapers, and posters etc, will have been replaced by other forms of communications technology before any such agreement is arrived at.

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