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Review of *Forging the Border: Donegal and Derry in Times of Revolution, 1911 – 1925* by Okan Ozseker

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which Hay points to as being an obvious next step for anyone wishing to build on her work.

Beyond those with interests in Irish history, readers of this book interested in the impact of militarism on society across Europe will find much with which to engage. Increasingly, histories of the Irish Revolution range beyond Ireland in situating the factors of the revolution in wider international developments. Marnie Hay's book is a strong indicator of the benefits of such an approach.

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Okan Ozseker, *Forging the Border: Donegal and Derry in Times of Revolution, 1911 - 1925*. Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2019. 302pp. ISBN 978-788550703 (paperback). Price £17.99.

This book is the latest in a long line of studies that seek to explore the revolutionary period in Ireland through the prism of local analysis. In this case Ozseker builds on templates provided by David Fitzpatrick, Marie Coleman and John Borgonovo by focusing on the counties of Donegal and Derry, examining the context, course and consequences of the war revolution there. The result is a strong book that fills a significant gap in the historical literature of the period and explains the complexity of the area in an accessible and credible manner.

One of the great strengths of this work is that it builds a coherent picture of the intricacy of the region. Donegal was split into two areas: a Catholic dominated, poor and mountainous seaboard, and a richer, more fertile eastern half which contained a majority of Protestants. Added to this was the fact that the north east of the county had far more in common with the city of Derry than the rest of the county, meaning that when the border between the Free State and Northern Ireland solidified in 1922, Derry was cut off from a large section of its natural economic and social hinterland. Donegal was also extremely poor, contained little in the way of infrastructure, was plagued by emigration and the county was taken into the Congested Districts Board (CDB) in 1909. In political terms too, the region was complex. Donegal was dominated by the moderate nationalism of the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), while the county of Londonderry was staunchly unionist; between these two poles was the city of Derry which contained an explosive mixture of the two.

BOOK REVIEWS

One of the aims of the book is to explain the relative calm of the area during the years 1919 to 1921, when the IRA was conducting a fierce insurgency against British rule across the island. The region was within the remit of the 1st Northern Division of the IRA, which was itself organised into four battalions, covering the county of Donegal, the city of Derry and a portion of the county of Tyrone. Ozseker agrees with David Fitzpatrick's theory that a combination of the strong tradition of moderate nationalism and the presence of a large unionist population, who were hostile to any form of Irish independence, meant there was little support for IRA operations. Indeed, it was not until the end of August 1920 that the first attack on a police barracks was carried out at Drumquin. However, the low level of IRA activity still provoked a harsh response from the authorities and Ozseker makes a compelling argument that the RIC and the British army were responsible for extra-judicial killings from September 1920 onwards. He is also critical of the IRA in Donegal, suggesting that it was badly organised, suffered from a lack of ruthlessness and shied away from ambushes in which the rebels might suffer casualties. The city of Derry, on the other hand, was not tranquil and was convulsed by riots in June 1920, but even here the IRA found it difficult to maintain the struggle in the face of opposition from the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and local ex-servicemen. These were obstacles that the IRA in other parts of the island did not have to face, thus reinforcing Ozseker's original point that Donegal/Derry was not typical of the country.

The truce, treaty and consequent civil war between June 1922 and May 1923 was particularly complicated in the region and Ozseker explores this in particularly competent fashion. Donegal was resolutely supportive of the treaty which established the Irish Free State, which severely hampered the ability of the local IRA to attack the structures of the newly established Northern Ireland. The Belfast government also introduced internment, further restricting IRA activities. The first actions of note were the clash between Free State and British troops in the border towns of Belleek and Pettigo in May 1922, both of which were resounding victories for the British. While the Donegal IRA was pro-treaty, there was an influx of anti-treaty members from the south, as well as from across the border where the IRA was escaping Stormont's crackdown. The result was that the area saw far more violence during the civil war of 1922-23 than it did during the conflict with the British from 1919-21, and the Free State government executed four men in retaliation for the deaths of Free State soldiers at the hands of the anti-Treaty IRA.

The book concludes with a sense of unfinished business; the report of the Boundary Commission in 1925 was rapidly suppressed once Dublin discovered that it recommended transferring some areas of Donegal to Northern Ireland and the two Irish governments agreed to maintain the border as it was. Ozseker argues that the newly hardened border had severe economic and political repercussions in Donegal

and Derry, restricting investment in the area and providing the seeds for future conflict. Both unionists in Donegal and nationalists in Derry felt alienated and abandoned and it was therefore little surprise that Derry provided the eventual spark that ignited the Troubles in 1969. Like other books of this type, women are largely absent, except for some references to Cumann na mBan. Otherwise, Ozseker has provided a deep context to the border and shown its complexity in Irish history – those seeking to understand the current situation surrounding Brexit and its potential effects in the region would be well advised to add this to their reading list.

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Wendell Schollander, *The Glory of the Empires, 1880-1914: The Illustrated History of the Military Uniforms and Traditions of Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States*. Stroud: The History Press, 2018. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 896pp. ISBN 978-0752486345 (hardback). Price £50.00.

Wendell Schollander presents an ambitious body of research in his book, *The Glory of the Empires*, in which he tracks the development of military uniforms between 1880 and 1914 in Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States. Schollander is not a traditionally trained military historian. He instead brings to his research an extremely organised and detailed methodology, which is especially suited to this kind of meticulous investigation. A seasoned American attorney, Schollander systematically builds research cases for each type of military uniform in the book, as if he was providing evidence in a court of law. This is exactly what is needed in a book like this: the topic dictates the best methodology, and Schollander delivers it. His writing and the book's structure ensure accessibility in an otherwise overwhelming area of research.

Section 1 of the book provides a brief overview, which includes data concerning land area of major empires prior to the First World War and their original size, a useful comparison of ranks across countries, and a diagram showing six different types of sleeve cuffs that are referenced throughout the book.

Section 2 covers military uniforms of the British Empire, with a country background, and information about the army and uniforms. The section then goes into detail