

特別寄稿

Queen Victoria's 1861 Visit to Ireland and the Burgeoning of Irish Nationalism

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Queen Victoria's third visit to Ireland took place from 21 to 29 August 1861. Her husband, Prince Albert, and three of their children (Princesses Alice and Helena and Prince Alfred) accompanied her. On the previous two visits, the one in 1849 and the other in 1853, there was a real sense of occasion in that she was coming to show solidarity with her people who had just endured a catastrophic famine (1845–49) and to lend her wholehearted support to William Dargan (1799–1867) and the Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853. The 1861 visit had no such grand contexts and it was essentially a private affair. The royal family was paying a visit to the Prince of Wales who was doing military training south of Dublin at the Curragh camp in County Kildare during the summer months. The second half of the visit was to reconnoiter the possibility of Ireland as a tourist destination with a visit to the only developed Irish tourist region at the time: Killarney in the southwest of Ireland. Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children were honoured guests of the Herbert family who resided at Muckcross Estate. Princess Alice recorded in her diary that Killarney and its surrounds were the most beautiful places she had ever visited. The visit was generally uneventful, but it does mark a watershed in the unabated rise of Irish nationalist sentiment.

This paper discusses the historical context of the visit by delving beneath the veneer of what seemed to have been in part an intended showcase for the promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination, along similar lines to the Highlands of Scotland. The queen's visit to Ireland took place while she was still mourning the death of her mother, so she

seemed perpetually subdued, if not mournful on occasions; this was particularly evident when she visited the governors of Dublin's prisons – an unusual location choice for a royal visitor. Even the birthday celebrations for Prince Albert at the Vice Regal Lodge in the Phoenix Park, Dublin were tinged with a certain melancholic atmosphere. One of the interesting effects of this was that it afforded the queen a heightened sense of awareness. The entries in her diary for this visit were among the most observant as to the true state of Ireland. The queen clearly perceived beyond the pomp and ceremony that Ireland had fundamentally changed since her last visit in 1853. She observed with great clarity the depopulation of the countryside and the impoverished state of the Irish peasantry, especially their wretched demeanor and appalling living conditions. This social depravity of the peasantry was the very seedbed that allowed radical nationalism to acquire momentum, and it did so with a great tour-de-force from the 1860s onwards. Therefore, this third essentially personal visit marked a watershed in Irish political history in that support and admiration for Queen Victoria in Ireland waned following the visit. Her going into seclusion following the death of her beloved Prince Albert from stomach cancer in December 1861 further exacerbated her estrangement from her Irish subjects.

The years prior to the 1861 visit were when Ireland featured least in British consciousness throughout the course of the nineteenth century. The *Freeman's Journal* critically acknowledged that the queen's speech for the ending of the 1855 parliamentary session praised the colonies' contribution towards the efficacious result of the Crimean War, but made no mention of the substantial Irish participation in the war:

But no man would discover from this royal effusion, so full of thanks for the past and of hopes for the future that there was such a kingdom as Ireland, that her Majesty had any sympathy, interest or connection with the people of this kingdom or of one gallant Irish heart that ever throbbed its last in defence of her crown.¹

A year and a half later, it was expressing its support for the omission of any reference

to Ireland in the opening parliamentary speech:

Ireland is omitted from the speech. Of later years it has dropped out of the standing role of topics which ministers had always ready for the consideration of parliament, and we do not regret the omission, of cold disregard is more preferable to the grating prominence which Ireland usually occupied in royal speeches.²

There were two trial runs to Queen Victoria's third visit to Ireland. The first of these came in the spring of 1858, when just after receiving his confirmation, the young Prince of Wales paid a visit to Ireland in the company of his personal tutor. It was the first royal visit not to centre on Dublin. From 12 – 14 April he visited the West Cork towns of Bandon, Clonakilty and Skibbereen, and from there he sailed further westward to County Kerry on the royal yacht *Osborne* to the picturesque town of Killarney.³ At Skibbereen, which he observed to be a prosperous market town, he stayed at Doyle's Commercial Hotel, which was renamed the Prince of Wales Hotel in his honour. A month later, James Stephens (1825–1901) visited the town to swear in Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and others as early members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). This nationalist organisation was founded on 17 March 1858 (St. Patrick's Day) with Stephens as its first president (March 1858 – December 1866). It was a secret oath-bound fraternity dedicated to the establishment of an independent republic in Ireland. Its counterpart in the United States was controlled by John O'Mahony (1816–1877) and was called the Fenian Brotherhood (*Clan na Gael*). The members of both of these nationalist crusades were generally termed as the Fenian movement, which went on to play a pivotal role in the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922.⁴

The prince went on to enjoy a two-week holiday at Muckross Estate in Killarney as a special guest of Colonel Henry Arthur Herbert (1815–1866). Henry Herbert was the MP for Kerry from 1847 until his death in 1866; he was also briefly the Chief Secretary for Ireland at the end of Lord Palmerstown's first administration in 1857 – a post he held for less than one year. He was educated at the prestigious Eton Public

School and graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1835. Cork's *Southern Reporter* portrayed him in rather munificent terms: 'Although a large land proprietor, he warmly supported the Corn Law movement and has shown himself the friend of progressive and enlightened reform.'⁵ The prince enjoyed his days at Muckross hiking and sailing, during which, in a gesture of royal bonding with the surrounds, 'Gun Rock Island' near Brickeen Bridge (connecting Lake Muckross and Loch Leane) was renamed 'Prince of Wales Island'.⁶

During his ten-week stay in Ireland for military training in 1861, the Prince of Wales referred to his 1858 visit, saying that 'he conceived a strong attachment to the peasantry' from it. This, according to the *Freeman's Journal*, which could not resist an opportunity to enter into the debate about Ireland's 'national character', was because he was a 'rollicking lad who talked so pleasantly, and dispensed his gold and silver so liberally.' It went on to contrast the raucous conduct of 'well-dressed mobs in England' with that of 'the ill clad but gentle mannered Irish peasant [who] observed all of the proprieties and stood respectfully apart until good-humouredly challenged the Prince to answer a question.'⁷ The implication was that the English peasants were well dressed and behaved unruly; whereas their Irish compatriots – though clad in rags – possessed a certain inherent decency.

Two months later the younger Prince Alfred also visited Killarney, albeit for a short stay. On a boat tour of the lakes of Killarney, his guide, Jeremiah O'Connor, played 'Rule Britannia' and later 'God save the Queen' on the bugle.⁸ The visits by Queen Victoria's sons were somewhat of trial runs for her own visit to Killarney in 1861; nevertheless, their visits were overshadowed by the triumphal tour throughout the country that autumn by the English Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman (1802–1865) – the first English prince of the Catholic Church to visit Ireland. He was appointed Lord Archbishop of Westminster in 1850 – marking the historic reinstating of the Head of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales after the Reformation (1517). He was the son of Anglo-Irish parents who had settled in Seville, Spain. The Wisemans were Protestant converts to Catholicism and had a family estate near Bandon in West

Cork. They also had a genealogical connection to Sir Edmund Spenser (1552–1599), who penned the masterpiece known as *The Faerie Queen* (1590 & 1596), an epic poem and allegory of the Tudor Dynasty under Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603). The inspiration for the poem is the course of the beautiful River Blackwater from Doneraile in North Cork to where it enters the sea at Youghal in East Cork. This is one of the greatest poems in the English language and marks the debut of refined Modern English verse. To the irritation of the British press, there was a toast to the pope but not to the queen at a special banquet for Cardinal Wiseman held in the Mansion House in Dublin; the Viceroy to Ireland, Lord Eglinton boycotted the occasion.⁹ What this event made clear was that Catholic nationalist Ireland, after a decade of tranquility, was regaining the capacity for self-assertion.

Lord Eglinton departed from his second viceroyalty to Ireland in June 1859 (a position he held since February 1858) with a relatively popular reputation in nationalist Ireland for a Tory lord lieutenant.¹⁰ He was an avid sportsman and had become renowned for the Eglinton Tournament – an equine sporting occasion that took place in 1839 at St James Park near Regent's Park in London. Tory administrations during the period went out of their way to appease Irish Catholic sentiment. The returning Lord Carlisle to the viceroyalty caused some initial consternation by his requesting that there be no formal ceremony of entry into the city of Dublin; he went on to insist that members of Dublin Corporation should not give him a welcome speech or express any intention about what direction his office should take.¹¹ The negative reaction to this was so passionate that he had to compromise. He duly received an address from the Corporation and in response made assurances that he had no desire to abolish the lord lieutenantcy.¹² Irish nationalism was further provoked several months later when the Westminster administration established a volunteer defense force in Britain to counteract a possible French invasion, but expressly disallowed the setting up of any such force in Ireland. That Irish allegiance could not be trusted was the implication that was made and capitalised on by the nationalist movement.¹³

Royal relations with Ireland proved to be particularly rocky in 1860. In March of that

year, the letters of the German polymath Alexander von Humboldt to the diplomat Karl Varnhagen von Ense were published. Both men were then dead. One of the letters, dated 27 February 1847, recounted a conversation between von Humboldt and Prince Albert when they met at Stolzenfels, Prussia in 1845.¹⁴ The *Times* reported that the publication of the letters had been a cause of ‘exciting a painful interest’ in the views to the prince.¹⁵

In private, for it would not have been constitutionally proper for him to have done so in public, the prince consort protested his innocence:

Most assuredly, I never said that the Poles and Irish deserved to be thrown overboard together, although it is quite possible that we had some conversation about the similarity and faults in character of both nations. The matter is of no importance, for what does a man not write or say to his intimate friends under the impulse of the moment?¹⁶

The incident caused an irreversible blemish to Prince Albert’s reputation in Ireland. However, in the short term, an incident involving his eldest son, about whose abilities both the queen and the prince consort were having increasing concerns, took the central focus. In July 1860, the Prince of Wales, accompanied by the Duke of Newcastle, went on a tour Canada representing the queen. In late August, he received an enthusiastic welcome in Montreal as well as in other areas of Quebec – the Catholic, French-speaking region of Lower Canada.¹⁷ The bishop of Montreal even had his episcopal palace appropriately decorated in welcome.¹⁸

Sectarian tensions were high in Canada and the Orange Order was strong in the Protestant, English-speaking region of Upper Canada. The prince’s advisors were anxious to prevent him from doing anything that might exacerbate such tensions. Newcastle advised the mayor of Toronto that the prince must not have to pass under Orange arches on his route through the city.¹⁹ A problem arose, however, at the town of Kingston, which the *Times* referred to as ‘a dirty, stagnant little town’ when reporting

about the incident.²⁰

The prince's party reached the town by steamboat. But Newcastle ordered the steamer not to dock because local Orangemen had erected a triumphal arch with a picture of William of Orange on one side and of the Prince of Wales and the Italian revolutionary Garibaldi, who had repeatedly attacked the Papal States, on the other.²¹ The Canadian Prime Minister, J. A. Macdonald, who was on the steamer and was the MP for Kingston, was furious.²² Newcastle was adamant and issued a public appeal to the Orangemen to abandon their protest.²³

There was an angry public meeting in Kingston and Orangemen protested the prince's steamer along the route. When the news reached Ireland, there was great satisfaction in nationalist quarters at the royal snubbing of the Orangemen.²⁴

On 5 February 1861, the queen went to see an Irish play by Dion Boucicault's called *The Colleen Bawn*, which was an adaptation of Gerald Griffin's *The Collegians*, at the Adelphi theatre in London. 'People are wild about it – and the scene when the poor Colleen is thrown into the water and all but drowned is wonderfully done' – she wrote to her daughter Vicky.²⁵ However, the year was to be one of sorrow for the queen with the death of her mother in March and the death of her husband Prince Albert in December. After the death of her mother, Queen Victoria entered into a period of melancholy and withdrew from public activities for several months; but when her husband passed away, she entered a state of even deeper and secluded grieving.

She could not have, therefore, welcomed the constitutionally inappropriate attempts in May 1861 of the Irish nationalist leader, the O'Donoghue of the Glens, to present her directly with a petition on Irish self-government, rather than to channel it through her Home Secretary as would have been the standard protocol.²⁶ Eventually rumours were spreading about the state of her emotional wellbeing. Her officials considered it would be therapeutically beneficial for her to have a summer visit to Ireland to see the Prince of Wales who was doing military training at the Curragh camp, which is located

southwest of Dublin in County Kildare.²⁷

The Prince of Wales arrived in Dublin at the end of June and spent a few days at the Vice Regal Lodge in the Phoenix Park carrying out official duties prior to joining the Second Battalion of the Grenadier Guards under Colonel Percy at the Curragh camp for a ten-week military exercise. He had the use of the quarters of the Irish commander-in-chief, General Sir George Brown. If the training went according to the plan, the prince would receive a rank promotion every two weeks so that by the end of the period he would be able to command a full battalion in the presence of his royal parents.²⁸

In early August, the Duke of Cambridge inspected the Curragh camp and perceived the prince to be somewhat lackluster.²⁹ Queen Victoria was later to formally express her gratitude to Colonel Percy for treating her son just like any other officer and for informing him about his shortcomings as a potential military leader.³⁰ Months after the end of the prince's training at the Curragh, it was felt necessary to issue a statement about his behavior there in the *Court Circular*. It recorded that on one occasion he had marched twenty miles on foot in a day with his men rather than go by horse. It went on to state that 'all his demeanour while in the camp was modest and retiring, and in all his conduct he acted up to the noble example of his father' – who had died a short time before the statement was issued.³¹

There were reservations not only about the prince's military prowess but also about his personal life. The posting became particularly renowned for the prince's romantic affair with the Irish actress Nellie Clifden; the prince was apparently enthralled by this fiery young Irish lady. Prince Albert was eventually informed of the affair in the autumn of 1861 and it instantaneously led to intense arguments between the two men that continued up to the time of his premature death in December. The queen was only informed of the affair a short time before the passing of her husband and she directly attributed his tragic demise to it.³²

The queen, Prince Albert, and three of their children, Princesses Alice and Helena (known as Lenchen) and Prince Alfred, arrived in Kingston on the evening of 21 August 1861 and it was publicised as a private visit to Dublin. As they travelled through the city the next day on their way to the Phoenix Park, the queen found the people 'most friendly and enthusiastic' as they greeted her.³³ Prince Albert visited public institutions in the afternoon while the Prince of Wales called on his family at the Vice Regal Lodge in the Phoenix Park before returning to the Curragh camp in the evening with his brother Alfred.

On 23 August, Prince Albert went to the Curragh while the queen received a welcome oration from Dublin Corporation. In the late afternoon, the royal family toured the principal streets of Dublin again. One member of the Corporation wished to include a reference in the address to the decline in Ireland's population by around one million since 1851, as recorded in a recent census, a figure that represented a further decline from the dynamic decline in the immediate aftermath of the famine. However, there had been little support for the inclusion of such a poignant statistic in the speech.³⁴ However, the queen did observe for herself the depopulation of Ireland. As she travelled south towards County Kerry by train a few days later, she recorded in her diary:

It is astonishing how utterly denuded of population the whole country is; large plains, a good deal cultivated, with here and there a small house, and awful cabins, but no villages and hardly any towns.³⁵

Saturday, 24 August, was the day for the queen's day trip by train to the Curragh to see the Prince of Wales command his troops. 'As we approached the Calvary they began to play one of Mama's marches which entirely upset me,' she wrote. 'Bertie came by, looking very nice and I recognized many Aldershot acquaintances.'³⁶ After the review, the queen and Prince Albert met some of the officers at their son's quarters, before returning to Dublin. While at the Curragh, Prince Albert discussed with Lord Carlisle that he did not think the prince was diligent enough concerning his responsibilities as

a soldier.³⁷ However, he respectfully reported to the prince that Bertie ‘did his part at the Curragh camp very well, held himself better, and had learned everything methodologically from the bottom up to command of a company. He had been drilling three times a day and appears to have enjoyed it.’³⁸

On Sunday, Prince Albert and his sons visited Mountjoy and Smithfield prisons while Queen Victoria and her daughters called on the commander-in-chief at Kilmainham gaol. The queen again was in sombre spirits: ‘I have felt weak and very nervous, and so low at times; I think so much of dearest Mama and I miss her love and interest and solicitude dreadfully. I feel as if I were no longer cared for.’³⁹ The next day was Prince Albert’s birthday. The queen arranged a birthday table for him at the Vice Regal Lodge with wreaths of flowers and presents. She gave him a half-length portrait of a Sicilian woman by the Belgian orientalist painter, Jean-François Portaels (1818–1895):

God bless and ever preserve my precious Albert, my adored Husband! Alas! So much is so different this year, nothing festive – we on a journey and separated from many of our children. I am still in such low spirits, but already quite early I wished him warmly and tenderly joy and he was as ever so loving and affectionate. May God mercifully grant that we may long, very long, be spared to live together and that I may never survive him.⁴⁰

The 1861 visit had a second part to it – a visit to the only developed tourist area in Ireland at the time: Killarney in County Kerry. Sir Walter Scott had made Scotland attractive to the English: ‘The fashion for the trimmings of an imaginary Highland culture was part of the dominant romantic ideology of the first half of the nineteenth century.’⁴¹ George IV had been enthusiastic for the Scottish fashion and Victoria and Albert had gone further and bought a home in Scotland, where they interacted directly and even affectionately with the peasantry on their Balmoral estate.

The *London Review* saw their residences there as helping in the process of bringing about a change in the relationship between England and Scotland, with the former no

longer fearing the latter as a place of rebellion but viewing it as a resort destination of outstanding beauty:

It is a singular and cheering sight in these modern days to see Queen Victoria treading the heather and wandering among the mountains and streams where the people once rose en masse to resist the dynasty of which she is so illustrious an ornament.⁴²

Could not the transformation that took place in Scotland also be possible in Ireland? The prospect of Ireland reinventing itself through a royal perspective as a peaceful rural retreat was an idea worth exploring. It certainly would have been a welcomed relief from the reality of the country as an arena of agrarian conflict and abject poverty. The royal visit to Killarney was a possible tentative Albertine experiment to explore such a transforming possibility.

On 26 August, the royal family travelled to the southwest of Ireland by train. They stopped at various points along the journey. At the brief stopover at Thurles in County Tipperary, the queen noted that 'the crowd was tremendous, very noisy and the people very wild and dark looking – all giving that particular shriek, which one hears here instead of cheers. The girls are handsome with long disheveled hair.'⁴³ This is evidence that there still was quite considerable interest and respect for the queen among the Irish peasantry.

At 6:30 pm, the royal party arrived in Killarney, where they were the honoured guests of the county's Liberal political establishment. They stayed at Kenmare House (also known as Killarney House) which the queen considered to resemble a French chateau.⁴⁴ The building was demolished in 1872. A Victorian mansion was constructed on the site, and the Prince and Princess of Wales stayed there during their visit in 1885. Valentine Augustus Browne (1825–1905), 4th Earl of Kenmare and titled Viscount Castlerosse (1853–1871) was the Liberal MP for Kerry from 1852 until his death. The Browne family was one of the few great Roman Catholic landowning

families in Ireland. He hosted the queen and her family. He was to have a career of service in the royal household and, like his grandfather Thomas Browne (1726–1795), known as Lord Kenmare, eventually to rise to the position of Lord Chamberlain of the Household during William Gladstone's second and third administrations (1880–1885 & 1886).

The evening was warm and Queen Victoria was to have an unusual complaint for a tourist in Ireland: 'All the windows open and yet not a breath of air.' In contrast to this, there was 'an excellent dinner served à *la Russe* with merely dessert and fruit on the table.' Among the dinner guests on that first evening were Dr. David Moriarty (1812–1877), Catholic bishop of Kerry (1856–1877), 'a tall, stout, very intelligent clever man' and James O'Connell (1786–1872), 'brother of the O'Connell, the last of that generation, a very good man, with quite different views to his brother.'⁴⁵ James O'Connell was a keen supporter of the Liberal party; on 29 October 1869, on Gladstone's recommendation, the queen conferred a baronetcy on him; he hereafter became known as Sir James O'Connell, 1st Baronet, of Lakeview, Killarney, in the County of Kerry and of Ballybeggan, Tralee, in the County of Kerry.⁴⁶

The next day the royal family boarded Castlerosse's large, eight-oar barge at Ross Castle for a journey on the lakes to the cheers of thousands of local people.⁴⁷ By lunchtime, they had reached Lady Castlerosse's cottage at the foot of the Hill of Glена. The queen noted that all the hills were wooded 'which gives them a different character to those of the Highlands.'⁴⁸ Jeremiah O'Connor was present once again to play 'God Save the Queen' as the party returned to the barge.⁴⁹ They then travelled to the upper lake where further refreshments were organized in a large tent that had been set up in 'a lonely spot but terribly infested with midges.'⁵⁰

That evening the Royal family moved as arranged to Muckross Park, the home of another local Liberal magnate, Henry Arthur Herbert (1815–1866), Lord Lieutenant of County Kerry and the host of the Prince of Wales when he visited the town in 1858. Colonel Herbert was the Liberal Member of Parliament for Kerry from 1847 until his

death. He was also Lord Lieutenant of Kerry (1853–1866); Viscount Castlerosse succeeded him as Lord Lieutenant (1866–1905). He served as Chief Secretary for Ireland from 1857 to 1858 during the first administration of Lord Palmerston (1855–1858). (John Henry Temple (1784–1865) was the only servicing Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to die while in Office.) Henry Herbert received a quality English education at Eton Public School and then at Trinity College, Cambridge – from where he graduated in 1835. The queen noted in her diary: ‘The Herberts are very agreeable, clever people. We retired early. It was again dreadfully hot.’⁵¹

On the second full day of the visit, the queen toured the Muckcross estate. ‘We were enchanted with the extreme beauty of the scenery ... it was one of the finest drives I have ever taken.’⁵² Princess Alice wrote of Killarney to the duchess of Manchester: ‘This is the place I admire most almost of any I have ever been.’⁵³

In the afternoon, during the course of a boat trip, the queen took part in a symbolic re-creation of part of the landscape:

By the Herbert's request, I christened one of the points which runs into the lake, with a bottle of wine, Albert holding my arm when we came close, so that the bottle was successfully smashed.⁵⁴

The only unsuccessful part of the choreography of the day was the failure of the pack of hounds belonging to Maurice James O'Connell, son of James O'Connell, to hunt a stag deer along the shore of the lakes as the royal boats passed by.⁵⁵

There was something highly stylized in the countryside that was presented for the queen to observe which seemed to have been undermined by her observations. At the dinner that evening, she noted that ‘everyone was so pleased at Killarney having been duly admired.’ And yet the next sentence in her journal entry acknowledges, apparently with a certain alarm, the existence of yet another Ireland besides the one that had been created for her: ‘Mr. Herbert told me that about them all the inhabitants

were Roman Catholics, the same at Killarney, where there were 3 Nunneries and several Brotherhoods, including Franciscan Monks.⁵⁶

There was obviously something disconcerting in this realization for the queen. Tourism always reduced the complexity of a culture to simple and acceptable images. The next day, shortly before her departure for Dublin, the queen actually visited a Franciscan foundation, but it was the ruins of Muckcross Abbey, a late medieval friary that was suppressed by the order of Oliver Cromwell in 1652. For the queen, however, it signified not the bewildering complexity of Ireland's unique political and religious identity but the familiarity of spooky Gothic romanticism. 'The cloisters are perfect and very ghostlike,' she wrote, 'No one high or low will pass it alone at night.'⁵⁷

An Ireland that was a safe tourist destination for the English was one in which its conflicting realities in contrast to those pleasing pastoral images necessary for tourism were deliberately held at bay. For this reason, tourism was often recommended by English commentators as a cure for Ireland, but radical nationalists viewed the idea with disdain.

The *London Times* was a consistent advocate of Ireland being seen as every bit as welcoming a part of the Celtic fringe as Scotland had become. In 1849, it thought that the queen's visit could only help in the process. 'She will draw in her train an immediate host of tourists and travellers.'⁵⁸ However, John Mitchell had sarcastically confided in his diary that once the famine had cleared the West of Ireland of its population, 'The Prince Albert will then take a hunting lodge in Connemara.'⁵⁹ Connemara in Co. Galway is a region of the most outstanding natural beauty in Ireland.

In their newspaper, the *Irish People*, the Fenians too evinced great hostility to what they derided as 'picturesque' Ireland that would attract tourism and that was advocated by the *Times*. 'The time will come when the annual stream of tourists will lead the way, and when wealthy Englishmen, one after another, in rapid succession, will seize

the fairest spots, and fix here their summer quarters.⁶⁰ They need not have worried. The Albertine image of a peaceful and scenic Irish countryside did not prevail for long in the British press; it was replaced for the remainder of the nineteenth century by a negative portrayal that critically focused on the Fenians and the land war.

Just before their departure from Dublin on 29 August 1861, the royal family toured around the principal streets of the city for a last time to cheering crowds though, according to the queen, with 'many dirty ragged people running along near the carriage decidedly the worst for whisky.'⁶¹ Two and a half months later, on 10 November, the streets of Dublin were to become the scene for another public spectacle, the hugely attended funeral of an exiled, though quite junior, Young Ireland activist, Terrance Bellow MacManus. This event has often been regarded as a symbolic turning point in nineteenth-century Irish politics, marking the reemergence of a confident, radical and uncompromising nationalism. It was organised by a group called the National Brotherhood of St Patrick. The Fenians had infiltrated this organisation and were certainly the principal beneficiaries of the propaganda value generated by it.

The funeral gained the disapproval of Paul Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin (1852–1878). The ostentatious fanfare he organized nine months later on 20 July 1862 for the laying of the foundation stone of the Catholic University of Ireland (now the National University of Ireland) was deliberately intended as an event to supersede the impact of the MacManus funeral. The MacManus funeral ceremony had been months in the planning. However, at least to some extent, it is also plausibly legitimate to view the energy that went into organising it as a counter to the royal visit that preceded it a few short weeks earlier.

When the MacManus funeral took place, the queen's recent memorable journey through the same streets was still vivid in the minds of Dubliners. A week before the funeral, copies of a letter from Patrick Lavelle, the priest who defied Archbishop Cullen to conduct a funeral service for MacManus, were distributed throughout the

city. It made no direct inference to the recent royal visit, but it strongly criticised those who cooperated socially and politically with the British administration in Ireland:

He [MacManus] abandoned all for Ireland, wealth, friendship, peace and human happiness ... he is denied the honours accorded to every Castle-slave, time serving hypocrite and Whigling sycophant ... the crawling place-hunter who worships only the one God of Dublin Castle.⁶²

The link between the royal visit of 1861 and the MacManus funeral was in essence essentially minor in nature. However, in the years to follow, the correlation between royal events and some nationalist demonstrations in Ireland was to become more obvious and overt. Over the next few years, nationalist interaction with royalty would take place through the context of the proposed commemorative sculpture of Prince Albert.

In the nineteenth century, London was the largest city in the world and the capital of the world's most important industrial economy and of a great empire, which, by the end of the century, embraced one quarter of the earth's surface. Its public monuments came to reflect this preeminence. Whereas in Washington, the capital of the United States, ten public statues were erected between 1851 and 1880; in London, during the same period, thirty public monuments were erected.⁶³ In contrast to England, Ireland was a poor country; and when compared to London, Dublin was a small and deprived city. Yet during the same period, twenty-five public monuments were commissioned and erected in Ireland – most of them of individuals who fitted into the canon of Irish nationalism. What is even more remarkable is that fourteen of the statues were positioned in Dublin alone.⁶⁴

There were at least five reasons for the extraordinary investment in public monuments by sculptors of international renown such as J. H. Foley R. A. (1818–1874). First, it was a cultural expression of nationalism – one of the legacies of the Young Ireland movement was a consciousness that nationalism had to be a cultural as well as a

political entity. Second, and this was especially true of Dublin itself, it was a way of marking out civic space for nationalism. The only area of government in which nationalists could exercise any control was that of chartered towns and cities, under the Municipal Corporations Act. The countryside was still controlled by ascendancy-dominated juries.

Third, in a country in which the nationalist majority held very little political power, it became a way of conducting politics through symbolic means, not only against Britain but, even more importantly, between rival groups within Irish nationalism itself. Fourth, and interestingly, the majority of the monuments were set in place during the period from the death of O'Connell (1847) to the rise of Parnell (1875) in which nationalist leadership was itself relatively weak. The production of sculptures of the great nationalist leaders of the past was a means by which the minor nationalist leaders of the present might acquire their legitimacy. This was part of the reason for John Gray's advocacy of an elaborate statue of O'Connell. Finally, during the same period, monuments to great nationalist leaders of the past could be used to at least make British visitors feel uneasy, especially royal visitors, who imagined that Ireland might be becoming more accessible and welcoming.

Even Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had had an encounter with Irish statuary, albeit of a miniature form. On their fourth visit to the Dublin exhibition in September 1853, they looked at some Parian statuettes:

The largest of the group represented the late Mr. O'Connell, surrounded by a number of peasants, male and female – the figures being about five or six inches in height and moulded with great spirit and expression. Her Majesty attracted by the figures, stopped to examine them, and instantly exclaimed – 'Ah, that is O'Connell.' 'Yes,' said Prince Albert, 'and an excellent likeness to him, too.' ... Mr. Leland has designed and modeled another group in which Mr. Dargan is represented surrounded by Irish artisans and labourers, whose condition he had done so much to elevate and improve, but unfortunately it was not quite ready for

exhibition, otherwise it is not improbably that it would have found a purchaser in the Queen.⁶⁵

Prince Albert died on 14 December 1861, reportedly of typhoid but more likely of stomach cancer.⁶⁶ A grief-stricken Queen Victoria began her retirement from public duties. After initial widespread feelings of sympathy for the queen, public opinion began to shift with her essential withdrawal from the outside world to the extent that within a couple of years her popularity had waned considerably, especially in Ireland.

The *Freeman's Journal* announced the death of the prince as a 'Great Calamity' for England. Next day, it apologized that due to technical printing reasons it had not been able to use black borders for the columns in which the announcement was printed.⁶⁷ This oversight to detail displayed a certain lack of respect on the part of the Irish newspaper because the apology came after and not with the publishing of the royal death notice.

Within months of the prince's death, there were moves to memorialize him throughout the United Kingdom. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Denis Moylan, wrote to the queen's private secretary, General Gray, on 28 February 1862 to propose the erection of a bronze statue of the prince as Ireland's national monument. He received a reply of approval on 3 March, indicating the queen's approval.⁶⁸

The Albertine committee engaged in much bickering and animosity with the O'Connell committee who were also disagreeing among themselves concerning the erecting of the O'Connell memorial in the centre of Dublin. When the Albertine committee gave the commission to J. H. Foley RIA in 1867, who coincidentally was commissioned in the same year to do the O'Connell sculpture, nationalist sentiment was prohibiting the erection of the statue in the prestigious College Green area of Dublin near Trinity College. Frederick Ponsonby, who did the statue of Prince Albert without the horse for the city of Glasgow wrote:

The Irish people always resented the coldness of the Royal family towards Ireland and complained that the Sovereign did not set foot in Ireland since 1861. They quite overlooked the fact that there had been occurrences which were calculated to implant in Her Majesty's mind a distrust and dislike of Ireland. The first was that when the Prince Consort died the Queen presented a statue of him to the city of Dublin, but the Mayor and Corporation refused to accept it and sent it back to her. This occurred when she was in such deep grief that it completely overshadowed her whole life, and she is reported to have said that she would never forgive Ireland.⁶⁹

In fact, the relationship between Irish nationalists and the Crown was never the actual issue in the College Green controversy. The real issue was between at least three very different factions of nationalism vying for position and power. The most robust of these proved to be the Fenian movement and it dominated the queen's perceptions of Ireland for decades to come – those based on the fact that Ireland was becoming more and more militantly nationalist and difficult to govern.

The bronze statue of Prince Albert, which portrays him as a youthful and perceptive prince, was completed in 1872 and placed in the lawn of Leinster House – a location of lesser prestige; there was even an unsuccessful attempt by nationalists to blow it up the same year. It remains in the grounds of the Irish parliament to the present day – though after Irish independence in 1922, it was relocated to a side corner near the National History Museum. The statue of Daniel O'Connell, completed in 1882 by Foley's successor Thomas Brock (1847–1922), was erected at the south entrance to Dublin's main thoroughfare, Sackville Street, which was renamed O'Connell Street after the declaration of independence. The bronze statue of O'Connell depicting him as a robust political leader was placed on an ornate granite plinth and limestone base surrounded by guardian angels. It is undoubtedly one of Foley's finest works because it is an artistically sophisticated creation. It was a product of a mature artist at the height of his creative potential.

Unlike the royal visits of 1849 and 1853, Queen Victoria's visit to Ireland in 1861 was a distinctly subdued affair, if not melancholic at times. From a personal point of view, she was mourning the recent death of her mother with whom she had a very special bond. Her son the Prince of Wales, who was undergoing military training at the Curragh in County Kildare during the summer of 1861, was the actual reason for her visit. However, he was not a model of virtue while in Ireland as he struck up a romantic affair with an Irish actress named Nellie Clifden, which did not meet with royal approval, especially from his father, Prince Albert. Even during the second part of her visit, which was to the picturesque town of Killarney in County Kerry as a royal tourist, the queen still seemed somewhat ill at ease. Apart from her genuine personal troubles, were there any other factors at play?

This discussion of her visit certainly indicates there were several. It is clear from her diary account of the visit that she was keenly aware that beyond the veneer of what was organized and arranged for her something rather traumatic was occurring in Ireland. She records repeatedly the abject poverty she witnessed, the deserted countryside and appalling living conditions of the peasantry. The impact of the Great Famine (an *Gorta Mór*) of the mid-nineteenth century seemed to have been gaining in momentum. The principal issue was not that the Irish peasants were still enduring severe hunger and related illnesses, but rather the catastrophe had propagated a political vacuum that was utilised by radical nationalists both at home and abroad. The Fenian Movement and the Irish Republican Brotherhood were to the fore in this regard. These pro-independence movements needed an icon that they could lambast, and the reigning British monarch was a natural choice. The public funeral of an insignificant nationalist figure named Terrance Bellow MacManus and the controversy over the Prince Albert monument constituted clear evidence of this ideological surge against British rule in Ireland. It was more apparent than real in the early years of the 1860s. The facts show that Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children were treated with genuine courtesy and respect not only by the people of Dublin but also by the common folk as the royal party journeyed south by train to

Killarney where they were hosted by Viscount Castlerosse MP of Kenmare House and by Colonel Herbert MP of Muckross House.

The real turning point came in the late 1860s with the intensifying land wars, which had the direct effect of turning the rural classes against their landlord rulers. This was the time when the English language received a new and potent word 'boycott' which is etymologically derived from the family name of a County Mayo landlord notorious for his tyranny against his tenants. This was not an isolated case, there were several as severe throughout the country and they eclipsed the more moderate landlords who were generally considerate of their tenants. These munificent landlords, many of whom date from the early plantations of Ireland (1556-1576), had an established relationship with the peasant community; but in almost every region there existed rogue landlords who inflicted unspeakable cruelty on their tenants – these generally date from the later plantations of Ireland (1610-1641). The Catholic Church and Irish nationalists joined forces against these tyrannical individuals with the desired effect of inciting the majority Catholic population to oppose the rule of the Anglo-Irish gentry. The problem was not that the despotic landlords were the universal norm but they happened to exist ubiquitously throughout the entire island yielding their repressive power and indifferent rule; they, in effect, brought about the downfall of the landed aristocracy in Ireland. The change was irrevocable. By the time Queen Victoria made her fourth and final visit to Ireland in 1900, it was a matter of when and not how Ireland would be an independent republic – an independence that finally came in 1922 but with a certain tragic price in the form of a short but bitterly fought civil war.

Endnotes

1. *Freeman's Journal*, 15 August 1855; *Freeman's Journal*, 31 October 1857, reported that there were 43,000 Irish soldiers and only 47,000 combined English and Scots soldiers in the British army.
2. *Freeman's Journal*, 4 February 1857.

3. *Freeman's Journal*, 17 April 1858.
4. On the Fenians, see Comerford (1985).
5. *Freeman's Journal*, 28 May 1857.
6. *Freeman's Journal*, 3 May 1858.
7. *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1861.
8. *Freeman's Journal*, 6 July 1858.
9. *Freeman's Journal*, 2 & 3 September 1858.
10. *Freeman's Journal*, 6 July 1859.
11. *Freeman's Journal*, 29 June 1859.
12. *Freeman's Journal*, 15 July 1859. On her 1861 visit, Queen Victoria writes that Lord Carlisle was 'exceedingly popular', see Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 23 August 1861.
13. *Freeman's Journal*, 7 December 1859.
14. Jagow, (1938), p. 346.
15. *Times*, 22 March 1860.
16. Letter of Prince Albert to the Princess Royal, 21 March 1860, in Jagow (1938), p. 346.
17. *Times*, 4 & 10 September 1860.
18. *Freeman's Journal*, 14 September 1860.
19. *Times*, 20 September 1860.
20. *Times*, 20 September 1860.
21. *Freeman's Journal*, 20 September 1860.
22. Lee (1927), I: p. 94.
23. *Times*, 20 September 1860.
24. *Freeman's Journal*, 26 September 1860.
25. Queen Victoria to the princess royal, 6 February 1861, in Fulford (1977), p. 305.
26. Comerford, *Fenians*, p. 64.
27. Weintraub, *Albert*, p. 403.
28. Weintraub, *Albert*, p. 403.
29. Lee, *Edward VII*, I: p. 118.
30. Magnus (1964), p. 47.
31. *Freeman's Journal*, 22 January 1862.
32. Weintraub, *Victoria*, pp. 292–93, 313.
33. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 22 August 1861.
34. *Freeman's Journal*, 14 August 1861.
35. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 26 August 1861.
36. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 24 August 1861.
37. Lee, *Edward VII*, vol. I, p. 119.
38. Prince Albert to King William I of Prussia, 1 September 1861, in Jagow (1927) p. 367.
39. Queen Victoria to King Leopold of the Belgians, 26 August 1861, in Benson and Esher (1908), vol. 3 (1854–61), pp. 577–8.
40. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 26 August 1861.
41. Thompson (1990), pp. 38–9.

42. *Freeman's Journal*, 10 September 1861.
43. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 26 August 1861.
44. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 26 August 1861.
45. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 26 August 1861.
46. *Freeman's Journal*, 15 September 1869.
47. *Freeman's Journal*, 28 August 1861.
48. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 27 August 1861.
49. *Freeman's Journal*, 29 August 1861.
50. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 27 August 1861.
51. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 27 August 1861.
52. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 28 August 1861.
53. Princess Alice to the Duchess of Manchester, 4 September 1861, in Kennedy (1956), p. 174.
54. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 28 August 1861.
55. *Freeman's Journal*, 29 August 1861.
56. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 28 August 1861.
57. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 29 August 1861.
58. *Times*, 3 August 1849.
59. See the entry for 26 October 1849, in Mitchel (1854), p. 203.
60. *Irish People*, 12 March 1864.
61. Royal Archives, Queen Victoria's Journal, 29 August 1861.
62. *Freeman's Journal*, 6 November 1861.
63. See Cannadine (1983) in Hobsbaum and Ranger (1983), p. 64.
64. See Hill (1998) in Foley and Ryder (1998), p. 56.
65. *Freeman's Journal*, 27 September 1853.
66. Weintraub (1987), pp. 299–300.
67. *Freeman's Journal*, 16, 17 December 1861.
68. *Freeman's Journal*, 5 March 1862.
69. Ponsonby (1951), p. 62.
70. On the life and work of J. H. Foley R. A., see Monkhouse (1875).

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