

## Sixth biennial report (fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth years) of the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences June 1991 – May 1993

1. The biennial general Conference of Irish Historians was held on 8 June 1991 at Magee College, University of Ulster.
2. The fifth biennial report of the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences (for fifty-second and fifty-third years) and the minutes of the previous conference were approved and signed.
3. The Irish Committee of Historical Sciences for 1991–3 was constituted as follows: Dr Ciaran Brady, Professor Kevin B. Nowlan and Dr W. E. Vaughan (representing the Irish Historical Society); Professor David Harkness, Dr Mary O'Dowd and Dr Eamon Phoenix (representing the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies); Dr David Craig, John McHugh and Dr Vivienne Pollock (representing the Economic and Social History Society of Ireland); Professor Nicholas Canny, Dr Keith Jeffery and Dr Colm Lennon (representing the Conference of Irish Historians); Professor Ronan Fanning, Dr John O'Brien, Dr Eunan O'Halpin, Dr Pauric Travers and Sabine Wichert (co-opted). Dr Alvin Jackson replaced Dr Phoenix in January 1992; Gerard Moran replaced Dr Pollock in November 1991; Dr Timothy O'Neill replaced John McHugh in December 1992; and James McGuire and Dr James Kelly replaced Professor Nowlan and Dr Vaughan in January 1993.
4. The officers elected by the committee were: Professor Nicholas Canny, chairman; Dr Keith Jeffery, deputy chairman; Dr Mary O'Dowd, secretary; Dr Colm Lennon, treasurer.
5. Six meetings of the committee were held during the two years. Attendance was as follows (with numbers of meetings for which members were eligible given in brackets): Dr Brady 6 (6); Professor Canny 6 (6); Dr Craig 5 (6); Professor Fanning 0 (6); Professor Harkness 3 (6); Dr Jackson 0 (4); Dr Jeffery 6 (6); Dr Kelly 1 (1); Dr Lennon 6 (6); J. McGuire 1 (1); J. McHugh 2 (4); G. Moran 5 (5); Professor Nowlan 0 (4); Dr O'Brien 2 (6); Dr O'Dowd 6 (6); Dr O'Halpin 5 (6); Dr O'Neill 1 (2); Dr Phoenix 0 (2); Dr Pollock 0 (1); Dr Travers 2 (6); S. Wichert 0 (6).
6. Regular communication was maintained with the Comité International des Sciences Historiques. The committee has submitted proposals for six papers and a round table for the eighteenth International History Congress to be held in Montreal from 27 August to 3 September 1995. Dr Jeffery and Dr O'Dowd represented the committee at the General Assembly held in Prague in September 1992.
7. The fourth volume of the new (third) series of Studies in Irish History, *Prelude to union: Anglo-Irish politics in the 1780s*, by James Kelly, was published by Cork University Press in 1992. The committee is grateful to Cork University Press and the senate of the National University of Ireland for bearing a share of the cost of publication.
8. In 1991 the committee established a sub-committee to liaise with the History Teachers' Association to discuss changes in the history curriculum for the Leaving Certificate. The membership of the sub-committee was as follows: Dr O'Brien (convenor), Dr Brady, Professor Canny, Dr O'Dowd and Dr Travers. Dr Mary Daly was also asked to join the sub-committee. The sub-committee has held three meetings with the History Teachers' Association and has agreed to organise jointly a one-day seminar on proposed changes to the curriculum. The seminar is likely to be held in October 1993.
9. In 1992 the committee established an archives sub-committee to investigate access to manuscripts and other problems confronting researchers in public archives in Ireland. The membership of the sub-committee was as follows: Dr O'Dowd (convenor), Dr Brady and Dr O'Halpin. The sub-committee has met with Dr Donlon of the National Library and Dr Craig of the National Archives to discuss conditions and resources for researchers in their respective institutions. As a result of the meeting with Dr Donlon, a questionnaire on conditions for researchers in the National Library was sent to all university and college history departments. Fifty-six responses were received. The majority indicated considerable dissatisfaction with the current opening hours of the library, particularly of the Manuscript Room. A report on the questionnaire has been sent to Dr Donlon.
10. The twentieth Irish Conference of Historians was held at Magee College, University of Ulster, 6–8 June 1991, with the theme 'War, politics and society'. The proceedings of the conference, edited by Professor T. G. Fraser and Dr Keith Jeffery are shortly to be published as *Men, women and war: Historical Studies XIX* by the Lilliput Press, Dublin.
11. The programme for the twenty-first Irish Conference of Historians, to be held at the Queen's University of Belfast, 27–30 May 1993, was decided. The conference theme will be the history of women, and the organisers Dr Mary O'Dowd and Sabine Wichert.
12. Regular communication was maintained with the Royal Irish Academy.
13. The Irish Historical Society held a full programme of lectures during the two-year period.
14. The Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies held a full programme of lectures and organised a symposium on nationalism and unionism.
15. The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland held its 1991 annual conference in Limerick and its 1992 annual conference in Cork.
16. The committee granted modest subventions to the Irish Historical Society; to *Retrospect*, the journal of the Irish History Students' Association; to the newly formed Historians of Ireland Postgraduate Association; and to the Curtis Memorial Prize Fund.
17. The committee is grateful to the Irish government for continued financial support. It is also grateful to the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies for bearing a share of the travel expenses of committee members.
18. The committee wishes to express its thanks to Mr Pearse Colbert for his services as honorary auditor.

24 May 1993

MARY O'DOWD  
Secretary