

Eighth biennial report (fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth years) of the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences May 1995 – May 1997

1. The biennial general Conference of Irish Historians was held on 18 May 1995 at University College, Dublin.
2. The seventh biennial report of the Irish Committee for Historical Sciences (for fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh years) and the treasurer's report were approved and signed.
3. The Irish Committee of Historical Sciences for 1995–7 was constituted as follows: Dr Ciaran Brady, Dr James Kelly and Dr Paucic Travers (Irish Historical Society); Professor David Harkness, Dr Michael Kennedy and Dr Mary O'Dowd (Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies); Dr David Craig, Dr John Logan and Dr Des McCabe (Economic and Social History Society of Ireland); Professor Nicholas Canny, Dr Keith Jeffery and Dr Colm Lennon (representing the Conference of Irish Historians); Dr Judith Devlin, Dr Jacqueline Hill, Dr Eunan O'Halpin and Dr John O'Brien (co-opted). Professor Seymour Phillips and Sarah Ward-Perkins replaced Dr Brady and Dr Travers in 1996; Dr Margaret Crawford replaced Professor Harkness in 1996.
4. The officers elected by the committee were: Professor Canny (chairman); Dr Jeffery (deputy chairman); Dr O'Dowd (secretary); Dr Devlin (treasurer).
5. Five meetings of the committee were held.
6. The committee sponsored a one-day conference on local history at St Patrick's College, Dublin City University, on 25 May 1996. The conference was organised by Dr James Kelly and Dr Paucic Travers. The next one-day conference will be in 1998 and will be held at the University of Limerick.
7. Two members of the committee, Dr Ciaran Brady and Dr John O'Brien, served on the History Committee of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and reported regularly to the committee on progress in the formation of the new History curriculum for the Senior Cycle.
8. The committee continued to correspond with the Director of the National Library and the Minister for the Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht concerning the opening hours of the National Library. In November 1996 the committee met with Dr Anthony Scott, the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the library. It is hoped that this meeting will lead to more regular contact between the Trustees and the members of the new statutory body for the library (when it is formed) and the committee. The committee is, however, seriously concerned that there has been no change in the library's policy on opening hours over the past two years, and that

since November 1995 access to the main reading room has been further restricted owing to maintenance work on the roof.

9. The twenty-second Irish Conference of Historians was held at University College, Dublin, 18–20 May 1995. The theme was religion, politics and society. The proceedings of the conference have been edited by the conference organisers, Dr Judith Devlin and Professor Roman Fanning. The volume will be published by University College Dublin Press and will be launched at the twenty-third Irish Conference of Historians.

10. The programme for the twenty-third Irish Conference of Historians to be held at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, in May 1997 was agreed. The conference theme will be luxury and austerity, and the organisers are Dr Jacqueline Hill and Dr Colm Lennon.

11. The International Conference of Historians was held in Montreal in August 1995. Historians from Ireland were well represented on the conference programme. A number of Irish historians presented papers, and members of the committee were involved in the organisation of a very successful round table on Imperial archives. The committee was represented by Dr Keith Jeffery, Dr Mary O'Dowd and Dr Eunan O'Halpin at the meetings of the International Committee of Historical Sciences. The next International Conference will be held in Oslo in August 2000.

12. The Irish Historical Society held a full programme of lectures during the two-year period.

13. The Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies held a full programme of lectures during the two-year period.

14. The Irish Economic and Social History Society of Ireland held its 1995 conference at St Patrick's College, Maynooth. The 1996 conference was held at Trinity College, Dublin.

15. The committee continued to liaise with the bibliographical sub-committee concerning the future of *Writings on Irish history*.

16. The committee is grateful to the Irish government for continued financial support. The Cultural Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs provided an additional grant of £500 towards travel expenses for committee members attending the Montreal conference. The committee is also grateful to the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies for funding the travel expenses of committee members from Northern Ireland.

17. The committee wishes to express its thanks to Mr Pearse Colbert for his services as honorary auditor.

17 May 1997

MARY O'DOWD
Secretary