

“The Old Faith:” Insular Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation

Lucy Boyd

Along with Catholicism, cultural and religious resistance to British imperialism are integral aspects of Ireland’s history. Ireland’s medieval insularity and its indigenous culture profoundly influenced the development and spread of Christianity on the island, and the resulting faith was culturally distinct from—and at times even heretical to—other manifestations of Catholicism in Europe. The rich local culture would also prove critical to Ireland’s ability to withstand England’s sweeping imposition of the Protestant Reformation in the British Isles during the sixteenth century. At the same time, Henrician repression helped galvanize Catholicism as a foundational element of Irish identity.

While some scholars have suggested that it is misleading to characterize the Irish religious experience as a unified faith removed from broader Latin Christendom, Ireland’s folkloric differences and its relative physical isolation from the rest of Europe during the Middle Ages gave rise to a unique form of “insular Christianity.”¹ As legend goes, Christianity came to Ireland in 432 when Pope Celestine sent the future St. Patrick to convert the Gaels.² The importance of local culture is already evident in the popular hagiographic legend, in which Patrick uses the shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity to converts.³ Regardless of the veracity of this story, Patrick left behind a rich monastical network.⁴ As a result of their unique physical and geographic context, the Irish developed a distinct and vibrant Christian culture from the start. Because they were never a part of the Roman Empire, Ireland (unlike the rest of Western Europe) lacked cities through which to build an ecclesiastical structure of bishops and dioceses.⁵ Monasteries, therefore, assumed many of the bishop’s responsibilities and played a central role in the development and spread of the church.⁶ As Judith Bennett and Sandy Bardsley note, while some bishops were

¹ Judith M. Bennett and Sandy Bardsley, *Medieval Europe: A Short History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 48.

² John Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” *The Crane Bag* 7, no. 2 (1983): 106.

³ Tarlach O’Raifeartaigh, “Saint Patrick,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2019, accessed 2 Nov. 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Patrick>.

⁴ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 106.

⁵ Bennett and Bardsley, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 48.

⁶ *Ibid.*

present in Ireland during the sixth and seventh centuries, their duties were “spiritual and sacramental only” and, notably, in some cases “they even lived in monasteries.”⁷

The Irish monastic network also differed from that in broader Latin Christendom in other important ways. One was the great success of “pilgrimage-as-mission,” in which monks left their communities to convert pagans; some of the new monastic centres that resulted from these efforts (such as St. Columba’s Iona Abbey, St. Finnian’s Clonard, and St. Brigid’s Kildare) remain famous.⁸ In these compounds, monks and nuns would generally each have a distinct single stone cell, called a *clochán*, or “beehive hut.”⁹ Lloyd Laing suggests that *clochán* were inspired by secular Celtic dwellings that pre-date the spread of Christianity, which underlines the impact of local culture on the faith.¹⁰

Irish churches also differed from those in the Roman tradition in important aspects, such as in the administration of baptism, episcopal consecration, monastic tonsure, and most contentiously, in the method of calculating Easter.¹¹ The Ionians used a set of tables known as the *Laterculus* to determine the date of Easter, while the papacy drew on a series of tables devised by Victorius of Aquitaine in the fifth century.¹² As such, the date of celebrations differed most years, and would sometimes be up to a month apart.¹³ This variance was of great concern to the Roman Catholic Church, as it suggested not only Christian disunity but mathematical ineptitude. These tensions would come to head at the Synod of Whitby, where the English Abbot of Ripon accused the Irish monks of “preferring the authority of St. Columba to that of the See of Peter.”¹⁴ The Roman method would win out, and by 800 the Irish church would conform to the broader practices of the papacy.¹⁵

Up until the ninth century, the Irish monastic system would flourish as centers of culture and learning and produce illuminated works such as the celebrated *Book of Kells*. Beginning in the

⁷ Bennett and Bardsley, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 48.

⁸ Bennett and Bardsley, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 48.; Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 106-7.

⁹ Bennett and Bardsley, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, 48-9.

¹⁰ Lloyd Laing, *The Archeology of Celtic Britain and Ireland: C.AD 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 222.

¹¹ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 107.

¹² E.T. Daily, “To Choose One Easter From Three: Osiwu’s Decision and the Northumbrian Synod of AD 664,” *Peritia* 26: 50-1.

¹³ Daily, “To Choose One Easter From Three,” 51.

¹⁴ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 107.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

ninth century, however, Irish monasteries became targets for Viking raids.¹⁶ *The Annals of Ulster* describe an attack on Rathlin Island, in what is now Northern Ireland, where the monastery was “burned by the heathens.”¹⁷ The chronicles reveal the spread of the violence and chaos. An entry from 798 details “the burning of Inis Patraic by the heathens,” with Vikings taking “the cattle-tribute of the territories” and the “shrine of Do-Channa,” while making “significant incursions in both Ireland and Alba.”¹⁸ Even as the Norsemen would eventually become Christians and integrate into Irish society through the establishment of “seaboard towns,” their trade connections with England would contribute to the breakdown of the existing monastic structure of the Irish church.¹⁹ The Norman connection with the English would bring England and Ireland closer together, with the Norse Kingdom of Dublin relying on Canterbury for ecclesiastical guidance and support.²⁰

As John Jordan notes, while the “Otsman” contributed to the breakdown of the existing monastic system, the major reforming influence came from within.²¹ Most central to this project was the future St. Malachy, an Abbott from Northern Ireland, who was passionate about restoring the church in Ireland, and complained that the people were neglecting proper sacramental rituals.²² Bernard, author of St. Malachy’s hagiography, paints a grim portrait of the state of Irish Christianity in the Middle Ages:

Never before had [Malachy] known the like, in whatever depth of barbarism; never had he found men so shameless in regard of morals, so dead in regard of rites, so impious in regard of faith, so barbarous in regard of laws, so stubborn in regard of discipline, so unclean in regard of life. They were Christians in name, in fact pagans.²³

While the scholarly consensus concludes that several elements of the *Life of St. Malachy of Armagh* were exaggerated, the Irish church was greatly enfeebled at the beginning of the twelfth century.

What the *Life of St. Malachy* does offer is a portrait of a zealous champion of Christianity who would be a central player in the Irish church councils of the High Middle Ages. To address the spiritual issues of the country, the Church held national synods in Cashel (1101 and 1172), Kells-Mellifont (1152), and Ráth Breasail (1111).²⁴ At Ráth Breasail, the Irish church shifted from

¹⁶ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 107.

¹⁷ Roger Atwood, “The Vikings in Ireland,” *Archeology* 68, no. 2 (2015): 47.

¹⁸ University College Cork, *The Annals of Ulster*, 253.

¹⁹ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 107.

²⁰ Francis Young, “Making Medieval Ireland English,” *History Today* 70, no. 3 (2020): 19.

²¹ Jordan, “Irish Catholicism,” 107.

²² St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *Life of St. Malachy of Armagh*, trans. H. J. Lawlor (2008), 162.

²³ *Ibid.*, 38.

²⁴ John Mac Erlean, “Synod of Raith Breasail: Boundaries of the Dioceses of Ireland [A.D. 1110 or 1118],” *Catholic Historical Society of Ireland* 3 (1914): 2.

a reliance on its existing monastic structure to a more typical system of diocesan bishops found elsewhere in Western Europe.²⁵ Even as these reforms brought more widely accepted devotional structures to Ireland, however, Irish Catholicism would retain an element of its insular flavour. Young argues that St. Malachy's efforts helped stabilize Irish monasticism, and it is notable that St. Bernard devotes much space in his hagiography to Malachy's restoration of a monastery in Bangor destroyed during a Viking raid.²⁶

It is important to consider these local movements of reform—such as those championed by St. Malachy—in light of the first Anglo-Saxon campaign to enforce English religious conformity on Ireland. Starting in October 1171, King Henry II of England would proclaim himself “Lord of Ireland” and invade.²⁷ While there were political and military motivations for this invasion, Henry II cited religious reform as justification.²⁸ Not only had the Synod of Kells-Mellifont turned the bishops of Dublin into archbishops—thus ending the only religious influence England had on Ireland—but Henry was looking to publicly atone, through acts of faith, for the murder of St. Thomas Becket one year earlier.²⁹ The Anglo-Norman barons established churches dedicated to English saints in the territories they conquered, including St. Werburgh (Dublin), St. Edmund (Althassel), and St. Edward the Confessor (Limerick) in what Francis Young calls an act of “sacred imperialism.”³⁰

Despite extensive attempts to “Anglicize” the Irish faith, however, this project would not ultimately succeed, and its failure foreshadows later unsuccessful attempts during the Reformation. The religious houses and the language installed by the English struggled: locals would recapture dioceses in the fourteenth century and established Anglo-Saxon lords increasingly adopted both regional religious customs and language.³¹ While a handful of English settlers continued to celebrate a handful of Anglo-Saxon saints, the legacy of insular monasticism and ongoing internal reform movements meant that these devotional practices found no meaningful foothold with the indigenous population of the island.

²⁵ Young, “Making Medieval Ireland English,” 18.

²⁶ Young, “Making Medieval Ireland English,” 18.; St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *Life of St. Malachy of Armagh*, 31.

²⁷ Young, “Making Medieval Ireland English,” 18.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

The “Anglicizing” projects of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are an important precursor to the events of Tudor England, with a few key differences. Most importantly, despite regional devotional differences, both the Anglo-Normans and the Irish in the Middle Ages would have understood themselves to be a part of Latin Christendom that practiced the same faith. Similarly, modern conceptions of national identity did not exist at this time. Nevertheless, Anglo-Norman Ireland’s church history reflects the lasting influences of the island’s insularity and its unique cultural environment, both of which gave rise to a nationalized faith that would help resist the spread of English Protestantism during the Reformation.

The full conquest of Ireland by England began in 1536, the year in which King Henry VIII formally broke with Rome.³² Opposition to both Henry’s religion and his politics in Ireland found expression during the Kildare Rebellion, whose leader Lord Thomas Fitzgerald renounced his allegiance to the King and had his followers swear obedience to the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, and himself.³³ The English would crush the rebellion, however, and in 1536-1537 Henry was recognized as the head of the Church of Ireland.³⁴ A flurry of reformation activities swiftly followed Henry’s victory. The English shut down abbeys and monasteries in the Pale—a region of Ireland that included Dublin and Ulster—“despoiled” their relics, and converted St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin into a Protestant Church.³⁵ As in England, the dissolution of monasteries in Ireland was central to the Henrician project: despite great local opposition, its actions suppressed roughly half of the religious houses in the country.³⁶

While Henry’s reign marked the beginning of a series of attempts to Protestantize Ireland, Edward VI, who took the throne upon his father’s death in 1547, radicalized the Reformation project.³⁷ A nine-year-old boy, he was little more than a figurehead, and a regency council led by his uncle Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, governed England in practice.³⁸ Under the Somerset Protectorate, while English Protestantism increasingly committed itself to Zwinglian theology, England would ignore the situation in Ireland for the first year and a half of Edward’s

³² Karl S. Bottigheimer, “The Reformation in Ireland Revisited,” *Journal of British Studies* 15, no. 2 (1976): 140-1.

³³ Henry A. Jeffries, “Unreformable Ireland? The Failure of the Reformation in Ireland,” *Marginalia* (19 January 2018): 11.

³⁴ Henry A. Jeffries, “Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland,” *Irish Historical Studies* 40, no. 158 (2016): 151-70.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Brendan Scott, “The Dissolution of the Religious Houses in the Tudor Diocese Meath,” *Archivium Hibernicum* 59 (2005): 286.

³⁷ John S. Morrill, “Edward VI,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

reign, due in large part to the Protectorate's preoccupation with its war in Scotland.³⁹ Reformation activities would begin in earnest under Edward with the help of Archbishop Browne of Dublin, an Englishman that Henry VIII appointed to promote Protestantism.⁴⁰ Historical records reveal that Browne devised and spread a "book of reformation" to the local populace; while no copies have survived, some historians have theorized that this book is similar to the "Order of Communion" that was released in England that year.⁴¹

Moderate attempts to spread the faith soon gave way to more zealous forms of reform. Starting in November 1548, Protestant priests were encouraged to wage war on idolatry—and on many of the traditions that distinguished the insular Christian faith.⁴² Purges of relics, images, sacramentals, and "all expressions of veneration for saints or sacred objects" followed.⁴³ These changes were not well received by the local congregation, who complained that "[Archbishop Browne] ha[s] taken open part with the Scot, that false heretic, and preached against the sacrament of the altar, and den[ied] saints."⁴⁴ Amid the unrest in the Dublin diocese, the Archbishop wrote to an unnamed lord deputy that he feared for his life.⁴⁵

This religious unrest was coupled with the serious material challenges that Reformationist promoters faced. The Lord Deputy of Ireland, Anthony St Leger, bemoaned the scarcity of texts with which to teach the reformed liturgy.⁴⁶ Copies were in short supply and written in English, a language that few locals could understand and fewer still could read.⁴⁷ As such, attempts to introduce a new vision of Christianity in Ireland were met at best with indifference, and at worst, active hostility.

St Leger's efforts were notable for his willingness to make concessions to encourage the spread of Protestantism: he introduced the printing press to Ireland and negotiated with the Anglican Church to publish the *Book of Common Prayer* in Latin, a language more familiar to the Irish.⁴⁸ This project was modestly successful, with St Leger reporting an increased interest in the

³⁹ Brendan Bradshaw "The Edwardian Reformation in Ireland, 1547-53," *Archivium Hibernicum* 34 (1977): 83.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 91-2.

book in the diocese of Limerick.⁴⁹ Given the intensity of the Reformation under Edward, however, St Leger's liberal attitudes placed him in some difficulty. In January 1551, he was forced to defend himself against several charges—including “neglecting the Reformation” and being a “Papist”—and was formally deposed four months later.⁵⁰

The troubles of the Edwardian project in Ireland were not merely textual. The English authorities struggled to find suitable English clergyman for the Irish bishoprics.⁵¹ This was not an easy task, as rumours of unrest in Ireland—and notions of its backwards people—made it an unattractive posting.⁵² The protectorate eventually found champions of the faith in form of Hugh Goodacre and John Bale; however, both of their careers went disastrously. Goodacre, who was stationed in Armagh, evangelized fruitlessly to a congregation that largely could not understand English, and died only five months into his posting, possibly poisoned by his own clergy.⁵³ At his station in Ossory, Bale wrestled with the local customs of Irish Catholicism, writing in horror of the “prodigious howling and patterings” at Irish funerals, a tradition of keening that stemmed from the earliest insular practices in Ireland.⁵⁴ Furthermore, parishioners recited traditional Catholic prayers for the deceased and were devout believers in the doctrine of Purgatory, which the Anglican Church firmly rejected.⁵⁵ The King's death in 1553 put brought an abrupt halt to the Edwardian project.⁵⁶ As a whole, it was a largely unsuccessful attempt to instill a culturally and linguistically foreign faith. The Protectorate's attempts to enforce Protestantism on such absolute terms only bred hostility and resentment in the local population.

Edward's sister Mary succeeded him in 1553 and temporarily halted the Reformation in Ireland.⁵⁷ A devout Catholic, she sought to restore the “old faith” to both countries that she ruled. As Henry Jeffries notes, while Mary's projects in England have attracted significant scholarship, there has been much less focus on her impact in Ireland.⁵⁸ While Ireland's population was mostly Catholic, her religious policies also helped it resist the Reformation.

⁴⁹ Bradshaw, “The Edwardian Reformation in Ireland,” 91.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Jeffries, “Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland,” 151-70.

⁵⁷ Eric Norman Simons, “Mary I,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2020.

⁵⁸ Jeffries, “Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland,” 151-70.

Mary's efforts to undo the work of her brother began in September 1553, when she released a declaration stating royal toleration of the Mass.⁵⁹ Much to the chagrin of Bishop Bale, this declaration and the restoration of traditional altars in the churches were met with great joy and local support.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Mary sought to replace Protestants that Edward had appointed to powerful clerical positions with Catholics.⁶¹ In her letters to Archbishop Reginald Pole of Canterbury, she asked about how she might support Catholic clergy quickly without undermining the papacy.⁶² When he failed to respond, Mary established a royal commission in April 1554 to remove members of the Irish clergy who had married.⁶³ This was, she wrote, a way of "purging" the church of those who had "sown heresies and schisms away from the true Catholic faith."⁶⁴ The result of this commission was one of massive ecclesiastical turnover: all but one of the removed clergymen was English.⁶⁵ As Henry Jeffries points out, that Mary's replacements were all local Irish men acknowledged the continued dominance of Catholicism among the population, even in the face of years of pro-Reformation activities.⁶⁶

It is undeniable that Mary's activities in service of the Catholic revival in Ireland were far less intense than those in England. In spite of the Henrician and Edwardian Reformations of the sixteenth century, the insular particularities of Irish Catholicism enabled a consistent (if not cohesive) resistance to Protestantism. While brief, Mary's reign would centre the Irish on their own Catholic project, which would prove vital to their continued resistance to subsequent Protestant projects, including those of Elizabeth I.

Elizabeth I ascended to the throne in 1558, and her attempts to promote Protestantism in Ireland met with swift opposition.⁶⁷ Attempts to have local elites take the Oath of Supremacy—in which public officials swear allegiance to the Queen as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England—met a quick end in the face of overwhelming resistance, including from the most Anglicized parts of Ireland.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Elizabeth also faced the struggle to find Protestant preachers that plagued her predecessors. Letters between church officials and Elizabeth reveal that

⁵⁹ Henry A. Jeffries, "The Marian Restoration in Ireland," *British Catholic History* 33, no.1 (2016): 1.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 17.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Morrill, "Elizabeth I," 1.

⁶⁸ Jeffries, "The Marian Restoration in Ireland," 27.

by 1564, among the roughly 2,500 parishes in Ireland, only three officials preached Protestantism: an Englishman, an Irishman, and a vicar briefly visiting from London.⁶⁹ The English were unable to evangelize effectively in their attempts to convert the local populace: Protestantism spread poorly on the ground, and local church hierarchs and secular elites firmly rejected it.⁷⁰ The Protestant Archbishop of Armagh noted this dissent in a letter to the Queen: “[the Irish nobility] condemn [...] your majesty’s most godly laws and proceedings more manifestly than the rest.”⁷¹ Attempts to impose the *Book of Common Prayer* met with steadfast opposition, including boycotts of parishes that attempted to use it.⁷² This unrest led to the establishment of the Irish Ecclesiastical High Commission in 1564 with a mandate to address “disturbances and misbehaviour” against “church, chapel [...] or divine service.”⁷³ Nevertheless, attendance at Protestant services remained low, and most nobles and peasants were regulars at Mass.⁷⁴ As Henry Jeffries suggests, boycotts revealed a coordinated approach to religious resistance also visible in underground networks that smuggled Catholic priests out of Ireland to religious colleges in mainland Europe.⁷⁵ These priests would later return and further solidify the faith in their home country.

Catholic reformation and revival was in full swing in central Europe during Elizabeth’s reign. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) had met to define Catholic doctrine and revitalize the Church in light of the Protestant threat.⁷⁶ Among the decrees the Council released were statements on spiritual cultural issues, such as guidelines for sacred art.⁷⁷ These decrees would push many Catholic-majority countries such as Spain, Italy, and France into a period of rich artistic growth and, through the founding of spiritual orders, the development of new forms of devotional mysticism.

While Catholicism was always dominant in Ireland, a comparison with contemporary Catholic developments in central Europe highlights the island’s unique religious insularity. The Celtic-rooted faith that had held strong against the English would not go through a similar period of artistic revival: indeed, Irish Catholicism was conservative and even archaic. The visual and

⁶⁹ Jeffries, “The Marian Restoration in Ireland,” 27.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 28-9.

⁷⁶ “The Council of Trent,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

literary arts were slow to develop in Early Modern Ireland—partly due to the English suppression of the aristocracy—and as such, the populace relied more heavily on their distinctive medieval traditions.⁷⁸ Similarly, the broader trend of founding new spiritual orders (such as the Jesuits) also eluded Ireland. The impact of this medievalist emphasis has shaped a faith that is distinct, even today, in its continuous draw upon ancient rites, art, and mythology.

Fundamental to a modern understanding of Irish history is consideration of its dominant faith: today, approximately 78% of the population is Catholic.⁷⁹ It is a Catholicism unique in its devotional practices and culture, and it emerged from years of insularity and successful resistance to various English Protestant expansionist projects. Indeed, the Protestant Reformation, as introduced by Henry VIII, would only serve to galvanize the faith. This resistance, coupled with Ireland's isolation, resulted in Irish devotional practices that are culturally distinct from other manifestations of Catholicism in Europe.

⁷⁸ Dorothy Walker and Simon Walker, "Indigenous Culture and Irish Art," *The Crane Bag* 1, no. 2 (1971): 47-51.

⁷⁹ An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh, Central Statistics Office, "Census of the Population 2016".

Bibliography

- An Phriomh-Oifig Staidrimh Central Statistics Office. "Census of the Population: 2016." 2016. Accessed 15 Nov. 2020. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8rroc/>.
- Atwood, Roger. "The Vikings in Ireland." *Archeology* 68, no. 2 (2015): 47-53.
- Bennett, Judith M. and Sandy Bardsley. *Medieval Europe: A Short History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Bottigheimer, Karl S. "The Reformation in Ireland Revisited." *Journal of British Studies* 15, no. 2 (1976): 140-49.
- Bradshaw, Brendan. "The Edwardian Reformation in Ireland, 1547-53." *Archivium Hibernicum* 34 (1977): 83-99.
- Daily, E.T. "To Choose One Easter From Three: Osiwu's Decision and the Northumbrian Synod of AD 664." *Peritia* 26: 47-64.
- Jeffries, Henry A. "The Marian Restoration in Ireland." *British Catholic History* 33, no. 1 (2016): 2-31.
- Jeffries, Henry A. "Unreformable Ireland? The Failure of the Reformation in Ireland." *Marginalia*, (19 January 2018).
- Jeffries, Henry A. "Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland." *Irish Historical Studies* 40, no. 158 (2016): 151-70.
- Jordan, John. "Irish Catholicism." *The Crane Bag* 7, no. 2 (1983): 106-16.
- Laing, Lloyd. *The Archeology of Celtic Britain and Ireland: C.AD 400-1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Mac Erlean, John. "Synod of Raith Breasail: Boundaries of the Dioceses of Ireland [A.D. 1110 or 1118]." *Catholic Historical Society of Ireland* 3, (1914): 1-33.
- Morrill, John S. "Edward VI." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020. Accessed 12 Nov. 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edward-VI>.
- Morrill, John S. "Elizabeth I." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020. Accessed 15 Nov. 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elizabeth-I>.
- O'Raifeartaigh, Tarlach. "Saint Patrick." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2019. Accessed 2 Nov. 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Patrick>.

Scott, Brendan. "The Dissolution of the Religious Houses in the Tudor Diocese Meath." *Archivium Hibernicum* 59 (2005): 286.

Simons, Eric Norman. "Mary I." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-I>.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux. *Life of St. Malachy of Armagh*. Translated by H. J. Lawlor, 2008. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25761/25761-h/25761-h.htm#Page_1.

"The Council of Trent." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020. Accessed 14 Nov. 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Council-of-Trent>.

University College Cork. *The Annals of Ulster*. Accessed 6 Nov. 2020. <https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T100001A/>.

Walker, Dorothy, and Walker, Simon. "Indigenous Culture and Irish Art." *The Crane Bag* 1, no. 2 (1971): 47-51.

Young, Francis. "Making Medieval Ireland English." *History Today* 70, no. 3 (2020): 18-20.