



Michael F. Crowley Lectures

2nd Program of the 2020-2021 Series ~ Our 19th Annual

Famine Memories: Terence MacSwiney's 1920 Hunger Strike

Guest Speaker: Joseph Lennon, PhD

Friday, November 6, 2020 ~ 6:00 p.m.

“Virtual” Presentation via Zoom

One hundred years ago, in 1920, daily newspapers around the world told the story of the starvation of a man. That man, Terence MacSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, eventually died in England’s Brixton prison after a seventy-four day fast. The release of his corpse, his funeral, and a series of international commemorations held the attention of the world’s modern press — and fired the imagination of Irish writers and Irish emigrants around the world. This presentation will explore the international dynamics of fasting traditions, the hunger strike and its impact on politics.

The death of Terence MacSwiney on 25 October 1920 spurred an unprecedented level of public mourning in the Irish diaspora; as such, it remains a unique event in Irish and Irish-American history. Over a million people, in Ireland and around the world, gathered on streets, in churches, and in stadiums to mourn the famished body of this Republican mayor. The evocation of hunger and starvation at a time when Ireland was at war with the United Kingdom tapped into deep memories of Irish famine, particularly the catastrophic Famine of 1845-52 during which around one million people died and millions more emigrated. Following the outpouring of public grief, the United States and other nations began pressing London to resolve the dispute. The 1920 memorials thus signal a turning point in the Anglo-Irish War, illustrating the power of hunger on the Irish imagination.

JOSEPH LENNON, PhD, is the Emily C. Riley Director of the Center for Irish Studies, Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Professor of English at Villanova University. He writes on Irish literature and culture, his present research being on the pre-history of the hunger strike. His first book, *Irish Orientalism*, won the Donald Murphy Prize from the American Conference for Irish Studies in 2004 and he has recently published scholarship in the *Irish University Review* and *New Hibernia Review*. He also publishes poetry in journals such as *Poetry Ireland* and *Natural Bridge* and has a book of poems, *Fell Hunger*, with Salmon Poetry, based in County Clare.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Visit www.NewportIrishHistory.org, click “Lectures,” then click the link to Reserve, under listing for Nov. 6. You will receive an e-confirmation. **Important:** The day before the presentation, you will receive another email containing a link to the virtual event. This will allow access to the live presentation which will begin at 6pm. If you do not see this email, check your SPAM. You can download and install Zoom on your computer or mobile device. We recommend you plan to log in early. **No fee** will be charged to participate, but we’d ask that members who have not yet paid their renewal fee for the current membership year renew on the “Membership” page of our website.

Non-computer/-mobile device Users: This lecture, including speaker’s slides and Q&A, will be videotaped and a link to view will be available on the ‘Lectures’ page of our website after the event. Please consider enjoying the lecture with a family member or friend who can provide computer access. We look forward to resuming in-person lectures when safe to do so.

QUESTIONS? Please contact Ann at (401) 841-5493 or (917) 270-3372 or email her at tpm1@earthlink.net.