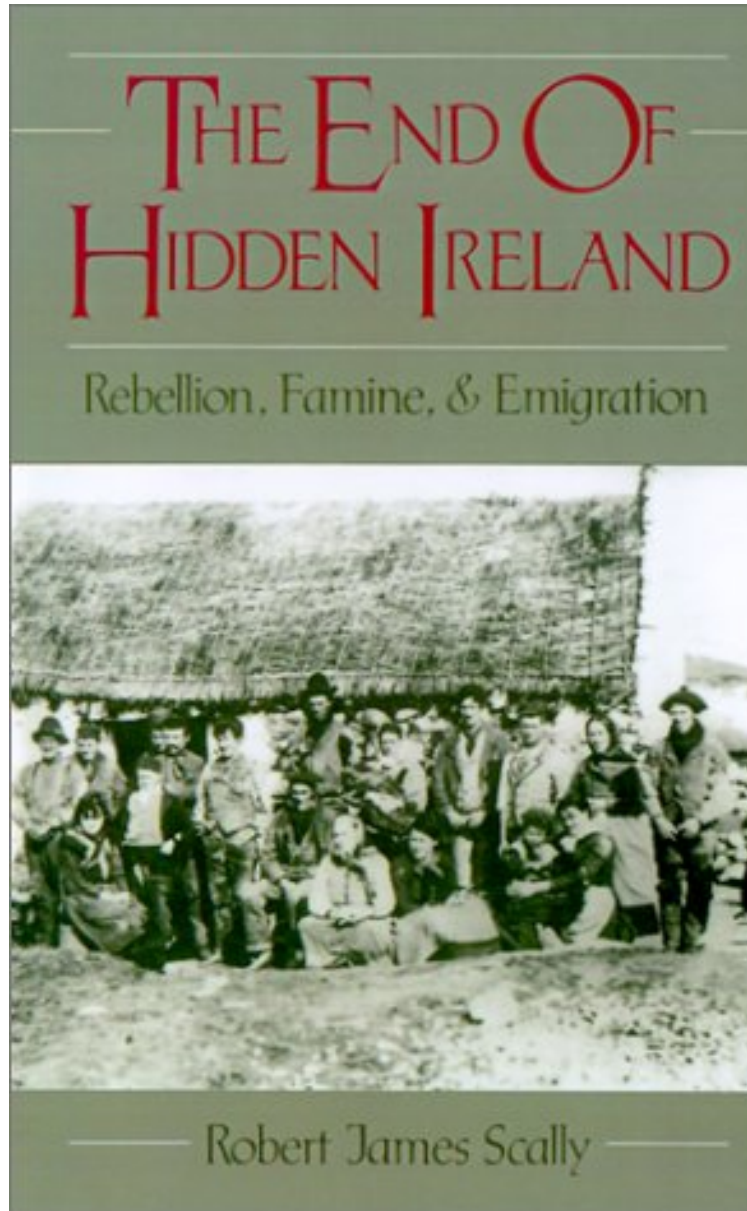


(Download pdf ebook) The End of Hidden Ireland: Rebellion, Famine, and Emigration

The End of Hidden Ireland: Rebellion, Famine, and Emigration

Robert Scally

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Robert Scally : The End of Hidden Ireland: Rebellion, Famine, and Emigration before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The End of Hidden Ireland: Rebellion, Famine, and Emigration:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A scholarly picture with limitations
By Albert Doyle
Robert Scally's book is the product of detailed research into the wiping out of the Irish village or "townland" of Ballykilcline in County Roscommon around the time of the great famine of the mid 19th century in Ireland and the forced emigration of its people to the Liverpool area of Lancashire and to the United States and Canada. The book starts with a description of the British imposed land ownership system in Ireland at the time, the landlords' financial difficulties which led to their desire to clear the land of their troublesome tenants by assisting them on their way, made easier by the famine. But the book presents an incomplete picture because of Scally's failure to consider context and history. Even the title is misleading. "Hidden Ireland", presumably meaning the remnant of the Gaelic culture which still stubbornly remained in the culture and language of the townland people and particularly in their attitude about use and ownership of land, had been receding in defeat for many years. Starting in 1607 with the defeat of the great northern leaders, O'Neill and O'Donnell and the "Flight of the Earls", the slow removal of native Irish leaders and the seizure of land by the colonizers, the Penal Laws of 1695 effectively proscribing the Catholic religion, and the Act of Union in 1800 after the United Irishman rebellion of 1798 were all aimed at destroying the Gaelic, Catholic, Irish nation. In fact they were never completely successful, and certainly the effort did not end with the leveling of Ballykilcline although it was a part of a low point for the Irish nation. The Irish people were never fully subjugated; nor were the peasants the docile, cultureless ignoramus painted by Scally, poor though they may have been. It was these very peasant people who supported Daniel O'Connell, the Catholic "Liberator" in his mass rallies in 1823, the more radical Fenians in 1860, Michael Davitt's National Land League in 1879 and the Sinn Fein movement founded in 1905 which finally won victory in elections for the Irish Dail and ultimately Ireland's freedom from Britain. "Hidden Ireland" has in many ways never disappeared and has emerged in our times, wounded but victorious, perhaps in a slightly different form. History is an unfolding tapestry, not a snapshot of a limited period. It is this which gives Scally's dismal portrait its dark and false color. If one does not understand the traditional Irish view of land ownership and cooperative use and its conflict with the English "metes and bounds" system which the conquerors saw as normal one cannot understand the views of the townland people. The old Gaelic and Brehon legal system of course did give way in our times. Another example of Scally's puzzlement is that he doesn't seem to realize that the Irish people saw the National School system brought by the English, in spite of its advanced, modern benefits, as part of the English plan to destroy their national culture and language and for that reason it was never fully accepted. The famine, the overwhelming catastrophe which struck the Irish people at the time of this narrative appears in the book only as background even though Scally's excellent footnotes tell that he was well aware of the facts and the impact of British laissez faire economic policies on the victims. He seems more interested in legal pleadings about unpaid rents. And his attitude toward the local Catholic clergy approaches downright ignorant hostility. As virtually the only educated people in the Irish community when they defended their people against perceived injustices he joins the English Protestant view of them as hot-headed trouble makers, a description not supported by their actual words quoted in the book. The latter parts of the book about conditions in the Liverpool area are the best part in my view. There is less about the immigrants to the United States which is surprising and more could have been said about Canada where the many Canadians showed great compassion for the suffering of the famine immigrants at Grosse Isle. I regret to have dwelt on what I see as the defects in this otherwise excellent book but I feel that its lack of historical context presents an incomplete picture. I recommend it for its general subject matter however.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An end of hidden realities of Irish history
By Gerard Casale
This is by far the most penetrating account of rural Ireland immediately before and during the Great Hunger that I have seen. Scally's researches into the actual living conditions and agendas of the rural tenants, landlords, middlemen and government will be a revelation to many.

28 of 30 people found the following review helpful. Thorough explanation of the cause of Ireland's devastation
By MEG
Scally does an excellent job of using historical facts to present a better picture of a devastated Ireland. Americans in particular often misunderstand the cause of the chaos usually blamed on the potato blight. In reality, the famine was only the "icing on the cake", which Scally explains well. The first half of the book is a very detailed description of Ireland in the days immediately preceding the famine. The second half walks us through the once-green hills of a broken Ireland, passing sunken faces and hungry eyes. Scally has been accused of leaving historical fact for emotional imagination. I submit the idea that every historian must create something from imagination at some point. Although we can read facts, we must paint the scenes in our minds. This is an excellent book to read if you are already interested in "Black '47" and is also good for the serious reader who cares to explore the Emerald Isle of 150 years ago . . . this is also an important source for an Irish-American who would like to better understand his or her roots, like me. Perhaps those of us who have ties to the isle are more likely to appreciate the suffering that happened there.

Many thousands of Irish peasants fled from the country in the terrible famine winter of 1847-48, following the road to the ports and the Liverpool ferries to make the dangerous passage across the Atlantic. The human toll of "Black '47," the worst year of the famine, is notorious, but the lives of the emigrants themselves have remained largely hidden, untold because of their previous obscurity and deep poverty. In *The End of Hidden Ireland*, Scally brings their lives to light. Focusing on the townland of Ballykilcline in Roscommon, Scally offers a richly detailed portrait of Irish rural

life on the eve of the catastrophe. From their internal lives and values, to their violent conflict with the English Crown, from rent strikes to the potato blight, he takes the emigrants on each stage of their journey out of Ireland to New York. Along the way, he offers rare insights into the character and mentality of the immigrants as they arrived in America in their millions during the famine years. Hailed as a distinguished work of social history, this book also is a tale of adventure and human survival, one that does justice to a tragic generation with sympathy but without sentiment.

From Publishers Weekly During the winter of 1847-48-"Black '47"-when the potato famine ravaged Ireland, the town of Ballykilcline, County Roscommon, was hit hard. The problem "was above all about food, and therefore about land." Hopelessly behind in paying their rent, the tenant-farmers rebelled. Those who had taken advantage of an offer from their landlord, Major Mahon, and left for Canada perished en route. News of the disaster reached Ballykilcline and Mahon was murdered. Recriminations followed about "Papist plots" on the landlord's side met by stalwart resistance on the part of the tenants. This study of the Irish land system and the effects of the great famine shows how the land was divided; the influence of the "Gentlemen and the Squireens"; the hatred of the peasants for the "drivers"-the landlords' rent collectors and evicters; and the peasants' eventual emigration (paid for by the British crown) and their new lives in the United States. Scally is professor of history and director of the Glucksman Ireland House at New York University. His account will be of particular interest to academicians. Illustrated. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. "The End of Hidden Ireland opens a window on a lost world in the process of becoming lost. Robert James Scally combines the labor of an archivist with the speculative verve of an historian of mentalities."--The Washington Post "Well written and well researched, a distinct contribution to the subject."--Kirkus s "Scally's book is compulsively readable, an intimate and humane portrait of a society on the brink of dissolution."--Kevin Whelan, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin "A beautifully written, deeply researched work of historical investigation that makes an important contribution to a true accounting of the Irish past... His book is a revelation."--Peter A. Quinn, author of Banished Children of Eve "On the 150th anniversary of the Irish Famine, no memorial to the victims could be more fitting or more moving than Robert Scally's spectacular recreation of the life and death of the community of Ballykilcline. Painstakingly researched, lucidly written, his work provides a sudden and intimate access to a world and a series of individual lives cruelly destroyed during the terrible forties of the last century."--Seamus Deane, University of Notre Dame "Professor Scally's meticulously researched book is a valuable addition to the growing body of work on the socio-political organization of rural life in Ireland in the first half of the last century. The publication of this book is a fitting memorial to the 500 or so Ballykilcline tenants who, weakened by famine, packed their meager possessions in May 1848 and headed for America."--Luke Dodd, Director, National Famine Museum of Ireland "This work is based on painstaking research into an extraordinary range of primary and secondary sources. Overall it is an outstanding piece of original research--a genuine contribution to Irish, British and U.S. social history."--William J. Fishman, University of London "Robert Scally has penetrated more deeply into the heart of 'hidden Ireland' than any previous scholar, and the result is a lasting and compelling contribution to Irish history and to migration and peasant studies."--Kerby A. Miller, University of Missouri "A highly original book whose impressive scholarship makes a significant contribution to understanding nineteenth-century Irish and North American history.... This is microhistory at its best, using a small setting to expand knowledge of bigger events. It is also splendidly written and deserves a wide readership."--CHOICE "Using an astonishing array of social history techniques and writing with the profound pity of a modern Villon, Professor Scally has united imagination and analysis upon the melancholy facts of a pre-famine Irish village."--Peter Linebaugh, University of Toledo "Scally writes with respect, affection, wisdom, and sensitivity."--Journal of Interdisciplinary History "[The book] does draw on a wealth of historical sources. But it is above all through the exercise of imaginative sympathy that Robert Scally brings these people to life."--The Irish Times "Scally moves beyond his meticulous scholarship, informed judgements and elegant style to reveal the 'secret world beyond Historical documents,' with a series of images that are both arresting and wrenching."--Irish Literary Supplement "Scally sets out the background of the events in remarkable detail. There is an incredible amount of material from a wide variety of sources."--The Albion "Scally's range of vision is substantial... [T]he author's handling of the available evidence is sensitive, balanced, and imaginative."--The Historian "This remarkable community portrait, written in an elegant and accessible prose in a style sympathetic to its subject matter, proceeds beyond the econometric examination of pre-Famine Ireland espoused by Joel Mokyr... and the general account provided by Kerby Miller in his classic work..."--American Historical From the Back Cover Many thousands of Irish peasants fled from the country in the terrible famine winter of 1847-1848, following the road to the ports and the Liverpool ferries to make the dangerous passage across the Atlantic. The human toll of "Black '47", the worst year of the famine, is notorious, but the lives of the emigrants themselves have remained largely hidden, untold because of their previous obscurity and deep poverty. In *The End of Hidden Ireland*, Robert Scally brings their lives to light. 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famine years. A brilliant analysis, rich with metaphors, *The End of Hidden Ireland* demonstrates the impact of modernization on Irish peasant behavior and makes a major contribution to migration, peasant, and famine studies. This book is also a tale of adventure and human survival, one that does justice to a tragic generation with sympathy but without sentiment.