



The Great Irish Potato Famine

By James S. Donnelly Jr.

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This is an account of the Great Irish Potato Famine of the late 1840s, a famine which resulted in the death of about one million people and was also largely responsible, in conjunction with British government policies, for one of the great international human migrations of British history—the mass exodus of some two million people from Ireland, mostly to North America, in the years 1845–1855. This book combines narrative, analysis, historiography, and scores of contemporary illustrations. This work aims to provide an insight into the misery of the famine and the nightmare of mass evictions that followed.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

The Irish Potato Famine of the 1840s, one of the major human catastrophes of modern times, has been popularly perceived as a genocide attributable to the British government's actions and failures to act. In professional historical circles, however, such thinking was dismissed for many years, as evidenced by the scathing academic response to Cecil Woodham-Smith's 1963 classic, *The Great Hunger: Ireland, 1845-49*, which, in addition to presenting a vivid and horrifying picture of the human suffering, made strong accusations against the British government and its officials. Donnelly (Irish history, Univ. of Wisconsin) has written an intelligent, thought-provoking, and well-written book that, among other things, is a very useful survey and synthesis of the current debates about and researches into the origins and causes of the famine. Donnelly supports Cecil-Woodham's charges of British governmental sins of both omission and commission in the famine but puts those charges in a broader context, including discussion of class and regional influences on the famine in Ireland itself. The chapter notes, indexing, and bibliography are of good quality. This book would be an excellent choice to accompany and update *The Great Hunger*. Highly recommended for both academic and public libraries. Charlie Cowling, Drake Memorial Lib., SUNY at Brockport

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Review

'This is unquestionably the most comprehensive single account of the Irish catastrophe...' Professor Peter Gray, Queen's University, Belfast '... many historians have written excellent books about the great Irish famine ... Donnelly's is the best and most comprehensive of them all.' Kerby Miller, Middlebush Professor of History, University of Missouri, Columbia 'James Donnelly's book is likely to become the classic account of the Great Famine, and the first port of call for both students and general readers.' Professor Peter Gray, Queen's University, Belfast

About the Author

James S. Donnelly, Jr., is a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. One of the most prolific and wide-ranging historians of Ireland, he is the author of *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork*, which was awarded the Herbert Baxter Adams Prize of the American Historical Association). He is a coeditor of the journal *Eire-Ireland*.

Users Review

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