In 3rd edition and German Diary

*Breac* articles also include: Introduction: "The ghost of Roger Casement is beating on the door", John Gibney, Michael Griffin, and Brian Ó Conchubhair; The Three Lives of the Casement Report: Its Impact on Official Reactions and Popular Opinion in Belgium, Pierre-Luc Plasman (Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium) and Catherine Thewissen (Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium); Ireland, Empire, and British Foreign Policy: Roger Casement and the First World War, Margaret O'Callaghan (Queen's University, Belfast); Casement and the Irish Language: Ruairí Mac Easmainn agus an Ghaeilge, Nollaig Mac Congáil (National University of Ireland, Galway); The Afterlife of Roger Casement’s Irish Brigade, 1916-1922, Justin Dolan Stover (Idaho State University); Roger Casement and America, Robert Schmuhl (University of Notre Dame); Guns in the Water: Quilty’s Car, Spindler’s Aud, and the First Casualties of the Easter Rising of 1916, Eoin Shanahan (Hibernia College); From Fragments to a Whole: Homosexuality and Partition in *Cries from Casement as his Bones are Brought to Dublin*, by David Rudkin, Mariana Bolfarine (University of São Paulo); History and Imagination in *The Dream of the Celt* by Mario Vargas Llosa, Leopoldo M. Bernucci (University of California, Davis); Crocodiles and Obelisks: The Literary Afterlife of Roger Casement in the Work of Jamie McKendrick and W.G. Sebald, Eoin Flannery (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick); Roger Casement’s Long Journey to Ballyheigue, Michael Cronin (Boston College); Lost to History: An Assessment and Review of the Casement Black Diaries, Paul Hyde; How It Is Recording Atrocity in The Black Diaries: Uncanny Echoes of Casement in Beckett’s Prose, Scott Eric Hamilton (University College Dublin); A Note on the Casement Papers in the Benjamin Iveagh Library, Farmleigh House, Dublin, John Gibney; *Casement* (An Original Screenplay), John Banville, with an introduction by Bridget English; *The Dreaming of Roger Casement*: A Play, Patrick Mason; Casement: The What and Why of Commemoration in 2016, Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh (NUI Galway); How Can the People of 2016 Best Commemorate Roger Casement’s Ideals and Work?, Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D.; Angus Mitchell, In Conversation with John Gibney, Angus Mitchell, with John Gibney; A Review of Angus Mitchell's *Roger Casement: 16 Lives*, Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh (NUI Galway). <http://breac.nd.edu/>

**Introduction: "The ghost of Roger Casement is beating on the door"**

**April 1, 2016**

[**http://breac.nd.edu/**](http://breac.nd.edu/)

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjioEolLgOM**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjioEolLgOM)

**Roger Casement - A Character of Contrast Alan Cantwell 2013 (Tralee)**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNiHV41BKqE**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNiHV41BKqE) **Dennis McCullough speaks**

**Alan Cantwell Breac Posted In:** [Roger Casement](http://breac.nd.edu/articles/category/roger-casement/)

**Author: John Gibney, Michael Griffin, and Brian Ó Conchubhair**

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**Introduction:**

Casement’s legacy is as contested as it is considerable. Controversy stalks the entire course of his life. He is the celebrated British civil servant who betrayed the United Kingdom, an imperial agent who became the prominent critic of British imperialism, the human rights’ activist and the Irish revolutionary. Questions remain over his baptism, his religious views, his dramatic conversion to Catholicism, his sexual orientation, and his role in preventing the Rising. Such complexities allow interest groups and pressure groups to select and promote a version of Casement that suits their particular agenda. His career is an example for gay rights groups, Catholic groups, human rights groups, language activists, eco-warriors, republicans, socialists, liberals, and cultural nationalists.

Casement is still in the eye of a political and intellectual storm because the complexities and controversies that engulfed him remain alive today; he is as much a lightning rod for controversy in death as he was in life. Throughout his life, Casement was a complex and controversial figure: championing unpopular causes, challenging vested commercial interests, and campaigning against the status quo. Even in death he remains a source of controversy. Long after the other fifteen executed leaders were dead and buried, the issue of Casement’s remains dogged Anglo-Irish relations, and when his body was repatriated, controversy dogged the exhumation and reinternment processes. Just as doubts surrounded his preferred landing place—was it Banna or An Cheathrú Rua, Galway?—so too remain questions over the authenticity of the diaries associated with Casement, the “Black” diaries: were they forged, amended, or doctored? Was Casement gay? Does it matter? If so, to whom? And why?

With the possible exception of James Connolly, the story of the other fourteen executed leaders is a local Irish affair, in which Irish nationalists, following Irish Republican Brotherhood traditions, sought to break the link with Great Britain through an armed uprising. If other 1916 leaders can be largely understood as Irish republicans, Casement is complicated; much more so for our neighbors across the Irish Sea. But Casement cannot be understood in terms of one single overriding ideology. He was, after all, an imperial agent and a knight of the realm, not just a disaffected Irish nationalist whose social and professional mobility was impeded. Casement is, as ever, different. As a member of the British elite, he turned his back on all the benefits which that status entailed.

Casement was, and remains, a humanitarian and political figure of extraordinary importance, one whose nationalist commitments in Ireland were a product of, rather than a diversion from, his internationalist concerns for human rights in the imperial world. A career diplomat in the British Foreign Service, his duties brought him to Africa and South America; what he witnessed in those places—abuse, torture, exploitation—transformed him into Europe’s, if not the world’s, most prominent human rights activist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In the Congo, he administered a region approximately two-thirds the size of Europe. But his experiences in the Congo and Peru radicalized him. A new radical political consciousness saw the formerly pro-British imperialist resign from the British consular service in 1913 and align himself with the burgeoning Irish revolutionary movement and become a founding member of the Irish Volunteers.

*Ruairí Mac Easmainn/Roger Casement (1864-1916): The Glocal Imperative* convened in Tralee, 24–26 October 2013 to celebrate and interrogate Casement’s glocal—global and local—impact and influence. This three-day gathering, which consisted of keynote addresses, panel discussions, dramatic readings, and theatrical productions by the Zyber Theatre Company, explored Casement’s life and times and his engagement in Irish and transnational affairs and issues. The conference opened with two photo exhibits at Kerry Library, Moyderwell, Tralee: “Roger Casement: Casement in Kerry/Ag Móradh Mhic Easmainn i gCiarraí,” a photo record of images chronicling the constructing and unveiling of the Roger Casement Banna memorial; and “Rubber, Amazonia and the Atlantic World, 1884 –1916,” which depicted Casement’s crusade for human rights in South America. Opening remarks at the exhibits were given by Tommy O’Connor (Kerry County Librarian) and Seamus Cosaí Mac Gearailt, the Mayor of Kerry.

Later that evening at the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre, Fr. Tomás Looney—President, Kerry Archeological & Historical Society—introduced the opening keynote “If the Casement Guns had Landed in Kerry: Another Version of the Easter Rising,” delivered by John Gibney (History Ireland). Friday morning commenced with a guided tour of Casement sites in North Kerry, including the Ballyheigue memorial, the Banna Beach Memorial, McKenna’s Fort, and Ballykissane Pier. The academic panels in the Carlton Hotel included papers by Michael Cronin (Boston College) and Andrew McGrath (independent scholar), followed by Angus Mitchell’s keynote. Jeffrey Dudgeon, Justin Dolan Stover, Matthew Erin Plowman, Tim O’Sullivan, Matt Horton, and Michael Brunnock closed out the panel presentations on Friday. Relocating to Siamsa Tíre, Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs, introduced Robert Schmuhl (University of Notre Dame) who delivered a keynote address to a full house. This lecture was followed by Zyber Theatre group’s premiere of *Remember Casement*, directed by Pádraig Dennehy and featuring Eoin O’Sullivan, Aoife Ní Chonchubhair, Margaret Slattery, Rhona Johnston, George Lowe, and Thomas Frank O’Connor. Saturday morning commenced with a focus on Casement in contemporary literature, with papers by Leopoldo M. Bernucci (University of California, Davis), Laura Izarra (Universidade de São Paulo), Mariana Bolfarine (Universidade de São Paulo), and Eoin Flannery (Oxford Brookes University). Lucy McDiarmid (Montclair State University) delivered a keynote followed by Tina O’Toole (University of Limerick) and Margaret O’Callaghan (Queen’s University Belfast). Nollaig Mac Congáil (National University of Ireland, Galway) spoke on Casement and the Irish language in a keynote chaired by Pádraig Mac Fhearghusa (Conradh na Gaeilge). The final academic session featured papers on Casement and poetry with presentations by Kurt Bullock (Grand Valley State University), Tomás Looney (KAHS), Matt Campbell (University of York), and John McAuliffe (University of Manchester). Patrick Mason, former Artistic Director at the Abbey Theatre, brought the conference to a close with a performance of his one-man show *The Dreaming of Roger Casement*, included here. A banquet at Ballyseede Castle was the conference’s final gathering. This special issue of Breac arises from this conference and its subsequent discussions.

The nineteen contributions in this special issue of the online journal *Breac* delve deep into Casement’s life and exploits, and examine various aspects of his legacy and motivations; in so doing, they shed new critical light on previously unknown and unexamined aspects of his career. Catherine Thewissen and Pierre Luc-Plasman’s essay breaks new ground by investigating popular opinion and public reaction in Belgium to Casement’s famous 1903 Report which sensationally exposed King Léopold’s brutal treatment of the indigenous population in the Congo Free State. Robert Schmuhl also expands Casement Studies in new directions in his clear analysis of American reactions to the 1916 Rising and the manner in which Casement’s arrest and execution just over three months later framed how people across the Atlantic learned about Easter Week and its aftermath. Casement, Schmuhl contends, kept the story alive in the United States, as he and his supporters sought in court proceedings and through the pressure of public opinion to escape the noose. Returning to Europe, Justin Stover focuses on those Irishmen who volunteered for Casement’s Irish Brigade and teases out the complexities of personal and collective loyalty, as well as British perceptions of treason during the Great War. The names and legacies of men of the Brigade are largely forgotten: ignored in postwar Britain and marginalized in post-independence Ireland. Denied British military and IRA pensions, these men, Stover argues, attended memorial services for Casement, and campaigned for the repatriation of his body to Ireland. Eoin Shanahan investigates in painstaking detail the events that surrounded the botched efforts to seize radio transmitting equipment in order to communicate with the Aud, which resulted in the tragic deaths of several men at Ballykissane Pier, Killorglin. This article sheds new light on the events leading up to Casement’s arrival in Ireland and on the first victims of the 1916 Rising.

The Gaelic League was a major social movement in Ireland during Casement’s adult life, and Nollaig Mac Congáil details both how Casement cooperated with numerous leading Irish language activists and how he related to the Gaelic League’s aims and objectives. Margaret O’Callaghan, in her expert analysis of Casement’s extensive political writings, opines that he was widely read in Irish and other histories, that he was an intellectual, and that in many respects he thought through historical analogy. She convincingly argues that he was perhaps, with the exception of James Connolly, the most prolific writer of the Irish revolutionary leaders, and that through his writings he presents a sustained critique of British imperialism, one that integrates the historical experience of Ireland with that of wider imperial policy. His analysis puts Ireland at the core of the British imperial project, and sees dislocated or damaged cultures as the ineluctable consequence of particular forms of colonization.

In 2016, the issue of commemoration is ubiquitous; hence, this collection features two essays that consider how and why Casement should be remembered and honored. Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D., engages with social issues in contemporary Ireland as well as with questions of Irish unity, physical commemoration, the Irish language, and human rights and freedom. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh proposes that the most powerful invocation of Casement during this centenary year may be for his work in the area of international human rights. As Ó Tuathaigh contents, Casement’s work in his own day, along with the enduring power of his witness and writings, will undoubtedly be an aspect of his legacy that will resonate strongly, not only in Ireland but in international debates, throughout 2016 and for long after. John Gibney opens a window on the Casement archive at Farmleigh House which includes correspondence with Lady Constance Emmott, a daughter of the 8th Duke of Argyll and Colonel Robert Gordon Berry; he also contributes a revealing interview with leading Casement scholar Angus Mitchell on the manner in which the rubber resource wars of the early twentieth century are relevant to Casement’s worldview and his role as a key witness to the rapid transformation of the world’s tropical regions—a defining moment in global environmental history.

An original and innovative aspect of this collection of essays, we suggest, is the section which focuses on Casement’s afterlife in memory and literature. In this section, literary scholars such as Leopoldo M. Bernucci and Scott Hamilton consider how major literature figures such as Samuel Beckett and Mario Vargas Llosa reimagine Casement in their creative works. If these essays focus on the reimagining of Casement in the work of these two Nobel Prize winners, Eoin Flannery casts his net wider and traces Casement’s literary afterlife in the work of Arthur Conan Doyle, Jamie McKendrick, and W.G. Sebald, arguing that Casement, retrieved from the past, becomes an ethical reference point in the present, and towards the future; though he is historically absent, we gain through his aesthetic presence. Bernucci considers how the manner in which Vargas Llosa subverts historical truth and recreates Casement’s biography for the purpose of fiction, while Hamilton explores how the Grove Press’s 1959 publication of *The Black Diaries: An Account of Roger Casement’s Life and Times with a Collection of his Diaries and Public Writings*, edited by Peter Singleton-Gates and Maurice Girodias, contributed to the development of Beckett’s late prose style.  Paul Hyde revisits the controversial diaries but employs a new approach to the documents in his article, “An Assessment and Review of the Casement Black Diaries.” The diaries and their controversies have distorted and obscured the deeper significance of Casement’s pioneering work—that is, his revelation of a causal nexus between imperialism and the abuse of human rights. Hyde in his contribution argues that almost one hundred years have passed without an impartial and exhaustive forensic examination of the diaries. Assuming that such an examination is indeed capable of determining their authenticity, it follows that the truth about the Black Diaries cannot as yet be taken as definitive.

Mariana Bolfarine (University of São Paulo) focuses on David Rudkin’s radio play *Cries from Casement as his Bones are Brought to Dublin*. Her careful analysis of the play positions it within a tradition of Northern Irish playwrights working in the context of an often violent and still unresolved political conflict, and she suggests that Rudkin’s 1974 text reads Casement’s ambivalent life and fragmented body as an allegory of a fragmented Ireland and as an attempt at reconciliation, both with the legacy of 1916 and with the more contemporary time of the Troubles. Moving from literature and the written word to the visual arts, Mike Cronin (Boston College) traces the convoluted history of the Casement sculpture which now stands in Ballyheigue, overlooking Banna Stand. In the same way that Casement’s life and legacy have proved deeply divisive, Oisín Kelly’s statue, originally commissioned in 1967, has also proved to be problematic. Cronin’s article explores why and how the statue was commissioned and the various attempts to find the completed piece a permanent home. In keeping with this consideration of the ways in which creative authors envision Casement in fictional works, the editors are delighted to include in this special issue of *Breac* work by two of Ireland’s finest creative authors, John Banville and Patrick Mason. John Banville, former sub-editor at *The Irish Press* and *The Irish Times* as well as a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*, has kindly allowed us to include his unpublished Casement screenplay, while Patrick Mason, former Director at the Abbey Theatre and winner of a Tony Award and a Drama Desk Award for his 1992 Broadway production of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, grants us permission to present his unpublished one-man show based on Casement’s life.

**Roger Casement—A Timeline:**

1864                   Roger David Casement born

1873                   Anne Jephson (mother) dies

1877                   Captain Roger Casement (father) dies. Casement raised by John Casement (Magherintemple,                                                              Ballycastle, Antrim) and educated as boarder at Ballymena diocesan school

1880                   Clerical job with Elder Dempster, a Liverpool shipping company

1895                   Appointed British Consul for Mozambique

1898                   Appointed British Consul for Angola

1901                   Appointed British Consul for Eastern part of French Congo

1903                   Commissioned by British government to investigate human rights situation in The Congo Free State

1904                   The Casement Report—Instrumental in King Leopold of Belgium relinquishing his personal holdings                                                      in Africa

1904                   Joins Conradh na Gaeilge/Gaelic League

1905                   Appointed Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for his Congo work

1905                   Joins Sinn Féin

1906                   Sent to Brazil—first as consul in Pará, then transferred to Santos, later promoted to consul-general in                                                     Rio de Janeiro

1910 & 1911    Casement pays two visits to the Putumayo Indians

1911                   Details rubber company’s use of stocks to punish Putumayo Indians

                           Knighted for his efforts on behalf of Amazonian Indians

1913                   Retires from British Consular Service

1914       (July)  Travels to U.S.A. to promote and raise money for Volunteers

        (late July)  Finances and organizes Howth gun-running (August)

                          Meets with John Devoy and Count Bernstorff, top-ranking German diplomat to propose a mutually beneficial plan in New York

     (November)  Negotiates a declaration by Germany and recruits POWs

1916     (April)  Germany offers 20,000 Mosin–Nagant 1891 rifles, 10 machine guns and accompanying ammunition

        (April 21)   Lands at Banna Strand, Tralee Bay, County Kerry

        (April 22)   Aud Norge scuttled by pre-set explosive charges

         (June 29)  Appeal denied

           (Aug. 3)  Hanged by John Ellis at Pentonville Prison (London)

1917  (Aug. 5)  First anniversary of Casement’s execution marked by a great public gathering at McKenna’s Fort near Ardfert.  Fort                              renamed Casement’s Fort and Thomas Ashe delivers oration

1929                  Lengthy negotiations between the Irish and British governments for repatriation of Casement’s                                                                   remains begin

1934                   Proposed Hollywood movie

1953                   Casement Park, Belfast, opened

1959                   Diaries declassified at British National Archives, Kew

1965      (Feb.)   Baldonnell aerodrome renamed Casement Aerodrome

            (March)   State funeral of Sir Roger Casement in Dublin

1966  (April 8)   Mrs Florence Monteith Lynch, turns sods at Banna Strand on the site of a memorial to Roger Casement and Captain                            Robert Monteith

           (June 4)   James H. Mackey unveils a plaque at Tralee Train Station to commemorate the memory of Roger Casement, after                                    whom the station is renamed

1967 (Nov. 29)   Construction of Roger Casement Memorial commences at Banna Strand

1968      (June)   Eanna McCanna designs the Roger Casement Memorial, Banna, Ardfert

           (July 28)   Unveiling of the Casement Memorial in Banna Strand, oration by James H. Mackey

1978                   Gaelscoil Mhic Easmainn, Tralee, founded by Conradh na Gaeilge

2000                   Royal Irish Academy conference “Roger Casement in Irish and World History”

2013                   The University of Notre Dame and the University of Limerick International conference Ruairí Mac                                                             Easmainn/Roger Casement (1864–1916): The Glocal Imperative

2016                   Arnold Thomas Fanning produces *McKenna’s Fort* in The New Theatre, Temple Bar

2016                   President Michael Higgins lays wreath at Banna Strand Memorial and Ballykissane Pier