



should be of interest to scholars of castle studies and historians of late medieval and early modern Ireland.

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The Jacobite Duchess: Frances Jennings, Duchess of Tyrconnell, c.1649–1731.
Frances Nolan.

Irish Historical Monographs. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. xx + 370 pp. \$90.

Frances Jennings has figured as a secondary character in the biographies of elite and military men but finally enjoys the spotlight in Nolan's book. One of the beauties at Charles II's court, wife to two Jacobite leaders, sister to Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, and staunch supporter of James II and his line, Jennings lived an eventful life. She was also a woman who does not sit comfortably in historical contexts: an English woman married to an Irishman living in France, a Catholic convert with Protestant family, a Jacobite exile. Frances was a complicated and complex woman and Nolan does an excellent job of writing a non-hagiographic life.

Nolan's book follows the chronology of Frances's life, but several themes dominate. Money was a constant issue for Frances. Both she and her younger sister Sarah left genteel poverty for the English court to find a husband and make their fortune. Nolan argues that worries about money haunted Frances for the rest of her life. Although she became quite wealthy (admittedly through her own tenacity and ability), she never felt secure. Frances was a woman of her time, namely the Financial Revolution, and actively managed a transnational portfolio of investments and properties in England, Ireland, and France.

Worries about money influenced Frances's relationships with her family. As the mother of several daughters, she focused on arranging advantageous marriages for them. Although she was able to boast that all three daughters became viscountesses, this did not lead to a happy or settled family life. Her eldest daughter, Lady Rosse, was her favorite, but Frances constantly bemoaned her lack of financial savvy and bad management. She ruined her relationships with her other two daughters, Ladies Dillon and Kingsland, due to disagreements over family property. Amid one of these quarrels, Frances wrote to her sister: "there cannot be a more odious bitter thing then child[r]en" (149). Toward the end of her life, she even sided with her son-in-law and grandson over her own daughter in an inheritance dispute.

Recent work on Jacobitism is beginning to acknowledge the important role women played in the cause. In Nolan's telling, Frances does not seem to have been a major player, although she seems to have featured more as a Jacobite figurehead and lightning rod. Frances supported the military and political careers of both of her husbands

(George Hamilton and Richard Talbot) and cultivated her position as a twice-widowed Jacobite martyr. She staunchly defended James II and his heirs, converted to Catholicism, helped sustain the Irish émigré community at the court in exile at Saint Germain, and enjoyed pensions from both the Jacobite court and the French monarch. In return, Frances was charged as a traitor for supporting James II, notably “by her own treason and is not unfortunate only by her husband’s” (118). Frances also spent the early 1700s wandering the Low Countries, acting as a Jacobite go-between with the Duke of Marlborough during the War of Spanish Succession. This is the one time Nolan clearly sees Frances as a Jacobite agent.

Frances’s conversion to Catholicism seems to have been authentic and not just political or pragmatic. Nolan does a fine job of using inventories of Frances’s books to illuminate her spiritual beliefs, which included Jansenist theology. Frances also was a dedicated religious patron, regularly lodging with and assisting nuns in France and the Low Countries. She also assisted in reestablishing nunneries in Dublin.

Nolan is at pains to separate fiction from fact when it comes to Frances’s life. She refutes apocryphal stories (her Irish maid was not the mother of the pretended baby James III) that authors have repeated over the years about Frances. In this way, Nolan’s book is about both the historical Frances and the many representations of her (“La Belle Jennings,” the “white milliner,” or the “Duchess-Nun”). It is this last representation that Nolan actively dismantles. Previous biographers had assumed that as soon as Frances hit middle age, she settled in a Dublin convent, never to be heard from again. This relates more to misogynistic ideas about middle-aged women and, as Nolan so cogently puts it, “a past tendency among scholars to look away from the archive once all the men of consequence have quit the scene” (169). We need more histories of complex and difficult women and Nolan’s book provides many ideas for how to do them.

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The Magic of Rogues: Necromancers in Early Tudor England. Frank Klaassen and Sharon Hubbs Wright.

Magic in History Sourcebooks. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021. x + 162 pp. \$22.95.

The Magic of Rogues is one of the latest additions in the excellent, much-needed series Magic in History Sourcebooks, which provides an opportunity to read medieval and early modern primary texts on magic, properly placed in their social and intellectual contexts. The underlying objective of the series is to show historical magic in action, and this is what Klaassen and Hubbs Wright’s book successfully does. *The Magic of*