



# Irish Life and Lore Recordings and Books

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**LAUNCH OF ORAL HISTORY AUDIO COLLECTION AND ILLUSTRATED  
CATALOGUE: *THE IRISH COUNTRY HOUSE AND THE GREAT WAR***

**DATE:            WEDNESDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

**VENUE:          NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND  
KILDARE STREET, DUBLIN 2**

**TIME:            3.00 PM.    Minister for Arts Heritage and the  
Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys T.D. will launch the Collection**

**SPEAKERS:    H.E. Mr. Dominick Chilcott, British Ambassador to  
Ireland  
Mr. Kevin Myers, Journalist**

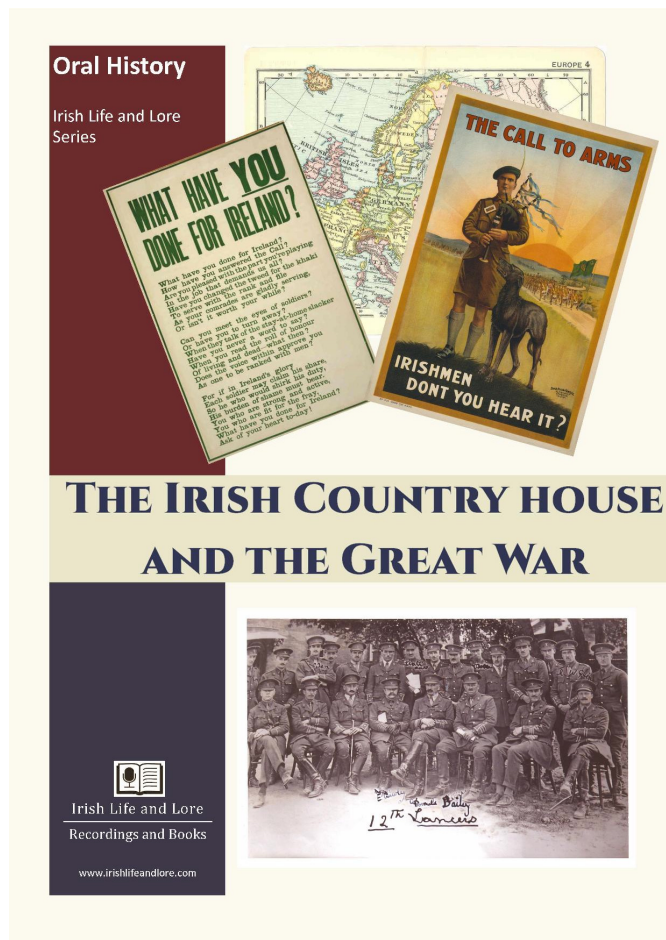
For the very first time, families from many of Ireland's old country houses will come together to celebrate and commemorate the memory of family members who took up arms in the Great War. Many of these Irish men and women were destined never to see their homes or loved ones again.

The launch of the Irish Life and Lore oral history collection, entitled *The Irish Country House and the Great War*, will mark a unique occasion in Irish history. Members of fifty-two families from all areas of Ireland were recorded in audio.

The date of the launch is noteworthy in that it falls just days before the one hundred year anniversary of the British declaration of war against Germany on August 4<sup>th</sup> 1914. The content of the oral history collection ensures that those who

fell, those who suffered lifelong physical and psychological injury and those fortunate enough to survive unscathed, will not be forgotten.

Members of their families who have been recorded for the project speak of their family histories, their childhood homes, their family tradition of military service, their service records and the lives lived after the war by those who survived. Anecdotes relating to their personal lives and relationships are recounted, often with gentle humour and pathos, and the bitter heartbreak endured by parents and siblings on the death of a beloved family member is described.



Maurice O'Keeffe

explains: *Much of the information recorded in this oral history collection has been brought into the public arena for the first time, and will now be available to historians and researchers into the future. We are very grateful to the people recorded for their great co-operation and huge integrity during the sometimes difficult and emotional process of compiling the collection.*

Information on the following subjects is also included in the oral history recordings:

- Reasons for involvement in WW1
- Unique insight into the personalities of those who fought
- Names of regiments joined
- Stories from the trenches and letters written from the Front
- The important role of women who served in the Great War
- The military honours awarded
- The memorials dedicated to the war dead
- The consequences on families of the death of an heir or heirs
- Widows who were left to fend for themselves and for their children

The project was funded by Fexco Financial Services of Killorglin, Co. Kerry, and is endorsed by the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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