Ireland’s Great Famine in Irish-American History
Enshrining a Fateful Memory
BY MARY C. KELLY

ABOUT THE BOOK:
Ireland’s Great Famine in Irish-American History: Enshrining a Fateful Memory offers a new, concise interpretation of the history of the Irish in America. Professor Mary C. Kelly’s book is the first synthesized volume to track Ireland’s Great Famine within America’s immigrant history, and to consider the impact of the Famine on Irish ethnic identity between the mid-1800s and the end of the twentieth century. Moving beyond traditional emphases on Irish-American cornerstones such as church, party, and education, the book maps the Famine’s legacy over a century and a half of settlement and assimilation. This is the first attempt to contextualize a painful memory that has endured fitfully, and unquestionably, throughout Irish-American historical experience.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:
Mary C. Kelly tells the crucial, fascinating story of how and why the Irish in the United States first experienced, later ‘forgot,’ and in recent decades ‘recovered’ in memory the horror of the Great Famine of 1845-52—the tragic, foundational event of Irish-American history. — Kerby A. Miller, University of Missouri

Mary C. Kelly’s Ireland’s Great Famine in Irish-American History is a groundbreaking work of investigative scholarship. As well as offer important insights into the continuing evolution of the Irish-American identity, Kelly chronicles the human struggle to make sense of a past that, though painful to possess, is impossible to escape. In terms of ethnic history in general and Irish-American history in particular, this book is a milestone. — Peter Quinn, Author of Banished Children of Eve

Although the history of the Great Irish Famine itself may be familiar to scholars, research on how the Famine was remembered, misremembered, and forgotten has barely begun. In this pioneering and wide-ranging book, Mary C. Kelly makes a significant contribution to this project. Drawing on the insights of contemporary memory studies, as well as on her own deep knowledge of Irish American history, Kelly provides a roadmap to the complicated process by which the memory of the Famine shaped what it meant to be Irish in the United States. — David Brundage, University of California, Santa Cruz

Ireland’s Great Famine in Irish-American History is a fascinating and important study of how our perceptions of this epic tragedy have changed over time and why those changes matter. Those new to this story will learn a great deal from her thoughtful analysis, while experts in Irish studies will marvel at her exhaustive research and new insights. — Tyler Anbinder, George Washington University

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Mary C. Kelly is a professor of Modern Irish and American Histories at Franklin Pierce University. She is the author of The Shamrock and the Lily: The New York Irish and the Creation of a Transatlantic Identity (Peter Lang Publishing, 2005).