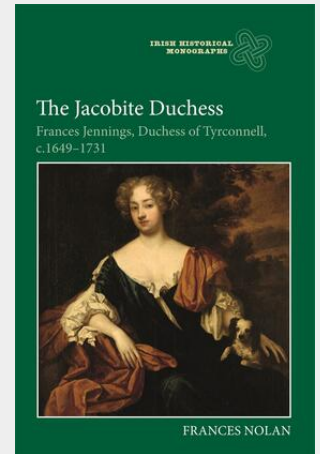


Nolan

The Jacobite Duchess

Frances Jennings, Duchess of Tyrconnell, C.1649-1731

The fascinating life of Frances Jennings, elder sister of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, charting her marriages and changes of fortune, her exile and return, her ambition, political manoeuvring and sincere piety. Frances Jennings, elder sister of Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, had an interesting and eventful life, most notably as the influential wife of Richard Talbot, earl of Tyrconnell, Catholic viceroy of Ireland under James II. Born circa 1649 into a Hertfordshire gentry family, she was a noted beauty at the Restoration court. There, she met and married George Hamilton, a Catholic officer who, after 1667, served in Louis XIV's army. In Paris, Frances raised three daughters, converted to Catholicism, and became an active member of the English Catholic émigré community. Following Hamilton's death, she remarried to Richard Talbot. As vicereine of Ireland, Frances helped re-establish Catholic hegemony, assisting in the foundation of convents and re-consecration of Christ Church cathedral. During the Williamite-Jacobite War in Ireland (1689-91), Frances fled to James II's exiled court in France. In 1691, she received word that her husband, now Jacobite duke of Tyrconnell, had died. Attainted for high treason, she used the Marlboroughs' influence to recover her Irish estates. In 1708, she returned to Dublin, where she died in 1731. Highlighting Frances's political manoeuvrings, religious identity and deep family attachments, this book portrays a complex and contested figure, a woman who acted on multiple stages, in diverse roles, challenging expectations of rank, gender, and 'nationality' in unexpected ways.



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