



The Death of an Irish Tradition

Bartholomew Gill

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The Dublin Horse Show is one of the city's proudest traditions -- a grand institution tarnished this year by the murder of elderly Margaret Caughey. Chief Inspector Peter McGarr is puzzled by the strange death of a seemingly harmless old woman whose apartment contains not a trace of her past life -- and by the heinous crime's apparent links to the upcoming equestrian event. Nearly everyone associated with the unfortunate victim has connections to the Horse show as well, from dowdy Margaret's racetrack gadfly brother, to her surprisingly elegant daughter who's scheduled to compete . . . to an ex-IRA contract killer. And with race day rapidly approaching, McGarr knows he must work quickly to untangle this knotted skein of deadly secrets. For if he falters, the tireless detective fears that more blood may be spilt -- perhaps even his own -- before the riders leave the gate.

The Death of an Irish Tradition Details

Date : Published April 29th 2003 by Avon (first published 1979)

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Author : Bartholomew Gill

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From Reader Review The Death of an Irish Tradition for online ebook

Jack says

weak and learing

Linda Van says

I read this under another title: Death at the Dublin Horse Show. It's the first of the Bartholomew Gill mysteries I've read. I may read another. Hard to say.

Alex says

Of the some half dozen of Gill's McGarr detectives I've read, this one is by far the weakest. The plot was exceedingly difficult to follow, but this may very well just have been me. Or perhaps the book required a better knowledge (currently non-existent) and understanding (paltry) of Irish social history and of horses than I possess. I've noticed this before, having had the hardest time plowing through Somerville and Martin's Some Confessions of an Irish R.M.

Sue says

Too many characters at once to sort out.

Tony Rampling says

Another great McGarr book!!

Chris says

The U.S. title for #4 in the series. Original title: Death of an Irish tradition

Palmreader says

There were times when I couldn't follow what was going on. There seemed to be a lot of under the table stuff that I didn't know about. But even so, it was an interesting read. The protagonist, McGarr is probably the least flawed of these types of books, but not squeaky clean either. His wife is a mystery. But intriguing.

I'll probably read another just to get some perspective.

Bev says

McGarr at the Dublin Horse Show* (1979) by Bartholomew Gill was a very disappointing read. After having read *The Death of an Ardent Bibliophile* (pre-blogging, so no in-depth review) and having fond memories of it as well as having given it a four-star rating, I was looking forward to this one. The St. Louis Post Dispatch didn't help matters with their "McGarr is a man mystery fans should get to know...a quiet, unassuming sleuth with powers of deduction rivaling Sherlock Holmes himself" blurb on the back cover. Along with a summary that makes it sound like a nice, normal police procedural mystery. After all--according to the back cover, McGarr is supposedly investigating a nice, quiet strangling of an older lady in a tidy little apartment.

Who would want to kill old Mrs. Caughey? The simple Dublin housewife had never harmed a soul. She lived alone with her beautiful daughter in a tidy apartment that contained not a trace of the past...a past that was suddenly revealed to be a cauldron of greed, passion, and revenge...a dangerous bress that would come to a boil at the Dublin Horse Show, turning an elegant pageant into a chilling spectacle, plunging McGarr into a pounding race against time.

No muss, no fuss. Not even a drop of blood. What I got was an Irish gangland/IRA shoot-em-up with more bodies lying around with bullets in them than I can remember. Oh, sure, Mrs. Caughey does get strangled and McGarr does investigate that murder but that leads him to all the IRA/Irish gangster business with a dose of revenge-style killing and a grand finale at the Dublin horse show.

Now, of course, Goodreads gives a synopsis from a different edition of the book above and it is a little more upfront with the reader. It does seem to me that *Murder Ink* misrepresents things a bit--the kinds of passion and revenge I was expecting was more personal and less bloody. One thing Gill does do is offer up several suspects--everyone from Margaret Caughey's racetrack hound brother to the daughter Mairead who may have wanted more freedom to the daughter's boyfriend with shady connections to the priest who taught Mairead piano to the rich race horse owner who bought the Caughey's land for a song. Any of these may have had even deeper motives and any of them may have connections to the IRA. McGarr just needs to figure out how it all ties together.

My ★ rating is really quite personal this time--primarily because I felt tricked by the synopsis on my edition, but also because IRA/gang-type shoot-em-ups really aren't my cup of tea. It's quite possible that someone who goes into the book knowing the type of crime novel it is (I can't really call it a mystery in the lines that I normally read) may quite enjoy this.

First posted on my blog My Reader's Block. Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.
