



# Hanging Crimes: When Ireland Used the Gallows

*Frank Sweeney*

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## **Hanging Crimes: When Ireland Used the Gallows** Frank Sweeney

From a time when the ultimate punishment in criminal cases in Ireland was the gallows, *Hanging Crimes* brings us ten spellbinding stories of rape, murder, love and betrayal from around the country. In all of these stories the murder or rape shook the entire community, exposing fears, disloyalties, treachery and often, an appetite for vengeance. The authors of these pieces have trawled through the archives to bring alive these crimes, the resulting courtcases and the final dispensation of justice. This book brings us closer to the scaffold than any other publication about the nineteenth century. The story of each event is set in the context of the time so that the reader gets a good understanding and feel for the locality where the event happened. In all of these stories the event of murder or rape shook the entire communities. In many cases people turned against each other and were willing to give evidence against friends, kin and neighbours which often sent them to the scaffold. We see how the rule of law worked for the ordinary people; we discover the rape or murder, then the courtroom scenes and finally the result and dispensation of justice. Not all hangings were efficient or glorious but a further surprise is that not all communities were shocked by hanging. Some regarded the event as a day of celebration. Real-life crime is a hugely popular and topical genre for a wide range of readers from those who enjoy a good crime novel to the local historian. These fascinating stories come from right around the country, from Wicklow, Kildare, Dublin, Cavan, Sligo, Tyrone, Galway, Roscommon and Kilkenny.

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