

Cashman, Joseph

by Patrick Long

Cashman, Joseph (1881–1969), photographer, was born at Blackpool, Cork city; his parents' names are unknown. He was educated locally and began his working life at the age of 12. He became apprenticed in 1895 to Guy & Co., a Cork firm of printers and engravers. From here he went to the *Cork Examiner* newspaper (1902), where he worked in the machine room and the engraving department till 1910, using his free time to perfect the photographic skills, satisfying an innate fascination with cameras. At the *Examiner* he worked on early colour printing techniques; this in turn informed his own photographic knowledge. He had a studio at his home in the Watercourse Road area of the north city and became an accomplished independent photographer in his own right.

He moved (1910) to the *Cambria Daily Leader* in Swansea, south Wales, and returned to Ireland (1912) to join the *Freeman's Journal* in Middle Abbey St., Dublin, where he remained till it ceased publication in December 1924. Cashman (known as 'Cash' to his colleagues) was employed primarily as an engraver, but increasingly his photographic genius transcended the backroom skills of the newspaper office. He established his professional photographic studio at 21 Capel St. soon after joining the *Freeman's Journal* and his greatest, at times iconic, images began to appear thereafter. In parallel with certain others, such as Keogh Bros, also of Dublin, Cashman recorded the Irish revolutionary era that commenced about 1912 with labour and political troubles and the emergence of the Irish Volunteers. His dramatic record of events continued long into the 1920s, freezing definitive moments in history through the eye of a camera, protected by an affable relationship with those on all sides (but especially with labour) whose images he preserved. As the borders of his official and unofficial careers remained sketchy, 'Cash' was everywhere at once, which contributed not only to the variety of his work but to the informal immediacy of his images. He, rather than his subjects, chose the moment, and this elevated his photographs from propaganda to *actualité*. The Cashman pictures were sought and used throughout the world, frequently by publications that failed (or neglected) to acknowledge adequately their source, an issue that he never appeared to resent, having moved on to capture the next dramatic moment.

For Cashman, the image was everything, its material rewards incidental. His most striking and familiar photographs, requiring little description, include a police baton charge on O'Connell St., Dublin, during the great lockout of 1913; Labour leader James Larkin (qv) passionately addressing an audience with arms upraised, the image that (although taken some years later than 1913) inspired Oisín Kelly's (qv) monumental statue of Larkin on O'Connell St.; Dublin Fire Brigade at the Easter rising, 1916; Éamon de Valera (qv) opposing conscription in Ireland, 1918; the first Dáil Éireann at the Mansion House, Dublin, 1919; the viceroy, Lord French (qv),

reviewing the RIC on his departure from Ireland, 1921; the Four Courts explosion, 1922, and Michael Collins (qv) with the National Army general staff at the funeral of Arthur Griffith (qv) in the same year. Having also been the Irish photographic representative (1920) of the London-based *Daily Mail*, Cashman remained one of the country's leading photographers in peacetime. With the *Freeman's* closure (1924), he worked independently from his Capel St. studio.

In 1931, at the inception of de Valera's Fianna Fáil daily newspaper, the *Irish Press*, Cashman was installed as manager of its processing and engraving and photographic departments. He designed and equipped these spaces with the most suitable materials for his work, rather than conform to prescribed norms. He remained with the *Irish Press* till 1942 but kept up his private studio till the late 1940s, where he specialised largely in bloodstock photography, reflecting a personal passion and expertise in the turf and horse-breeding. He received frequent awards and encouraged young photographers with his personable and easy manner.

Cashman married Lora Jones (d. 1947) of Glanmire, Co. Cork; they had two sons and two daughters. After her death he lived his remaining years at 13 Manor St., Dublin, till his death, aged 87, on 1 January 1969. He was buried at Mount Jerome cemetery in Dublin. In 1992 an album of his photographs was published, edited by Louis McRedmond, as *The revolutionary years: photographs from the Cashman collection, Ireland 1910–30*.

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*Ir. Times, Ir. Press, Cork Examiner*, 2 Jan. 1969; Louis McRedmond (ed.), *The revolutionary years: photographs from the Cashman collection, Ireland 1910–30* (1992); *Ir. Times*, 31 Oct. 1992; Tim Pat Coogan and George Morrison, *The Irish civil war* (1998)