
**C.S. Parnell, a Controversial Irish Political Leader:
A Portrait by Dorothy Eden in her Novel, *Never Call it Loving***

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Abstract

Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-91), an Irish political leader of nationalists, causes a national controversy and division by taking Kitty O'Shea, wife of one of his followers, Captain O'Shea, as his mistress. This leads to massive contention between the Irish Catholic Church the nationalist strugglers, who deem him as their own leader and denounce the Church for its involvement in politics. This love story, condemned by the Church as adultery, becomes one of the rarest romances, matched by the famous mad love of Catherine and Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), as depicted by Dorothy Eden in her novel, *Never Call it Loving* (1966). Eden is most sympathetic to this estranged wife, Kitty, who falls in love with the most charismatic man, Mr. Parnell; like Heathcliff, Parnell dies miserably, leaving the Irish nation in serious schism. This moving novel is analysed as a sample of historical fiction, which delights readers by its accurate and impressive depiction of this romance; historians can rarely do this, for they're concerned with mere dry facts.

Keywords: romance; politics and religion; schim; historical fiction; adultery.

Text: Eden Dorothy. *Never Call it Loving*. London: Coronet Books, 1976 (Abbreviated as *NCIL*)

The Historical Novel

The historical novel sets its events and characters in well- defined historical

context, and it might include both fictional and real characters. It is distinguished by convincing detailed description of the manners, institutions, morals, and scenery of its chosen setting, and attempts to convey a sense of historical verisimilitude. (Hawthorn, 15)

When Napoleon once said: "Take away history and bring me a novel. I wish the truth," he might have had various intentions, but he hit the nail on its head. Sir Edward Owen, once an Oxford history tutor, expressed his view that a historical novel may give a truer picture of a period than a history book covering that period (Jones, 109). The historical novelist has to make her/ himself familiar, by much study and research, with the spirit of the period, so familiar that s/he can imagine the reaction of her/his characters to that spirit. (ibid, 109)

Moreover, Gertrude Atherton avers that serious novelists, who describe the period in which they live are, in fact, writing current history, and that their work is as valuable for later reference, as the efforts of historians. (Jones, 109)

The writer of a historical novel has freedom in choosing her/his material and can omit much that the historian doesn't feel justified in omitting; consequently, the novelist's picture, generally, may be nearer the truth than the historian's. (Jones, 109) Dorothy Eden (1912-1982) is such a historical novelist, an artist who could depict a true picture of the period covered by her novel, *Never Call it Loving*.

In her "Dorothy Eden on *Never Call it Loving*" she explains how she was able to familiarise herself with her characters and setting; "How did I come to write this book?" She answers:

I wanted to write a Victorian cause celebre, but when the story of Parnell and Kitty O'Shea was suggested I thought it [is] just another story of rather sordid intrigue and put it out of my mind. (311)

But she happened to make several visits to Ireland and became deeply interested in its history; the next phase was even more significant, for I came upon Katharine O'Shea's memoirs which I hadn't known existed.

Katharine has told her story guardedly, with a great deal left out. It has been suggested by other historians that this book was written with her son, Gerard O'Shea, holding her back from too many admissions. So one has to read between the lines. (311)

She concludes:

From the moment of reading that book the missing and vital information became brilliantly clear to me, and I knew that the story must be written again, this time in full. (311)

Which she did, most effectively and movingly, indeed.

Jones stresses the fact that "a historical novel may give a truer view of a person or a period than a history book can, as the novelist is freer to choose his material and so isolate essential elements from the inessential details." (121) As historical novelist, Eden aimed at this, bringing the important elements to the foreground, while keeping unimportant ones in the background. Eric Bloom wrote in *The Limitations of Music*: "Fiction, imaginary and beautifully handled, has a greater value than the truth told with the bald accuracy of police report." (Jones, 122) This applies to Ms Eden, for she scanned the newspapers reports, concluding that

One of the most eerie experiences of the researcher is reading about one's subject in old newspapers, facts written down as the news happened, and unaffected by the hindsight of history.... Charles Stewart Parnell must have been a godsend [gift] to English journalists. (Eden, *Never Call it Loving*, 313)

Parnell, in fact, was a godsend gift to her, as well; was she a writer not biased or writing to prove a point? She confesses:

Perhaps I have been too kind to the lovers. This, I do not know. I wrote only as intuition told me. And, anyway, why not be kind? Their debt to society, if they owed one, has been paid long ago. (ibid, 313)

Dorothy Enid Eden

Dorothy Eden was born in 1912, is one of the best known gothic novelists and historical romancers. She was born in Canterbury Plains in New Zealand, but pursued a literary career in Great Britain. She is survived by a sister and brother and nieces and nephews in Australia. (*The New York Times*, Obituaries, Online) She was best-known for her

many mystery and romance books, as well as short stories that were published in periodicals.

As a novelist, she was renowned for her ability to create fear and suspense. Her most famous novel is *Never Call It Loving: A Biographical Novel of Katherine O'Shea and Charles Stewart Parnell* (1966), an account of two famous figures in the Irish history. (Bloom, 236) As Mary Paradise (her pseudonym), she wrote gothic romantic tales which are set either in an Edwardian London like *Speak to Me of Love* (1972) or the Australian Outback like *The Vines of Yaarabee* (1962).

Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891)

He is first described when Katharine goes with her sister, Anna, to the House of Commons to re-invite him to her house, at Eltham, thus:

A tall spare figure, very upright, walking without haste across the cobble stones. And young. Or young for all they said he had done. He was bareheaded, his thick dark brown hair brushed smoothly, his beard neatly trimmed and glossy. His handsome aristocratic face was very pale. In contrast the eyes which he turned so directly and inquisitively on Katharine seemed almost black, though, as she came near, she saw they were sharp brown that glowed. Eloquent eyes. (*NCIL*, 21)

As Katharine leans forward, holding out her hand to Parnell, the white rose that she has tucked it in her bosom, falls out:

He swiftly stooped to pick it up. But instead of handing it back to her he touched it to his lips and then tucked it in his own buttonhole. He smiled faintly, gave a courtly bow, and left them. (*NCIL*,22)

Anna notices this " little touch of gallantry " and tells Katharine: "He was certainly taken with you" (*Ibid*, 22) which proves fatally right, later.

In an article, " Parnell the rebel prince: Kevin Hoddick Flynn revisits the career and reassesses the character of this great Irish patriot" (*History Today*, April 2005), Flynn asserts that Parnell haunts the Irish

historical imagination. "It has been said," he adds, "that the Irish people have a sense of guilt over his fate."

James Joyce [in his *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 1915] put his finger on it when, in the 1920s, he recalled Parnell's plea to his countrymen not to throw him to the English wolves, noting with savage imagery: "they did not fail his desperate appeal; they tore him to pieces themselves".

At the Christmas gathering (in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) Mr. Casey, infuriated by Dante's. 'Devil [Parnell] out of hell. We won! We crushed him to death! Fiend' bows his head on his hands, and sobs with pain: "Poor Parnell!... My dead king." (34)

The Home Rule League, says Flynn, founded in November, 1873, had difficulty in finding a suitable candidate. At last one was selected by Isaac Butt, the leader of the Home Rule at Westminster. "My dear boy", Butt said to a friend,

We have a splendid recruit, with a great historic name,
my young friend Parnell from country Wicklow: unless
I am mistaken, the Saxon will find him an ugly customer. (Qtd in Flynn)

Parnell's choice to join the Home Rulers was surprising, for he was a protestant landowner descending from an English family that had survived the Cromwellian confiscation; young Parnell was educated almost entirely in England and left Cambridge in 1869, without getting a degree. Flynn adds:

In speech, manner and dress, he seemed typically English.
His favourite sport was cricket. Aloof even among friends,
he was reserved in manner, laconic in speech, sallow in
complexion; as unlike the popular image of an Irish man as
one could be.

This is precisely how he appears in the novel, which strikingly appeals to Katharine O'Shea; most people found him distant and silent, some

sinister, all charismatic. Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister at that time, called him "a genius of uncommon order", all agreed he was born a leader. (Flynn)

One of the most effective factors that led him to take up the Home Rule was his implacable hostility towards England. His antipathy to the English is described thus:

He thought that his hostility towards the English had probably been engendered by his mother, although his father and his grandfather even though of English descent had been notable advocates for Ireland's rights. (*NCIL*, 38-9)

For this reason, and for others, such as the obstruction policy at the House of Commons, he became the most hated man there. Time and again he was expelled by the speaker. He was not daunted by this and would not be intimidated; he was responsible, he said, only to the Irish people. (Flynn)

When Isaac Butt died in May 1879, the title of "uncrowned king of Ireland" was bestowed on his successor, Parnell, whose picture is defined by Flynn:

The picture we have of Parnell is that of a cold autocrat, but in fact he was a man of passion. His frigid and almost inhuman control was a deliberate cover. In the course of his speeches he would lacerate his hands-held invariably behind his back-and grip his Order Paper so tightly that it often tore.

Here is a sample of his speech, once the Home Rule Bill has been defeated by Mr. Chamberlain, who leads the Conservatives, Parnell has expended his last strength and sat with "a ravaged face and burning eyes, contemplating the ruin of his hopes." He springs to his feet, "full of fire and nervous energy" to make "one of his most poignant speeches."

During the last five years I know there have been

very severe and drastic Coercion Bills, but it will require an even severer and more drastic measure of coercion now. You have had during those five years the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. You have had a thousand of Irish fellow subjects in prison without specific charge, many of them for long periods of time without trial.... You have authorised your police to enter the domicile of a citizen of your fellow subject in Ireland at any hour of day or night and search any part of this domicile, even the beds of women, without a warrant. You have fined the innocent for offences committed by the guilty, you have taken power to expel aliens from the country, you have revived the curfew laws and the blood money of your Norman conqueror, you have gagged the press, and seized and suppressed newspaper, you have manufactured new crimes and offences and applied fresh penalties unknown to your law for these crimes and offences. (NCIL, 225-6)

Parnell doesn't wait for the applause to end; he doesn't even resume his own seat, but he simply turns and walk out of the House to Katharine, who is waiting. (ibid)

It is while Ireland seethed, avers Flynn, and an alarmed cabinet deliberated, that Parnell met and fell in love with Katharine O'Shea. She understood his nature like nobody else. She became all-important to him, for she had become at once mistress, nurse, companion, and political intermediary. Parnell was under tremendous strain: in Ireland, he was the life and soul of the land agitation, at Westminster, he continued to lead the most formidable Irish group ever to sit in the House of Commons. Katharine saw the reality of Parnell: haggard, overworked, mentally battered, and physically exhausted. (ibid)

Flynn states that a more remarkable career has never been witnessed in either Irish or English history; his active political life lasted just fourteen years, during which he rose to lead a nation and change the course of history. He concludes:

A native Irish parliament was his goal and England his inveterate foe....

Yet, for all his faults, he ranks among the greatest of Irish patriots.

Today in better times for Ireland_ a grateful people salute Parnell and ignore his all too human failings.

Katharine O'Shea Parnell (1845-1921)

Though Katharine has had her own private solicitor, Mr. Pym, the author, Dorothy Eden, is, in fact, Katharine's more passionately dedicated solicitor. Readers are easily won by Eden's depiction of this fine, English lady, even in her extra-marital attachment to her lover, Parnell. This dedication of Eden is matched by Mary Rose Callaghan in her biography of Katharine. "*Kitty O'Shea*": *The Story of Katharine Parnell* (1994)

The life and character of Mrs. Katharine O'Shea, Callaghan affirms, has been surrounded by myth and mystery until relatively recent times. This might have been caused by the immediate political consequences of the scandal, created by her divorce from Captain William O'Shea, in 1890, including Parnell's rapid political demise and premature death, the virtual abandonment of the Home Rule by the Liberal Party, and the schism of the hitherto formidable Irish Parliamentary Party, for almost a full decade.

In her well-written biography, Callaghan renders a full and sympathetic account of Katharine O'Shea's personality, her family, and social background, as well as her relationship with both her husbands (O'Shea and Parnell). She's no femme fatale, but a caring and sincere young woman, who tried her best to make her marriage to the reckless Captain O'Shea work. Despite his frequent absence from home, Willie exhorts his reluctant wife to invite the Irish leader, Parnell, to dinner. The rapid development of an ordinary Victorian social occasion into a passionate love-affair shows her own loneliness and vulnerability, after years of neglect, as much as by Parnell's fascination with Katharine and his charisma and gallantry.

In preparing reluctantly for this dinner, Katharine twice changes her mind about the dress she is to wear for it; Lucy, her servant for a long time, loses patience and demurs:

"Really, Miss Katharine, anyone would think you were entertaining royalty."

"I suppose in a way I am, Lucy I believe that Mr. Parnell is called the uncrowned king of Ireland." (*NCIL*, 5)

Though he doesn't show up, she scarcely doubts this to be her destiny, to fall in love with this "uncrowned king", which leads to his early death and her subsequent widowhood, after three months of marriage to Parnell.

Her alienation from her current husband, Captain O'Shea, and Parnell's charisma concur and lead to inevitable romantic love. But, why has she married him and why so soon alienated? She has married him at eighteen, before being able to distinguish between gratitude and love. Soon after her father's death, Captain O'Shea, a dashing young Irish Captain of 18th Hussars, comes courting her, scarcely waiting for her father to be buried.

He was good-looking, charming, witty, and the best horseman in his regiment. His mother and his sister were his remaining family... [they] were Catholic... Katharine's father, Sir John Page Wood, had been an Anglican Churchman and Royal Captain... [yet] none of Katharine's sisters and brothers, or her mother.... had thought Captain O'Shea's religion an obstacle. Dear Katharine did not need to embrace the Catholic faith. She merely had to promise to bring up her children in it. (*NCIL*, 7)

With the birth of her children and maturing, she begins to find out that Willie O'Shea isn't the ideal husband; on the contrary, he proves to be her biggest disappointment, while

She had heard that Charles [Parnell] was protestant.

He must be a remarkable man to have succeeded in becoming such a power in a Catholic country. (*NCIL*, 7)

Willie, an Irishman, proves to be his opposite:

Willie might want to shine in politics, but he had no desire to quarrel with his sophisticated English friends ... He had always sought friends who were influential and rich, although, in living up to them he had several times reduced his wife and children to penury. (*NCIL*, 7)

Willie is a snob affected by his English friends, but as an Irish landlord he sympathises with them against his own poor, miserable Irish people:

As a landlord himself, even though his estate in Limerick was heavily mortgaged, Willie allied himself with the English against the constantly troublesome peasants. (*NCIL*,11)

As a foil, Parnell seems to Katharine fascinatingly distinguished; ruminating on the prospect of meeting him at dinner.

She had a distinct feeling that Mr. Parnell would be stimulatingly different, that his cold and unapproachable manners would be just a façade which a perceptive woman could penetrate. (*NCIL*,14)

Which proves to be right; Aunt Ben, who adores her niece, Katharine, surprises her by her concept of Willie, which proves her sagacity:

“You [Katharine] know my opinion of Willie. I am sorry to say I have never considered him anything more than overgrown schoolboy. It is only because he is your husband that I received him at all....”

Katharine was laughing. Aunt Ben's perspicacity constantly amused and surprised her. (*NCIL*,15)

Later, when she meets Mr. Parnell, Aunt Ben admires him as much as Katharine cherishes him, for she finds him a polished gentleman.

After three years of marriage, during which the three children: Gerard, Norah, and Carmen have been born, Katharine becomes disillusioned and unhappy, an estranged wife. Bitterness leads her to contemplate her own fate and lot in her miserable life with Willie, who indulges himself in social life he cannot afford.

It had been a journey that had taken thirteen years, and that had become increasingly painful as all her affection (it had never been love, she had long ago realized) for her charming weak untrustworthy self-indulgent vain husband had died. (*NCIL*, 12)

To escalate her misery, her fine daughters, Norah and Carmen, who are called by Aunt Ben "butterflies", the good thing that Willie has

given her, beg their mother: "Mamma, could you get us another baby?" She begins to cogitate with painful anguish: Another baby? ... How could she tell them that there would never be any more babies. She had resolved that that part of her life with Willie was over the morning six weeks ago when he had come to her at Thomas's Hotel. (*NCIL*, 17)

He has promised to meet her there the previous night, but has forgotten, leaving her outraged: "Then in the rage she had torn off her clothes, dropped them on the floor, and gone to bed" (*NCIL*, 17)

It is during this time of agitated alienation that she first meets a gallant, courteous Parnell at the house; dropping her white rose, he picks and fixes it in his buttonhole. When he leaves them to return to the House of Commons, she wonders whether he has "gone back into the house with her rose in his buttonhole?" She is spellbound and absent-minded:

She was agitated, as much in a dream, as a girl in her teens. This was nonsense. And dangerous. It was one thing to be out of love with one's husband, but to fall in love with another man would be crazy. (*NCIL*, 22-3)

When Mr. Parnell arrives at Wonerish, Eltham, he attracts the attention of all the people attending dinner:

All the eyes were on the handsome face, now coldly aloof,

of this man who called himself Irish and spoke like a well-bred Englishman. (*NCIL*, 23)

To exacerbate her estrangement, Katharine suspects her husband, Willie to be a rake, though he tries to conceal this from her; quite outraged at his default at Thompson's Hotel, She was certain ... that it had not been any of his countrymen who had detained him last evening. For some time she had known as surely as she could without having detective follow him, that he was far from being a faithful husband.

She had never known him to be anything but importunate in his desires, caring little whether he was sober or drunk, or whether or not she welcomed him into her arms. Far less did he reflect on the possibility of giving her pleasure. (*NCIL*, 17-18)

This estrangement leads to dire loneliness, which propels Katharine into passionate love for Parnell; Eden depicts in her fascinating narrative the couple's (Katharine and Parnell's) eleven years of their relationship from their first meeting, their secret assignations (using pseudonyms), the birth of their three daughters, the first dying for her frailty, through the notorious divorce proceedings, and their final separation, with the death of Parnell.

Callaghan thinks that Katharine was courageous defying the contemporary mores by her relationship with Parnell, but she conformed instinctively to the Victorian model in her unquestioning support for her lover, and in making their home and "family life" a paradisiacal haven away from the cruel and often bitter political world at Westminster. She adds: "Indeed, she was so successful at this that on occasions she had to force Parnell out to attend his duties in the House of Commons."

Though Captain O'Shea, listening to wide-spread rumors, and once finding Parnell's portmanteau at his house, accuses her of adultery by cuckolding him, she protests strongly, believing her marriage to him to be adultery. While sleeping with Mr. Parnell on her marriage-bed, she begins to meditate:

So this was adultery, she was thinking dizzily. No, this extraordinarily sweet waiting and anticipation was not that ugly word, it was love. Her adultery had taken place long ago with Willie, with the body she didn't love. [Parnell] had slid in beside her, and she was instantly intorably aware of his body beside her. (*NCIL*,95)

This leads to the birth of three daughters (Sophie Claude, Clare, and Katie), the first dies soon, but two survive; it happens when they begin to believe it is their inevitable destiny, forever.

During Christmas at Eltham, in the still night the sound of the carollers is "poignantly beautiful", and when from the village the Christmas bells begin to chime, Katharine asks Parnell: "Do you believe in God?" He responds:

I am not sure. But I do believe in personal destiny.
I believe that certain people are meant to meet and love,
and that it's quite useless to fight against that because
it's their destiny. (*NCIL*, 204)

When her husband, Willie, becomes furious, saying: "Don't you know that what you're doing is a cause for divorce. Refusal of conjugal rights," she responds:

"Then perhaps you had better divorce me." He retaliates by saying, angrily:

I'll never divorce you. You're mine, and that's all there it
to it ... Damn Kate, you don't hate me as much as all that?
(*NCIL*, 114)

When she reminds him that it was he who has prompted her into this affair, Mahon replies on behalf of Captain O'Shea:

I told you to be nice to Parnell, but I didn't expect you to
take him quite so much to heart. Not that I'm entirely
blaming the poor fellow [Parnell] if you look at him with
those fine sparkling eyes that would melt an iceberg.
(*NCIL*, 132)

This response infuriates her, so she dismisses Mahon from her house, asking him never to "step over the threshold of my house." (*ibid*)

Captain William O'Shea

Being so sympathetic and lenient to the "adulterous" lovers, Katharine and Parnell, to Willie O'Shea, the author, Eden, is unrelentingly the

opposite. He is depicted as the villain of the piece, "an overgrown schoolboy", as Aunt Ben believes him to be. Though he is lucky enough to be accepted as Katharine's husband, he disappoints not only her, but her Aunt Ben and readers, as well; if Katharine and Parnell prove to be altruistic in their care and dedicated love for each other, he proves to be a self-seeking, opportunist demon.

As "injured" husband he writes a letter to Parnell, challenging him to a duel to re-compensate for his dishonour as cuckold; Katharine makes a movement to tear the sheet of paper up, but he snatches his letter from her: "If you do this, I'll only write another." (*NCIL*, 130) When she begs him not to do it, he asks, "Why not?" (*ibid*) She retorts:

"Because it would be a terrible mistake. Are you going to make not only yourself and me and Mr. Parnell, but the whole Irish party a laughing stock?"

"To hell with the Irish party. I'm only interested in my rights.

What is mine is mine, and that refers to you." [Willie responds]

"Does it?" said Katharine slowly. "Perhaps it also refers to Aunt Ben's money, and the house she so kindly bought for your family. What are you going to do with those things?" (*NCIL*, 130)

Katharine reminds him of his meanness, for while he is unable to support his family, letting them rely on the charity of Aunt Ben, he is extravagant in his expenses, especially in inviting his friends or wasting his time and money at pubs. He obliges Parnell to help him win a seat in Parliament for Galway, though he is not adored by its people, but they elect him for the sake of the "uncrowned king of Ireland," Mr. Parnell.

But the crux of their marriage is when Katharine inherits her own Aunt Ben. He blackmails her for a considerable sum of money as a price for his silence and connivance at her affair with Parnell. When she refuses to pay this ransom, for her inheritance is dragged into legal proceedings by her siblings, he sues her for adultery and Parnell as co-respondent. Katharine wishes to attend the proceedings for divorce, to testify for his complicity, but she is vetoed by Parnell.

Katharine had all the evidence Mr. Lewis [solicitor]

had advised her to get, evidence of Willie's cruelty, of his collusion in the way he had encouraged them to be together, of his hopes of reward, and, if that evidence were not enough, of his own affairs with women, conducted privately but not privately enough. She had a list of these women, all able to be called as witnesses. (*NCIL*, 278)

Had she attended the trial, she might have justified her reputation of loyalty to her lover, Mr. Parnell, but he surprises her by his intention to withdraw his own evidence. She protests: "But how can you do this? You assured everyone that when the facts were known you wouldn't be blamed." (*ibid*) Parnell responds:

"My people won't turn against me, whatever happens. The English ..." he shrugged. " Let them think what they like. It won't concern me." (*ibid*)

Quite distressed and disappointed, she says:

Supposing they decide to believe Willie? What can they do if we say nothing? Then you will be ruined. (*ibid*)

Irish nationalists have assumed that Parnell would emerge from the courtroom an honourable man, but being anxious to marry Katharine soon he decides not to contest William O'Shea's charges, so his image is tarnished by the Captain's testimony, tremendously. To add fuel to this burning issue, Mr. Gladston, prompted by British Nonconformists to separate the Liberals from Parnell as a public sinner, insists that the Irish party drop him as its leader. Moreover, Parnell is opposed by the Catholic Church and clergy, which leads to his loss of by elections, deterioration of his health, and death.

While Willie has it all his own way in the courtroom, Charles (Parnell) advises Katharine to stop receiving *The Times*, or at least to refrain from reading it, but she pores over the long report of the proceedings of the trial.

Her face flushed with anger and shame as she read evidence given by servants, Jane Leinster, and that sly Miss

Glennister, who both identified Charles from a photograph, said he was often at the house, and sometimes the doors of the sitting room was locked; Esther Harvey, the house-keeper at the house in Regent's Park, who said that Mrs. O'Shea often came to visit the gentleman who lived there; Samuel Drury, the cab driver who frequently drove Mr. Parnell down to Eltham at night; that infamous pair at Medina Terrace, Brighton, Harriet Bull who testified that she had seen the respondent and co-respondent coming out of a bedroom together, and Mrs. Pethers who said that often Mrs. O'Shea came late at night, her hair all flying, she didn't look respectable, and there was the queer episode when Captain O'Shea arrived unexpectedly, and Mr. Parnell hurriedly left by the fire-escape...

As for Willie, he had turned himself into a model of injured innocence. (*NCIL*, 281)

Moreover, prospective testimony of her own children causes her anguish and grief; asked by their father, Willie, to testify in court, Parnell relieves them by saying they are not to appear there. Katharine asks Norah what she has been told to testify, she embarrassedly says:

"Only that you were not to be disturbed when you had a visitor. at the sitting room door was shut. That-that the servants knew this, too."

For many years, Katharine thought in agony. How could she not have realised how her children felt about the door shut against them? (*NCIL*, 280)

Willie wins the custody of their children, after "committing perjury with every word he said, his face bearing its familiar look of righteousness and injury." (*NCIL*, 282) Mr. Lockwood, Willie's solicitor, asks for a decree nisi to be absolute in six months, also asks for the custody of the children under-age to be given to his client, for Minors were never left in the care of the guilty party, and since there was no defence, the respondent in this case admitted her guilt. (*NCIL*, 284)

Tragic Destiny of the Lovers, Katharine and Parnell

The romantic love of Katharine and Charles is one of the most moving stories and like most other romantic stories, it ends in tragedy. Eden might have been influenced by famous death-bed scenes of the eighteenth century and the Victorian era, to describe the rheumatic fever of Mr. Parnell at Brighton and his slow deterioration into death. Following her divorce, they marry civilly, not in church, as they have both wished, their ecstatic three-month honeymoon ends in the tragic death of the "uncrowned king of Ireland."

So she had to stand by the white face, so familiar
and yet so strange, and say her farewell. The envelop
containing a withered white rose dropped long ago in Palace
Yard lay on his breast, the ring with its intertwined K
and P was on his finger. Those two things and her heart,
he would take with him on his journey he would ever
make across the Irish sea. She wished he could have known
that she had capitulated at last, that she was letting
Ireland have him. The Irish earth would cover him
gently, and she would never be beside him again... (NCIL, 310)

If this could never be called loving, one wonders what love is; the title is aptly borrowed from Elizabeth Browning's poem:

*Unless you can muse in a crowd all day
On the absent face that fixed you:
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast
Through behaving and unbehaving:
Unless you can die when the dream is past,
Oh, never call it loving.* (NCIL, 26)

In one of their clandestine meetings at Eltham, Parnell repeats the last two lines, for they have become their refrain:

*"Unless you can die when the dream is past,
Oh, never call it loving "* he quoted dreamily.
" Come sit beside me, Kate rest a little until
daylight." (NCIL, 86)

Fact, Fiction, or Faction?

Expatiating on the "Types of Novel", Hawthorn, in his *Studying the Novel*, mentions a type of fiction called "faction":

The term comes from the American author Truman Capote and is a portmanteau word (= fact + fiction) to refer to novel such as his own *In Cold Blood* (1966). In this work primarily novelistic techniques are used to bring actual historical events to life for the reader. The term has come to denote a work that is on the border line between fact and fiction, concerned primarily with a real event or persons, but using imagined details to increase readability and similitude. (22)

This definition precisely applies to Eden's novel, for, as she states in her comment: "Dorothy Eden on *Never Call it Loving*", she researched her basic data of the novel, especially Katharine O'Shea's memoirs. Perhaps I have misinterpreted, perhaps in some incidents I am wrong, but I have the strongest feeling that I have scarcely erred, that poor unhappy Katharine has been at my shoulder all the time. (NCIL,311)

Moreover, Eden went to the setting of her love-story, to see what had happened there; she was quite amazed at the changes and transformations:

... there is very little visible evidence left in England of Parnell's and Katharine's existence. Eltham is now a busy suburb of London, the house in Brighton where Parnell died has been pulled down and a block of flats built in its place, Thomas's Hotel in Berkeley Square has long since gone. So has the Westminster Palace Hotel and the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Parliament. Only the soot-grimed Victorian railway stations where the two so often met remain practically unchanged.(NCIL,312)

Conclusion

Dorothy Eden's *Never Call it Loving* might have appealed tremendously to Napoleon as historical fiction, for one can seldom find any serious differences between history and fiction in this novel, which classify as "faction", expediently. For instance, if one peruses Mary Rose Callaghan's "*Kitty O'Shea*": *The Story of Katharine Parnell*, one would feel that s/he is reading an almost exact version of the story of this lady in Eden's novel, who fascinates Charles Parnell so much that he is divided in his devotion to his country, Ireland, and his passionate love for her.

Here might be another proof that fiction is, in fact, a ladies' fine art, beginning with Jane Austin, who is admired by other writers, even "The Master", Henry James, developed by Emily Bronte, whose *Wuthering Heights* (1847) deals with similar overpowering love, and Eden perfects the use of fictional techniques to make her novel as engrossing as a mystery novel, full of surprises, twists, and sentiment.

Had it been available at the court proceedings for Katharine's divorce from Captain William O'Shea, she and her love, Charles Parnell, might have been exculpated of any sin and Willie O'Shea indicted for his dissipation, perjury, and selfishness. Yet, one has to believe the warning on the inside page: " The characters and situations in this book are entirely imaginary and bear no relation to any real person or actual happening."

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Published: March 11, 1982 from
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