

The core task plus the first additional task: The life of Roger Casement

Learning aims

Firstly, to inform the students of a clear overview of who Roger Casement was and what significant events occurred in his life. This is presented to the students in four stages: Casement's early life, his activism, his nationalism and his death including the controversial 'black diaries'. Secondly, the obtaining and sharing of this information will train the students' abilities in reading comprehension through skimming and scanning plus develop language production via speaking/discussion exercises to present and share information.

The core task plus the first additional task description

Before the first full lesson, as a lead-in homework task, the students will be provided with one of four information cards, which must be split equally throughout the class as well as possible. For instance, in a class of 20 students, each card should be given to five random students, this will cover all four topics equally across the class. These information cards each ask two key questions respectively concerning a particular stage in Roger Casement's life. The cards also need to be accompanied by the text *The Butterfly Collector* by Rebecca Solnit. The students must be informed that they do not need to read the whole text. Instead, as a minimum, just the pages referenced on each card, which will provide enough information to answer their questions. However, the students can read the whole text if they choose, plus be allowed to research independently to support their reading of *The Butterfly Collector* and answer the questions more thoroughly. The students should make notes, which they must bring to use in a discussion activity during the first full lesson on Casement.

When the students return and have completed their homework reading comprehension tasks, they will then be grouped with the other students who drew the same card as them, for the first additional task, which is broken down into two-stages. The initial task involves the groups discussing the answers to their questions, they should share the information they have found, providing evidence if necessary, and unify their answers. This may require additional support from the teacher if major discrepancies arise. Once each group has fully understood their area of Casement's life, the teacher has the choice to move on to one of two additional speaking tasks. The first option is for each group to present their area of Casement's life to the class in order, then field questions. Alternatively, create a jigsaw task, where representatives from each of the four groups are put together and then present each area of Casement's life to each other, and answer any questions the other members of the group may have.

At the end of this activity, the teacher could field additional questions from the class concerning areas of Casement's life which are still unclear. However, perhaps opening these questions to the class first may be an effective strategy, to see whether anyone knows the answers or has an opinion, to create further discussion.

Prerequisites: as this task presents an introduction and overview of Casement's life, there are no prerequisites for this task.

Required material: all the students would need beyond the handouts would be either paper and pen or an electronic device to make some notes to bring into class and then again for further note taking during the activities.

Main types of student activity/output: reading comprehension (core) and language production (first additional task)

Key Skills: reading (core) and speaking (first additional task)

Primary text:

Solnit, Rebecca. "The Butterfly Collector." *A Book of Migrations: Some Passages in Ireland*. 1997. Rev. ed. London: Verso, 2011. 38–60.

Further reading:

This text by Kirkland presents additional perspective on Roger Casement's life, from a more subjective angle. However, the style of writing is more advanced than *The Butterfly Collector*, so is only suitable for students at the higher end of C1 to C2 level.

Kirkland, Richard. "Rhetoric and (Mis)Recognitions: Reading Casement." *Irish Studies Review* 7.2 (1999): 163–172.

This biography provides a basic outline (in one page) of Casement's life, which could also be used as a timeline for reference during the whole modular teaching unit.

Biletz, Frank A. "Casement, Sir Roger (1864–1916)." *Historical Dictionary of Ireland*. *Historical Dictionaries of Europe*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2014. 69–70.

Roger Casement:

his early life

Please read Rebecca Solnit's *The Butterfly Collector* (mainly P40-44) and answer the following questions.

What was Casement's life like growing up?

How did Casement's early life shape him as a person and influence him later on?



Roger Casement:

Activist

Please read Rebecca Solnit's *The Butterfly Collector* (mainly P44-50) and answer the following questions.

How and why did Casement become an activist and what difference did he make?

How did the two locations of Congo and The Amazon compare?



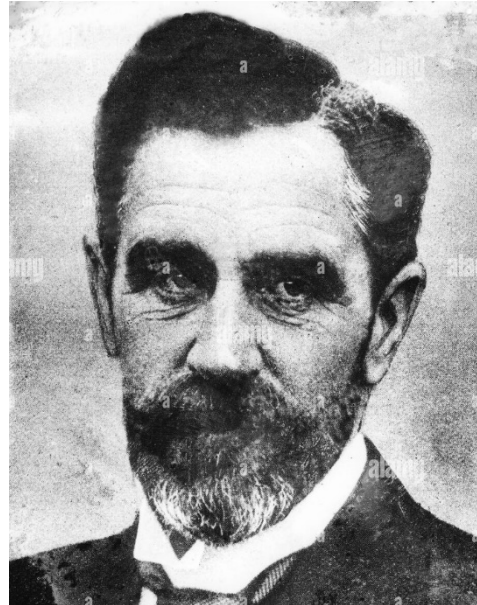
Roger Casement:

Nationalist

Please read Rebecca Solnit's *The Butterfly Collector* (mainly P49-54) and answer the following questions.

What made Casement change allegiance from supporting the British Empire to fighting for Irish independence?

What were his aims for Ireland and how did he try and achieve them?



Roger Casement:

Death and Black Diaries

Please read Rebecca Solnit's *The Butterfly Collector* (mainly P54-60) and answer the following questions.

Why was Casement sentenced to death?

What were the black diaries and why were they controversial?



Second additional task: Eva Gore-Booth Poem: *Roger Casement*

Learning aims: To provide a perspective of Roger Casement's legacy through a poem by a supporter/friend, Eva Gore-Booth. The task tests the students' listening skills and vocabulary in a genre which they may be less familiar with - poetry.

Task description: In the first task, the students must be given the first handout and then listen to the poem and answer the basic comprehension questions. Then, the students should discuss the answers with a partner or in small groups and then the teacher should gather feedback.

In the second stage of the task, the next handout should be given, which provides additional insight into Gore-Booth and the figure Kathleen Ni Houlihan. The poem can be played again, then answers should be discussed and feedback given.

In the final part of the task, the last handout provides the students with the full poem. The three additional questions probing further into the poem's details, vocabulary and poetic techniques should be answered and discussed. The poem can be played a final time, then Gore-Booth's vocabulary should be a key focus, especially examples such as: bringing hope and light, bitter, hatred, struggle, poisoned, hero, desolate and a new star.

Prerequisites: The core task must already be complete for familiarity with Casement's life.

Required material: Beyond the handouts and recording, just the ability to make some notes.

Main type of student activity/output: language practice: vocabulary

Key Skills: Listening, reading and speaking

Primary source: Gore-Booth, Eva. "Roger Casement." *Prison Letters of Countess Markievicz (Constance Gore-Booth): Also Poems and Articles Relating to Easter Week by Eva Gore-Booth, and a Biographical Sketch by Esther Roper*. Preface by Eamon de Valera. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1934. 130.

Further reading / additional task: W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory's play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, a one act play focusing on the 1798 Irish rebellion via a family in a small Irish village. The short play could be read, analysed or even performed in a double lesson.

Yeats, W.B. and Gregory, Lady. *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*. NMI, 1902. NMI. <https://nmi.org/wp-content/uploads/PublicDomain/CathleenNiHoulihan.pdf>

Eva Gore-Booth – Roger Casement poem

You are going to hear a poem written by Eva Gore-Booth entitled *Roger Casement*. The poem was written after Casement's execution and speaks of his life, death and place in history.



First, just listen to the poem and consider the questions below.

Questions

1. What is the poem's perspective of Casement?
2. What brings you to this opinion?
3. What poetic techniques does the poem use to enhance these points?

Background

Have a look at the information about the poem's writer, Eva Gore-Booth, and the woman mentioned in the poem, Kathleen Ni Houlighaun and discuss.

1. How does the information concerning Eva Gore-Booth influence your reading of the poem?
2. Why does Eva mention Kathleen Ni Houlighaun in the poem?

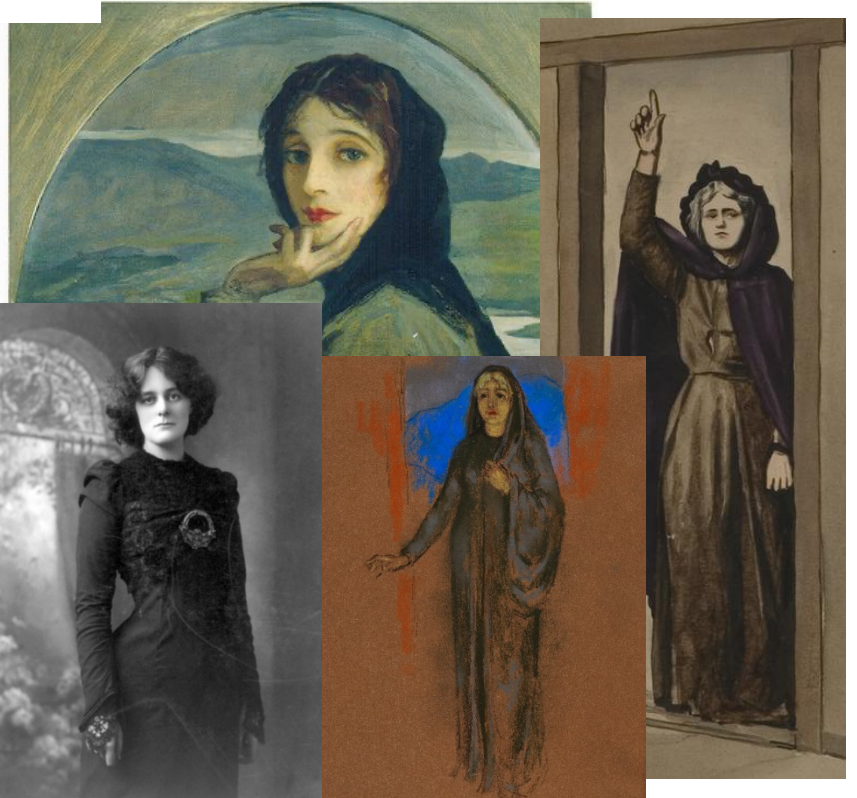


The writer: Eva Gore-Booth

Eva was an Irish poet, dramatist and suffragist. She was a peace activist and campaigned to abolish the death sentence. She showed solidarity for Roger Casement by attending his trial to support the overturning of his death sentence.

Kathleen Ni Houlighaun

Kathleen is a mythical symbol and emblem of Irish Nationalism. She has been featured in various literature and art including paintings and plays. She is often depicted as an old woman who needs the help of young Irish men to fight and free Ireland from colonial rule.



The Poem

1. What is the main point that Eva Gore-Booth is making about Roger Casement's life and death in each stanza?
 2. What impact does her vocabulary usage have? What poetic techniques are used? Consider: repetition, alliteration and rhyme structure.
 3. What was Eva Gore-Booth's main motivation for writing the poem?
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ROGER CASEMENT

I dream of one who is dead,
As the forms of green trees float and fall in the water,
The dreams float and fall in my mind.

I dream of him wandering in a far land,
I dream of him bringing hope to the hopeless,
I dream of him bringing light to the blind.

I dream of him hearing the voice,
The bitter cry of Kathleen ni Houlighaun
On the salt Atlantic wind.

I dream of the hatred of men,
Their lies against him who knew nothing of lying,
Nor was there fear in his mind.

I dream of our hopes and fears,
The long bitter struggle of the broken-hearted,
With hearts that were poisoned and hard.

I dream of the peace in his soul,
And the early morning hush on the grave of a hero
In the desolate prison yard.

I dream of the death that he died,
For the sake of God and Kathleen ni Houlighaun,
Yea, for Love and Voice on the Wind.

I dream of one who is dead.
Above dreams that float and fall in the water
A new star shines in my mind.

(Gore-Booth, Eva. 1934)

Third additional task: Remediation of a screenplay

Learning aims: By challenging the student's ability in remediation, the aim is for students to improve their close reading skills through the understanding of the text and context then challenge their writing ability by recreating the piece in another form.

Task description: The handout includes an excerpt from the screenplay *Ruling Passions: The story of Roger Casement* by Michael Eaton, - Casement's life story. The excerpt, detailed on the handout, features the point in Casement's life when he went to Germany attempting to recruit Irish P.O.W. soldiers. The excerpt's dramatic irony makes it quite comical in tone, which could make the task fun to complete. Multiple examples of genres to convert into are provided on the handout, this freedom of choice is an attempt to spark the students interest and creativity.

When the students return for the second double lesson, having completed the homework task, the teacher can then place them in small groups (3-4 people) as a follow up exercise to share their creative efforts with each other, provide feedback and ask questions while the teacher monitors. Also, if a handful of students are motivated, they could read or perform their piece to the whole class. The students can then submit their written pieces for in-depth analysis.

Prerequisites: This task must be done as a follow-up to the core task, which will provide the students with the fundamental knowledge needed. The students should be reminded of the part of Roger Casement's life that is covered in the excerpt, focusing on the historical context, including why Casement travelled to Germany and the risks and consequence of doing so.

Required material: Beyond the handouts and recording, just the ability to make some notes.

Main type of student activity/output: Reading comprehension and language production

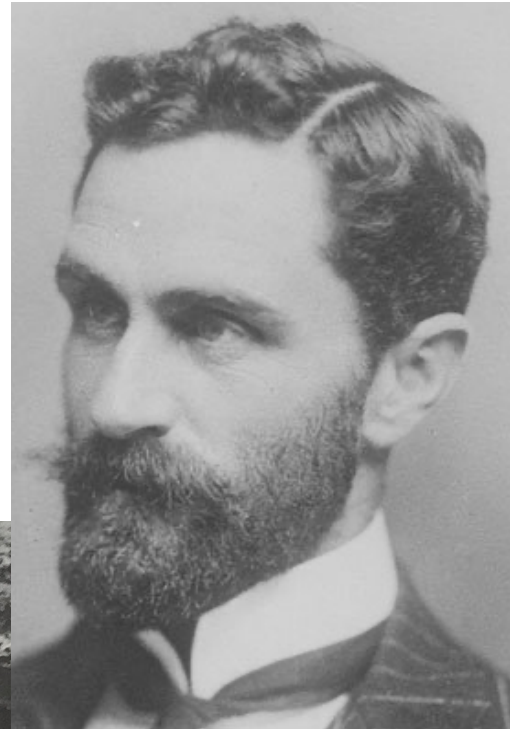
Key Skills: Reading, writing and speaking

Primary source

Eaton, Michael. "Ruling Passions: The Story of Roger Casement." *Critical Quarterly* 41.1 (1999): 82–126; 41.2 (1999): 105–152; 41.3. (1999): 71–117.

Additional task: Acting out further segments of Eaton's script would work effectively as an additional task, there are many interesting scenes which could be used. The students could divide into groups then perform or film a scene of their choice.

Ruling Passions: The story of Roger Casement



A group of prisoners in a German prison camp in Limburg. 26 November

In 1914 Roger Casement travelled to a German prisoner of war camp to speak to a group of Irishmen being held during the first world war. His motivation for this was to try and recruit the men to join his revolution, in an attempt to free Ireland from British rule.

This chapter of history was dramatized in a script by Michael Eaton called *Ruling Passions: The Story of Roger Casement*. In an exert below, Casement has already had an initial attempt to address the Irish prisoners, but they laughed, heckled and were so offended by his suggestion to rebel that Casement had to be removed from the meeting for his own safety. Roger is then pondering what to do next when there is a knock on the door...

Your task

Please read the script below then change it into another genre of writing, for example a short story, a news article, a comic, a poem, a rap, the choice is yours... Try your best to stick to the main essence of the story, so it is still recognisable.

Roger sits in the drab office of the German Commandant Major, his coat draped around his shoulders. A decrepit OLD SOLDIER is leaving. Roger writes down his name, trying to preserve his optimism. The Prince looks on.

A knock on the door and a GUARD enters leading a cocksure, good-looking young man, DANIEL BEVERLEY, who speaks in broad Dublin tones. Roger rouses himself:

ROGER

What can I do for you, lad?

Beverley looks around, awkward that the Germans are there.

BEVERLEY

I'd like to offer my services, sir.

Roger's spirits are instantly lifted.

ROGER

Well, well. What's your name?

BEVERLEY

Daniel Beverley.

ROGER

You want to join us, Dan?

BEVERLEY

Well . . . you know how it is . . . I want to be my own man
again, sir.

Roger looks into the young man's eyes, struggling to make contact:

ROGER

Quite right. Every man was born to be free.

BEVERLEY

Aye, I reckon.

(a pause, then:)

I was thinking, sir, you don't happen to have a smoke on
you?

Roger reaches into his pocket and pulls out a cigarette case. He empties the contents into his hands and passes them over to Beverley.

ROGER

Indeed I do, Dan. Ireland won't forget you for this.

Roger writes down his name. As Beverley lights up:

BEVERLEY

You see the thing is, sir, it's so terrible cold here. You
wouldn't have such a thing as a drink . . . To warm me
starving spirits, now would you?

Reluctantly Roger hands over a flask. Beverley takes a deep pull and is gone. The Prince laughs cynically.

ROGER

Perhaps it would be best if I could talk to each of the men
alone.

ZU LEININGEN

(not entirely without feeling)

Perhaps it would be best if I were to take you back to Berlin

Eaton, Michael. "Ruling Passions: The Story of Roger Casement." *Critical Quarterly* 41.1 (1999): 82–126; 41.2 (1999): 105–152; 41.3. (1999): 71–117.

Fourth additional task: A passive investigation into Roger Casement's humanitarian work

Learning aims: to exercise the student's knowledge of the passive construction and usage thereof, through a task designed for them to experience how passive is used in 'real' texts. Additionally, the task should encourage the students to question and better understand the usage of passive.

Task description: the handout features the introduction to the text *Sir Roger Casement and the International Humanitarian Movement* by Andrew Porter, which covers an overview of Casement's time as a British consul in the Congo and Amazon. The students must understand why the passive is used, what agent is missing (or used with a by-phrase) and then rewrite the sentences in the active form. The students can work individually then pair-check or work in pairs throughout. The eleven sentences containing the examples of passive have been highlighted to prevent confusion and the construction has been emboldened. However, a version of the text without the emboldening is also available, if the teacher would like the student to locate the construction themselves. Additionally, if the teacher would like to shorten the task, then the passive examples could easily be split across the class.

Prerequisites: the students should be familiar with the passive usage in English before participating in the task or may need a refresher before completing it. The students must have completed the core task, so they are already informed concerning who Roger Casement was and what the text refers to. The other two additional tasks do not need to be completed before this one, the task order is interchangeable.

Required material: beyond the handouts and recording, just the ability to make some notes.

Main type of student activity/output: reading comprehension and language practice:
grammar

Key Skills: reading and speaking

Primary source: Porter, Andrew. "Roger Casement and the International Humanitarian Movement." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 29.2 (2001): 59–74.

Further reading: For an alternative perspective, this text provides a personal encounter of Casement's life in the Congo.

Meyers, Jeffrey. "Conrad and Roger Casement." *Conradiana* 5.3 (1973): 64–69.

A passive investigation into ...

Sir Roger Casement and the International Humanitarian Movement



The use of the passive tense has many motivations, when a writer uses a passive construction, they are intentionally omitting information from a text concerning agency or shifting focus onto a particular person/thing. This can make the reader ask: who or what undertook this action? Read the text below and focus on the eleven highlighted sentences, which include a passive construction, then for each sentence try to work out....

A. Why was passive used?

B. What would the agent/subject be if it had been included?

C. What would the sentence look like in the active construction?

Roger Casement's reputation as a humanitarian is arguably the least contentious aspect of his much-debated career. For Roger Sawyer, writing in 1996, he was 'probably the bravest, most selfless, practical humanitarian of his day'. The following year, in introducing his edition of *The Amazon Journal of Roger Casement*, Angus Mitchell pinned on Casement the double accolade of 'humanitarian and Irish revolutionary' and wrote of his 'humanitarian work' as representing, for both his contemporaries and those with hindsight in our own day, 'the greatest human rights achievement of his age'.

This is a claim with which many contemporaries agreed. It was, after all, for his official role as a British Consul in exposing the atrocious systems of forced labour established in the Congo and Amazon River basins that Casement received his knighthood in July 1911. One of the few such honours available to the foreign service, this was no mean recognition. It came from a people and a state that prided themselves on their active concern, stretching back more than a century, to protect the rights and advance the liberties of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world. It **was widely felt** that Casement had succeeded where the British directors of the Peruvian Amazon Company exposed in his despatches had conspicuously failed. In the House of Commons, Members of Parliament drew attention to Casement's reports as outstanding examples of the consular obligation to comment fully on labour abuses, and saw in them 'the legacy of the old nineteenth-century campaign against slavery'. By contrast, in the Company, 'we have a case of directors who have been very indifferent to the great record of England in the past, and the great service which she performed in the suppression of slavery throughout the world'.

It is also a claim that **has been endorsed** by later scholars. Although, as William Roger Louis noted nearly forty years ago, for a time his 'role as Irish patriot ... obscured his role as Congo reformer', that obscurity **was not allowed** to persist. Following the independence of the Belgian Congo in 1960, Louis and the Belgian historian Jean Stengers examined in detail *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Casement's place in the history of the Congo. The early 1900s saw widespread and sustained humanitarian criticism of King Leopold's Congo Free State for its atrocities against Africans. When this **was combined** with popular support for the Congo Reform Association, founded in 1904 by E.D. Morel, the public pressure reached such a pitch as to compel international intervention in Congo affairs. Louis and Stengers showed how Casement's official consular report of 1903 on the condition of the Upper Congo, and, unofficially, his encouragement and mediation behind the scenes, were of crucial importance in promoting and sustaining the movement which led to the eventual transfer of the Congo to the Belgian state in 1908 and its formal annexation. Recalling the birth of the Congo Reform Association some years afterwards, Casement wrote 'How we planned and plotted - & I said that if the Congo question was to be made a living one, it **must be taken out** of the hands of the F.O. & Govt. and made a people's question - & how I said to you "Thou art the man"!'.

Casement's Congo experience and his effectiveness as an investigator later made him a natural choice for a similar mission in South America. As Consul in Rio de Janeiro, he **was sent** in 1910 to report for the Foreign Office on reports of analagous brutality in the exploitation of wild rubber by British-directed entrepreneurs on the Putumayo River, in a region disputed between Colombia and Peru. His report of 1911 again created a sensation, and in the face of delays and procrastination by the Peruvian government, Britain's Liberal ministry felt obliged in 1912 to establish a parliamentary Select Committee to investigate. The Committee's proceedings include Casement's evidence and still merit reading, but,

although its Report endorsed his findings, action **was delayed** and was in any case soon overtaken by the outbreak of the First World War.

As a result, while the Congo developments **are well known**, the Putumayo episode has since received comparatively little attention, although there have been several biographical narratives since the early 1970s. The Putumayo has also provided a focus for examination of Casement's ethnographical ideas, and for analysis of the 'culture of terror' often associated with colonialism. Only in 1996 did it emerge far more prominently as the accidental beneficiary of attention following renewed controversy over Casement's diaries. **This was brought** about by the revelation that for his journey to the Putumayo in 1910 there existed two such diaries, one 'black', recording his numerous homosexual experiences, and the other 'white', including no such references. Nevertheless, neither at the time nor since has there been any serious disposition to deny that the Putumayo investigation provides ample evidence of the continuities in Casement's career. The personal dynamic of humanitarian commitment; the professional, painstaking observation and reportage; and the unofficial encouragement of the Anti-Slavery Society's reform campaign, were again much in evidence.

Such modification as has occurred of this general picture of Casement's role has been two-fold and refers to the Congo issue. **The full extent of his dependence on the missionaries for information and informants while on tour - and of Morel's and the Congo Reform Association's reliance on them to harness support for their public campaign - has now been demonstrated.** Most recently, the contribution at a later stage in the campaign by one of Casement's consular successors, Wilfred Thesiger, in advising the Foreign Office on the continued default of the Congo authorities, was important in maintaining the diplomatic pressure for reform.

The record of Casement's practical achievements is thus now well known and essentially uncontested. On this occasion, in reconsidering his place in the context of the international humanitarian movement, it is therefore perhaps most useful to turn to his ideas and their relation to the conventional wisdom of his day. It is a reconsideration which necessarily begins in the 1880s, a decade which saw the process of African partition gather serious momentum, and Casement's own first contact with West Africa.

A passive investigation into ...

Sir Roger Casement and the International Humanitarian Movement



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Roger Casement's reputation as a humanitarian is arguably the least contentious aspect of his much-debated career. For Roger Sawyer, writing in 1996, he was 'probably the bravest, most selfless, practical humanitarian of his day'. The following year, in introducing his edition of *The Amazon Journal of Roger Casement*, Angus Mitchell pinned on Casement the double accolade of 'humanitarian and Irish revolutionary' and wrote of his 'humanitarian work' as representing, for both his contemporaries and those with hindsight in our own day, 'the greatest human rights achievement of his age'.

This is a claim with which many contemporaries agreed. It was, after all, for his official role as a British Consul in exposing the atrocious systems of forced labour established in the Congo and Amazon River basins that Casement received his knighthood in July 1911. One of the few such honours available to the foreign service, this was no mean recognition. It came from a people and a state that prided themselves on their active concern, stretching back more than a century, to protect the rights and advance the liberties of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world. It was widely felt that Casement had succeeded where the British directors of the Peruvian Amazon Company exposed in his despatches had conspicuously failed. In the House of Commons, Members of Parliament drew attention to Casement's reports as outstanding examples of the consular obligation to comment fully on labour abuses, and saw in them 'the legacy of the old nineteenth-century campaign against slavery'. By contrast, in the Company, 'we have a case of directors who have been very indifferent to the great record of England in the past, and the great service which she performed in the suppression of slavery throughout the world'.

It is also a claim that has been endorsed by later scholars. Although, as William Roger Louis noted nearly forty years ago, for a time his 'role as Irish patriot ... obscured his role as Congo reformer', that obscurity was not allowed to persist. Following the independence of the Belgian Congo in 1960, Louis and the Belgian historian Jean Stengers examined in detail *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Casement's place in the history of the Congo. The early 1900s saw widespread and sustained humanitarian criticism of King Leopold's Congo Free State for its atrocities against Africans. When this was combined with popular support for the Congo Reform Association, founded in 1904 by E.D. Morel, the public pressure reached such a pitch as to compel international intervention in Congo affairs. Louis and Stengers showed how Casement's official consular report of 1903 on the condition of the Upper Congo, and, unofficially, his encouragement and mediation behind the scenes, were of crucial importance in promoting and sustaining the movement which led to the eventual transfer of the Congo to the Belgian state in 1908 and its formal annexation. Recalling the birth of the Congo Reform Association some years afterwards, Casement wrote 'How we planned and plotted - & I said that if the Congo question was to be made a living one, it must be taken out of the hands of the F.O. & Govt. and made a people's question - & how I said to you "Thou art the man"!'.

Casement's Congo experience and his effectiveness as an investigator later made him a natural choice for a similar mission in South America. As Consul in Rio de Janeiro, he was sent in 1910 to report for the Foreign Office on reports of analagous brutality in the exploitation of wild rubber by British-directed entrepreneurs on the Putumayo River, in a region disputed between Colombia and Peru. His report of 1911 again created a sensation, and in the face of delays and procrastination by the Peruvian government, Britain's Liberal ministry felt obliged in 1912 to establish a parliamentary Select Committee to investigate. The Committee's proceedings include Casement's evidence and still merit reading, but,

although its Report endorsed his findings, action was delayed and was in any case soon overtaken by the outbreak of the First World War.

As a result, while the Congo developments are well known, the Putumayo episode has since received comparatively little attention, although there have been several biographical narratives since the early 1970s. The Putumayo has also provided a focus for examination of Casement's ethnographical ideas, and for analysis of the 'culture of terror' often associated with colonialism. Only in 1996 did it emerge far more prominently as the accidental beneficiary of attention following renewed controversy over Casement's diaries. This was brought about by the revelation that for his journey to the Putumayo in 1910 there existed two such diaries, one 'black', recording his numerous homosexual experiences, and the other 'white', including no such references. Nevertheless, neither at the time nor since has there been any serious disposition to deny that the Putumayo investigation provides ample evidence of the continuities in Casement's career. The personal dynamic of humanitarian commitment; the professional, painstaking observation and reportage; and the unofficial encouragement of the Anti-Slavery Society's reform campaign, were again much in evidence.

Such modification as has occurred of this general picture of Casement's role has been two-fold and refers to the Congo issue. The full extent of his dependence on the missionaries for information and informants while on tour - and of Morel's and the Congo Reform Association's reliance on them to harness support for their public campaign - has now been demonstrated. Most recently, the contribution at a later stage in the campaign by one of Casement's consular successors, Wilfred Thesiger, in advising the Foreign Office on the continued default of the Congo authorities, was important in maintaining the diplomatic pressure for reform.

The record of Casement's practical achievements is thus now well known and essentially uncontested. On this occasion, in reconsidering his place in the context of the international humanitarian movement, it is therefore perhaps most useful to turn to his ideas and their relation to the conventional wisdom of his day. It is a reconsideration which necessarily begins in the 1880s, a decade which saw the process of African partition gather serious momentum, and Casement's own first contact with West Africa.