



# ROYAL DE LUXE

NANTES

LIMERICK / September 2014

## Cromwell

Oh my, I do not like the look of this black notebook!  
Show me, young man, what these pages bear witness to...  
Hurry!  
(She looks and thinks)

Ah !! I think that the big Story,  
I mean the story of humanity,  
is never told in the same way, depending on the territory one lives in  
as well as the people who have lived there.  
Indeed, all stories change points of view  
depending on which historian is analysing them.  
These dishonest manipulations have filled the financial and political lives of every  
nation since time began.

You could, therefore, be forgiven for doubting a ghost,  
that for 60 years, had no other desire but to spit on the Irish,  
like a toad's kiss brutally severing the hope of its victim  
whilst plunging its suffocating tongue into its enemy's throat.

Rest assured, this is of course nothing but imagination!

This man's name shines like a dark stain in the Irish sky.  
This stain is a black hole in the galaxy  
that will go on forever spreading its hatred for people.

Oliver Cromwell, having been charged with strangling, executing,  
destroying and mangling Irish resistance,  
arrived on August the 15<sup>th</sup>, 1649 with 12 000 men  
to cut Ireland to the heart.

The landing happened silently.  
The crashing of waves on the sand  
was louder than the sound of the horses' hooves.  
The armed men were as quiet as a barefooted child.

The bows mingled with the morning mist  
as if floating through smoke.  
The cannons, lifted by the men, nostrils flaring,  
spanned the spray, holding barrels of fire aloft,  
whilst the cannon balls, dragged by hundreds of men,  
traced bulging furrows beneath the sea.

Once everything was on the beach and after a short time of rest,  
the army began its march.  
The sun had not yet appeared. The hills had to be climbed in silence,  
the sound of horses muffled and the mouths of suffering soldiers shut up.

At 8 o'clock in the morning, as Cromwell faced Drogheda,  
he fired twelve cannons at the city,  
waking the citizens as would have done a volcano.  
Like horses ripping up the sky.  
In short, the city was taken, and in order to mark the supremacy,  
the power, the religion, and the economic interests of the time,  
thousands of children, women, men and elders  
were crushed and burned in churches,  
or run through with swords.  
This was only the first of Cromwell's victories.

There were so many other magnificent battles.  
Any sense of humanity was lost on this man.  
The sieges of Drogheda, Wexford, Clonmel, Waterford, Galway and of Limerick  
were more efficient than a giant Hoover cleaning the Irish house.

Famous names emerged from this hurricane:  
Hugh O'Neill, Donagh MacCarthy, James Bultler, Ulick Burcke....

Meanwhile butterflies rising from the ears of each Irishman,  
filled the sky and created a cloud that neither the cannons, arrows  
nor the swords could destroy.  
It was like an infestation of grasshoppers encrusting themselves in the armours.  
The horses, in a panic, fled back along the road homeward bound,  
and the ships that were lost in this cloud of insects soon found their way back to the  
English coast.  
It is true that Cromwell had destroyed an island, but he hadn't vanquished hope  
nor the banner of freedom !  
And now let us sing together!

© **Jean-Luc Courcoult**, author / director of the street theatre company **Royal de Luxe**