

'The real capital': historical musings on Cork and second city syndrome
Donal Ó Drisceoil, School of History, University College Cork

This paper takes a ramble through the historical record and cultural landscape, seeking the tangled roots of Cork's sense of identity. It will explore the provenance and import of the 'Rebel Cork' moniker and ask how and why Cork city displays the classic signs of 'second city syndrome', with its apparently contradictory inferiority and superiority complexes. Merchant princes, striking workers, market traders, British royals, enlightenment philosophers, hot-air balloonists, short-story writers, revolutionaries and porter drinkers are amongst the motley cast of characters invoked in the search for answers.