Migration has always been a big factor in Irish history and from 1600 to 1800 continental Europe was the main destination for tens of thousands of Irish migrants. Significant groupings of Irish migrants and exiles were seeking religious refuge, due to a series of penal laws directed towards Catholics and in operation in Ireland from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. These laws precluded the establishment of Catholic seminaries in Ireland as they forbade any type of Catholic teaching or education as well as encouraging the banishment of Catholic clergy in general. Various European cities and towns could provide places of support for the education and well-being of Catholic seminarians. Quickly, a network of Irish colleges began to emerge on the continent predominantly in Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal which educated both clergy and laity. The Irish colleges had the specific task of educating and training students for the priesthood and for the Irish Mission.

**ARCHIVE**

The archive of the Irish College, Salamanca contains the archives of the Irish colleges in Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, Seville, Madrid and Alcalá de Henares spanning the period from the late sixteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. This archive holds over 50,000 documents mainly from the Irish College in Salamanca. The archives are the property of the Irish Episcopal Conference and were deposited in St Patrick’s College, Maynooth in 1952 when the last of the Irish colleges in Salamanca closed its doors. The Salamanca Archive is the most important Spanish language archive collection in Ireland.

In the archive one can find material as varied as: students’ oaths, rectors’ private papers, administrative & private accounts, leases of property owned by the Irish colleges, rents & royalties, mortgages, title deeds, receipts, books of income & daily expenses, correspondence, petitions, royal bulls & briefs, proclamations & decrees, execution of wills, annuities and college photographs.

**ONLINE CATALOGUE**

The online catalogue is now available on the NUIM Library and St Patrick’s College website giving researchers online access to the full listings of this wonderfully rich archive for the first time: http://library.nuim.ie/russell-library/manuscripts-and-archives/salamanca-archives

The catalogue is fully searchable and lists to international standards. Over time, more material and resources relating to the Irish colleges in Spain will be added making this catalogue an invaluable resource for those interested in Hiberno-Spanish matters.

**DIGITISATION OF THE COLLECTION**

The entire collection will be digitised and stored securely in a digital repository which is scheduled to be completed by 2015. An FORAS FEasa have also created a digitised, interactive copy of an account book belonging to the Irish College in Alcalá. This digitised version of the account book for the years immediately prior to the college’s closure offers a unique insight into the day-to-day running of the college http://archives.forasfeasa.ie/

**PUBLISHED**

**ARTICLE IN ARCHIVIUM HIBERNICUM**

The Irish in Asturias: the footprint of the Irish College, Salamanca, 1913-1950

This article traces the history of the clerical students and rectors of the Irish College, Salamanca (Colegio Real de Nobles Irlandeses) on their summer vacations on the northern coast of Spain. The article draws chiefly on rectors’ reports to the Irish hierarchy in the Salamanca Archive, held in St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland and on the papers of Alexander McCabe, Rector of the College from 1935-49, held in the National Library of Ireland. A summer house (Casona de Verines) was purchased in the early 1920s and thereafter the holidays were spent in Pendueles, in Asturias, adding further details to our knowledge of the evacuation of the students on the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. It recounts some of the impressions and experiences of Alexander McCabe as an eye witness to the civil war in Spain as documented in his reports and personal diaries. Two photographs, one from the National Library of Ireland and the second from the collections of St Patrick’s College are now published for the first time.

**ELECTRONIC LINKS**

NUIM ePrints and eTheses Archive http://eprints.nuim.ie/

RIAN: Ireland’s National Research Portal http://rian.ie/