

Mortality and Longevity in Ireland

The single greatest achievement of previous generations has been to propagate life. Their most precious gift to the new-born is the ways and means to prolong life. This volume takes a close look at how life was extended in Ireland from one generation to another. It tells two quite different stories. The first story begins *in* the second half of nineteenth century when the high rate of deaths in infancy and childhood in Ireland start to fall dramatically year-on-year. The soul-testing tragedy of parents burying their offspring becomes increasingly less routine until it is a rare event. Then, beginning in the 1970s, but so gradual as to be imperceptible at first, older adults began to live longer, a trend that accelerated until recent years. Individual lifetimes are extending far beyond the time required to rear the next generation. The original research reproduced in this volume highlights that the majority alive today in Ireland are projected to live to 90 years of age and beyond. This is a fundamental renegotiation of the equilibrium between our species and nature, beneficial to the individual. However, it has not entered popular consciousness as a triumph of possibilities for the individual but as a burden - a “pension time-bomb” or a crisis in healthcare or long-term care provision. Throughout history and prehistory man battled with man over the immediate necessities for life for kith and kin. Now these are in abundant, the battleground has moved to the resources to prolong life.

Dr Shane Whelan is an actuary and Associate Professor in UCD School of Mathematics & Statistics. He was the managing editor of the British Actuarial Journal for several years and served on councils of the actuarial profession both in Ireland and the UK. He is a member of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Expert Group on Population Projections since 2007.

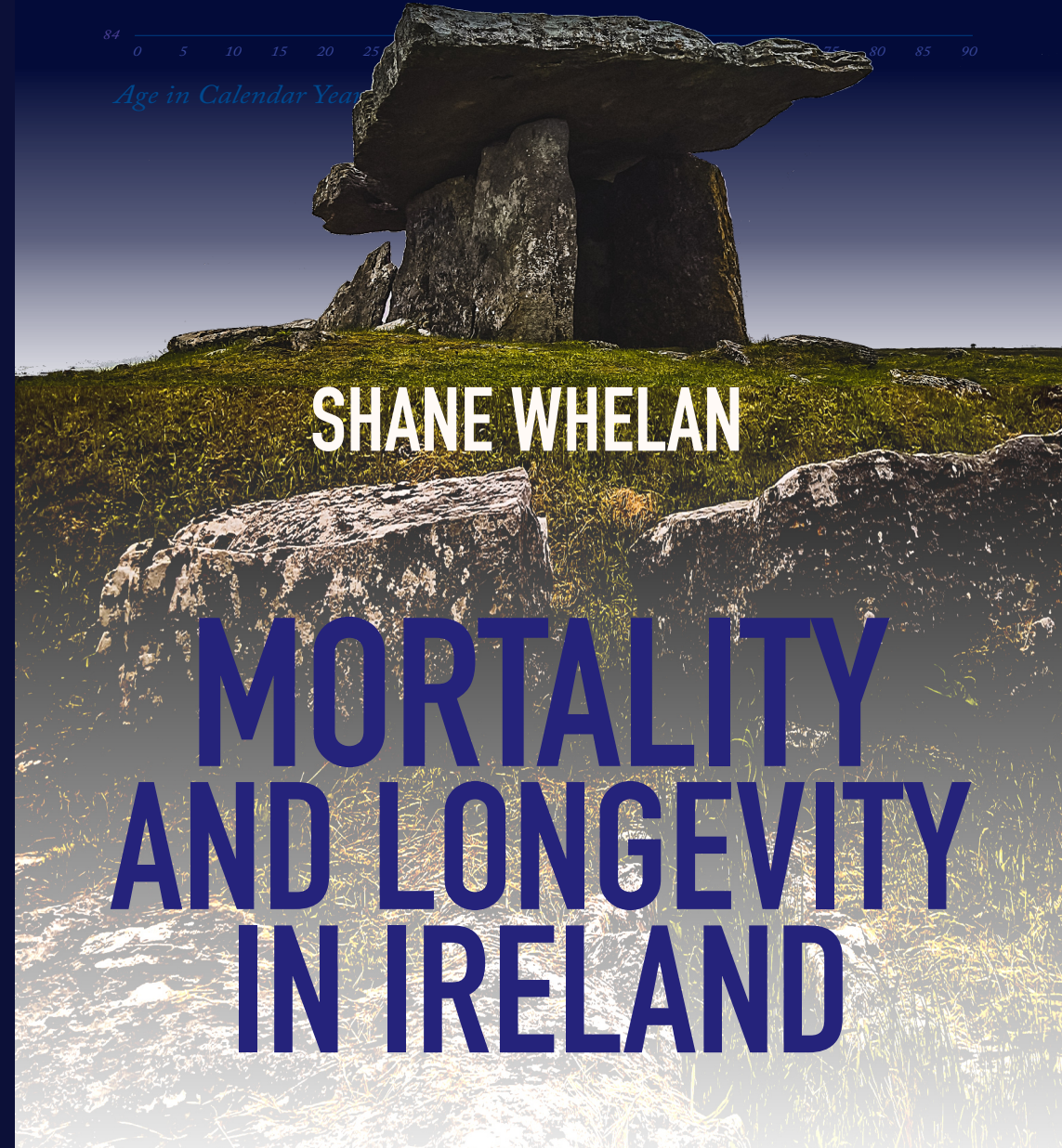
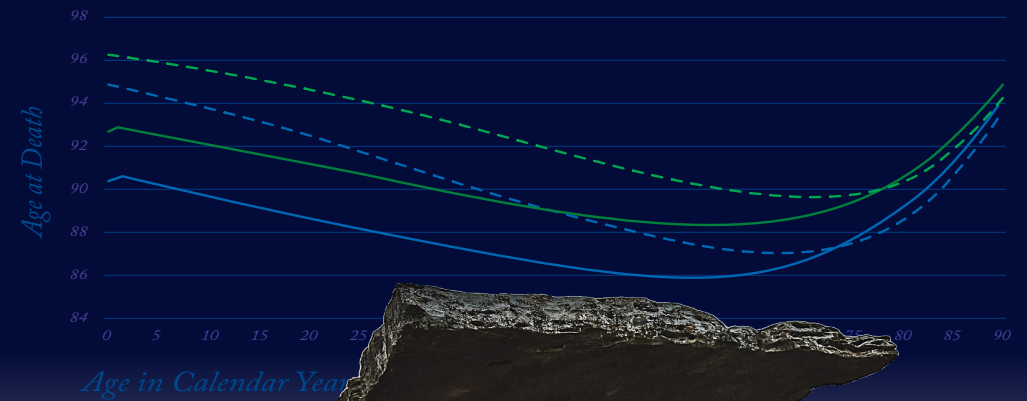


Published with the kind support of the
Society of Actuaries in Ireland



Mortality and Longevity in Ireland

Shane Whelan



SHANE WHELAN

MORTALITY AND LONGEVITY IN IRELAND