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## The cruelty man

Sarah-Anne Buckley

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The Cruelty Man represents the first comprehensive account of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in Ireland, from its foundations in 1889, to the passing of responsibilities to the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) in 1956. In both Britain and Ireland, the NSPCC was at the forefront of the child protection movement, yet the history of the Society in Ireland has not been fully addressed. This book aims to fill this vacuum. It provides a study of the Society, while also utilising it as a vehicle to examine the treatment of poverty-stricken children and families by the State. More broadly, it contains a comprehensive history of child welfare from the introduction of the Poor Law in 1838 to the publication of the Kennedy Report in 1970. It addresses issues surrounding institutionalisation, welfare, family violence, compulsory education, child abuse and the role of charity in the provision of welfare. Based on research of the available records of the NSPCC archive, and court records, the text also explores changing concepts of childhood. It will appeal to both an academic and general audience, as it uses case studies of families investigated by the Society and the State. It will be essential to students of Irish social history, gender studies, social work and social policy. More generally it will interest those observing recent reports into child abuse in State institutions and in particular the history of Ireland's industrial school system. The foreword by Vincent Browne also demonstrates its contemporary relevance.