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Minister Varadkar speaking at the launch of the Wexford-Savannah Axis Research Platform Georgia Southern today.

March 19, 2014



Minister Varadkar speaking at the launch of the Wexford-Savannah Axis Research Platform Georgia Southern today.

The Wexford-Savannah Axis research platform seeks to reveal many stories linking Wexford and Ireland's "sunny southeast" with Savannah. Even famous narratives, such as that of Father Peter Whelan, can be told more fully and disseminated to the rising generation. A son of Wexford and sometime Vicar General of the Savannah diocese, Whelan ministered to Confederate troops during the Union attack on Fort Pulaski; and his Good Samaritan

service to the prisoners of war at Andersonville is also well known. But how did his youth in Wexford and neighboring Kilkenny predisposed him to such extraordinary service? The Ireland in which Whelan emerged was dominated by Daniel O'Connell, the "Liberator," and his acolyte John England, who would become the first Catholic Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, and whose call for a Catholic priesthood in the American South attracted Whelan.

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