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Sommario/riassunto	Named for its mythical leader "Captain Rock, " avenger of agrarian wrongs, the Rockite movement of 1821-24 in Ireland was notorious for its extraordinary violence. In Captain Rock, James S. Donnelly, Jr., offers both a fine-grained analysis of the conflict and a broad exploration of Irish rural society after the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Originating in west Limerick, the Rockite movement spread quickly under the impact of a prolonged economic depression. Before long the insurgency embraced many of the better-off farmers. The intensity of the Rockites' grievances, the frequency of their resort to sensational violence, and their appeal on such key issues as rents and tithes presented a nightmarish challenge to Dublin Castle-prompting in turn a major reorganization of the police, a purging of the local magistracy, the introduction of large military reinforcements, and a determined campaign of judicial repression. A great upsurge in sectarianism and millenarianism, Donnelly shows, added fuel to the conflagration. Inspired by prophecies of doom for the Anglo-Irish Protestants who ruled the country, the overwhelmingly Catholic Rockites strove to hasten the demise of the landed elite they viewed as oppressors. Drawing on a wealth of sources-including reports from policemen, military officers, magistrates, and landowners as well as from

newspapers, pamphlets, parliamentary inquiries, depositions, rebel proclamations, and threatening missives sent by Rockites to their enemies- Captain Rock offers a detailed anatomy of a dangerous, widespread insurgency whose distinctive political contours will force historians to expand their notions of how agrarian militancy influenced Irish nationalism in the years before the Great Famine of 1845-51.
