

**THE IRISH IN LEICESTER, c.1841 TO c.1891:
A STUDY OF A MINORITY COMMUNITY
IN THE EAST MIDLANDS**

Nessan John Eugene DANAHER, B.A. (Hons.); M.Ed.

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

Submitted July 1999 for degree validation
by the
University of North London

THE IRISH AND LEICESTER, c1841 TO c1891: A STUDY OF A MINORITY COMMUNITY

ABSTRACT

The central aim of this thesis is to pioneer an in-depth study of the Irish in the largely unstudied east midlands town of Leicester, and to do so across the half-century c.1841-91. The Irish migrant and settler experience in Leicester is contextualised against current historiographical debates about the Irish in nineteenth century Britain; and the Leicester Irish experience is contrasted with that of Irish settlers elsewhere, including where relevant the wider diasporic framework. The work addresses social, economic, political and cultural agendas, and attempts to do so within a wide-ranging analysis which locates local developments within a national context. The thesis examines both direct and indirect patterns of migration, with reference to diachronic decennial analysis and the issue of transience. The thesis addresses: the centrality of prejudice experienced by the Irish via a prejudiced media and the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism; the social structure of the migrant and settled community (re: housing, health and poverty); occupational patterns in relation to class, gender, ethnicity and generation; the important but ignored contribution of Irish males and females to local Catholic growth, especially in terms of leadership, personnel, infrastructure and resourcing in education; patterns of criminal behaviour, including variations occasioned by differing religious and gender backgrounds and the situation of second as opposed to first generation Irish; and finally the community's political development vis-à-vis both local as well as national agendas. The Irish community is identified in a wide sense, as this is felt to be a more valid way of evaluating progress or lack of it. This approach also facilitates comparisons between the Irish-born sector and the wider (or "effectively") Irish community when appropriate.

The analysis presented is based on an extensive and specially compiled database which includes relevant identifiable entries from the censuses for Leicester from 1841 to 1891 inclusive. The data includes all the census fields, and deliberately conjoins not just the Irish-born, but spouses and siblings born outside Ireland. Extensive integrated use is made of data from prison, poor law, corporation and other sources.

The thesis concludes that, whilst the Irish were, and remained, a minority, with

very little expansion in relation to the host community's growth, this did not deter positive developments in the areas identified above. Whilst a Protestant and anti-Catholic culture permeated the town, and probably intersected with economic factors to limit in-migration, it was not powerful enough to deter the models of religious and political internal community development that were taking place in other Irish communities in Britain at that time. By c.1891, the Leicester Irish had not been assimilated; they did achieve levels of integration which in employment terms reflected the situation of c.1841, when there had been some small representation in jobs outside the unskilled sector. In ethnic and cultural identity terms the Irish in Leicester experienced upturns and downturns throughout the period. This was especially the case via formal education, which materially assisted the processes of incorporation and denationalization, and took place despite the hibernophilic attitude of the local Catholic leadership from c.1875. An identifiable Irish Protestant dimension existed, and this group may have been more widely represented in Leicester than elsewhere.

PAGE	CONTENTS
i	Abstract
iii	Contents
1	1 Introduction
21	2 Why did the Irish come to Leicester?
57	3 The Social Structure of the wider Irish Community (Part I): Occupational Patterns.
111	4 The Social Structure of the Community (Part II): Settlement and Problematization.
160	5 The Irish Dimension to Catholic Development in Leicester.
225	6 Educating the Irish: Identity, Incorporation and Infrastructure.
277	7 Racializing the Irish through the Mobilisation of Popular anti-Catholicism in Leicester.
334	8 Crime and the Problematization of the Irish in Leicester.
395	9 Political Development in the Irish Community: the Threat to the British Body Politic.
462	10 Conclusion.
472	Bibliography (and Abbreviations List).

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

PAGE	CONTENTS
4	(a) Aims of and Issues in the Thesis.
8	(b) Sources.
12	(c) Leicester's existing connections with Ireland.
15	(d) Organisation of the Thesis.
20	(e) Conclusion.

TABLES

6	(1)	Male and Female Irish-born Migrants in Leicester (on Database only) 1841-1891 inclusive, compared with Census originals.
7	(2)	(a) Population of the City of Leicester and the Number of Irish-born at all Censuses from 1841 to 1901.
7		(b) Figures for the Non-Irish born (Males and Females, <20 and 20>) in Leicester 1841-91, on Author's Census Database.
7a	(3)	The Increase in Leicester's Population against the overall stability of the numbers of Irish-born in Leicester, 1841 to 1891.
11	(4)	(a) Irish-born in Selected English Towns in 1851.
11		(b) The Irish-born in Nottingham and Leicester compared. 1841-1891, and as percentages of the overall population.

(a) Aims and Issues in the Thesis

This thesis examines Leicester as a non-traditional centre of Irish migration from 1841-1891; it is intended as a contribution to serious historiographical debates on the Irish in Britain in the nineteenth century; it aims to explore a wide range of the central experiences and contexts which shaped the lives of Irish migrants in that period. As a key historian of Irish migration to Britain has noted (Swift, 1992), there are three outstanding areas needing further debate, and this research aims to contribute to these debates.¹

First, apart from works by Lees (1979), Finnegan (1986) and Lowe (1989) there are few comprehensive analyses of the Irish experience in individual urban centres, and this is especially true of Irish settlement in the Midlands. Second, most of the analysis to date has centred on the early and mid-Victorian periods; more attention needs paying to the descendants of this first generation and to later arrivals from Ireland. As the census data for 1891 became available while this thesis was in gestation, the decision was made to attempt to study Leicester across the full half-century. Third, this research aims to achieve a balance between the usually less well explored area of the economic and political agendas and the more frequently examined issues around social and religious affairs.

Thus this thesis attempts to explore aspects of settlement and demography, migration inwards and outwards, social mobility, occupational patterns and mixed marriages. The evolution of the Irish community in Leicester is evaluated, where possible, through diachronic decennial analysis, and the issue of transience as opposed to settlement is discussed.² The dynamics operating amongst the Irish in Leicester are explored in relation to community leadership, clerical as well as lay, and to community organisation at formal and informal levels.³ However, significant individuals and organisations have been identified in Leicester and these are included in the analysis.

¹SWIFT, R., The Historiography of the Irish in 19th century Britain, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (ED)(1992), *The Irish in the New Communities*, Vol. 2, *The Irish World Wide, History, Heritage and Identity*, p.52-81.

²Fitzpatrick discusses this issue; however, there is a paucity of surviving correspondence in the British context; even transient migrants were not devoid of structural contacts, as much of Irish community life was informal and at "street" level. See FITZPATRICK, D. The Irish in Britain, Settlers or Transients?, in BUCKLAND, P. & BELCHEM, J. (Eds)(1992), *The Irish in British Labour History*, pp. 1-10.

³The definition of "community" as used throughout the Thesis is from the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "Often applied to those members of a civil community, who have certain circumstances of nativity, religion, or pursuit, common to them but not shared by those among whom they live; as the British or Chinese community in a foreign city, the mercantile community everywhere, the Roman Catholic community in a Protestant city." Throughout, a distinction is drawn between the Irish-born, and the "wider" or "whole" Irish community, which includes spouses and siblings as per the census.

Gender, religion and class roles issues are addressed; womens' experiences, Protestant migrants and the middle class Irish are dealt with in context.

The thesis also aims to situate the Irish in Leicester in the context of three broad issues which usually feature in these studies, such as Finnegan (1982) on York, Lees (1979) on London and Fielding (1993) on the north west. First, why did the Irish migrate, where from and to where, and with what outcomes? Second, how far was the range of attitudes displayed towards them negative, and was it uniform throughout the study period? Third, how far along the continuum between arrival, integration and assimilation did those Irish settling in Leicester actually travel? These three fields are examined, with reference being made to the themes of poverty, nationalism, ethnicity, and both the Catholic and Protestant traditions, throughout the half century under study.

Leicester is not typical of those locations normally associated with Irish settlement in the nineteenth century. Situated virtually in the centre of England, it was a county and market town with an active Protestant profile, and with a slowly decaying domestic industry based on the framework knitting of hosiery goods.⁴ Even so, by 1851 there were 877 Irish-born residents in the town, comprising 1.4 per cent of the population. This compares, for example, with Stafford, where at this time the 496 Irish-born comprised 4 per cent of the populace, and with Nottingham, where 1,686 (2.8 per cent) were Irish-born. (See Tables 1, 2a and 2b)

Leicester is an appropriate location for the proposed thematic study for several reasons. Firstly, it had a reasonably substantial representation of Irish-born, especially in 1851 and 1861. (See Table 2(a)) Secondly, although actual numbers of Irish remained broadly static across fifty years, they did not keep pace proportionately with the town's increasingly rapid population increase, whereas in many other urban expansion situations the Irish element increased correspondingly. (See Table 3) Thirdly, the town's geographical situation permits us to be reasonably certain that migration patterns represented genuine social movement and not just short term relocation. Fourthly, such a small town model can be usefully compared with more well-known studies of larger cities and conurbations. Fifthly, apart from Sliney (1980) on Leicester 1850-60, Murphy (1993) on Nottingham in 1851, and Minns (1996) on Derby 1850-70, very little else has

⁴Reference will be made to Rutlandshire, the small, mainly agricultural neighbouring county. From c.1974 to 1997 it was formally incorporated within Leicestershire, and there are historical links between the 2 counties.

TABLE 1	MALE AND FEMALE IRISH-BORN MIGRANTS IN LEICESTER (ON DATABASE ONLY) 1841-91 INCLUSIVE, COMPARED WITH CENSUS ORIGINALS									
	MALE		Male Totals	FEMALE		Female Totals	Grand Totals	OFFICIAL CENSUS TOTAL	%of Irish on Database	
	<20	20+		<20	20+					
1841	40	149	189	39	144	183	372	477	80.0%	
1851	119	276	395	80	258	338	733	877	83.6	
1861	60	289	349	70	284	354	703	857	82.2	
1871	41	284	325	59	311	370	695	876	79.3	
1881*	40	258	298	38	263	301	599	948	63.2	
1891	31	250	281	32	240	272	553	792	69.8	
TOTALS	331	1,506	1,837	318	1,500	1,818	3,655			

Notes: (1) As a control on extraction of data from originals, it is possible to compare results here with the result of Sliney's extract for 1851; Sliney traced 761/877 Irish-born for 1851, a figure which corresponds reasonably well with this author's 733/877. Such a close co-relation suggests that the extracted data here is reasonably correct. In any case, as samples, they are more than adequate in both years; see SLINEY, T. (1980).

(2) *1881 incomplete data due to illegibility of many of originals, but proportional sample is of appropriate extent.

TABLE 2(a): POPULATION OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER AND THE NUMBERS OF IRISH-BORN AT ALL CENSUSES FROM 1831 TO 1901.

Date	Population of City of Leicester	Number of Irish-born	% of Population
1831	38,904	300*	0.77
1841	50,853	477	0.93
1851	60,642	877	1.44
1861	68,056	855	1.26
1871	95,220	876	0.90
1881	122,376	948	0.77
1891	174,624	792	0.45
1901	211,579	977	0.46

Notes: (1) general source is the *Census*, 1841 to 1901 inclusive.
(2) Fig. for Irish-born in 1831 is from *Report on State of Irish Poor in Great Britain, 1836, App.G.*

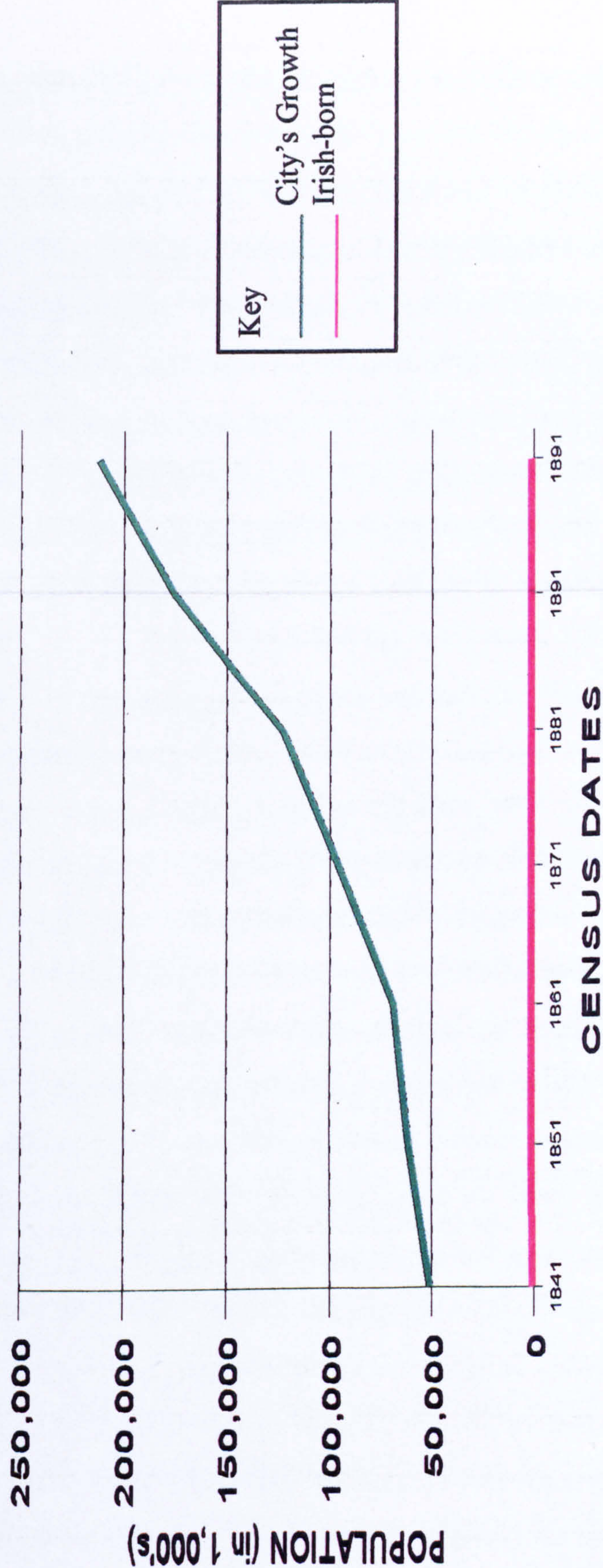
TABLE 2(b) Figures for the Non-Irish born in the wider Irish Community (Males and Females, <20 and 20>) in Leicester 1841-91, from Author's Census Database

	Males			Females			
	under 20	20 or over	Total	under 20	20 or over	Total	Grand Total
1841	105	72	177	98	39	137	314
1851	170	95	265	195	96	289	554
1861	212	83	295	202	97	299	594
1871	340	131	471	367	150	517	988
1881	287	150	437	287	142	429	866
1891	252	184	436	236	195	431	867

Note: Overall total = 4,183 person in wider Irish community

TABLE 3

The Increase in Leicester's Population against the overall stability of the numbers of Irish-born in Leicester, 1841 to 1891 (Source: Census data)



Notes: It is immediately obvious that the absolute numbers of Irish-born remained virtually static in proportion to the steadily expanding population of Leicester in these years (see Tables 4(a) and 4(b)). Nottingham, in contrast, experienced a higher-proportion of Irish-born between 1841 and 1861, but mirrored Leicester's ratios in 1881 and 1891; see Table 4(b).

been researched to date on Irish settlement in the East Midlands.⁵ Sixth, Leicester was a town with a high and historic Protestant profile playing host to Irish migrants who were mainly Catholic. The interplay of prejudice and proselytism, sometimes mutual, but predominantly anti-Catholic, was a long-term trait. Finally, a study of the Irish in a midlands county town offers an extra dimension to the existing research picture, which is based mainly on major studies of larger, and often more industrialised, locations.

This thesis aims then to give an overview of the social, economic, political and cultural development of the Irish community in Leicester in relation to the Irish in Britain generally, from c.1841 through to c.1891; it will also emphasise those aspects where the experience of the Irish in Leicester is particular and unique.

(b) Sources

Leicester has to date not featured in major research on the Irish in Britain; therefore material has of necessity had to be extracted from a variety of archives, many outside the locality. Main sources are discussed below, and listed in the Bibliography.

Sources indigenous to the Irish community are, usually, few in number, due mainly to poverty, and the tendency to geographical mobility. There is, however, the unique memoir of a self-educated and articulate second generation Irishman, Tom Barclay (1852-1933). Born in Leicester to parents from Limerick and Mayo, from urban and rural Irish settings,⁶ he was brought up a Catholic.

Barclay's *Memoirs* explore his childhood in the Irish "rookeries" of Leicester, a town of strong Protestant opinions and traditions; graphic descriptions of a Catholic education and upbringing, and of attendant anti-Irish prejudice; the significance of the use of Irish Gaelic by the community in Leicester; and views of current affairs from the Fenians through to the campaign for Home Rule;⁷ and a positive appreciation of the

⁵There are very few studies of the Irish in smaller towns, especially those outside those areas most well associated with Irish in-migration. A recent PhD thesis on the Irish in Derby, by MINNS, H., concentrates on education and folklore, (1997); MURPHY, P.J. (1993) has produced a study of the Irish in Nottingham in the 1850's as part of an M.A. study, the only work on Leicester was by SLINEY, T., *Irish Immigrants in Leicester (1850-1860)*, as part of an MA (1980), which usefully explored some areas but was limited in terms of the time scale covered and the agenda for discussion. HERSON, J (1988) *Why the Irish Went to Stafford* in a useful case study on settlement in the 1830-71 period. MacRAILD (1998) examines the Cumbrian Irish across the 1841-91 period.

⁶See *Memoirs and Medleys - The Autobiography of a Bottle Washer* (1934); the 1995 edition has new introductions on Barclay's political and intellectual development, and his ethno-cultural profile as a second generation Irishman.

⁷He learned Irish in London in the heyday of the League, meeting leading personalities such as Pierce Beasley, W.P. Ryan, P.T. McGinly, Fionan MacColm, Sean O'Cahan and Dr. Henry.

place of traditional Irish music, song and dance in the life of the Irish community in Britain.

The recollections do not tell the entire story of the Irish in Leicester in the nineteenth century; Barclay's secularist stance, and his radical socialism, set him apart from many of his fellow-Irish. There is nothing on the Irish contribution to Catholic development in Leicester; not once is the parish of St Patrick mentioned, despite its existence at the very core of the Irish settlement. Most historians have either ignored it or used it selectively; where it has been used, the Irish dimension has been either marginalised or ignored.⁸ Barclay wrote regularly for a fringe local journal, *The Wyvern*, in the period c.1890-1900; there is useful information here also concerning Leicester's Irish.⁹

Other biographical material has concerned external views of the Irish; usually marginal, but refreshingly sympathetic. Most of this material concerns the Ellis family, the father John and the two daughters, Isabel and Eliza, who were Quakers of tolerant disposition. Detailed and uniformly negative coverage of Leicester's Irish c.1846 to c.1877 comes from the *Annual Reports* of the Rev. Joseph Dare's Unitarian Mission.

The bare and bleak view of the Irish held by local historians owes much to their use of Dare's *Reports of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society* as a primary source; a recent analysis by Haynes uncritically accepts Dare's view of the Irish:

Worst of all, however, were the 'dangerous and neglected denizens of lodging-houses and dwellers in overshadowed and overcrowded places not fit for human habitation.'¹⁰ Into this category, Dare placed the permanent mendicants, many of whom were Irish.

Haynes lauds Dare for his ability to empathise with the poor and the working class; there is no evidence at all of any sympathy or empathy from Dare for the Irish. Indeed, a recent summary of the ripple effect of Kay's stereotype vision of the Irish in Manchester can be applied justifiably to Dare's perorations on the Leicester Irish:

⁸Only one local historian has used Barclay to any extent; see HAYNES, J.B; in Bibliography; neither of his 2 articles explore the Irish factor.

⁹The most informative work is Barclay's. In a series of articles on Leicester's main slums, Barclay explored perceptively the Irish area of 'Abbey Street and Green Street', in *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII, p.149-150. This is the best single source.

¹⁰HAYNES, B. (1991), *Working Class Life in Victorian Leicester*, p.89, citing Dare, 1873, *RLDMS*, p.6.

Repetitive recycling of his most graphic passages removed them from the context of his argument, gave respectability to revived atavistic prejudices, and played a powerful role in the articulation of a long-lived adverse stereotype of the Irish immigrant in Britain which recent work is only now beginning to modify.¹¹

In regard to matters of Irish settlement across virtually a twenty year period (1847 to 1865 approximately) Dare's views primed Leicester opinion, and his *Annual Reports* were regularly covered in the local press as well as being published independently. Dare's chapel, the Unitarian Great Meeting, was also a focus for opinion-formation amongst the local power *bloc* of Liberal politicians on the Corporation.¹²

Dare's emphasis on the negative aspects of Hibernian migration was worsened by his constant anti-Irish editorialising and his use of denigrating terminology. Like many other critics, Dare saw the occupants, and not the overcrowding, as the problem. In 1850, when the "Famine" was in its third year of impact, commenting on beggars and rag and bone merchants crowding into Irish private dwellings, Dare pronounced: "They should be sent home to grow flax and corn in their own beautiful island." Again, in 1865, Dare reported that:

A respectable housekeeper informs me that the lower portion of the Irish who live in the back streets, from the Old Cross downwards, spend the after part of the Sabbath in utter disregard of its sacred character. Pitch-and-toss, drinking and brawling, make the neighbourhood another Donnybrook Fair.¹³

The fact that by 1865 Dare had, apparently, divided the Irish into a "lower portion" and some other untitled segment suggests that there may have been a grudging admission after two decades that some of the Irish constituted a vaguely defined "upper" portion. Dare had formed his opinions early on, and was not thereafter easily dissuaded.

¹¹BUSTEED, M. & HODGSON, R; *Made in Manchester: the Articulation and Diffusion of Irish stereotypes in 19th C. Britain*; p. 29-33 in DANAHER, N., (Ed.) *Irish Dimensions in Brit. Educ; Report on 10th Conf.*, 1993, Irish Studies Workshop.

¹²See ELLIS, I.C. (1935), *Records of 19th Century Leicester*, p.305; quotes one source thus; the first 7 mayors after the Reform Bill were members of the Great Meeting.

¹³Dare, Rev. J., *RLDMS*; 2nd of 1847, p.21-2; 5th of 1850, p.20-21; 20th of 1865, p.13-14. The choice of Donnybrook Fair by Dare as a performance indicator of Irish malfeasance echoes similar earlier stereotyping in the local press; see chapter on Leicester Media attitudes to the Irish.

The great bulk of the evidence regarding the Irish in Leicester has been researched, extracted and processed from the records of both individuals and agencies who had contacts with the Irish; much of this material is in the Leicestershire Records Office; other sources include both regional and national archives. The main source was the decennial census, data being gathered for all Irish-born people, their spouses, (whether Irish or otherwise) and their children from the 1841 to 1891 censuses inclusively. This rendered a total of 3,655 different individual entries for the Irish-born and a total of 4,183 for the wider Irish (or effectively Irish) community. (See Tables 1, 2(a) and 2(b))

As other researchers have noted, the enumerators found the spelling of Irish names, of both people and places, to be problematical. Birth places feature for less than 20 per cent of each census group (none at all for 1841). Ages given are inconsistent; but they are nonetheless broadly correct. Occupational descriptions could suffer from subjectivity from both subject and recorder. Generally, the census appears reliable and consistent. Data for 1841-91 was entered on D Base III; original data by hand was compiled over two years by the author, who supervised and checked the subsequent entering on to the database. The intention was to study the widest possible timespan - a half-century - so that more long-term comparisons could be made than is generally the case with Irish migrant studies.¹⁴

As well as data for Leicester, the database also contains separately the same information for the main urban areas inhabited by the Irish elsewhere in the county (viz. Loughborough, Whitwick and Hinckley). This is useful, obviously, for purposes of comparison between the city and the county situations, and for acknowledging those interactions that did take place.

(c) Leicester's existing connections with Ireland

In terms of communications, Leicester was reasonably well equipped by c.1830. Coach services linking London enjoyed new local turnpikes; new canal schemes became operational; in 1832-3 the first mechanical public railway in the Midlands linked Leicester with the nearby coalfields in Swannington and Whitwick.¹⁵ Whitwick became

¹⁴The data was then checked via the SSRC Standard disk, and then transferred on to Lotus Approach to enable more speedy analysis. Hereinafter, ACD means *Author's Census Database*.

¹⁵See SIMMONS, J., *Communications and Transport*, PYE, N. (Ed)(1972), *Leicester and its Region*, p.311-324.

a magnet for Irish seeking work. A sophisticated rail network spanned the county by c.1850. As well as providing job opportunities, this network made both county and town more accessible. Contacts between Ireland and Leicestershire certainly pre-date the "Famine". Irish people travelled to or through Leicester as gypsies, and as cattle drovers; conversely, Leicester dealers had contacts with Ireland and the Irish via import-export arrangements, especially of foodstuffs and other agricultural products. References in the *Borough Records* for the period c.1100-1500 suggest that Irish merchants had contacts with Leicester.¹⁶ Trade between Leicester and Ireland was obviously ongoing; local merchants traded with Ireland before c.1700. Leicester imported Irish foodstuffs throughout the 1700-1900 period.¹⁷

Ireland supplied food even during the "Great Famine". The important cattle trade was two-way, Leicestershire importing in bulk, and exporting specific breeds for rearing. Both county and city were noted *entrepôts* for regular cattle fairs and markets, and Irish livestock has featured since c.1680.¹⁸

In 1862, for example, a serious accident to a cattle train carrying 60 Irish beasts in 4 trucks occurred near Manton (Rutland): 11 wagons were derailed, with men and cattle hurt:

The Irishmen declared that they and the poor beasts were all 'kilt' and were quickly seen rolling in the field singing out to the top of their voices that they had broken backs and were 'kilt' downright; another hollering out "my poor beast," but the Irishmen's fears were worse than the facts, although bad enough.¹⁹

There was a mutual traffic in livestock, such as pedigree sheep.²⁰ "Throughout those parts of Ireland where sheep rearing became important after 1815, the Leicester ram was crossed with the Roscommon ewe in fact, the Leicester cross effected a minor revolution."²¹ The trade was reciprocal; "by 1866 the order of preference in eastern Leicestershire" included the Kerry Cow as one of the six equally favoured

¹⁶See BATESON, M. (1899 and 1901), *Records of the Borough of Leicester*, Vol. I, 1103-1327, p.312 and 322; and Vol. II, 1327-1509, p.464.

¹⁷DARE, P. (1927), *Old-Time Law keepers, Constables of Aylestone, 1671-1710*, p.12, 13, 14 & 15.

¹⁸See JENKINS, W. A. & SMITH, C.T., Soc. & Admin Hist. 1660-1835, in *VCHL* (IV) (1958), p.80.

¹⁹TRAYLEN, A.R. (Ed)(1980), *Railways in Rutland*, Vol. 3, p.10 + 11. FINNEGAN (1982) explained the use by the Irish of the word "kilt" (p.50): To quote Maria Edgeworth: 'The mere English reader, from a similarity of sound between the words *kilt* and *killed*, might be induced to suppose that their meanings are similar, yet they are not by any means in Ireland synonymous terms. Thus you may hear a man claim - 'I'm kilt and murdered!' - but he frequently means only that he has received a black eye, or a slight contusion,' *Castle Rackrent*, (1800), p.85.

²⁰THIRSK, J. *Agrarian History, 1540-1950*, p.231, in *VCHL*, Vol. II.

²¹DONNELLY, J.S. Jnr (1975), *The Land and the People of the 19th Century Cork*, p.44.

breeds.²² There was a developed interface then between Leicestershire and Ireland in the pedigree stock trade.

The long-term importance of Irish food imports into Leicester²³ was remarked on by an educated working class observer in 1838 who articulated the problem that was to explode after 1845: "I would ask you if the great exports in cattle made by Ireland to England is a proof that the poor of that country have plenty of meat. Does it not prove the reverse? Are the poor of Ireland pining for want of that meat which they export?"²⁴ A decade later, and the exports from Ireland to Leicester would include increasing numbers of Irish people.

The movement of Irish gypsies locally is well documented from around c.1650, eg at Stathern and Waltham on the Wolds.²⁵ Waltham held a celebrated horse fair each Michaelmas (September).²⁶ These Irish gypsies experienced discriminatory and sometimes exemplary treatment, passes being issued only after physical punishment had been administered. Irish travellers reached Branston in 1654, Stathern in 1663, and Aylestone c.1680.²⁷ The *Journal* in 1794 drew attention to an Irish gypsy deserter; James Donovan of Cork, and gave an interesting depiction of his wife:

..... she is an Irish woman, wears a cotton bed-gown, shawl handkerchief, green petticoat, a man's hat, and an old grey woollen cloak.²⁸

From c.1850, Hinckley was regularly visited by a gypsy group selling besom brushes and brimstone matches.²⁹ Gypsies therefore had long-term associations with Leicestershire, where some obtained temporary work as migrant farm labourers.

There were other, more formal, travellers between Leicester and Ireland. William Gardiner, the noted Leicester businessman, musician and raconteur, provided positive images of his Irish contacts in his memoirs of c.1838. In Liverpool he met a "Gentleman

²²THIRSK, J. in *VCHL*, Vol. II, p.245.

²³During the turbulent 1790's, hunger and poverty forced the town's authorities to import emergency consignments of Irish food: "on one occasion, a Mr. Alderman Phipps bought a ton of salted butter from Ireland and retailed it at prime cost." The *Mercury*, for example, detailed butter and bacon imports in the summer of 1866, together with price movements in the Irish butter market and in Waterford bacon prices. ELLIS, C., *History in Leicester* (1948/69), p.97; LC, 3 March 1836; LM, 2 June 1866.

²⁴LC, 31 March 1838, letter of Jabez Weston.

²⁵I am indebted to Dr. David Smith of Leic. Polytechnic, an expert on travellers. Sources: LCRO, *Stathern Parish Constable's Accounts*, DE1605/56, Folio 17 and *Waltham on the Wolds P.C. Accnts*, DE615/60, Folio 69.

²⁶LCRO, *Waltham on the Wolds P.C. Accnts*, DE615/60 and f.54.

²⁷LCRO, *Branston Constables Accnt*, DE720/30, folio 84. LCRO, *Stathern PC Accnt*, DE1605/56, folio 180. See DARE, P., (1927) *Old-Time Law keepers, Aylestone, 1671-1710*, p.23.

²⁸LJ, 8 August 1794, p.3.

²⁹FRANCIS, H.J. (1930), *History of Hinckley*, p.48. -

who belonged to one of those Irish families of rank that settled in France about the year 1700.” Gardiner described the “unprecedented hospitality and politeness” he was met with by a Dublin businessman. Gardiner met Irish notabilities, such as the historian O’Connor Don (ie Charles O’Conor, 1764-1828, of Belanagare). He observed approvingly Daniel O’Connell in the Commons.³⁰ O’Connell featured regularly on the invitation lists of the Liberal élite in Leicester in the 1820’s and ‘30’s.³¹ Thus prior to the “Famine” migration, contacts existed between Leicester and Ireland involving traders, travellers, and the political and cultural élites on both sides of the Irish sea. The “Famine” migrants, however, were to draw out rather different reactions from their hosts in Leicester in the decades from c.1845 to c.1870.

(d) Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis confronts key issues in current research on the Irish in Britain. It does so, for example, by analysing small scale settlement, by moving the spotlight onto non-Catholics as well as Catholics, and by researching beyond the normal 1830-60 focus. By tackling these questions, the “ethnic fade” interpretation is countered; yet, the analysis of the Leicester experience will show that not all of the Irish were integrated or assimilated post-c.1860. Leicester’s Irish are worthy of study for two important reasons: they maintained a type (or types) of distinctiveness despite their limited numbers, and they experienced serious ongoing communal ethnic tension over issues of religion and politics, which theme is a major product of this study.

The 8 chapters are organised into two main sections. The first (chapters 2, 3 and 4) deals with the socio-economic experiences of the migrants: why Leicester was selected, the structures of their developing community after arrival, and the occupations they entered into. The second section (chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9) addresses the broad cultural formation of the Irish in Leicester, and their impact on the host community, concerning questions surrounding the related issues of religion, education, anti-Catholicism, crime and politics.

Whilst factors such as housing, health and employment are frequently discussed, dimensions such as crime and educational development are less frequently analysed,

³⁰LCRO; GARDINER, W. (1838), *Music and Friends*, p.213, 435, 323-4, 568-9. His positive and sympathetic comments about the Scottish language and famine distress in Scotland (p.736, 755-6) support the idea of his pro-celtic proclivities.

³¹LCRO, DE 1274/13, Paget letters; Daniel O’Connell, London, to T. Paget, 25 March 1836; there are several such examples.

(other than in works such as Finnegan's (1982) on York and Swift's (1985) on Wolverhampton). In addition, Catholic infrastructural development, the manipulation of anti-Catholic prejudice and the political agenda of the Irish in Britain all tend to be dealt with either in broad national or narrow local studies.

Certain questions are posed by the evidence from Leicester which concern issues of interpretation in regard to the migration and settlement processes, and considerations of the notions of community and integration. An analysis of the periodisation of migration helps to avoid the tendency to over-simplify the actual situation existing c.1845-50. For example, large numbers of the Irish-born women who were involved in Leicester's staple framework knitting industry were, in the 1840's and 1850's, married to English husbands, which has obvious implications for migration patterns and questions of integration and religious toleration.

The census data, obviously, lifts the curtain only once in a decade. This means, therefore, that rates of mobility, both short and long distance, are hard to define. Where possible, the censual turnover has been identified and quantified, so that as realistic as possible a balance can be struck between the more settled and less settled sections of the migrant body. This in turn raises issues surrounding the question: how many or how few became integrated, and why. What patterns emerge relating to departers and stayers; what was the ratio between the two, and did it fluctuate, and when, and why? Did long-term settlers lose or maintain their identities? Was there ever an Irish ghetto in Leicester? Why, indeed, did only relatively few Irish come to Leicester? (See Tables 2(a),2(b) and Chapter 3).

Motives for migration often explain settlement patterns, and for this reason an analysis of such motives forms the second chapter. Irish migration to Leicester became discernible c.1830, and statistically significant by 1841. As well as "push" and chain migration, Leicester's central location assisted both the inflow of Irish first-time settlers, as well as subsequent re-locating migrants. An important "pull factor" also operated: textile work opportunities, particularly in framework knitting, attracted those with transferable skills to leave Ireland (where British protectionism was steadily crippling Irish industries). The domestic system, then still pertaining in both England and Ireland in that sector, offered a further incentive to whole families from Ireland.

The third chapter aims to examine the significance of changing occupational patterns. The decades 1851-81 saw the emergence of a preponderance of the unskilled

amongst the Irish in Leicester. Whilst in the 1840's and '50's agricultural opportunities still existed, by the 1860's, there was an increasing presence in textiles and to a lesser extent in heavy industries. Irish men and women, first and second generations, were participants in the industrialisation of Leicester's hosiery and footwear trades from c.1865. There were very few Irish in the recognised middle and upper classes; social mobility seems largely to have been confined to those of the working class who aimed to be lodging house owners, marine store dealers and small retail traders. With municipalisation post c.1880, opportunities existed for an increased but nonetheless still limited number of white collar jobs. The one area with Irish middle-class representation was medicine, and most of the males involved were of Protestant Irish extraction.

The fourth chapter of the thesis aims to examine a range of socio-economic indicators: housing and settlement patterns; health; and the impact of poverty. Settlement c.1840 was concentrated in key areas, some of which came to have long-term associations with Irish families, especially in the Green Street-Abbey Street area. By c.1900, however, settlement was far more diffuse, with no real numerically significant core areas of Irish left in the city. Poverty was endemic; the socio-economic profile of the Leicester Irish was better balanced in 1841 than for 40 years thereafter. Poverty conditioned the Irish just as it conditioned the views of most contemporary local social observers who saw the Irish as instigators and carriers of poverty, and not as victims.

Chapter five aims to evaluate the importance of the Irish dimension in Catholic development in Leicester. Local sources either marginalise or ignore the Irish, as a traditional English gentry hegemony still pontificates over other interests. The structure of formal and informal Catholic practice is examined; the role of the Irish both as priests and as the people is scrutinised, especially in relation to sacramental observation. Questions surrounding marriage in particular are explored. The contribution of the Irish religious, both male and female, is critically evaluated. The Cistercians of Mount St Bernard's were an Irish offshoot, despite the claims of their own historian; many of its personnel during the study period were Irish, and it became a centre of welfare relief for Irish migrants.

Proselytism, a bitterly contested issue of the period, with a definite Irish agenda, is examined; from Leicester, indeed, Irish speaking Protestant missionaries journeyed to bring their light to the benighted papists of the Connacht shoreline. The Church's answer to internal backsliding was the missionary, put in to work his magic at parish level.

Perhaps the most significant input of Catholic effort was that put into education, and an analysis of how local education issues developed forms the basis of chapter six. The curriculum was limited, and reflected externally imposed aims and objectives. The wider needs of first and second generation Irish children were not recognized. This was true of the small Irish Protestant sector also. The local infrastructure was impoverished, reflecting the scarcity of financial resources. Both patronage and grants from the Catholic Poor Schools committee tended mainly to operate in the interests of rural and mainly English Catholic pupils, and to the detriment of those urban Irish pupils in schools like St. Patrick's. The social agenda utilised to boost Catholic funds nevertheless involved the local Irish community. The Irish child shouldered the added disadvantage of prejudice. Parental priorities fluctuated, and attendance and therefore attainment frequently suffered.

Irish male and female personnel played a significant role in Leicester's Catholic education service; teacher and student achievement was limited by the training and resources available. Only from c.1875 was teacher training a priority, and even then few appeared interested or willing to work in the ghetto school of St. Patrick's.

The efforts of leadership elements in the Irish community were hampered throughout the period, especially in the 1830-60 period and again in the 1890's, by the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism. Leicester still saw itself as "the metropolis of dissent" as late as c.1895.

Leicester's crusading Protestant tradition dated from Lollardy; during the Reformation and after it reflected the extremes of Protestant action and opinion. It is not surprising then that Orangeism found its supporters in the town in the 1820-40 period. Anti-Catholic action and agitation were ongoing processes: Leicester's protestants participated in national anti-Catholic campaigns; nationally known Protestant activists frequently visited the town; and both national and local anti-Catholic organisations were well organised and influential. Leicester's Catholic Irish did on occasion come into direct confrontation with their Protestant critics, and Irish Protestants participated in Protestant action in Leicester. Even if campaigns were intermittent, they were sufficiently ongoing to assure a strong local legacy of anti-Catholic attitudes and practice which can only have served to harass, intimidate and inhibit at least part of the Irish Catholic population.

Criminal attitudes and behaviour amongst the Irish were exploited by critics who

were in the main Protestants. Leicester's Irish population experienced the new style of policing from the early 1830's. Vagrants and the owners and inhabitants of common lodging houses were frequent targets for police and local authority criticism and control.

Crime patterns amongst the Irish of Leicester are analysed here in relation to both summary jurisdiction and quarter sessions procedures. Catholic representation is further analysed in relation to Irish and non-Irish practitioners. Juvenile and second-generation patterns are explored, as in the role of Irish women in local crime. Media conceptions of Irish criminality played an important negative role, particularly in relation to those classified riot situations in which the Irish became involved in the town. Whilst it was clear that the Irish were over-represented in Leicester's crime statistics, their transgressions most frequently concerned minor offences. Irish criminal behaviour in Leicester therefore needs situating against a background of poverty, deprivation and working class disadvantage generally.

If the Irish were over-represented in crime figures, they were, again like many others, under-represented in terms of political civil rights. The ninth chapter analyses political development amongst Leicester's Irish community. The Irish in Leicester participated, to a limited extent, in local working class politics. In Leicester there was a numerically significant involvement of Irish (women as well as men) in Chartism, a pattern denied by historians.

Working class politics and class interests sometimes clashed with the political expression of Irish nationalist aspirations. There is evidence of support in the Irish community for Fenianism, and for Home Rule and the Land League. Local Liberals supported Home Rule, whilst Conservative elements promoted the pro-Orange Primrose League. These issues divided the Leicestershire Catholic body. The sympathetic role played by the local Catholic Bishop, Bagshawe, from 1875, is analysed and evaluated; for an English-born Catholic incumbent to develop such a high profile supportive role on an Irish agenda must have assisted the development of a sense of organisational maturity and communal self-confidence amongst the Irish in Leicester. The tenth and final chapter summarises the main findings of the research and the conclusions based thereon.

(e) Conclusion

Leicester had then, by the 1840's, connections with Ireland which went back to the fifteenth century at least. Irish traders, travelling gypsies, migrant farm workers, and soldiers both British and Irish had all helped in the development of contacts between Ireland and Leicestershire. Before c.1840, Leicester enjoyed a varied series of connections with Ireland; in particular, the local Liberal élite corresponded and met with Daniel O'Connell; and local Catholics, both Irish as well as English, co-operated with local Non-Conformists in a radical reform agenda. The social emergency of the late 1840's and early 1850's, together with the politics of religion, upset this positive interface. Leicester's profoundly Protestant profile and traditions, allied with media distortion, would have to some extent been a cultural disincentive to many Irish to settle in Leicester, and this must in part account (together with economic factors) for the limited numbers of Irish settling in the city across the period of the study. The 1836 *Report on the Irish poor in Britain* noted that, in the case of Leicester, "they were not sent for," a statement revealing in its simplicity.³²

³²*Report on State of the Irish Poor in G.B.* (1836), App. G, p.164.

CHAPTER 2

WHY DID THE IRISH COME TO LEICESTER?

You and mother and the rest of the wretched emigrants, victims of the 1848 potato blight, I often think of your condition - the sad exodus - penniless - trade-less - never to return to Erin! Did the famine-ships bring you over free? Brother was separated from brother - whole families broken up: one remained in Liverpool, one in the Potteries, and one went to America. Women as well as men tramped every foot of the road after leaving the boats: no trains for mere emigrants. Stick selling, mat-making, rag and bone dealing and farm-labouring; no possibility of learning a handicraft, and no hope of ever returning to your own country, "Exiles without defence and without shelter, lamenting their fatherland and their inheritance."

from *Memoirs and Medleys, the Autobiography of a Bottle Washer* (1934), p.11, the autobiography of Tom Barclay, (1852-1933) a second generation Irishman, born in Leicester,

CHAPTER 2

WHY DID THE IRISH COME TO LEICESTER?

PAGE	CONTENTS
24	(a) The Great "Famine" as a push factor in the migration pattern
30	(b) Chain Migration - Joining Family and Friends
35	(c) The Attraction of the Textile Trades
43	(d) Settlement due to military postings and to Catholic foundations
46	(e) Settlement due to Leicester's central location
56	(f) Conclusion

LIST OF TABLES AND MAPS

31	1	Incidence of specific localities re-birthplaces of Leicester Irish enumerated between 1851 and 1891.
32/3	2	Known Birthplaces of the Leicester Irish, 1851 to 1891 inclusive.
35	3	Places of Origin in Selected Streets in 1871.
36	4	Male and Females Irish-born In-migrants to City of Leicester (from census returns), 1841 to 1891.
39	5	Distribution of Hosiery Machines (for Hand Framework Knitting) in Ireland c.1844.
41	6	(a) Irish-born males and females (all ages) engaged in Textiles and associated trades in Leicester in 1841.
41		(b) Ethnic composition of marriages involving 1 or more Irish-born in Leicester's wider Irish community in 1841.
42	7	Framework Knitting and Hosiery : ethnic composition of married couples (involving 1 or more Irish born) in Leicester's wider Irish Community in 1841, 1851 and 1861.
45	8	The Wider Irish Community in Leicestershire - Population Statistics 1841 to 1891.
51-3	9	Birthplaces of English-born Children of the Leicester Irish 1851 to 1891.

- 55 10 **The Irish born and effectively Irish Community in Leicestershire 1812 to 1891.**

MAPS

- 25 1 (a) *The Connacht Region:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1851 and 1861.
- 25 1 (b) *The Connacht Region:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1871, 1881 and 1891.
- 26 1 (c) *The Connacht Region:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1851-1891 inclusive.
- 26 2 *The Cork area:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish 1851-1891.
- 27 3 (a) *The Eastern Ulster area:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish from 1851.
- 27 (b) *The Eastern Ulster area:* known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1851-1891 inclusive.

CHAPTER TWO

WHY DID THE IRISH COME TO LEICESTER?

This chapter aims to explore the reasons for Irish in-migration to Leicester, and attempts to show how these several factors varied in importance across the period c.1841 to c.1891. In particular, it is also intended to demonstrate why Irish in-migration to Leicester was relatively limited when compared to that occurring in other areas of Britain.

The reasons why the Irish might have come to Leicester are a mixture of “push” and “pull” factors: to escape from social and economic disadvantage, and especially the “Famine”; to join relatives and friends already in the town; to seek employment, generally and specifically in the textile trades; to serve in local British Army locations; to utilise the emerging Catholic infrastructure; and to take advantage of Leicester’s central location geographically. The quest for work was acknowledged in the Leicester annexe to the 1836 *Report on the State of the Irish Poor*, when “the occasion of their coming” was described as “surmised from want of employment;” it was noted also that “they were not sent for” and were prepared to work in “whatever departments they can procure employment.”¹

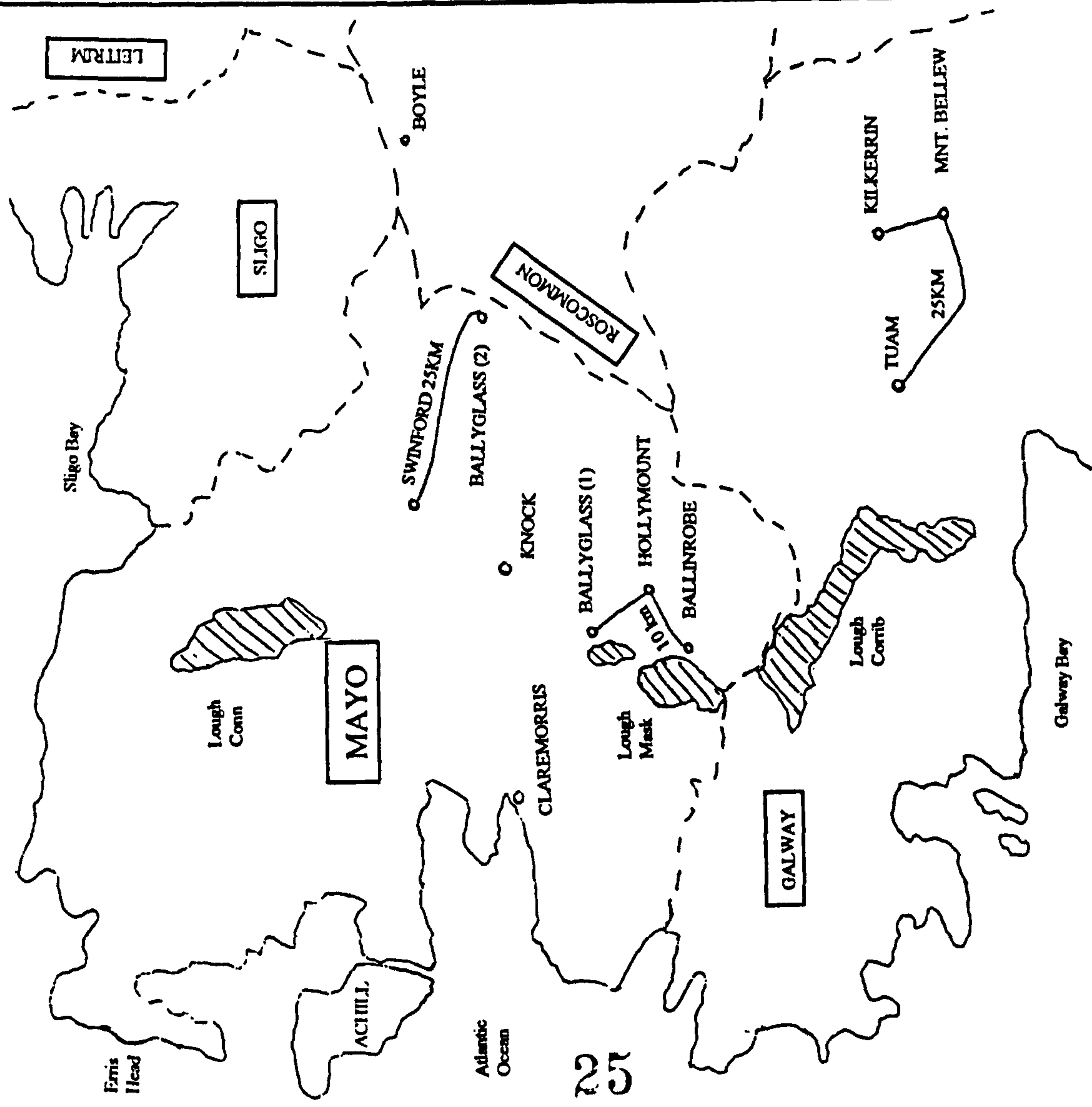
This summation was accurate only in part: whilst the generality of in-migrants were often desperate or not too particular, analysis of the 1841 census indicates a small but significant group of skilled workers of Irish birth, many of whom had backgrounds in the textile trades, especially framework knitting, whilst in Ireland.

(a) The Great "Famine" as a "Push" factor in the Migration Pattern

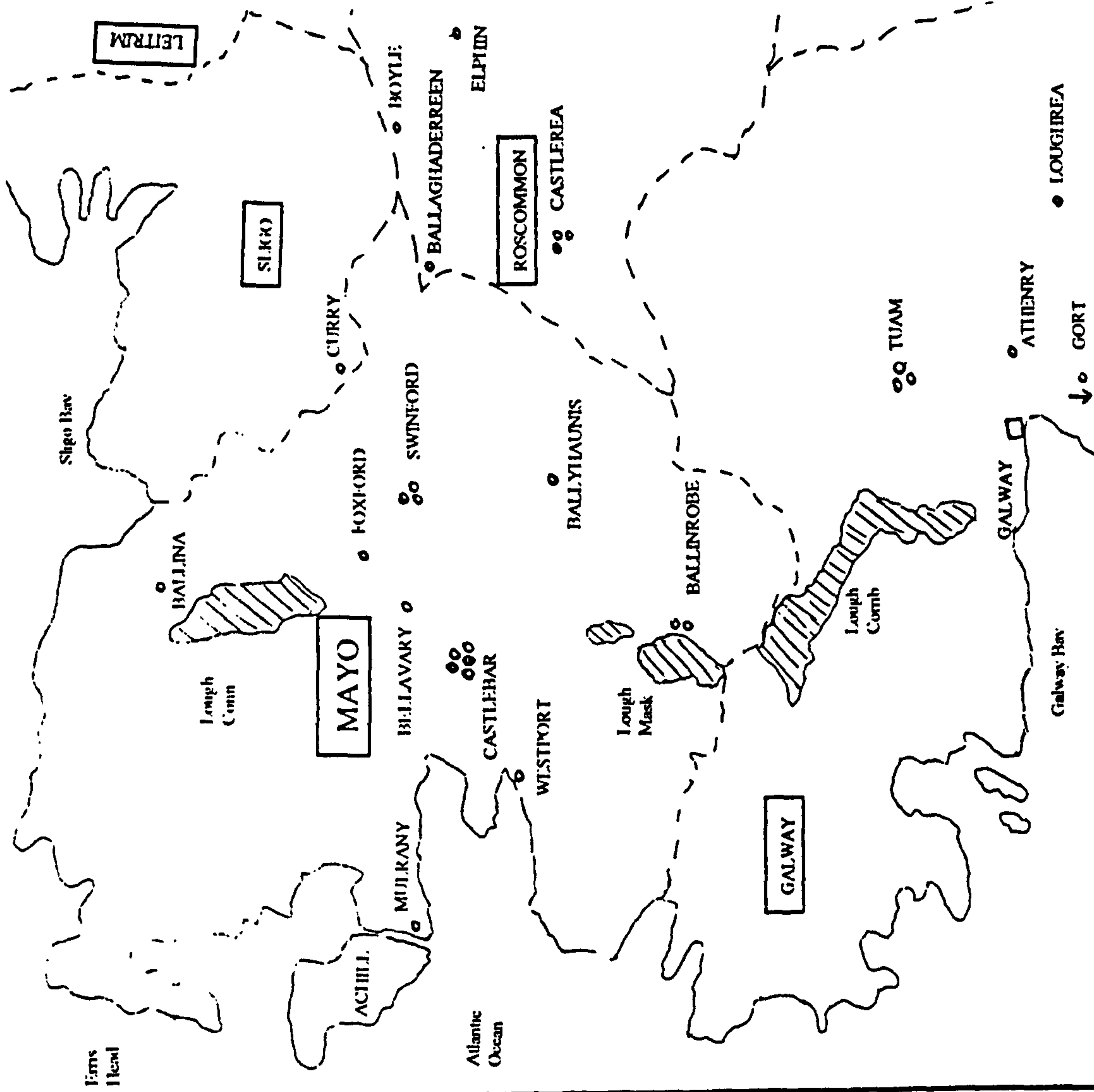
There is ample contemporary evidence to explain why Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Dublin, Cork and Down featured so highly in migration to Leicester. This “push” factor is important because it spans the half-century c.1790 to c.1850, providing a pattern in time as well as space. These localities, marked in the series of Maps 1(a), (b) and (c), are discussed below.

The poor western counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon provided the bulk

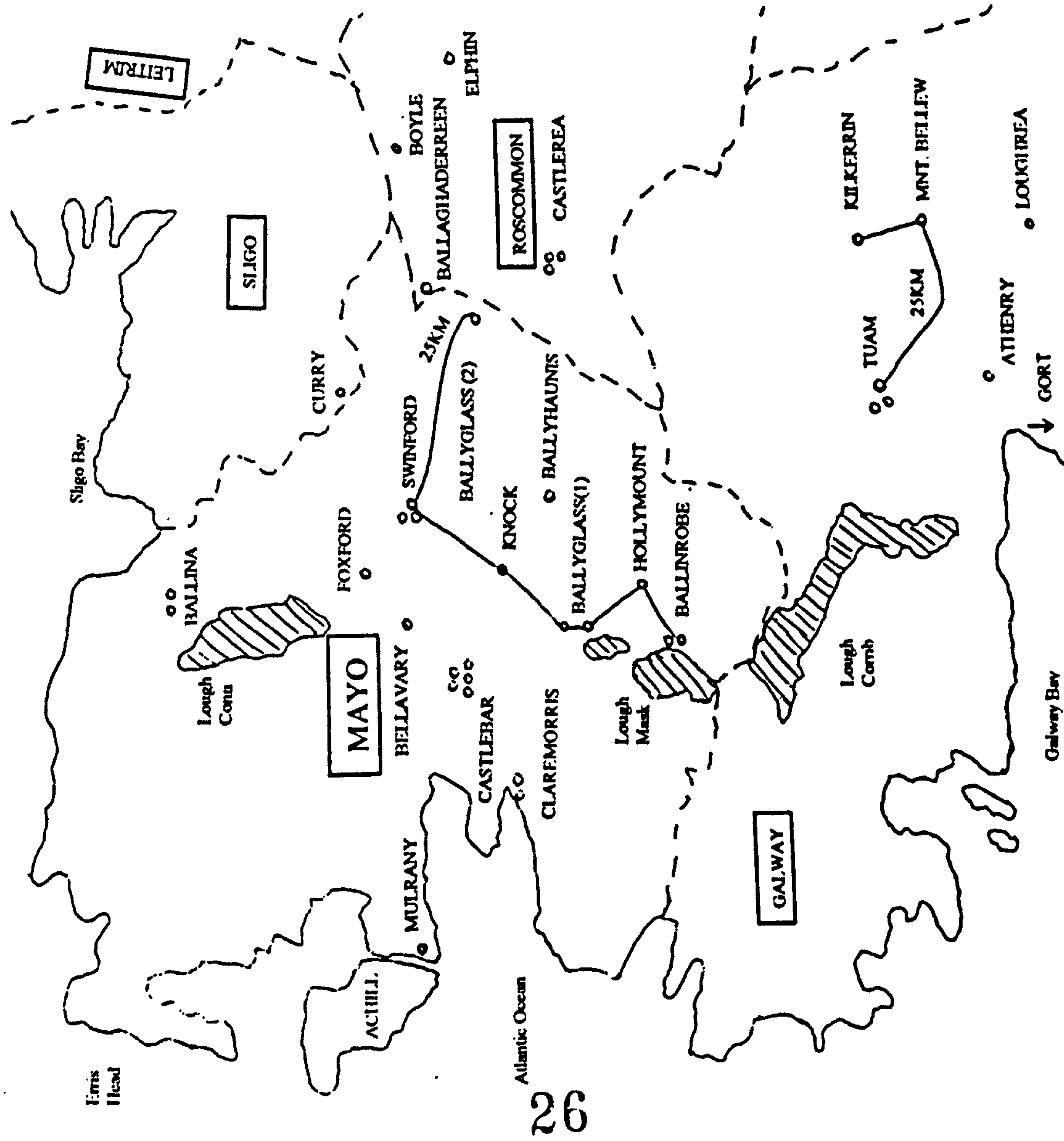
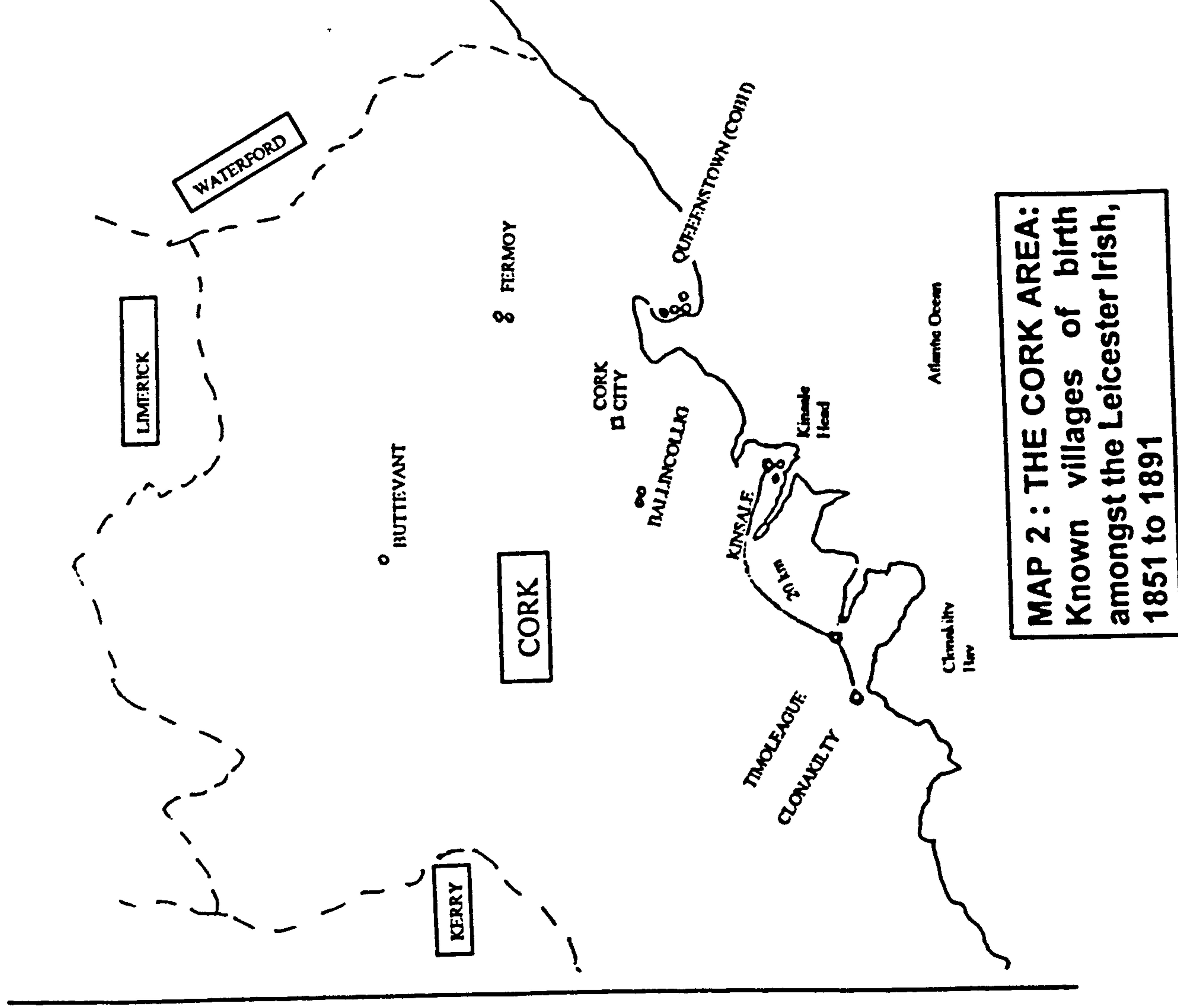
¹*Report on State of Irish Poor in Great Britain*, (1836), Appendix G, p.164.



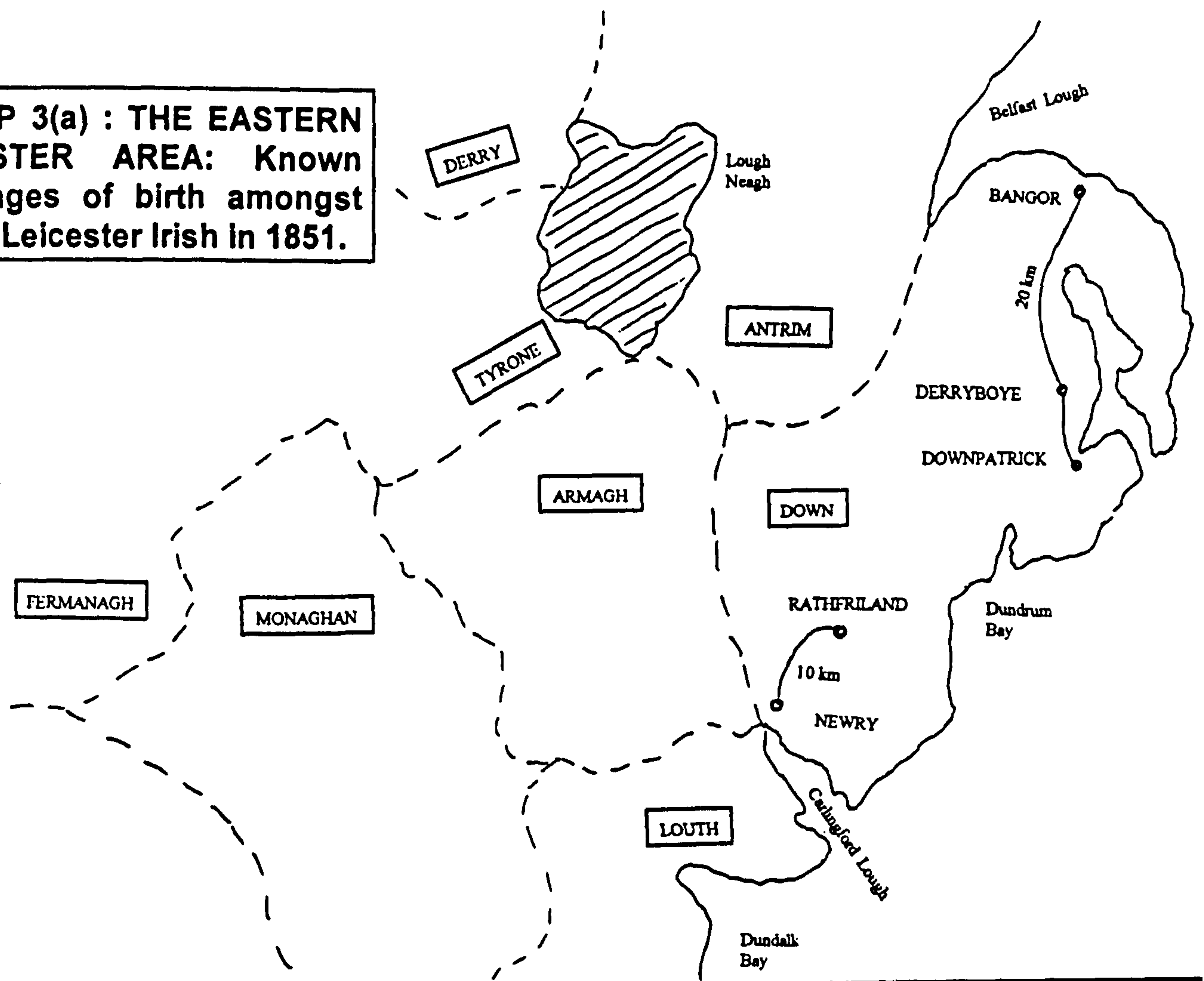
Map 1(a): THE CONNACHT REGION: Known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1851 and 1861



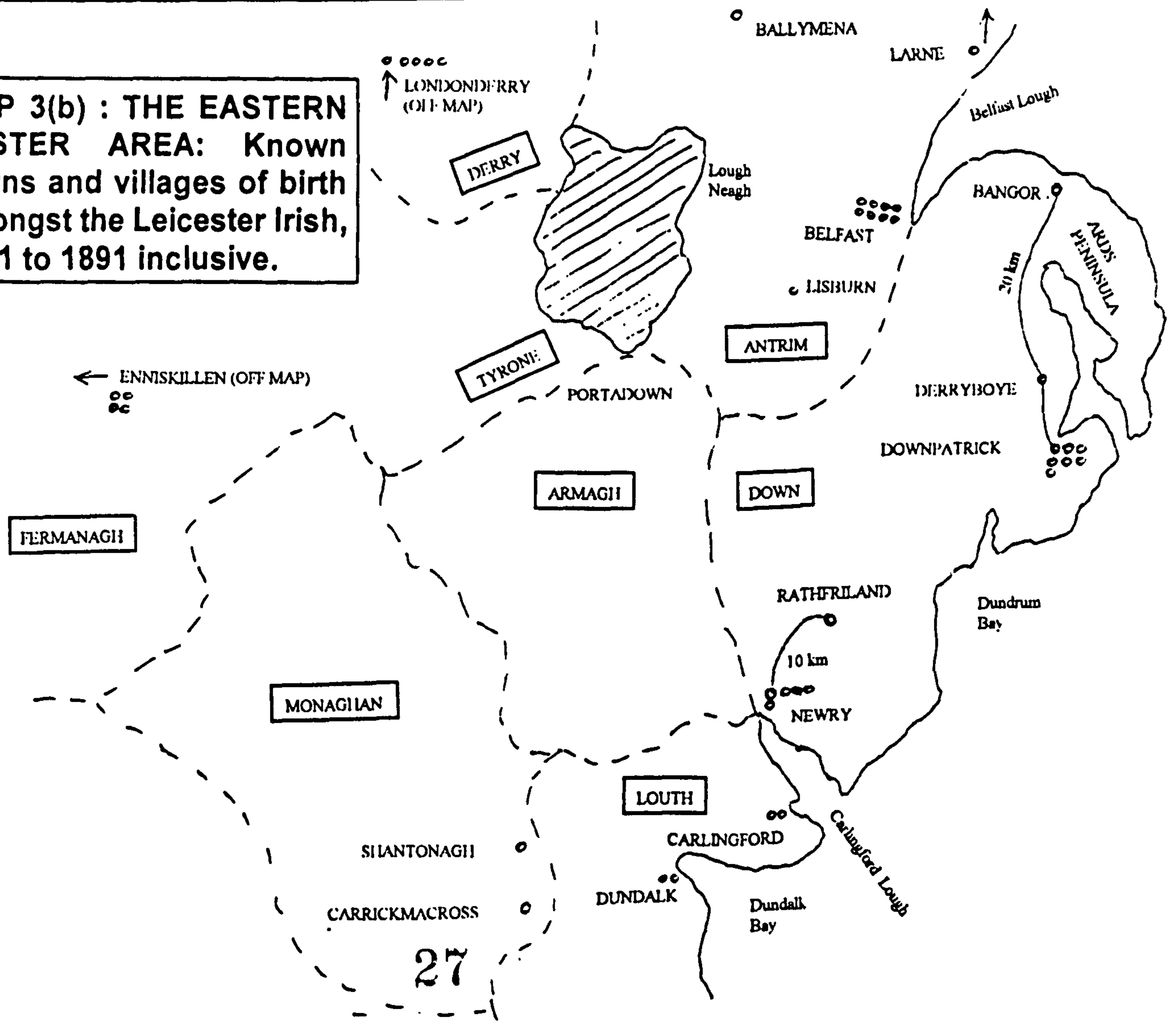
Map 1(b): THE CONNACHT REGION: Known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1871, 1881 and 1891



MAP 3(a) : THE EASTERN ULSTER AREA: Known villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish in 1851.



MAP 3(b) : THE EASTERN ULSTER AREA: Known towns and villages of birth amongst the Leicester Irish, 1851 to 1891 inclusive.



of migrants across the period. De Latocnaye (1798) and Thackeray (1842) both described the endemic poverty of Galway.² By the Great "Famine", Galway was set to be a disaster zone.³ Many of the worst affected locations such as Tuam, Gort and Athenry, are listed as places of birth of some of those Galway-born Irish arriving in Leicester. From 1845, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon experienced virtual total failure of the potato crop.

A Leicester Protestant family, the Frewens, were aware of distress in the west of Ireland even pre-1845. Selina Frewen, writing of rural disorder, commented on the severe famine conditions:

..... by the way, there is great distress in Mayo and Donegal and large subscriptions being raised here for them, famine of both men and beast as both the potato and hay crops failed in those counties last year.⁴

De Tocqueville in 1835 described Castlebar as "a harsh and desolate sight;" thus migrants from numerous areas around Castlebar (see Map 1(a)) were to terminate their exodus at Leicester.⁵ This was a mere prelude to the 1840's disaster. In 1846, objective opinion in Swinford, Ballyhaunis and Ballina concurred on near starvation in those areas; the destitution in Ballinrobe, Castlebar and Westport was "unbelievable." Maps 1, 2 and 3 show a pattern developing from all of these locations.

Tellingly, almost all of those Mayo locations identified by O'Rourke as disaster zones were cited as places of birth of Irish in-migrants to Leicester in 1851 and 61. (see Maps 1 a/b/c) The parish priest of Swinford described the unwillingness to help of non-resident landlords. In 1847, correspondents stated: "fever is committing fearful ravages in Ballindine, Ballinrobe, Claremorris, Westport, Ballina and Belmullet, all in the county of Mayo."

In 1847, a Protestant cleric compared the harrowing scenes in Balla, Claremorris, Ballyhaunis and Hollymount, all areas sending migrants to Leicester, with the equally notorious Skibbereen. Ballyglass was cited as a place where the ending of public works

²De LATOCNAYE, (1798), *A Frenchman's Walk* p.145. THACKERAY, W.M. (1842), *The Irish Sketch Book*, p. 223, 242, 207-8.

³All data re the "Famine" is from WOODHAM-SMITH, C (1962), *The Great Hunger - Ireland 1845-49*, p. 74, 71-2, 204-5, 110, 137, 202, 317, 321, 285, 205 and 271 and from well researched account of 1874, *The Great Irish Famine*, by Canon John O'ROURKE, pp. 40, 80, 149, 181, 185-6, 191-3, 196, 231 and 242-5.

⁴LCRO, Martin Mss, DG/6/D/96(i); Selina Frewen's letter to her brother Thomas; March 1831

⁵De TOCQUEVILLE, A. (1835), *Tour of Great Britain and Ireland*, p.182-4.

equated to a death sentence.⁶

Corresponding evidence of distress explains the migration from Dublin and Cork. Poverty in Dublin was explicit, ingrained and endemic.⁷ O'Rourke noted of December 1846 the 700 starvation-induced dysentery cases in a Dublin Workhouse;⁸ in June 1847, massive numbers of fever victims totally overwhelmed existing facilities.⁹ This re-occurred in 1848, and was reinforced by typhus in 1849. Dublin's harbour was convenient for those departing for Britain, and many of Leicester's Irish in-migrants would have sailed from it.

Cork became infamous in "Famine" reporting. Like Dublin, it had the advantage of not just one but several points of departure for migrants to Leicester (see Map 2). Contemporaries emphasised Cork's economic inertia and endemic poverty.¹⁰ The horrifying impact of the "Famine" catastrophe on west Cork is very well documented, and helps account for the presence of Clonakilty-born persons (as well as migrants from Timoleague and Kinsale) in Leicester's census of 1851.

O'Rourke's 1874 account covers those specific areas of Cork which decanted their population towards Leicester. In late 1846, the leading citizens of Clonakilty stressed immediate food provision as an "urgent necessity." At Kinsale (another listed birth-place of the Leicester Irish), the local Union witnessed 240 out of 250 fever cases relapsing. At Fermoy, some survived on cabbage leaves.

The last of the main areas of origin of Irish persons settling in Leicester in 1851-61 was County Down (see Maps 3 a/b) and in particular the Newry area. In 1845, a local rector reported on a one-third loss of potatoes both in store and still undug. In 1846, corpses lay on the streets of Newry; a dysentery epidemic following famine fever decimated the old and infirm.¹¹

It is abundantly clear then that by co-relating known birth-places of the Irish-born in Leicester, at county and locality level, with well documented and relevant "Famine" sites of the 1840's, that the catastrophe of the 1845-50 period acted as a "push" factor

⁶O'ROURKE, J. (1874), p. 149, 243, 191 and 231.

⁷De LATOCNAYE, p. 75-6; and De TOCQUEVILLE, A, p.155.

⁸THACKERAY, W.M. (1842), p.81.

⁹O'ROURKE, J. p.181, 133, 244 and 126

¹⁰GRIMES, S. (Ed), (1806/1980), *Ireland in 1804* (anon journal) p.20; De TOCQUEVILLE, A. p.113. WOODHAM SMITH, C. (1962), p.202.

¹¹O'ROURKE, J., p.40, 80, 242. The most recent and authoritative analysis of the "Famine" underlines the evidence cited relating to Ballina, Ballinrobe, Castlebar, Swinford, Fermoy, Kinsale, Boyle, Tuam, Dublin and Newry; see KINEALY, C. (1994), *This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52*.

in decisions made by residents of Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Cork, Dublin and Down to migrate to England, embarking on journeys which, sooner or later, involved residence in Leicester. In some of these situations, underlying long-term economic disadvantages also played their part. Statistics indicate that emigration was not highest from the worst hit areas (partly because of poverty, deaths, and the factors of finance, motivation and information). Paradoxically, emigration was lowest from Down (6 per cent), Dublin (3 per cent) and Mayo (8 per cent), all of which were important contributors to Leicester's Irish population growth. This probably helps also to account for the concentrations of these migrants in certain streets in Leicester (see settlement and housing sections).¹²

(b) Chain Migration: Joining Family and Friends.

Leicester had already experienced an inflow pre-1847, as the *1836 Report* and the 1841 census indicate; the "Famine" further stimulated chain migration. These assertions can be measured against the census analysis pertaining to the birth places (where known) of the Leicester Irish. Although limited, the data is sufficient, and has been summarised in *Tables 1 and 2: Known Birthplaces of the Leicester Irish 1851-91*.

These indicate that one province, Connacht, was pre-eminent throughout the 1851-91 period. Over 40 per cent of Leicester's Irish migrants between 1851 and 1871 were natives of the west of Ireland; this proportion dropped to around 29 per cent of the total pre-1881 and did so again in 1891. Tom Barclay, born in Leicester in 1852, referred to his mother as being "brought up in the wilds of the County Mayo, God help us!"¹³ In 1881, the Dublin proportion peaked at 34 per cent; in the same year the Connacht contribution dropped (see Table 2).

The key supplier county in Connacht was Galway, which provided around 19 per cent of migrants from c.1851 to c.1871, and still provided 15 per cent in 1891. Roscommon and Mayo each provided roughly half those provided by Galway right across the period. The only other noticeable "bulges" were provided by Down and Cork, which showed the highest representations for their provinces (Ulster and Munster

¹²KINEALY, C. (1994), P.299.

¹³BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.3; FITZPATRICK, D (1984) notes that "from the Famine onwards, depletion tended to be greatest in the Connaught region"; see *Irish Emigration 1861-1921*, p.9; in *Studies in Irish Economic and Social History* No. 1.

respectively) across the period.¹⁴

It is evident that around 60 per cent of Leicester's Irish appear to have come from the four counties of Galway, Dublin, Mayo and Roscommon. It seems to have been the case that many of the Connacht migrants came from several smaller areas of concentration which, from c.1850 to c.1900, developed and maintained clear patterns of movement. Even though the enumerators rarely gave specific localities, and considering that those localities recorded were spread across a wide range of counties, concentrations nonetheless clearly emerge. (See Maps 1a/b/c).

TABLE 1		INCIDENCE OF SPECIFIC LOCALITIES RE : BIRTHPLACES OF LEICESTER IRISH ENUMERATED BETWEEN 1851 AND 1891				
YEAR	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	TOTAL FOR EACH COUNTY
TOTAL per census	33	6	51	30	49	
Mayo	8	2	11	2	4	27
Roscommon	--	1	2	1	9	13
Galway	12	--	2	1	2	17
Dublin	--	2	--	9	1	12
Cork	3	--	6	2	6	17
Down	10	--	2	4	4	20

- Notes: (1) "Incidence" includes multiple mentions of certain locales.
(2) Roscommon and Dublin featured heavily in 1851, despite lack of locality details.
(3) 1861 was virtually bereft of detail; none was offered for 1841.
(4) The 7 Irish farm servants in Leicester Workhouse in 1881, from Galway (3), Sligo (2), Roscommon (1) and Dublin (1), again reflect Connacht's pre-eminence; *ACD*.

The Connacht map sequence helps explain push migration to Leicester from the West. Map 1(a), showing birth places in 1851 and 1861, identifies three main concentrations: two in Mayo, around Swinford, and in the region of Hollymount and Ballinrobe; and one in Galway around Tuam. The locations of Claremorris, Knock and Boyle emerged only in the 1861 data; the Knock reference provides a closer link between the two main Mayo areas indicated in 1851. Mayo locations were mentioned more often than Galway locations, although Galway provided twice as many migrants for most of the period; (see Map 1(a)). The incidence of areas possessing links straddling county

¹⁴Note 4 to Table 2 provides details as to regional proportions of birth places in Ireland for each year from 1851 to 1891. See MacRAILD, D (1998), re Irish in Cumbria 1851-91, where by far the greatest numbers of Irish came from Down.

TABLE 2		KNOWN BIRTHPLACES OF THE LEICESTER IRISH, 1851 TO 1891 (INCLUSIVE)									
County and Province		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Galway		52	19.4	33	18.9	61	18.4	23	13.0	40	15.1
Roscommon		24	8.9	22	12.6	38	11.5	9	5.1	27	10.2
Mayo		29	10.8	14	8.0	38	11.5	15	8.5	18	6.8
Sligo		2	0.7	6	3.5	6	1.8	4	2.2	1	1.4
Leitrim		8	2.9	2	1.2	---	---	---	---	1	0.4
CONNACHT	Total	115	42.7	77	44.2	143	43.2	51	28.8	87	32.9
Carlow		5	1.9	2	1.2	---	---	---	---	1	0.4
Dublin		47	17.5	39	22.4	57	17.2	60	34.0	56	21.2
Meath		5	1.9	2	1.2	4	1.2	---	---	5	1.9
Kildare		1	0.4	---	---	6	1.8	2	1.1	5	1.9
Longford		3	1.1	2	1.2	4	1.2	---	---	4	1.5
Westmeath		1	0.4	1	0.6	4	1.2	1	0.6	5	1.9
Louth		3	1.1	1	0.6	---	---	1	0.6	5	1.9
*Queen's Co.		7	2.6	5	2.9	6	1.8	2	1.1	1	0.4
*King's Co.		1	0.4	1	0.6	2	0.6	---	---	3	1.1
Kilkenny		4	1.5	---	---	8	2.4	5	2.8	3	1.1
Wexford		7	2.6	---	---	6	1.8	1	0.6	2	0.7
Wicklow		1	0.4	3	1.7	2	0.6	1	0.6	4	1.5
LEINSTER	Total	84	31.4	56	32.4	99	29.8	73	41.4	94	35.5

Table 2 continued overleaf

Table 2 (continued)

Derry	2	0.7	---	---	3	0.9	---	---	7	2.7
Down	16	5.9	4	2.3	2	0.6	5	2.8	7	2.7
Tyrone	4	1.5	1	0.6	---	---	---	---	1	0.4
Armagh	---	---	1	0.6	7	2.1	1	0.6	4	1.5
Fermanagh	1	0.4	---	---	2	0.6	1	0.6	1	0.4
Antrim	6	2.2	3	1.7	4	1.2	5	2.8	4	1.5
Cavan	3	1.1	1	0.6	2	0.6	4	2.2	---	---
Monaghan	2	0.7	3	1.7	8	2.4	1	0.6	1	0.4
Donegal	1	0.4	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
ULSTER	35	13.2	13	7.5	28	8.4	17	9.6	25	9.6
Clare	1	0.4	2	1.2	5	1.5	---	---	3	1.1
Cork	16	5.9	7	4.0	23	6.9	16	9.1	25	9.5
Tipperary	6	2.2	5	2.9	10	3.0	7	4.0	7	2.7
Kerry	---	---	3	1.7	2	0.6	1	0.6	8	3.0
Limerick	7	2.6	7	4.0	13	3.9	9	5.1	8	3.0
Waterford	3	1.1	4	2.3	8	2.4	2	1.1	5	1.9
MUNSTER	33	12.2	28	16.1	61	18.3	35	19.9	56	21.3
Total & %age of named localities	267	99.5	174	100.2	331	99.7	176	99.7	262	99.3

Notes:

- (1) All decimal calculations to first decimal place (notionally the lower horizontal column, the HS fig. for each year is approx. 100%).
- (2) The data for 1881 was often illegible, hence the noticeably fewer items in the field.
- (3) Today, Queen's Co = Laois, and King's Co = Offaly
- (4) In regard to the whole census entry of Irish-born (ie all, whether or not county of birth was indicated) the samples above represent 30.4% of the 1851 figure; 20.4 % of 1861; 37.8% of 1871; 18.6% of 1881 and 60.9% of 1891.
- (5) No locality details at all were offered in the 1841 census; hence its absence from this tabulation.

borders becomes very clear indeed; (see Map 1 (c)). Concentrations emerged in Galway and Roscommon, whilst there would appear to have been cross-county links between Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. Significantly, the earliest reference to Irish harvest workers in Leicester, for c.1830, mentions the pattern of annual visits by a family called Quin(n) from Roscommon.¹⁵ Leicester's pattern was typical, for it reflects those both of York¹⁶, and of Stafford, where the three counties of Mayo, Roscommon and Galway all featured prominently in 1851-71, with a cross-county concentration centred around Castlerea (Roscommon).¹⁷

The existence of chain migration to Leicester is supported by important evidence of concentrations based on surnames in 1841, when the enumerators gave no details other than "Ireland" as place of birth.¹⁸ 1851 was rather more precise. Predictably, there is firmer evidence of grouping based on regional origin in the 1851 data, where enumerators gave 33 places of origin (see Table 1). There were in 1851 in Leicester two families each of Prendergasts, Hanleys and Tierneys, and three each of Maloneys, McKennys, Dixons and Underwoods. (Dixon is a northern Protestant name).¹⁹ They all lived in the core Irish area of Abbey St.- Green St.- Royal East St., and all fitted Heinrick's broad description of the Irish in Leicester as being predominantly "hewers of wood and drawers of water."²⁰ The McKennys lodged with an Irish grocer, Ann Dempsey, providing a link with the pre-Famine Irish, for in 1841 she lived in Abbey Street.²¹

The Underwoods offer a contrasting perspective. Irish-born Eliza (41) in 1851 was married to Leicestershire-born William (45), a glove manufacturer employing 25 men, originally from Gaddesby. They lived in Free Lane. Mary Underwood, a widow of 77 born in Dublin, together with her daughter Elizabeth, a "persian cotton" winder, lived at No. 15 St. Margaret's Street, as did a grand-daughter, Charlotte (27), a hosiery mender. Mr. Underwood became involved in the Home Rule movement agitation in

¹⁵ELLIS, M. (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, p.11 and 12.

¹⁶See FINNEGAN, 1982; pp 69, 94 and 95. Connacht, and especially Mayo, featured heavily in the census returns for 1851, '61 and '71. As in Leicester's case, both Dublin and Cork also provided significant inputs, with Dublin being ranked second after Mayo, with Galway in third place in both 1861 and 1871.

¹⁷HERSON, J. (1988), p.28-33. By contrast in Bristol in 1851, the majority (around 60%) of Irish-born came from Cork; see LARGE, D., p.42, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1985). Cork migrants also predominated in London at this time; see LEES, L.H. (1979), p.51.

¹⁸There is tentative surname evidence in 1841: eg two families each called Kelly, Richmond, Cherry, the Hubbard, and Dempsey. ACD pp.2,4,8,12 and 19.

¹⁹McLYSAGHT, E (1985), *Surnames of Ireland*, p.81 & 83.

²⁰AC D, Leicester 1851, p.2, 15, 16, 19, 26, 29, 30, 32 and 33.

²¹ACD 1841, p.13.

Leicester in the later part of the period.

Whilst the 1861 census is very limited indeed as to information on regional origins, 1871 is far more useful. A clear concentration emerged in the Lower Garden Street - Green Street - Lower Green Street - Back Garden Street area. Nine households in Lower Garden Street and ten in Green Street showed clear evidence of grouping by place of origin in Ireland (refer Table 3).

TABLE 3	PLACES OF ORIGIN IN SELECTED STREETS IN 1871			
COUNTY	GALWAY	ROSCOMMON	MAYO	WATERFORD
Number of Persons	42	19	15	5
Specific locations	Tuam Athenry	Ballaghadereen	--	--
Source: <i>A.C.D</i> 1841-91.				

By 1881, migration to Leicester from Connacht was being overtaken by movement from Leinster (including Dublin), which provided 41.4 per cent of migrants (on named county data) in that year, and 35.5 per cent in 1891. Ulster people also gradually but steadily increased their representation in Leicester; whilst accounting for just 12.2 per cent in 1851, by 1891 21.3 per cent (over one-fifth) were arriving in Leicester from Ulster. These trends are reflected in a much greater diversity of occupations (see discussion on occupations) and are probably also a reflection of the attraction to Northern Irish Protestants represented by Leicester's historic and resurgent Protestant ethos. As late as 1891, although there was clear evidence of dispersion of the Irish by this time (see section on housing) a total of 28 persons from Roscommon, Mayo and Galway still resided in Abbey Street, and 13 out of 27 Irish in the Workhouse were from these same three counties.²²

(c) The Attraction of the Textile Trades

The range of domestic textile trades generally, and particularly framework

²²See full discussion in Chapter on Anti-Catholicism; the increase in Ulster in-migration may help account for the resurgent Protestant fundamentalism of the Kensits in Leicester around the turn of the century.

knitting, acted as a “pull” factor to draw Irish migrants to Leicester. Women left Ireland in greater numbers than men for two main reasons: the “push” factor of economic change undermining their traditional work patterns at home, and the “pull” factor of the labour demands the English industrial market.²³ This male-female gender ratio applied to the Leicester situation; see Table 4 which examines the numbers of male and female Irish-born migrants in the city of Leicester for 1841 to 1891.

TABLE 4		MALE & FEMALE IRISH-BORN MIGRANTS IN CITY OF LEICESTER (FROM CENSUS RETURNS), 1841-91					
	MALES			FEMALES			
	<20	20>	SUB-TOTAL	<20	20>	SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL
1851	See note (1)				See note (1)		877
1861	66	338	404	85	368	453	857
1871	57	341	398	72	406	478	876
1881	See note (2)		453	See note (2)		495	948
1891	See note (3)		---	See note (3)		---	792

Notes: (1) Re 1851, all <20 = 214; all over 20 = 663; total = 877.

(2) Re 1881, no age breakdown available.

(3) Re 1891, total only available.

(4) a preponderance of females over males is evident in 1861, 1871 and 1881.

(5) the census data actually gives 2 figures for 1861: 855 and 857; the latter appears to be correct

(6) Source = Census.

Clear evidence is available for 1861, 1871 and 1881, when in all instances the number of Irish females (20+) enumerated in Leicester exceeded the numbers of men registered (ie by 6% in 1861; by 8% in 1871; and by 4% in 1881). This evidence is replicated in the database constructed from the census when more Irish-born women than men were identified from 1861 to 1891 inclusive (see Table 4). Leicester’s gender and Irish birth-place patterns therefore reflect Fitzpatrick’s contention that “it may however be shown that female majorities were most common among emigrants from Connaught and the north midlands, while from the 1880’s onwards the largest proportions of children and

²³See WALTER, B. (1989), *Gender and Irish Migration to Britain*, p.14-21.

married emigrants came from the more prosperous eastern counties."²⁴

In Leicester's case, the staple of hosiery framework knitting remained on a domestic or workshop basis until the mid century, and it may therefore have had a double attraction for Irish women migrants. It offered work the same as, or similar to, textile occupations traditionally theirs in Ireland; and it did so in an apparently more congenial environment - home and workshop, rather than factory, based. Male textile workers from Ireland would have been similarly attracted; Redford remarked that "Scottish framework knitters were also employed along with Irish in the Midlands hosiery districts" in the period 1800 to 1850.²⁵ Fitzpatrick has noted that: "Irish emigrants, particularly those from Ulster to New England, were also prominent in the textiles industry, one sector in which skills were exported. Textile skills were also exported to certain British cities such as Bradford and Dundee." As demonstrated above, Irish textile workers from Ulster and other locations settled in Leicester.²⁶

Before and after 1800, most Irish women in farming communities were regularly involved in regionally specialised domestic cloth manufacture (eg. frieze, wool, linen and flannel). It is contended here that Leicester's hosiery tradition had the effect of drawing in some of those Irish women, who saw logical possibilities for gainful employment. Coarse stocking making was especially important in the western counties of Connacht after c.1800; the linen industry was increasingly concentrated in the north-east;²⁷ both of these and especially Connacht, were important areas providing Irish migrants for Leicester.²⁸

There is historiographical evidence to support the idea of Irish migrants coming to Leicester from a variety of Irish textile centres. Murray's (1903/1970) study of modern Anglo-Irish commercial relations established that in Dublin by c.1760 a wide range of quality woollen clothes was being produced. The extensive woollen manufacture of Cork was concentrated in a radius of 8 to 10 miles around Cork city.²⁹ Both Dublin and Cork then, had flourishing woollen trades; both sent substantial numbers of persons to Leicester; eg. in 1851, 17.5 per cent of Irish-born migrants to

²⁴FITZPATRICK, D (1984), *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, p.9, in *Studies in Irish Econ. & Soc. Hist.* No. 1; the second part of his conclusion is being accepted in the context of the general figures for Leinster in 1881 and 1891 in Table 2.

²⁵REDFORD, A. (1926/76), *Labour Migration in England, 1800-18500*, p.137.

²⁶FITZPATRICK, D (1984), p.32.

²⁷See O'TUATHAIGH, G, *The Role of Women*, in MacCURTAIN, M. & O'DONNCHA, C. (1978), p.27.

²⁸Leicester's wool trade certainly feared Irish competition as a threat; see LCRO, 10D 72/620/1/624; letter from JP. Hungerford to Sir Edward Hartopp, 23 April 1800, re petitions to Parliament from Harborough protesting at Irish wool exports.

²⁹MURRAY, A.E. (1903/1970), *A History of the Commercial and Financial Relations Between England and Ireland*, p.106-7.

Leicester were from Dublin and 5.9 per cent were from Cork; (see Table 2). Maxwell (1946) also noted Cork's woollen manufactures, as well as cotton mills at Bandon; by 1830, both industries were in decline, and local people may have looked for similar openings abroad.³⁰ O'Brien, G. (1918/1977) in his economic history of Ireland also emphasised the importance of the woollen trade (for Dublin in particular).³¹ O'Brien and others pointed to the prevalence of militant trade unionism and strike action in both Dublin and in Cork; this resulted in lock-outs and closures, both of which may have propelled the migration process.³²

Recent analysis (Mokyr, J. 1985) suggests that by c.1780, as most of the economically repressive legislation was suspended or repealed, the Irish economy began to rapidly expand.³³ Even so, both Mokyr and O'Grada "have given realistic prominence to rapid de-industrialisation as a source of poverty;" from self-sufficiency in woollen textiles in 1800, Ireland by 1838 produced only one-seventh of its former output. "The roll-call of casualties of regional Irish domestic industries was appalling: cotton weaving, stocking production, hand knitting, homespun tweed (etc.)."³⁴ Cobbett toured Ireland and drew attention to the economic plight of workers in Irish textiles.³⁵

Irish workers in these industries were not (despite contraction) facing seriously lowered wage rates; O'Brien quotes Arthur Young, for example, on wage rates for woollen fabric manufacture in Cork.³⁶ If this was generally the case, then Irish workers would have sought and expected, if possible, matching rates in British counties such as Leicester. Before c.1850, the Leicester trade was cyclical and often poor; after c.1850, it was subject to mechanisation. A local Catholic magazine noted "the vast increase in the staple trade of Manchester, in consequence of the introduction of machinery for spinning cotton induced very many Irish weavers to settle here the majority of them were Catholic in persuasion."³⁷ As well as in the North West of England, there is the compelling evidence relating to intentional Irish settlement by female workers with

³⁰MAXWELL, C. (1946), *County and Town in Ireland Under the Georges*, p. 244-5.

³¹O'BRIEN, G. (1918/1977), *The Economic History of Ireland in the 18th Century*, p. 46-7, 188-9, 370-1, and 431.

³²CHAMBERS, W. (Ed)(1861), *Trade Unions, Strikes and Lock-outs*, No. 3. p.7; some of this was pro-employer propaganda. Also, there is complementary evidence of this in the form of the support given by Irish female trade knitters for Leicester Chartism; see Politics chapter.

³³MOKYR, J. (1985), *Why Ireland Starved*: p.287.

³⁴RICHARDS, E. (1988) Regional Imbalance and Poverty in early 19th C. Britain, in MITCHISON, RA. & ROEBUCK, P. (1988)(Eds), *Economy and Society in Scotland and Ireland 1500-1939*, p.199.

³⁵KNIGHT, D. (Ed)(1984), *Cobbett in Ireland - A Warning to England*, App. VI, Address of the Manufacturing and Operative Weavers of Kilkenny, 30 September 1834, p.292-3.

³⁶O'BRIEN, G. (1918/1977), p.290-293.

³⁷BDA; *The Catholic Magazine*, 1832, p. 523; *Monthly Intelligence*, Oct. 1831, in obit. for Rev. Broomehead of Manchester.

transferable skills in the Dundee jute mills.³⁸ Is there a link between Leicester's textiles industries, in particular framework knitting, and Irish in-migration?

There is convincing evidence that the framework knitting areas in Ireland were also areas from which the Irish chose to migrate to Leicester. One of the two standard histories of the industry (Henson, G., 1831) indicates Dublin as a location as early as 1686; by c.1750, "the trade in Ireland had rapidly flourished," especially in Dublin (500 frames), Cork (almost 200) and Belfast (100+). By c.1780, Dublin had 700, Cork 300, and the overall Irish total exceeded 1,500 frames. There is a clear co-relation between these three areas and the centres for Irish migration to Leicester.³⁹ English entrepreneurs had tried to open up the Irish framework trade. There were contacts between Leicester and Ireland; the famous Biggs family (investors in framework knitting for 30 years and successful Liberal politicians) "travelled widely in Ireland" in search of orders, thereby publicising the industry in Leicester.⁴⁰ In 1813, early attempts to unionise the knitters embraced workers in both Leicester and Ireland.⁴¹

The other standard history of framework knitting (Felkin, W., 1867), supported the main thrust of Henson's work, and pointed out that in 1844, on the eve of the great

TABLE 5		DISTRIBUTION OF HOSIERY MACHINES (FOR HAND FRAMEWORK KNITTING) IN IRELAND c.1844			
Belfast *	35	Lurgan *	8	Drogheda *	6
Coleraine	12	Limerick	10	Enniskillen *	12
Dublin *	44	Balbriggan *	100	Lisburn *	22
Dungannon	6	Cork *	10	Total = 265	

Notes: (1) Source is FELKIN, W. (1867); see footnote 42, & p.400-401, 468; Balbriggan is in Co. Dublin.

(2) Felkin also stressed the development of lace manufacturing in Limerick, which spread to other parts of Ireland once women and girls were trained.

(3)* Signifies an area of origin for Irish-born in Leicester (see Table 2 & Maps)

Irish exodus to Britain and USA, there were 265 frames operating in Ireland, "nearly half

³⁸COLLINS, B. (1981), Irish Emigration to Dundee and Paisley during the first half of the 19th C. In GOLDSTROM, J.M. & CLARKSON, L.A. (Eds)(1981), *Irish Population, Economy and Society: Essays in Honour of the late K.H. Connell*, p.195-212.

³⁹HENSON, G. (1831/1970), *History of the Framework Knitters*, p. 60, 106, 236-7, 416; Henson was a pre-1832 trade union leader, with sound proletarian credentials.

⁴⁰EVANS, R.H., The Biggs Family of Leicester, *TLAHS*, Vol. XLVIII. 1972-3, p.32.

⁴¹HAMMOND, J.L & B., (1919), *The Skilled Labourer, 1760-1832*, p.230.

of which were employed in the specialised manufacture of Balbriggan hose which still retained their celebrity."⁴² Of these 265 frames, 237 (89 per cent) were sited in those areas of the east and north-east which sent Irish settlers to Leicester. Indeed, if Coleraine and Dungannon (approximately 40 and 50 miles respectively from Belfast port) were added, the proportion would be 96 per cent. There is one clear consideration here: that a goodly number of Irish-born framework-knitters who came to live in Leicester may have been Protestant, because of the sometimes urban and generally eastern and north-eastern locations they departed from. Conversely, many of those migrants with experience of the domestic manufacture of textiles in the west and south-west were probably in the main Catholic; (ie those from Cork, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon). The Dublin city and county area (including Balbriggan) accounted for 144/265, or 54.3 per cent, of hosiery machines.

The 1841 census data also supports the proposition that Leicester's textile trades were a "pull" factor. This also confirms that the Dublin area was particularly prominent in its representation amongst the Irish in Leicester. The clear centrality of textiles occupations to those pre-"Famine" Irish-born in Leicester in 1841 is obvious. Of 148 males and 50 females enumerated as having jobs (198 in all) no less than 97, or 49 per cent, were in the various branches of textiles, from production through to making up. (See Table 6a).

It is also possible to show, by linking individual survivors from 1841 with extrapolated information about their Irish backgrounds taken from the 1851 census, something of the roots of the 1841 cohort. Of 20 instances (amongst both families and individuals), 9 (almost half) could be identified with named Irish birth-places. Of these, 7 were from Dublin, and one each from Co. Wexford (Enniscorthy) and Co. Fermanagh (Enniskillen). These proportions co-relate very closely with the distribution of hosiery machines in Ireland in 1844 (see Table 5), where just over half of the machines were concentrated in and around Dublin, with a rather smaller segment at Enniskillen. The occupations of the nine in the 1841-51 pattern were as follows: 4 knitters, 3 framework knitters wives, 1 seamstress and 1 woolcomber. This evidence is suggestive of a definite personnel connection between the textile trading areas of Leicester and of Ireland. Some

⁴²FELKIN, W. (1867/1967), *History of the Machine-wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufacturers*, p.462-3.

TABLE 6(a) IRISH-BORN MALES AND FEMALES (ALL AGES) ENGAGED IN TEXTILES AND ASSOCIATED TRADES IN LEICESTER IN 1841		
Type of Trade	No's Employed	Notes:
FWKs/Stocking Makers	48	(1) Source: ACD.
Weavers	8	(2) Most categories were associated with woollens.
Woolcombers	5	(3) The jobs were spread across 37 single persons (23 males and 14 females) in addition to 41 family units, 38 of which were married couples.
Spinners (mainly wool)	8	(4) See Box below for ethnic breakdown of these couples. (ie Table 6(b))
Winders/seamers	7	(5) Only 12 of these were aged U-20.
Miscellaneous (eg gloves, lace, linen steamers, tailors)	21	(6) FWKs = Framework Knitters.
	97	

TABLE 6(b) ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF FRAMEWORK KNITTERS' MARRIAGES INVOLVING 1 OR MORE IRISH-BORN IN LEICESTER'S WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN 1841.		
Ethnic origins of partners in the 38 marriages	Total	% ages
English males wed to Irish-born females	32	84.2
Irish-born males wed to non-Irish females	2	5.3
Both partners Irish-born	4	10.5
	38	100.0

of Leicester's Irish hosiery workers were sufficiently well established to survive the exigencies of the late 1840's and to reappear in the census of 1851.

A second consideration supports framework knitting as a "pull" factor. Of Leicester framework knitters' marriages in 1841 (see Table 6(b), and Table 7,) an overwhelming proportion (32/38, or 84.2 per cent) involved English males marrying Irish-born females.⁴³ Whilst some of these marriages involved single Irish females coming to Leicester, it seems more likely that most of the English males had completed military service in Ireland, where they met with young Irish women. From the latter's point of view, a soldier (or sailor) was a good catch as regards long-term economic security - in the form of a pension.⁴⁴ (See next section re-relevance of military posting).

⁴³In 1851, 21 marriages involved English male FWKs married to Irish females; ie out of 223 couples, (9.4%); in all there were 66 mixed marriages (English male: Irish female) in 1851, or 29%.

⁴⁴The importance of military pensions is clearly indicated in contemporary Irish street ballads; eg *The Kerry Recruit*, identified by READ (1880) as being sung by the Leics. Regiment, concluded: "They gave me a medal, and 10 pence a day; Contented with Shelagh I'll live on half-pay, in *The Enniskillen Dragoons*," the last verse declared: "They've given us a pension, boys, of 4d each day" See O'LOCHLAINN, C (1939), *Irish Street Ballads* p.2; and 229.

Certainly the Leicestershire Regiment had served in Ireland: from 1826-29 in Dublin, the midlands, and the west; and from 1850-54 in the west, in Dublin again, and in Cork.⁴⁵

The pull of Leicester's textile trades operated from c.1841 to c.1861, after which the old framework became virtually extinct, and women took an increasing share of the newly industrialised hosiery jobs in factory situations. There were 25 Irish-born persons identified in framework/hosiery knitting in 1851; 9 women and 16 men. Of these 25, 14 had specified places of birth: Dublin (7); Mayo (4) and 1 each in Cork (Clonakilty), Tyrone and Galway. This evidence underlines the same nexus of key areas already identified in 1841. The link with Dublin was clear again in the 1861 data.⁴⁶

When the 1851 data is examined in relation to the wider community (ie Irish-born, their spouses, and children), a total of 56 persons emerges as engaged in the framework/hosiery trade, and again there is repeated the 1841 inter-marriage pattern; (see Table 7) a clear majority of married partners consist of English-born males with Irish-born wives. Only in 1861 does this picture radically alter (see Table 7) but by this

TABLE 7		FRAMEWORK KNITTING AND HOSIERY : ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF MARRIED COUPLES (INVOLVING 1 OR MORE IRISH-BORN) IN LEICESTER'S WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY, 1841, 1851 AND 1861.					
		1841		1851		1861	
Ethnic origins of Partners		Total	% age	Total	% age	Total	% age
English-born males and Irish-born females		15 32	75.0 84.2	21	75.0	8	40.0
Irish-born males and English-born females		3 2	15.0 5.3	5	17.9	6	30.0
Both partners Irish-born		2 4	10.0 10.5	2	7.1	6	30.0
Total Numbers of Couples in FWK and Hosiery		20	---	28	---	20	
Notes: (1) Source = ACD. (2) For 1841, a wide sample was also taken, across all textile trades, because the whole of 1841 was smaller and therefore more manageable (see 2nd figure in each box); the proportions are still similar nonetheless.							

⁴⁵See WEBB, E.A.H (1912), *Hist. of Services of 17th (Leics) Regt* for details; whilst (rather ironically) 55% of one unit of the 17th were Irish-born in 1852, they had had, since 1782, a cultivated recruiting policy re their home base; see JENKINS, R., *FLRO Newsletter*, Sept 1995, No. 15. p.8-11; re 17th's Squad Roll Book of 1852; and CANNON, R. (1848), *Hist. Record of 17th Regt.* p.28.

⁴⁶The 1861 data for Irish-born FWKs was very limited re-Irish birth places; only 2 Dubliners were listed, the third being extrapolated from the 1851 data; females from Belfast (Antrim) were listed. No other locations were identified.

time the structure of the hosiery trade was changing radically also. If anything, the 1861 figures suggest that English husbands were removing themselves from a contracting occupation, whilst Irish male partners, and Irish couples, were moving in, probably in part because of the gaps being created the movement out of the first group.

(d) Settlement due to Military Postings and to Catholic foundations

Data from the Census and baptismal registers contributes essential evidence on the early nineteenth century settlement of those Irish in Leicester who were involved in military service. The pattern was built up over the years c.1790 to c.1850, in line with postings and demobilisations arising from the French Wars and imperial forays of that time. This unacknowledged element in Irish settlement in the Leicester area is important, for it created a religious infrastructure which could support, and be expanded by, future in-migrants.

Of 8 Irish surnames listing births to military families prior to 1815, 4 re-appear in the 1815-35 baptismal registers. This suggests that around half of the pre-1815 Irish Catholic families listed may have either settled, or returned to settle, in Leicester in the twenty year period post-Waterloo.⁴⁷ This is supported by an entry in the complete Leicestershire census returns. The enumerators' report for St. Margaret's parish in 1821 stated: "Increase partly attributed to the return of discharged soldiers together with a continuance of public tranquility."⁴⁸

It is significant too that of the 16 baptismal entries with one or more Irish parents, 13 occur between 1800 and 1805, indicating a concentration of troop movements involving men of Irish origin.⁴⁹ The Leicester annexe to the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor* noted how the Irish influx commenced:

"At what time did the Irish first come to Leicester and its neighbourhood; and has there been an influx of them since that time, progressive or otherwise?"

"About A.D. 1815, since which year the number has gradually increased."⁵⁰

Various factors explain this pattern of military mobility: certain Irish units were

⁴⁷LCRO, MF 144 and Brit. Mus. Add. Mss. 32.632, *Holy Cross Baptismal Registers, 1785-1814*.

⁴⁸HOSKINS, W.G. & MCKINLEY, R.A. (Eds)(1955), *VCHL* (Vol. III), *A History of Leics*; Table of Population 1801-1951; p.203.

⁴⁹LCRO, MF 144, *Holy Cross Baptismal Registers, 1785-1814*.

⁵⁰1836 *Report on Irish Poor in G.B.*, Vol. XXVIII, p.164, Appendix G; Qu.3. and Answer; respondent was Rev. L. Oxley, of Holy Cross.

moved out of Ireland after the 1798 rebellion; troops were needed for the European War, and as English units went overseas, Irish units could be used to plug the gap; in Britain, there was considerable political, social and economic unrest from c.1790 until c.1810 requiring a military presence. Leicestershire was the scene of food riots and serious Luddite unrest.⁵¹

The county offers evidence of significant Irish military-related settlement pre-1850; eg at Loughborough c.1833-38, Fr. Benjamin Hulme recorded Irish military families in his care.⁵² In 1841, of 90 Irish-born persons enumerated in Loughborough, 10 were soldiers of the 3rd Dragoons, whilst an Irish woman was married to one of the English soldiers listed.⁵³ In May 1852, the 8th Hussars were stationed in Loughborough; 20 were Irish.⁵⁴

Many Irish Catholic recruits served in the Leicestershire Regiment (17th Foot) in 1852. The extant Squad Roll of the Light Company details 91 soldiers. More than half (50) were Irishmen, and hailed from diverse areas (Cork, Clonmel, Carlow, Dublin and Galway); 52 privates were Protestant and 39 Roman Catholic. (Only 2 out of 8 NCOs were Catholics, although 7 of the 8 were Irish-born). Therefore a total of 41 men (or 44.4 per cent) were Catholic; a high proportion.⁵⁵

A typical example of Irish military settlement in Leicester is provided by the Riley family. David Riley, born 1824, married in Leicester in 1866, had, prior to being wed, served in the 73rd Highlanders at Limerick. By 1869, the couple had moved to Leicester, to Stableford's Row, a shabby courtyard dwelling of one up-one one-down back-to-backs. This was off Mansfield Street, and therefore situated in the predominantly Irish quarter centred on the Abbey Street - Green Street nexus.

The family had two children christened at Holy Cross; the sponsors were in part Irish; the two boys, David and James Patrick, attended St. Patrick's School. Here, in microcosm, is a typical example of Irish settlement in Leicester related to military service, and necessitating a Catholic infrastructure.⁵⁶

⁵¹EVANS, R.H. (1958), in *VCHL*, Vol. 4, Pol. Hist.

⁵²CUMMINS, J. (1949), *The Church in Loughborough*, p.1.

⁵³ACD, L'boro 1841, Reel 4, H107-594-596; in all, 42 soldiers were listed; the Irish therefore comprised 25%.

⁵⁴HIRST, T. (nd. c1890), *Life of the Rev. Andrew Egan*, p.80 (in RCAL).

⁵⁵JENKINS, R.P., 'History, Habits, Dispositions etc,' in *For the Record (Newsletter of the LCRO)* Sept. 1995, No. 15, pp.9-10. Given that the tallest and strongest men, needed for physical prowess, were located in the Grenadier Company, there may have been even more Irish in that section.

⁵⁶ISW/OHA; Interview with Mr Pat Riley, July 1987, and P.R.'s own written family history 1987 (revised 1991); (LCRO).

TABLE 8	THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTERSHIRE - POPULATION STATISTICS 1841-1891 : ie all Irish-born, their spouses - whether Irish or not, and children [Source; ACD]				
YEAR	LEICESTER	WHITWICK	L'BORO	HINCKLEY	
1841	621	20	155	35	
1851	1,320	135	243	96	
1861	1,311	387	222	108	
1871	1,695	427	240	100	
1881	1,468	375	197	80	
1891	1,428	286	176	62	
Notes: The definition of Irish community is a full one, as the title implies. For a similar interpretation, see FINNEGAN, F. (1982), Introduction.					

This Irish military factor could often be indirect, in that an English soldier married to an Irish woman returned together to the mainland. In 1851 in Loughborough there were seven such military families; in two of these, the husband was a military pensioner, a good economic investment for a nineteenth century wife. A Leicester welfare worker, when visiting lodging houses in 1849, noted that "a widow with a small family, recently come from Ireland, married there an Englishman who was a soldier another widow, in similar circumstances, resides within a few doors."⁵⁷ There were many such military families which benefited from the regular pension. In Leicester by 1851, 3 of the 15 Chelsea Pensioners either married to Irish women, or with 1 or more children born in Ireland, were in the framework trade.⁵⁸

It is clear then that the need for religious provision for Irish Catholics was a primary factor in the establishment and development of the Irish and Catholic infrastructure in the Leicester area. For example, Fr. William Foley of Northampton proactively sought to assist Catholic soldiers at Northampton barracks.⁵⁹ Foley had worked in Leicestershire, servicing a gentry chapel at Husbands Bosworth in 1824-25. Clearly, the Irish Catholic soldiers of both Leicester and Loughborough provide evidence

⁵⁷DARE, Rev. J., *RLDMS* 4th of 1849, p.21.

⁵⁸ACD 1851, p. 36 (James Taylor) and p.40 (William Holder and Thom. Kinsey). Not all ex-military men were necessarily of the 17th Foot, such as Isaac Taylor, of the 12th Foot, in 1861 (p.55). In 1861, there were 31 military pensioners, most of whom were English with Irish wives.

⁵⁹GILLOW, J. (1885), *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, Vol. II p.306. Foley's name is indicative of probable Irish ancestry. (See also YOUNG, Fr. U. (1933), *Life of St. Ignatius Spencer, C.P.*, p.33 (in DCAL); and TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B., in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed)(1954), *V.C.H.*, Vol. II p.63.

of pre-1840 Irish settlement in the county.

The other index of Irish settlement around Leicester relates to parents' surnames, in the baptismal registers of St. Mary's, Loughborough, for 1833-38:⁶⁰ 63 children in 38 families were baptised; 12 couples and 15 separate partners had Irish surnames. One parish historian commented: "it is quite clear that the Irish element in the mission was strong." A later pamphlet concurred: "it is quite clear that the Irish element in the mission was strong in these foundation families of the present church." Loughborough Protestant activists in 1844 noted "about thirty families of Irish Roman Catholics the priests have taken due advantage of these their natural allies."⁶¹ Only 5 of the 36 Irish surnames appear in the 1841 census data, just 14.7 per cent of the total. This suggests a very high turnover of Irish-born persons in the years between 1833/38 and 1841. Clearly then, part of the Irish settlement in the Leicester area was due to the pattern of regular military postings, and their attendant supporting Catholic infrastructures.

(e) Settlement due to Leicester's Central Location

The central location of Leicester, in the east midland counties, means that it is easily accessible from all points. In terms of Irish migration, the Leicestershire area was virtually equidistant from the two main points of entry: Merseyside and the Bristol Channel ports. Also, for agricultural labourers who regularly worked their way across central England either from or towards the vast acres of Lincolnshire,⁶² Leicestershire was for some an unavoidable area to be crossed, and evidence exists of Irish migrants working in the county.

Communications had developed apace with the area's economic and industrial development. By c.1765, Leicestershire had developed a good network of internal coach services on the new turnpike trust roads, with an east-west road axis centred on the Loughborough-Market Harborough new road. From c.1765 Leicester had effective regular coaching links with London, Nottingham and Derby; by 1800, the network extended to cover Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield and Carlisle. Therefore, the main

⁶⁰See CUMMINGS, J.D. (1949); Baptismal Register Data.

⁶¹LAPTS, 1844 Report, pp.5 & 6.

⁶²See agricultural occupations.

north-south routes existed for paying passengers, and could be followed on foot by those without the means to pay fares.⁶³

Steam power came early to Leicestershire for worsted spinning, and from c.1850 for framework knitting. The need for coal drove the canal and railway initiatives in Leicester. The Ashby Canal of 1804 and the Leicester-Swannington railway of 1832-3, as well as providing jobs, allied improved transport opportunities to economic growth; both were "pull" factors. The Swannington line served the new Whitwick coalfield, already attracting Irish families in the 1840's, which maintained a steady Irish growth until the end of the century, and the gradual decline in Britain's staple coal and iron industries. This line also brought further labouring opportunities, with granite from Groby, and brick and tile manufacture in Whitwick and Ibstock.

Leicester's Midland Counties Railway (1839-40) linked the town with London and Birmingham, Nottingham and Derby, and Leeds and London:

The railway did much for Leicester, helping it to realise, for the first time in its history, the full advantages of its position, so close to the very centre of England.⁶⁴

By the 1870's Leicester had direct rail links with East Anglia, Yorkshire, Scotland, Lancashire, Bristol and South Wales. Migrants with the means were able to travel by train to Leicester not only directly from ports of entry, but also from other areas of Irish settlement in the country; most probably walked. Evidence points to such movements in census data, in oral history, and in the autobiography of Tom Barclay. Barclay's⁶⁵ account reflects his second generation viewpoint, one that deals only briefly with his parents' Irish roots and their geographical transition.

Clearly impacted on Barclay's mind was a series of factors accompanying the migration process, compounded of poverty, a lack of preparedness, exodus and exile, the awfulness of the "Famine", the disintegration of families and the sheer physical demands of transition and resettlement; (see quote on title page). The finality, and the social and economic degradation of the often involuntary resettlement, are effectively transmitted. His mother, brought up in the "wilds" of the County Mayo, was nonetheless to

⁶³See SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present*, Vol. 1, *Ancient Borough* p.116-7 and p.155-6 and NEAL, F. (1998), *Black '47*, on migrant routes inland.

⁶⁴SIMMONS, J. (1974), Vol. 1, p.155.

⁶⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.11.

demonstrate social skills as a focal point in the community, and eventually came to run a small business of her own.

Whilst Barclay's brief account is the only direct one relating to Leicester, there is an oral history account by the Geraghty (Sharratt) family which also settled in the east midlands area.⁶⁶ Unlike the Barclays c.1848, the Geraghtys (Sherratts) were able to exercise some degree of foresight and pre-planning, and their experience, although stressful, was less stark.⁶⁷

The Geraghty's lived near Gort (Co. Galway), an area associated with Irish migration to Leicester (see Map 1c). In 1866, when potato blight reappeared, the married members left for Britain, the unmarried (with less responsibilities) for the USA. The three married brothers, Michael, Stephen and James, had to decide their respective futures. James, married with one son, decided to stay with the parents, Dan and Mary Anne Geraghty, on the grounds that the smallholding would just support this small group. Both Michael and Stephen were married, each with six children, and they decided to move their entire families to Britain rather than be forced apart.

The parents had preserved the wife's dowry, and £40 in gold coins were carefully stitched into the childrens' underclothes, as a security measure. This practice was obviously reasonably common amongst Irish migrants, for the Unitarian Missionary in Leicester, Joseph Dare, described in 1854 an Irishman with gold similarly hidden about his person.⁶⁸ To avoid robbers en route to Dublin, the Geraghtys travelled on an indirect route "in their oldest, ragged clothes the two families posing as penniless gypsies, and carrying their few possessions which included Sunday best clothes and food for the journey, in two wagons." Believing in what is now termed "the myth of return," none in fact ever retraced their steps homewards. The 4 adults and 12 children travelled with their "pots and pans, spare harness, tools, ropes, clothing, homespun blankets and rugs." Their diet comprised "bacon, smoked fish, oatmeal, corn, wheat flour, eggs carefully packed in buckets, butter and baked bread."

The children used the wagons for resting during the day and night; the men had carefully waterproofed the fabric wagon covers with multiple layers of mutton fat, whilst

⁶⁶The Sharratt/Geraghty family eventually arrived in Derby, and appear typical of many who moved to the east midlands or eastern counties, where mining/industrial and agricultural opportunities respectively existed. Their account is used extensively in BASTOW, J. (1970), *The Development of Catholic Education, in the 19th Century in the Diocese of Nottingham*, pp. 38-9.

⁶⁷BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.3.

⁶⁸DARE, J., *RLDMS*, 9th of 1854.

beeswax was used to damproof the wooden chassis. Raw wool was collected from hedgerows en route and spun into rough and ready waterproof hooded cloaks. In Dublin, the wagons and horses were sold for cash, and £10 was spent on a passage in a cattle boat. On arrival in Liverpool, the two families were split up amidst the noise and chaos of the quayside, and they never met again. This account so far echoes Barclay's comment that "Brother was separated from brother - whole families were broken up : one remained in Liverpool, one in the Potteries, and one went to America."

The bustle of Liverpool, the vast numbers of Irish and the visible evidence of poverty was their first major shock. Advice about railway work was given to Stephen Geraghty in a pub. Despite the expense, and hoping still to be reunited with Michael Geraghty's family, they bought a handcart for the remaining luggage and the young children. They met with both good and bad experiences as they headed for the east midlands, then with an expanding mining, industrial and railway infrastructure. Again, this narrative reflects Barclay's stark observation that "women as well as men tramped every foot of the road after leaving the boats: no trains for mere emigrants."

Both the Geraghty and the Barclay narratives point to Liverpool as the port of entry for at least some of the Leicester Irish.⁶⁹ Census analysis of the Irish in Leicester throws some further light on this aspect of migration patterns. Whilst the Bristol Channel seems to have been the entry point for some, in most cases migrants to Leicester entered via the north-western ports of Merseyside. The 1851 census for Green Street showed that Michael Madden (30) was married to Sarah (26) from Liverpool, both their children Bridget and Mary, (aged 6 and 3) being born in Leicester. Similarly, in 1874, James Moylett (38) from Mayo, a shoehand living in Garden Street, had married Catherine (36) who was also Liverpool born, and they had 4 children all born in Kendal (Westmoreland) before their move to Leicester. These wives may well have been second generation Irish, given the preponderance of Irish settlement in Liverpool. By comparison, Maurice Conroy (46) of Sash Row, was married to a wife (Elizabeth, 50) from Bristol, all 3 of their family being identified as "English."

As well as probably marrying in Liverpool, some returns indicated that the early children of some marriages were born in the area of the probable port of entry, indicating

⁶⁹BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.11. The Dublin/Belfast-Liverpool sea routes were well established by 1833: see evidence of Samuel Perry of Dublin Steam Packet Co re-passenger figures Dub/L'pool 1826-33: 188,988 persons entered; *Rep't on State of Irish Poor in GB*, PP. (1836), App. II, pp. 8-9. See also *1st Rep't of S.C. on Emigrant Ships*, PP. (1854) Evid. of S. Redmond re passage from Dublin to Liverpool, p. 88-9; re-differing economic status of Irish and cheapness of fares.

settlement elsewhere prior to moves to Leicester. Richard Chambers (39), Irish-born manager of Leicester's Gas Works in 1861, married a Liverpool woman (Sarah, 43); the first two of their five offspring were Liverpool-born, the remainder from Leicester.

In 1871, Daniel (42) and Ellen (34) Carey, both Irish-born of Abbey St, had the first of their five children born in Lancashire (Manchester), with the next three born in Staffordshire.⁷⁰ A more upwardly mobile family, registered in 1871, also exhibited the Liverpool link; Connell Loughnan, Irish-born medical assistant (29) was married to Sarah (25) from Liverpool, and their first two children were born there also. A more diverse geographical pattern developed in the case of the Smith family. The husband William, Irish-born (45) married Mary (36) who was Gloucester-born; their children were born, respectively, in Northamptonshire, Hampshire and London; this suggests early settlement based on entry via the Bristol area.⁷¹ However, this evidence notwithstanding, only a minority of migrants at any of the censuses analysed viewed Leicester as their primary destination.

Some migrants came to Leicester only after sojourns of varying lengths in other locations in England, and indeed Wales and Scotland. Some evidence for this is discernible from an analysis of the birthplaces of children born in Britain to Irish people eventually settling in Leicester. Table 9 shows a clear pattern of development, and one which is noticeably consistent.⁷²

The main conclusion to be drawn here is that Leicester was rarely the priority destination for most migrants. At every census from 1851 to 1891, between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of settlers in Leicester had had children born previously in the east midlands, the west midlands, or London and the southern counties (in roughly equal proportions most of the time). In other words, two-thirds of the families had already spent some time in the wider midlands and the south.

Only a very small number (never more than 5 per cent) moved to Leicester from Scotland; slightly more families travelled onward from the north-eastern counties, as they also did from Wales and the South-west. The north-western English counties, often correctly associated with Irish migration, witnessed less than 10 per cent of these families in both 1851 and 1861, but accounted for 17 per cent of these settlers in both 1871 and

⁷⁰ ACD 1851, p.31; 1861, p.14 and 42; 1871, p.5 & 6, 21 and 52.

⁷¹ ACD 1871, p.52 and 6.

⁷² ACD: analysis re birthplaces of English-born children of the Leicester Irish, 1851-91.

TABLE 9

BIRTHPLACES OF ENGLISH-BORN CHILDREN OF THE
LEICESTER IRISH, 1851 TO 1891

AREA OF UK	YEAR									
	1851		1861		1871		1881		1891	
		%		%		%		%		%
Scotland	4	4.7	4	4.6	4	2.0	3	1.7	7	3.5
N.W	6	7.0	8	9.2	35	17.1	31	17.4	29	14.7
N.E	14	16.5	7	8.0	15	7.4	12	6.7	18	9.1
E.Mids	22	25.8	12	13.8	44	21.6	30	16.8	38	19.2
W.Mids	15	17.7	21	24.1	27	13.2	33	18.5	37	18.7
London + S	22	25.9	28	32.2	55	26.9	47	26.4	52	26.3
Wales + SW	2	2.4	7	8.0	23	11.3	22	12.3	17	8.6
Totals	85	-	87	-	204	-	178	-	198	-

Notes:

(1) Definitions of Areas of UK:

- (a) Scotland = all counties included (not islands)
- (b) North-West = Lancs, Cheshire (including Liverpool and Manchester) & Cumbria
- (c) North-East = Yorkshire, Durham & Northumberland
- (d) East Midlands = Notts, Lincs, Derbs and Northants
- (e) West Midlands = Warks and Staffs
- (f) London and South = London, Kent, Essex, Wilts, Herts, Surrey, Hants, Bucks, Oxon
- (g) Wales and South-West = Wales (all areas), Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Avon.

(2) Pictorial format: see pie diagrams following.

(3) % ages in this Table are to 1st d.point; they are rounded off in pie diags.

KEY:

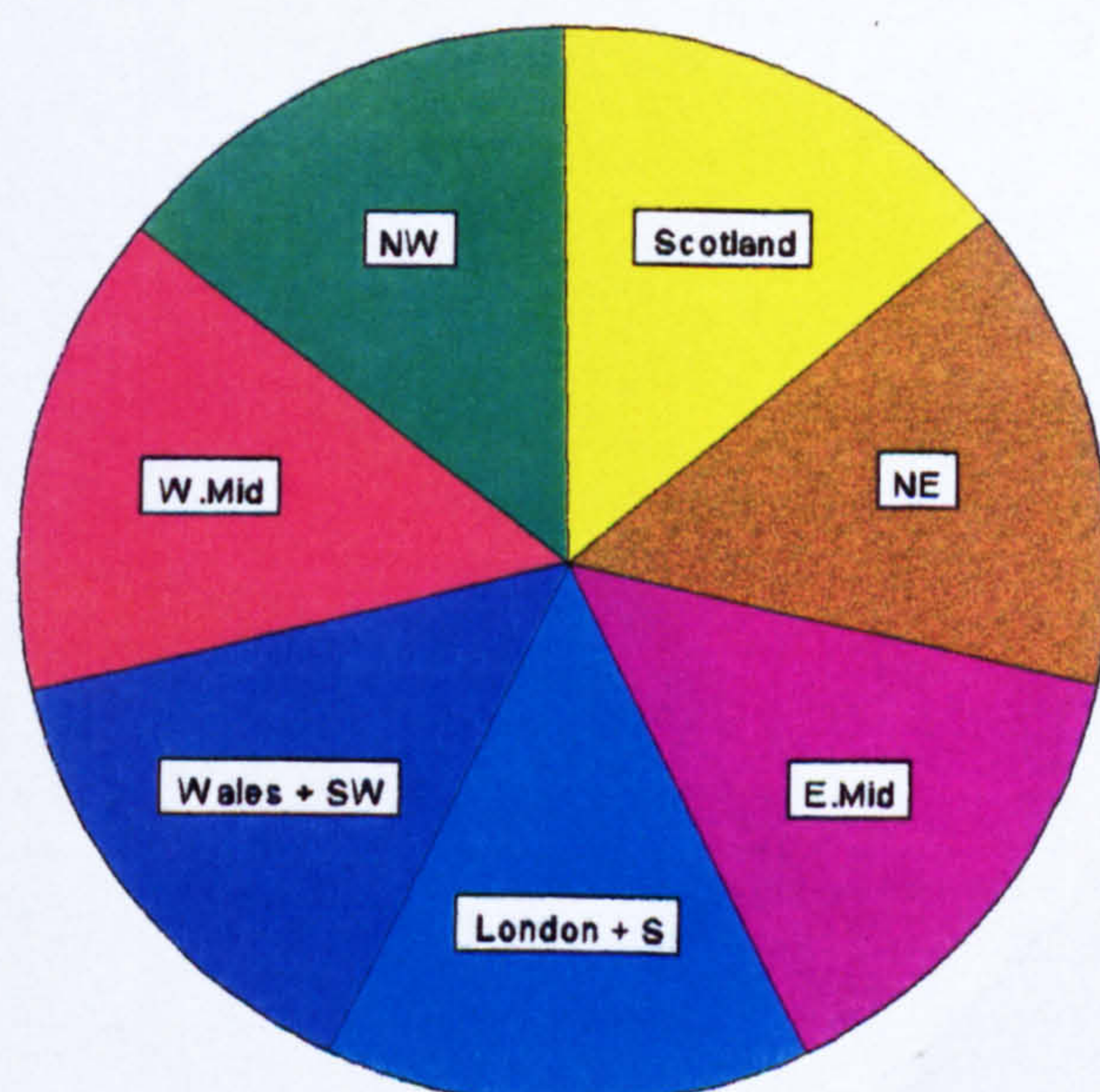
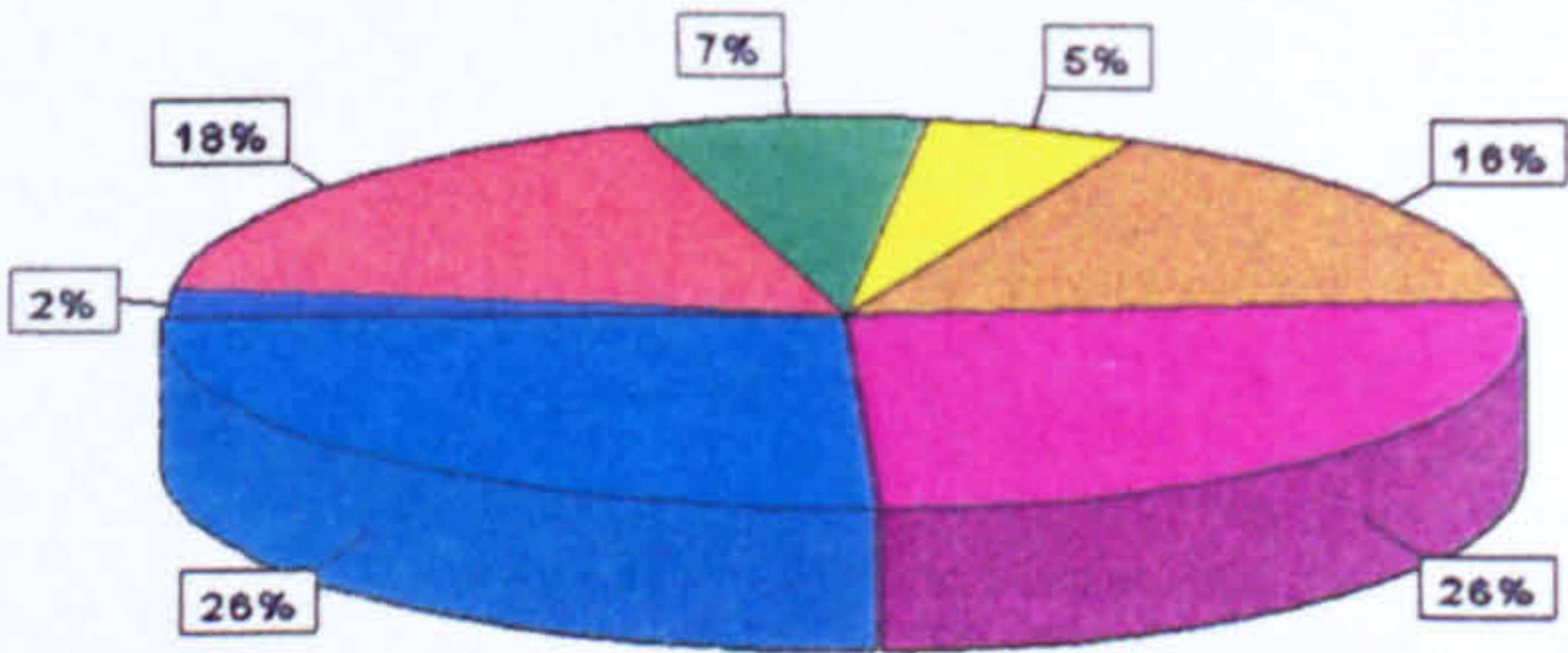
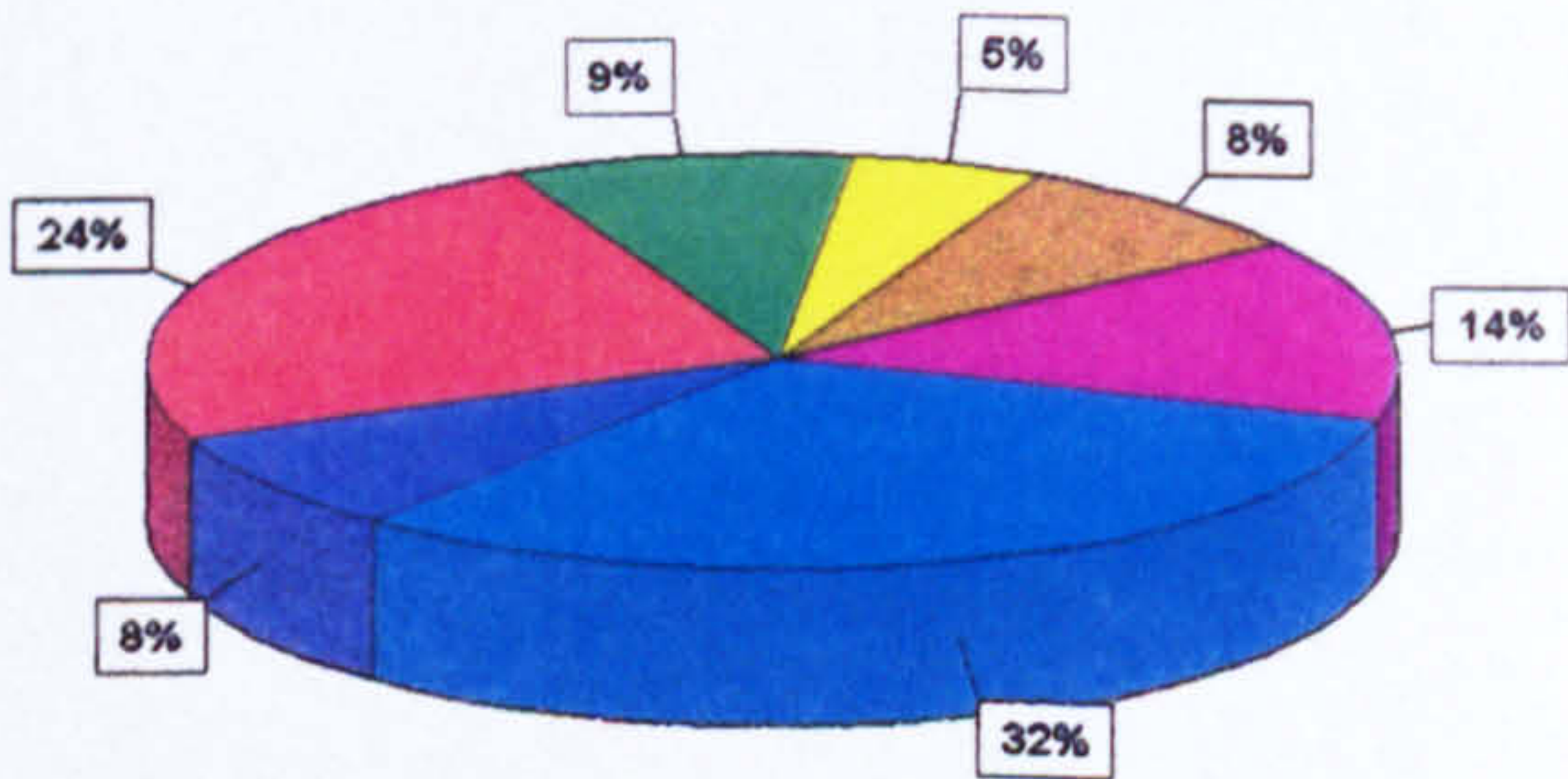


TABLE 9 continued	BIRTH PLACES OF ENGLISH-BORN CHILDREN OF THE LEICESTER IRISH, 1851-91
----------------------	--

1851



1861



1871

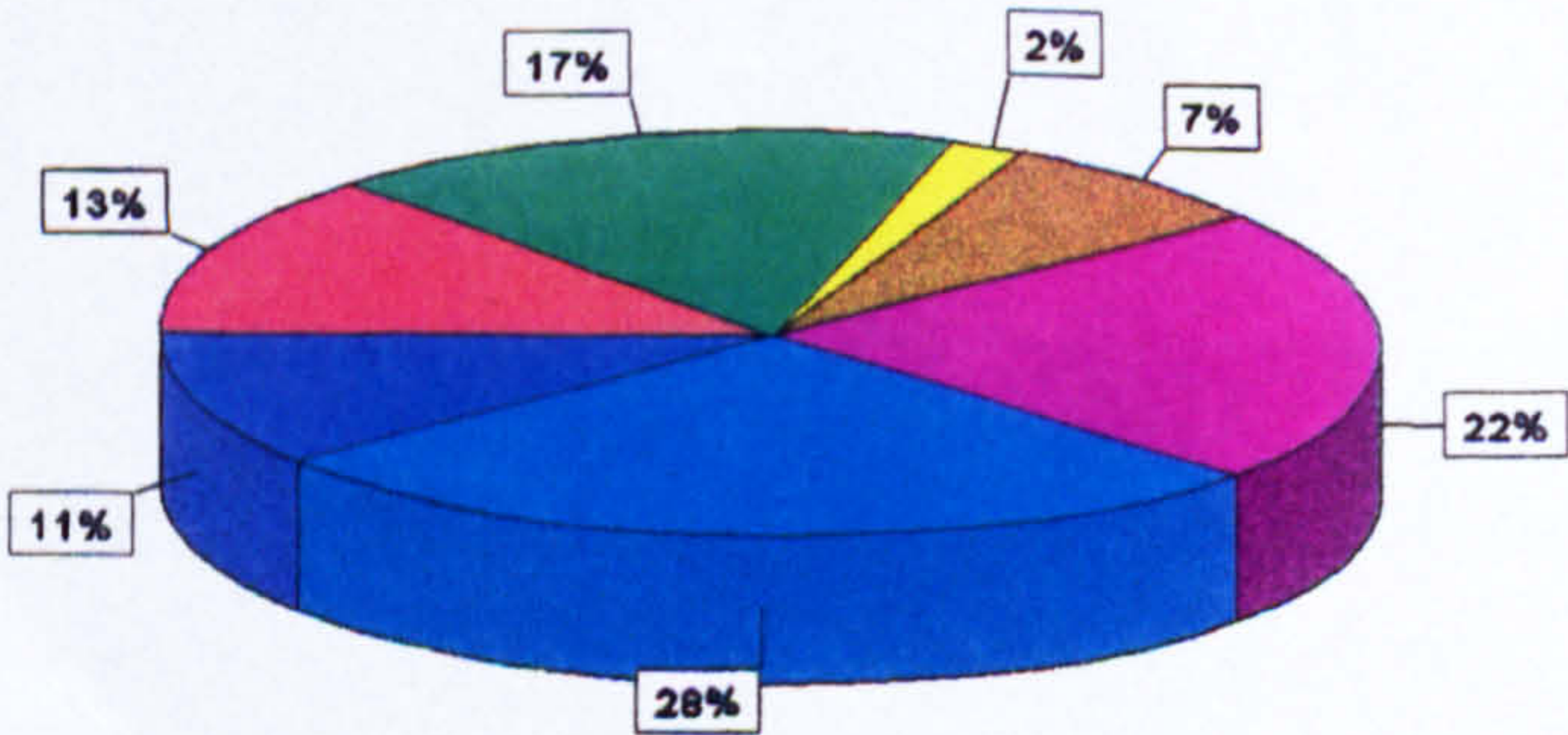
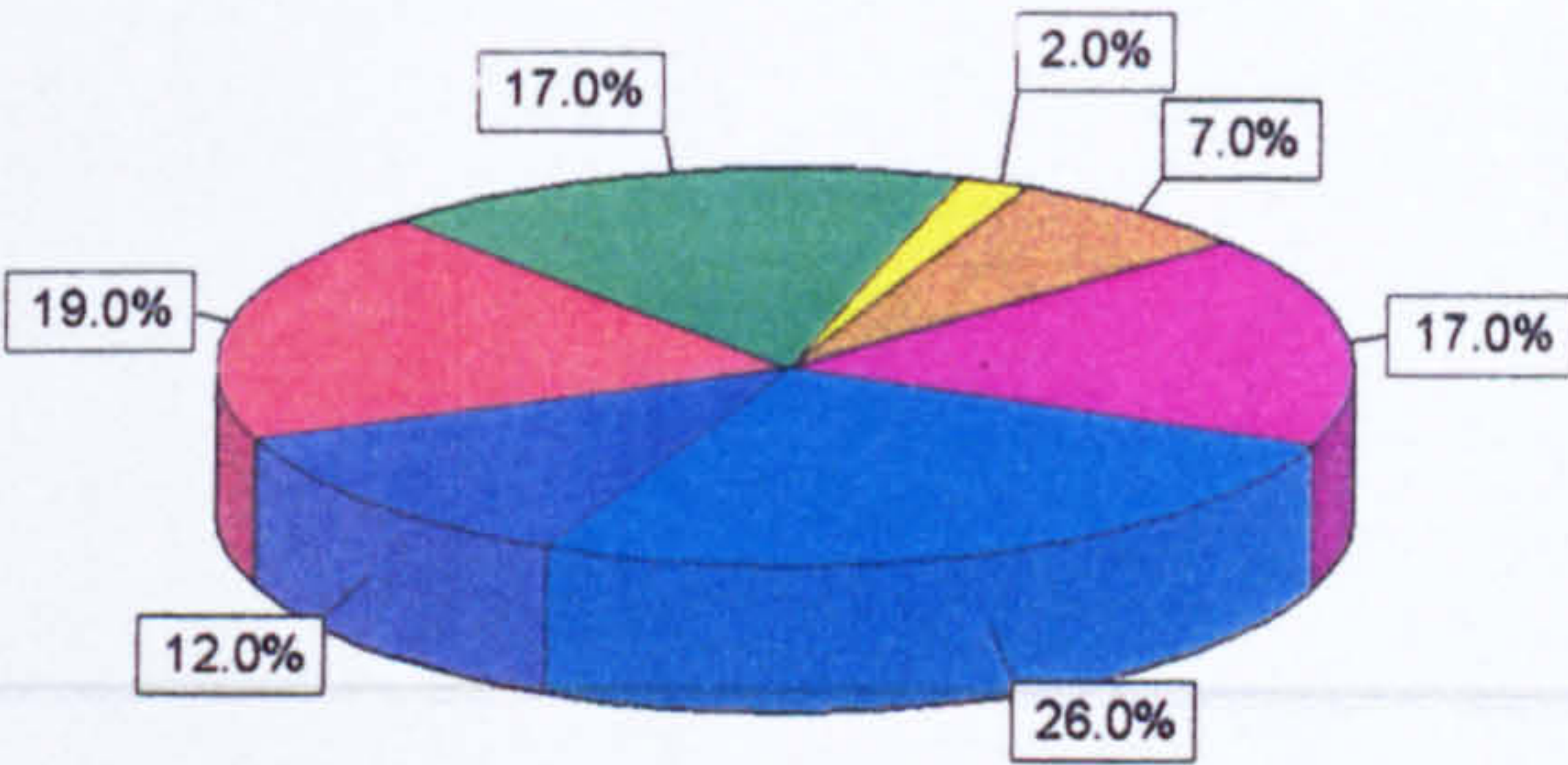
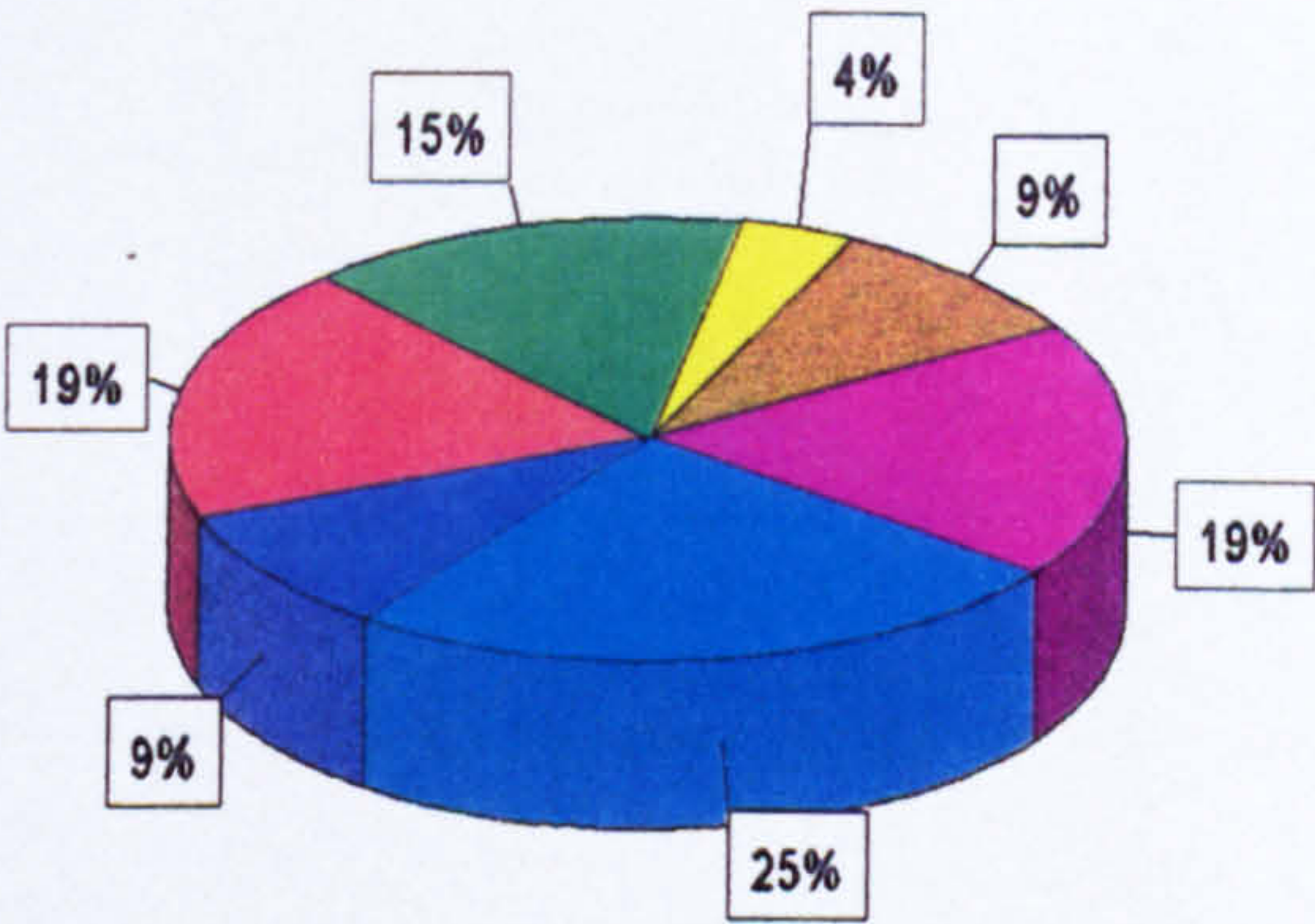


TABLE 9	Continued
----------------	------------------

1881



1891



- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Scotland | NW | W.Mid |
| Wales + SW | London + S | E. Mid |
| NF | | |

1881, and 15 per cent in 1891. This increase in families moving towards Leicester directly from the north-west suggests that in the last three decades of the century Leicester's increasing economic growth, especially in regard to the newly mechanised footwear and hosiery industries, did have some effect on attracting Irish families away from their initial area of settlement around the region of the north-western points of entry. Economic decline and stagnation in older northern industries may partly also account for this.

The other main area with a pattern of large and regular movement of Irish families into Leicestershire was that of those counties immediately surrounding Leicestershire, the east and west midlands. At all the Leicester censuses between 1851 and 1891, between 35 and 40 per cent of Irish families were re-locating from other parts of the midlands. Only in 1851 and 1871 did the east midlands contributions dominate that of the west midlands; by the last quarter of the century the input from the two midlands areas was quite evenly balanced. Therefore, it is in general probably true to say that the majority of those Irish settling in Leicester did so only after living in London and the South, or the wider midlands area. This calls for some consideration of the duration of the period of residence of the Irish in Leicester. If the town was only rarely a priority destination, then this should be reflected in the figures for the turnover of Irish-born in the town across the study period (see section (d) above).

One Catholic historian quotes without evidence 1826 as the key year for Irish arrivals; this can be backed by data from the Catholic baptismal and marriage registers, and the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor in Britain*.⁷³ (See section (d) above). Another Catholic historian, Canon Sweeney, indicating the tenfold increase in Catholics in the Diocese from 2,160 in 1773 to approximately 20,000 in 1850, noted that:

The main factor in this increase was Irish immigration. It had been a steady trickle before 1826 and this figure was doubled by 1850. They came in through Liverpool, settled in the cotton towns of south Lancashire and thence spread to the textile valleys of north-west Derbyshire. Very few seem to have penetrated into Leicestershire, but there was a great demand for them in the Notts and Derby coalfield where their fine physique made them ideal for the heavy work of sinking pits and of puddling in the new ironworks In Lincolnshire there was a great seasonal demand for Irish harvesters, but some of them settled,

⁷³See chapter on the Irish contribution to Catholic growth in Leicestershire. The source for the 1826 estimate is TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B., (1954), *VCHL*, Vol. II, pp.55-73.

and the new missions of the Great North Road were largely indebted to them.⁷⁴

Sweeney's contention that "very few Irish seem to have penetrated into Leicestershire" is an exaggeration needing revision. The two factors he cites to explain Irish immigration elsewhere in the diocese, namely coal-mining and seasonal harvest labouring, were both relevant to Leicestershire; (see Occupations). The county also offered the old staple of framework knitting, an attraction to those Irish with textiles experience. De Lisle described the local mining opportunities in 1860:

"..... in our neighbouring Parish of Whitwick there are actually 900 Irish, all come within the last 6 years, attracted by the demand of labour in the coal mines of the district when I open mines in the next Parish of Shepshed we shall want many more Irish to aid use in working them"⁷⁵

The figure for the Irish proportion amongst the county's Catholics c.1820-1840 is in fact around 30 per cent, rather more than a "very few."

In Leicester, census data indicates that the Irish-born increased in absolute terms from just 300 in 1831, to 477 in 1841, with a leap to 877 in 1851; in proportional terms,

TABLE 10		THE IRISH-BORN AND EFFECTIVELY IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 1841-1891. Population data re: Irish-born, their spouses and children (ie total numbers of entries on database)		
YEAR	LEICESTER	WHITWICK	LOUGHBOROUGH	HINCKLEY
1841	688	20	155	35
1851	1,333	135	243	96
1861	1,304	387	222	108
1871	1,687	427	240	100
1881	1,478	375	197	80
1891	1,419	286	176	62
Notes: (1) SOURCE: ACD 1841-91 (2) The notion of being "effectively Irish" comes from CLAPHAM (see footnote); it refers to the locally-born children of migrants. The data here includes all children, spouses and thereby broadens the category to that used by FINNEGAN (1982) and also for the Irish in York. ⁷⁶				

they increased from comprising 0.8 per cent of the town's population in 1831, to forming

⁷⁴SWEENEY, G.D. (1950), *A Short History of the Diocese of Nottingham*, p.30.

⁷⁵Lincolnshire farms were a popular work location for transient Irish labour, and Leics. had to be crossed en route; see BARBER, S., Irish Migrant Agricultural Labourers in 19th century Lincolnshire, in *Saother*, No. 8, 1982, p.10-23. See PURCELL (1900), A de Lisle to G. Spencer, 25 Feb. 1860, p.186-7.

⁷⁶CLAPHAM, J.H., Irish Immigration into G.B. in 19th Century, in *Bulletin of the Internat. Cmtee of Hist. Sciences*, 20 July 1933, p.603; cited in HERSON, J. (1988), pp.81-3 and 89. See also FINNEGAN, F. (1982), p.1.

1.4 per cent in 1851. Using the figures from the manually researched census database, which includes second generation and non-Irish spouses for the 1841-91 period, the pattern which emerges is presented in Table 10. Irish migrant community growth, and its peaks, are evident in Leicester, and (for purposes of comparison) in Whitwick, Loughborough and Hinckley. In all cases (except Hinckley) the peak year was 1871.

(f) Conclusion

The evidence offered above supports the five main reasons advanced for Irish migration to Leicester. Detailed analysis of the census data shows that in the 1850's and 1860's especially, there were three main areas in Ireland which decanted migrants to Leicester: Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. Other important sources for in-migrants were the south and east of County Cork; County Down in Ulster; and the general Dublin area. Whilst the bulk of Irish in-migrants settled in Leicester City, there were sizeable proportions in county towns such as Loughborough and Hinckley and in the industrial-mining area of Whitwick, as well as smaller numbers scattered in villages in rural occupations.

These waves of settlement were responding to different stimuli over time as regards the pattern of Irish settlement in Leicester. The pre-“Famine” migrants c.1841 were not necessarily responding to a serious emergency situation; numbers of skilled workers, especially in framework knitting and textiles, targeted Leicester specifically, bringing transferable skills organised on a family basis. The period c.1851 witnessed the more recognisable refugee-type influx of distressed persons. Until c.1881, the Leicester Irish reflected a preponderance of the unskilled. The increase in migration from Ulster c.1881-91 probably included a greater proportion of Protestant migrants, which would explain the level of local support expected from Leicester by the Wyckliffite preacher agitators who attempted the deliberate provocation of Irish Catholics virtually on a nationwide basis c.1890-1905.⁷⁷

⁷⁷The Wyckliffite factor was especially important in Cumbria and Merseyside; see MacRAILD, (1998), and WALLER, P.J. (1981).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY (PART I): OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS

I cannot here omit one other feature of the agricultural life of those days. Every summer the children at Beaumont Leys were accustomed to notice the arrival - regular as that of the swallows - of certain small, spare, active men, clad in grey frieze coats, with lapels and brass buttons, and they knew that the Irishmen had come again to help in the great work of the corn reaping. They settled steadily to their work by day, and at night the hay barn was their sleeping room. I wish I could give you a true idea of the devotion of these labourers to your grandfather, or of his trust in their honesty, and his appreciation of their characters. One family of Quins, from Roscommon, came to Beaumont Leys for a period of many years, growing at last too old and infirm to undertake the long journey. Your older aunts can remember an incident which always delighted our father, and which illustrated the sympathy existing between himself and genuine Irishmen. A party of reapers arrived one night at our home, asking for permission to sleep in the barn. Their request was granted, and I have little doubt that a supper was also supplied to them. Your grandfather was ever an early riser, but on this occasion he was not prepared for a diligence surpassing his own. When he went out in the early morning to superintend the work of the day, the barn was empty, but the gratitude of the poor Irishmen had expressed itself with palpable, irresistible eloquence. They had reaped part of a field of oats before continuing their journey!

From ELLIS, M. (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, pages 11 & 12.

And now I went to work: this would be about the year 1860. I was eight years of age and I went to work, turning the wheel at Browett's Rope-walk where Taylor Street now stands. Unwashed, ill-clothed, ill-fed, untaught, worried by vermin, I worked in all weathers, and not without scolding and threats of violence, seventy hours a week for - how much? One shilling and sixpence. About a farthing an hour, think of it. There was no clock in the house, and many a morning have I dressed hurriedly at about five a.m. and run out into the street enquiring the time lest I should be late for six a.m. Oh what a happy land was England! Later still I wound yarn for cardigan jacket weavers in Curzon Street, and I forget what time I started in the morning, but I know I worked until ten o'clock at night. At that time there was no legal restriction as to what age a child might go to work, nor to the number of hours a day you worked him. I remember I turned the wheel a spell at Colton's Rope-walk which was situated on the very ground occupied by Cooper and Corah's place - St. Margaret's Works. When father came home boozed, there was a row in the house; singing and shouting and abuse: we were all frightened and upset, and I used to be late at work through having my sleep curtailed, and so got the sack. Consequently I worked at a number of places. I was a boot-finisher's sweater, and peeled osier-rods on a plantation close by St. Mary's Mount in the Newarke: here I fell into the canal (or the Soar, I forget which) and was rescued from drowning. Finally I managed to learn something of the Hosiery Trade through being a Rotary Hand's helper .

From: BARCLAY, T. (1934), *Memoirs and Medleys, The Autobiography of a Bottle-Washer*, pages 14 and 15.

CHAPTER 3:

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY (PART I): OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS

PAGE	CONTENTS
61	(a) Introduction
62	(b) The Irish in the local labour force and the emergence of a preponderance of the unskilled from c.1851.
75	(c) The roles of the agricultural and general labourers.
83	(d) Gender roles in occupations, especially in the hosiery and footwear trades.
94	(e) The Irish presence in railways and heavy industries.
98	(f) The upwardly mobile and the middle class Irish.
110	(g) Conclusion

TABLES FOR CHAPTER THREE (PART I)

PAGE

63	Table 1:	Occupations and Gender: All Irish-born Males and Females (aged 20>) at work in Leicester's Irish community - Combined figures for 1841-91 inclusive.
64	Table 2:	Occupations and Gender: All Males and Females (aged 20>) at work in Leicester's Whole Irish community - Combined figures for 1841-91 inclusive.
65	Table 3:	Occupations and Gender: All Males and Females (aged 20>) at work in Leicester's whole Irish community: separated figures for 1841-91 inclusive.
66	Table 4:	Occupations: both Irish-born and Non Irish-born in Leicester's Whole Irish community in work from 1841-1891 inclusive (aged < 20 and 20 >, male and female).
67	Table 5:	Occupations of Irish-born and Whole Irish Community (Males and Females aged 20>) Compared, 1841-1861 inclusive (pie diagrams).
68	Table 6:	Occupations of Irish-born and of Whole Irish Community (Males and Females aged 20 >) Compared, 1871-1891 inclusive (pie diagrams).
69	Table 7:	Irish-related skilled and middle class entries in <i>White's Directory, 1846</i> .
70	Table 8:	Numbers of Irish-born Hawkers, Pedlars and "Chip-Sellers" (Male and Female) 1841-1891.
73	Table 9:	Proportions of General Labourers (age 20 >) as shown in figures for Irish-born males and for all males in Leicester, 1851 to 1871.
73	Table 10:	Occupations in Rank Order of the English and Irish residents of Green St. and Abbey St. in 1851.
78	Table 11:	Numbers of Irish-born Agricultural Labourers in Leicester 1841-1891.
81	Table 12 :	Numbers of Irish-born in Rural Areas of Leicestershire, 1851-1871.
82	Table 13:	Irish-born General Labourers and Semi-Skilled Workers (Male 20 >) in Licester, 1841 to 1891.

85	Table 14:	Occupations of Irish-born Females broadly grouped in rank order, for 1851 and 1861.
86	Table 15:	Occupations of Irish-born Males broadly grouped in rank order, for 1851 and 1861.
89	Table 16:	(a) Irish-born workers (aged 20 >, from <i>Author's Census Database</i>) in the Framework Knitting/Hosiery Trade and the Boot and Shoe Trades, 1841 to 1891.
90		(b) Young Persons (< 20) in the Textile Trades in Boot and Shoe Manufacturing in Leicester, 1841 - 91 (Irish-born and rest of Irish community).
91	Table 17:	Irish-born Framework Knitters and General Textile Workers in Leicestr (aged 20 >), 1841 to 1891.
91	Table 18:	Non-Irish born Framework Knitters and General Textile Workers in Leicester's Whole Irish Community (aged 20 >) 1841 to 1891.
92	Table 19:	Ratios of Men to Women for Irish-born and for All of Leicester in the Hosiery and Footwear Trades in 1881.
93	Table 20:	Males and Females under 20 : Workers and Scholars amongst the Irish-born and the Wider Irish Community, 1841 to 1891.
103	Table 21:	A Proletarian Élite: Irish-born Lodging House Keepers, Marine Store Dealers, and Clothes and Rag traders in Leicester, 1841 to 1891.
106	Table 22:	Rate Payers in the Irish Community in Selected Streets in Leicester in 1847, cross-referenced with the 1841 and 1851 Censuses.
107	Table 23:	Numbers of Irish-born Lodgers in Leicester's Irish Community, 1841 to 1891.
108	Table 24:	Irish social mobility in Leicester from c.1846 to c.1904 from local Directory evidence.

CHAPTER 3

(a) Introduction

This chapter will analyse the Occupation patterns of the Irish in Leicester across the 1841-91 period. It will be seen that, despite their mixed occupations c.1841, the Irish came by 1851 to reflect a preponderance of the unskilled, a pattern which persisted until c.1891, by when the pattern of 1841 re-asserted itself. The roles of the Irish as farm and general labourers, in the developing hosiery and footwear trades, and in heavy industries, is examined. Despite their minimal representation, the upwardly mobile and bourgeois Irish are also analysed.

The earliest reliable evidence as to their occupations lies in the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor in Great Britain*.¹ The Irish had arrived "from want of employment", and had not been requested to come. They were not concentrated in any particular occupation, but involved wherever opportunities existed. They received the going rate of wages if they exercised the necessary capabilities. "Very few, if any" were involved as bricklayers' labourers,(and this remained true in ensuing censuses).²

This minimal picture is supplemented by the data from the 1841 census, which reflects a relatively balanced Irish male workforce, especially when compared with the post "Famine" pattern of the 1851 census.³ As Hickey (1967) pointed out in regard to Cardiff, the profiles of jobs for the pre-"Famine" Irish of 1841 was much more of a cross-section than those exhibited by the 1851 and '61 data, which reflected a preponderance of the unskilled.⁴

The Leicester census data for 1841 to 1891 inclusive has been analysed here, using the modified occupational status classification (Groups I to V, with no sub-groups) based on the Registrar General's descriptors. (See note 3 to Table 4, and Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). As is standard in similar research, the age patterns used are over 20 and under 20, for both males and females (although many youngsters of both sexes were working as early as 8 years of age.⁵ At all censuses there were more Irish-born men than

¹ERICKSON, E.L. (Ed), *1836 Report on the Irish Poor in GB*, App. G., p.156 and 164. The respondent was Fr. Henry Lewis Oxley, OP., of Holy Cross.

²The question assumed that British-born bricklayers labourers were being forced out by Irish competition.

³All census data in this chapter is from this ACD 1841-91, unless otherwise indicated.

⁴HICKEY, J. (1967), *Urban Catholics in England and Wales from 1829*, pp.64-80.

⁵HERSON (1988) on Stafford, for example, uses the 5 major groupings, plus their sub-units, as identified by the generally accepted standard of W.A. Armstrong in 1972. Here, I have opted for the 5 basic categories without identified sub-units, as used by L.H. LEES (1979) p.98 on the Irish in London. Analysis is given in notes and in the text. Both HERSON and

women enumerated as working but this usually ignored womens' heavy domestic responsibilities.

(b) The Irish in the local labour force and the emergence of a preponderance of the unskilled from c.1851

The situation as revealed in 1841 showed that almost half (47 per cent) of Irish-males in Leicester had a skilled occupation (Category III); around a quarter of this group were framework knitters - the staple of Leicester since Tudor times, and a further quarter was made up of tailors, carpenters and joiners, and weavers. There were only 4 agricultural labourers (in group IV), but there was a total of 37 general labourers, just over 35 per cent of the whole catchment. Only 10 males featured in Category II, including 2 school masters, a publican, and a cartographer, "Master of the Maps to Her Majesty," who may well have been employed on an Ordnance Survey project.⁶ Just 2 men qualified for the status of Category I: a surgeon and a civil engineer. There were no Irish-born apprentices listed in 1841.

This general picture is reflected in the evidence of the key local source of the period, *White's Directory* of 1846. The only relevant entries are listed in Table 7 below: Although that the numbers of Irish-born in Leicester by 1851 had virtually doubled, there are proportionately more *Directory* entries reflected for 1841 rather than 1851, which underlines further the conclusion reached above about the nature of the 1841 catchment.⁷

The post-"Famine" picture supplied by the 1851 data gives a very much altered picture of Irish-born male employment patterns in Leicester, mainly at the expense of the skilled men's sector. Whilst a surgeon, two clerics and a soda water manufacturer emerged in group I, and the representation of group II increased to 10 persons, 4 of these were lodging house keepers and another 4 were grocers or victuallers. The skilled trades (group III) contained 12 framework knitters, 7 tailors and 4 bricklayers (68 in total); the semi-skilled and unskilled sector, however, contained 149 persons: 49 of those were agricultural labourers, a further 12 being "chip sellers" or "wood hewers" (ie providers of firewood), with 25 being hawkers. The 2 main trends in the 1851 data were

⁶FINNEGAN (1982) on York in 1851 noted that 29 Irish-born men worked in varying capacities on OS work; this may also account for the civil engineer's presence in Leicester in 1841.

⁷Other Irish entries in *WHITE* (1846) included Henry Quinn, Shoemaker of Woodboy St; Richard Day, publican (see Chapter on prejudice and Daniel O'Connell meeting); James Riley, shoemaker of Bedford St; and William Riley brazier of Causeway Lane (close to the chapel of St. Michael see chapter on RC church growth).

TABLE 1														
OCCUPATIONS AND GENDER: ALL IRISH-BORN MALES AND FEMALES AGED 20 + AT WORK IN LEICESTER'S IRISH COMMUNITY - COMBINED FIGURES FOR 1841 TO 1891 INCLUSIVE														
Reg.Gen Class No.	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		Totals	% ages
I (Red)	2	1.2 9.5	4	0.9 19.0	2	0.4 9.5	2	0.4 9.5	4	1.0 19.0	7	1.8 33.3	21	0.9
II (Black)	20	11.7 6.3	52	12.5 16.3	60	13.2 18.8	56	12.2 17.5	62	15.5 19.4	69	18.2 21.6	319	14.0
III (Blue)	78	45.6 10.0	130	31.2 16.7	121	26.7 15.5	147	32.2 18.9	155	38.7 19.9	147	38.8 18.9	778	34.2
IV (Green)	15	8.8 3.8	102	24.5 25.6	127	28.0 31.9	61	13.3 15.3	60	15.0 15.1	33	8.7 8.3	398	17.5
V (Orange)	56	32.7 7.35	129	30.9 16.9	143	31.6 18.8	191	41.8 25.1	120	29.9 15.8	122	32.2 16.0	761	33.4
TOTALS	171		417		453		457		401		378		2277	

- NOTES: (1) the 1st number, (at bottom LHS of each box) = the proportion of Irish-born in that particular class at that census year.
- (2) the 2nd number (at bottom RHS of each box) = % age in that class at that census compared with the whole 1841-91 catchment, in that class.
- (3) the colours indicated in the 1st column correspond to those used in the pie charts, q.v.
- (4) see Note 3 to Table 4 re Registrar General's classifications.

TABLE 2

OCCUPATIONS AND GENDER: ALL MALES AND FEMALES AGED 20 + AT WORK IN LEICESTER'S WHOLE
IRISH COMMUNITY - COMBINED FIGURES FOR 1841 TO 1891 INCLUSIVE

Reg.Gen Class No.	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		Totals	% ages
I (Red)	2 0.8	7.1	4 0.8	14.2	2 0.3	7.1	4 0.7	14.2	6 1.2	21.4	10 2.1	35.7	28	1.0
II (Black)	28 11.0	6.0	66 13.5	14.1	92 15.5	19.6	87 15.3	18.6	96 18.6	20.5	99 20.5	21.1	468	16.1
III (Blue)	133 52.6	12.9	170 34.7	16.5	202 34.1	19.6	162 28.4	15.7	192 37.3	18.6	170 35.3	16.5	1029	35.6
IV (Green)	18 7.1	4.3	97 19.8	23.0	132 22.3	31.3	67 11.7	15.9	70 13.6	16.6	37 8.7	8.8	421	14.5
V (Orange)	72 28.5	7.5	153 31.2	16.0	164 27.7	17.1	250 43.8	26.1	151 29.3	15.8	166 34.4	17.4	956	32.8
TOTALS	253		490		592		570		515		482		2902	

- NOTES: (1) the 1st number, (at bottom LHS of each box) = the proportion in that particular class at that census year.
(2) the 2nd number (at bottom RHS of each box) = % age in that class at that census compared with the whole 1841-91 catchment in that class.
(3) the colours indicated in the 1st column correspond to those used in the pie charts, q.v.
(4) see Note 3 to Table 4 re Registrar General's classifications.

TABLE 3

OCCUPATIONS AND GENDER : ALL MALES AND FEMALES AGED 20 + AT WORK IN LEICESTER'S WHOLE IRISH COMMUNITY - SEPARATED FIGURES FOR 1841 TO 1891 INCLUSIVE								
Reg. Gen's Class No.	Gender	1841	1581	1861	1871	1881	1891	
I (Red)	M	2+0=2	4+0=4	2+0=2	2+2=4	4+2=6	7+3=10	
	F	0+0=0	0+0=0	0+0=0	0+0=0	0+0=0	0+0=0	
II (Black)	M	10+6=16	45+12=57	43+31=74	42+27=69	42+27=69	52+19=71	
	F	10+2=12	7+2=9	17+1=18	14+4=18	20+7=27	17+11=28	
III (Blue)	M	64+48=112	68+50=118	58+39=97	77+68=145	78+93=171	87+121=208	
	F	14+7=21	62+34=96	63+38=101	70+64=134	77+66=143	60+88=148	
IV (Green)	M	10+2=12	65+9=74	98+3=101	26+2=28	45+2=49	19+3=22	
	F	5+1=+6	18+5=23	29+2=31	35+4=39	15+6=21	14+1=15	
V (Orange)	M	48+13=61	84+19=103	83+7=90	126+35=161	81+22=103	80+27=107	
	F	8+3=11	45+5=50	60+14=74	65+24=89	39+9=48	42+17=59	

- NOTES (1) All figures exclude <19s; NIB=Non-Irish-born.
- (2) 1st figure in each box = Irish-born; 2nd figure=NIB; 3rd figure=first and second combined
- (3) Each of the main Registrar General Classifications is divided horizontally: upper box for male entries; lower box for female entries.
- (4) see Note 3 to Table 4 re Registrar General's classifications.

TABLE 4

**BOTH IRISH-BORN AND NON-IRISH BORN IN WORK IN
LEICESTER'S IRISH COMMUNITY, 1841-91**

YEAR	MALE		FEMALE	
	<20	20>	<20	20>
1841	14/105 11/40	69/72 137/142	6/98 10/39	13/39 42/144
1851	100/170 94/119	92/95 269/277	106/195 56/80	46/96 138/258
1861	127/212 49/60	83/83 286/289	120/202 56/70	55/97 173/284
1871	224/340 33/41	126/131 281/284	199/367 51/59	95/150 191/311
1881	191/287 32/36	146/150 248/253	200/287 28/34	88/142 150/263
1891	178/252 28/31	173/184 248/250	177/236 27/32	117/195 137/237

NOTES: (1) Includes all second generation Irish children.

(2) *Irish-born = lower figure in each box.

*Non-Irish-born = upper figure in each box.

(3) *Registrar General's Social Groups:*

I. Professionals, large employers, top-ranking administrators. (Red)

II. Shopkeepers, clerks, teachers, lower ranking administrators, small business people. (black)

III. Skilled workers. (blue)

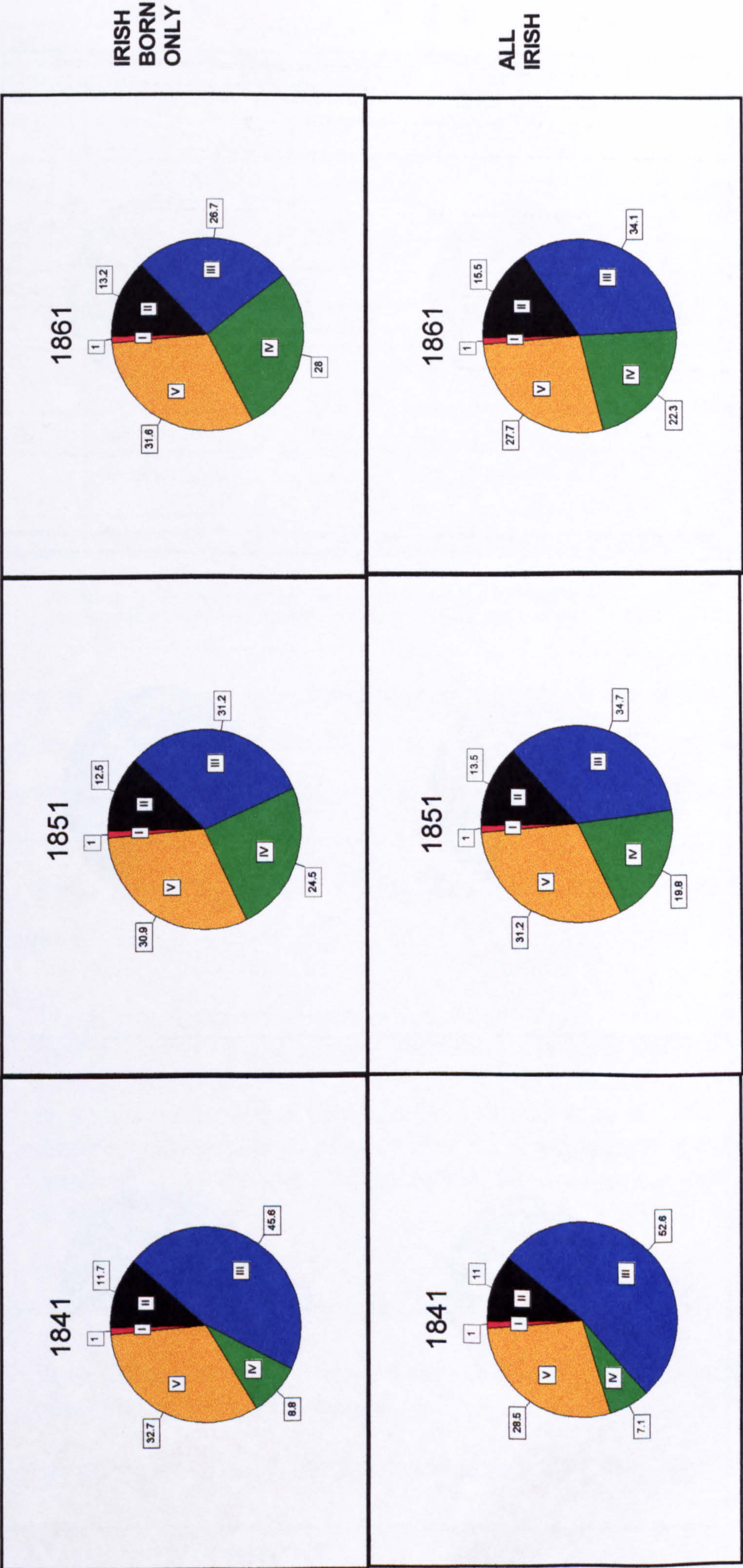
IV. Semi-skilled workers. (green)

V. Unskilled workers. (orange)

(as used by LEES, 1979)

The colour codes for groups I-V refer to pie diagrams on Tables 5 and 6.

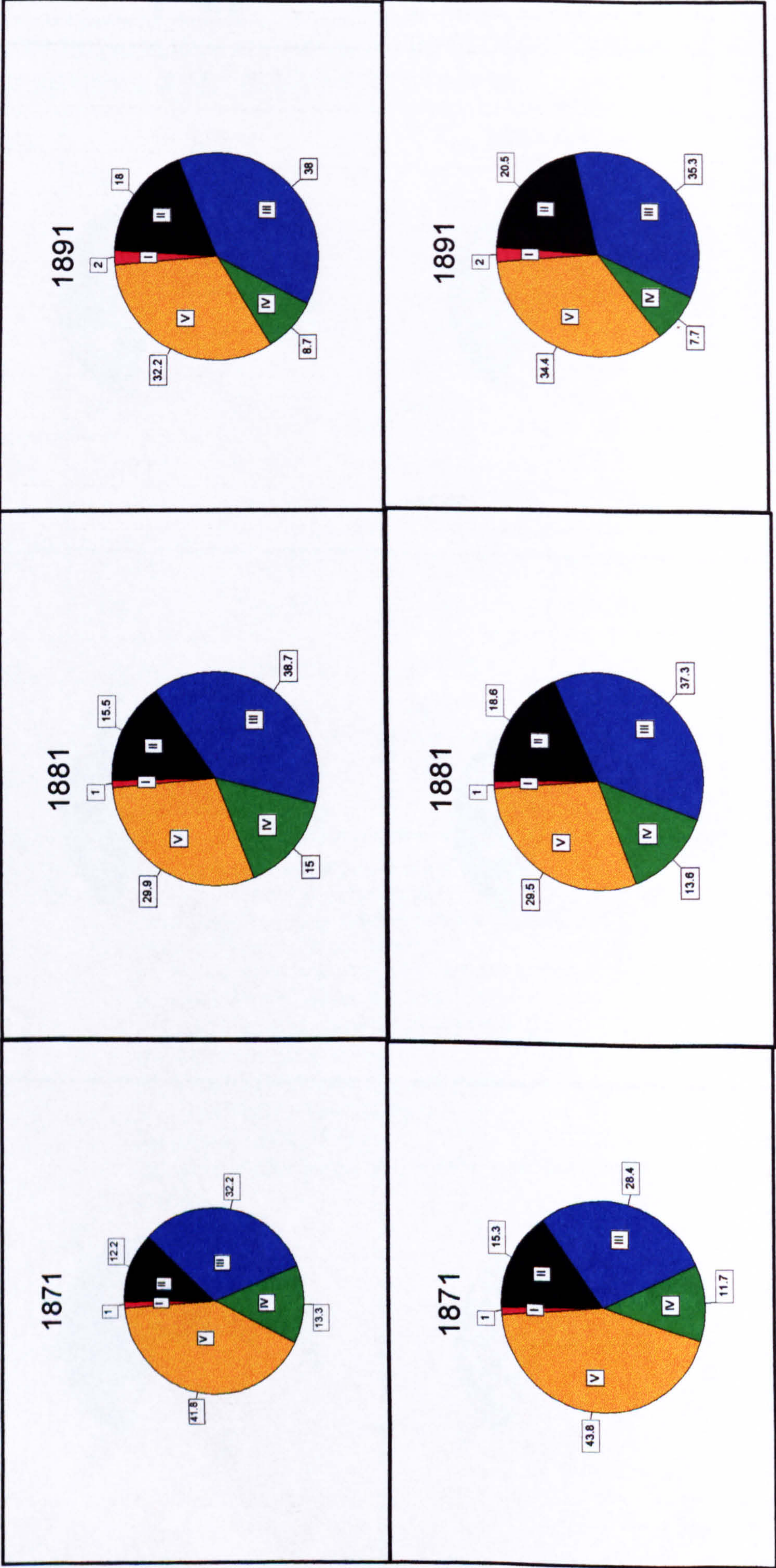
TABLE 5	OCCUPATIONS OF IRISH-BORN AND OF WHOLE IRISH COMMUNITY (MALES & FEMALES AGED 20+) COMPARED, 1841 TO 1861 INCLUSIVE (Source: Author's Census Database) (See Table 6 for data for 1871 to 1891)
----------------	--



NB: See Note 3 to Table 4 re Registrar General's classifications.

TABLE 6

OCCUPATIONS OF IRISH-BORN AND OF WHOLE IRISH COMMUNITY (MALES & FEMALES AGED 20+) COMPARED, 1871 TO 1891 INCLUSIVE (Source: Author's Census Database) (See Table 5 for data for 1841 to 1861)



NB: See Note 3 to Table 4 re Registrar General's classifications

women enumerated as working but this usually ignored womens' heavy domestic responsibilities.

TABLE 7

IRISH-RELATED SKILLED AND MIDDLE-CLASS ENTRIES IN <i>WHITE'S DIRECTORY OF 1846</i>					
Ethnicity	Name	Occupation	Address	Census of 1841	Census of 1851
Irish Wife	John James COX	Pipemaker (clay)	Bedford St. (P.195)	✓ p.7	✓ p.10
Scots or Irish	James ANDERSON	Surgeon	94 Churchgate (p.198)	✓ p.11	
Teacher (at St Patricks later)	John MEE	Teacher	RC School, Wellington St. (p.169)	✓ p.20	
Irish	James MITCHELL & Son	Teacher	Silver St. (p.169)	✓ p.22	
Irish	James CAIN	Cordwainer; boot & shoe maker	Church Gate (p.172)	✓ p.20	
Irish wife	John TAYLOR	Tailor	Sanvey Gate (p.198)	—	✓ p.41
Irish	George WEBB Jnr	Manager, Leics Banking Co.	Granby St. (p.171)	—	✓ p.41
Irish	John FENNING	Butter Dealer	81 Belgrave Gate (p.137)	✓ p.9.	✓ p.16

NOTES: (1) Source for 1841/51 = ACD.

(2) Source for *White's Directory of Leicester, 1846* = LCRO/Leic Libraries.

(3) The surgeon's 1841 entry is unclear on birthplace; could be either Ireland or Scotland.

then the large increase in agricultural labourers and the notable decrease in those in skilled occupations, reduced by a third from 1841. The 1851 figures were to set the pattern for the next two decades, and this is confirmed by the internal evidence of both Barclay and Heinrick.

Speaking of his parents c.1855, Barclay showed the typicality of their occupations:

We were commanded to remain shut in, father and mother being out most of the day earning a living. Father knew no trade and to dig was not able: he collected rags and bones, rag-bag on back, without as much as a truck (or handcart): mother worked at a rag-shop or marine store dealer's, or she got blocks of wood from the woodyards, chopped them small and sold the chips in pen'norths for fire-lighting round the neighbouring streets.⁸

He was strongly aware that the Irish migrants were "trade-less":

Stick selling, mat-making, rag and bone dealing and farm labouring; no possibility of learning a handicraft.

He noted that most of the Irish had "no regular trade;" they were coming to an

⁸BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.4 and 11. The significance of marine store dealing is discussed below.

employment situation “where labourers are already plentiful;” and they knew little or nothing of England’s “trades and callings.” As a result:

Those that couldn’t get navvying and farmers work, took to “chip-chopping,” “mat-making,” and “swag.” A swag basket is a hawker’s basket, and is filled with tapes, matches, cotton, laces, buttons, pins, and so forth.⁹

Barclay’s observations are confirmed by the judgement of the census enumerator of 1861, who described the occupations of those dwelling in the Abbey Street-Green Street area thus:

This district comprised chiefly of the lower order of the Irish such as lodging house keepers, pedlars, rag collectors, bone collectors, hawkers of small wares, beggars etc, and it is difficult to get at the proper description of some of the parties.¹⁰

TABLE 8 NUMBERS OF IRISH-BORN HAWKERS, PEDLARS AND “CHIP” (FIRE-WOOD) SELLERS, MALE AND FEMALE, 1841 TO 1891				
	Age 20 +		Aged U=20	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1841	8	1	---	---
1851	31	9	17	5
1861	12	10	2	4
1871	15	6	1	---
1881	4	3	---	---
1891	6	4	---	---
Source: <i>ACD</i>				

Further confirmation came from the local Unitarian missionary, Rev Dare, a keen critic of the Irish newcomers who congregated in “nightly rendezvous after their wandering for rags and bones, and such things - or for the sale of wood in all directions.”¹¹ (See

⁹BARCLAY, T. Leicester slums - Abbey St. and Green St. in *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII. p.149.

¹⁰1861 Census; Leicester, Reel 100, ED 58. The rather desperate life-style of “Bone-Grubbers and Rag-Gatherers” is explored in *Mayhew’s London* (1851, Quennel Edtn; p.201-206).

¹¹DARE, Rev. J 7th *RLDMS* (1852), p.9.

Table 8).

Indeed, the "sale of wood" by "chip sellers" fired the Rev. Dare to several of his more powerful indictments of Irish trickery and marginal criminality across a period of 10 years, 1852 to 1861. He described the general approach of Irish "timber merchants" thus:

"Timber Merchants." These, chiefly Irish, split wood for sale and hawk it from door to door. The children sent to sell it are designedly turned out shoeless and in rags to secure purchasers or charity; they are tasked as to the quantity they must sell; if possible they are a worse description of beggars than the classes already enumerated.¹²

In 1861, Dare strongly denounced Irish fraudsters: "They came from Ireland and began business in the 'wood line,' which is generally a pretence for indolent and irregular habits." After being provided with 2 hundredweight of wood on credit, "they then gave up wood selling and left the debt unpaid."¹³ Their dishonesty and chicanery were underscored anecdotally:

Some idea may be formed of the low cunning of the Irish from the following fact which came under the notice of my informant, who keeps a wood yard, and often supplies these people with wood which they split up for sale in small quantities. An Irishman, one day, came for a certain quantity of wood for which he wanted trust. He tried every art of persuasion, stating how much it would accommodate him -how he was foodless and penniless, &c., &c., - but as the wood merchant was inexorable, and he found if no money there would be no wood, he asked "if the mistress could lend him just a pair of scissors?" The scissors being produced he proceeded to take off his waistcoat and then carefully opened a pipe like formation in the inside of the back of the garment. From this secret hoard he produced from four others a sovereign to pay for the wood. On being remonstrated with, for telling such an hypocritical tale, he merely replied he didn't want to "disturb the craters," and he could soon have turned the wood into money that should have paid for it. And thus there is no believing any of their statements.¹⁴

That there was an ethnic factor in job patterns is evident from a close look at the English and Irish residents' occupations for Abbey Street and Green Street (see Table

¹²DARE, Rev. J. 10th RLDMS, (1855), p.13.

¹³DARE, Rev. J. 16th RLDMS, (1861), p.8.

¹⁴DARE, Rev. J. 9th RLDMS, (1854). There is an element of sarcastic wit in the wood chopper's insincere insistence on not wishing to "disturb the craters"; there is also, in the secreted gold, an echo of the migration account of the Geraghty-Sharretts (see above).

10). The juxtaposition of occupations in order of "preference" shows a concentration of more skilled trades at the top of the English workers' list, whilst the less skilled work features most prominently in the column of Irish residents. (It is interesting, however that framework knitting is not at the bottom of the Irish columns; see section on that trade). Tables 8 and 9 bear out Barclay's comment; Table 8 shows clearly that street-selling peaked, as would be expected, in around 1851, with famine disorientation at its most impactful. It is interesting that females were always less well represented, and that virtually no under-20s were involved in this unskilled sector by 1871, an indication of opportunities offered by compulsory education and in the hosiery and footwear trades.

Barclay's opinions are reflected in the 1851 and '61 census data. In 1851 amongst Irish males, for example, there were 25 hawkers, 12 wood choppers and 49 agricultural workers; a decade later no less than 82 farm labourers were enumerated, together with 52 general labourers, comprising together around 47 per cent of the total Irish-born male workforce. In 1871, the situation for males was still dire: 126 of 273 males over 20 were general labourers, although the agricultural sector had shrunk to just 13; together (139) these made up 51% of the Irish male workforce. (refer Tables 5, 6, 8 and 9).

Those men in the skilled sector declined from representing 47 per cent in 1841 to 25 per cent in 1851 and just 20 per cent in 1861. By 1871, an element of recovery had set in in this sector, when 28 per cent of men were in skilled occupations; this recovery continued into 1881 and 1891, when levels of 31 per cent and 35 per cent respectively were recorded. Even so, the 1891 figure of 35 per cent was still markedly less than the 1841 figure of 47 per cent. (Refer Tables 1 to 6 inclusive).

The mixed picture of skilled and unskilled Irish exhibited by the 1841 data was reflected in the development of Mount St Bernard's monastery. Irish labour was used for its construction; the need for an ordinary church arose from the presence of the Irish Catholic construction workers. The 1841 census for Whitwick showed Irishmen working at the monastery site as architect, bailiff, tailor, gardener, wheelwright and locksmith, together with 4 agricultural labourers and one "domestick." By 1851, there were 14 farm workers, 5 servants, 5 labourers and a "cow boy", all Irish-born, at the abbey.¹⁵

¹⁵ACD, Whitwick, 1841 and 1851 p.27 (HO.107. 5961/5971) and HO. 107.2084. This church opened in 1837, doubling as a school until 1843.

TABLE 9	PROPORTIONS OF GENERAL LABOURERS (AGE 20+) AS SHOWN IN FIGURES FOR IRISH-BORN MALES AND FOR ALL MALES IN LEICESTER 1851-1871	
	% age of Irish-born Gen. Labs	% age of Gen. Labs in All Leicester
1851	31.6	4.1
1861	29.2	3.8
1871	46.0	4.7
NOTES:	(1) Figures for Irish-born are from <i>ACD</i> . (2) Figures for all Leicester are from <i>Census</i> summaries (see Bibliog).	

TABLE 10	OCCUPATIONS IN RANK ORDER OF THE ENGLISH AND IRISH RESIDENTS OF ABBEY ST. AND GREEN ST. IN 1851.	
Order of Precedence	Irish Residents	English Residents
1	Agricultural Labourer	Framework Knitter
2	Chip Seller	Glove Stitcher
3	Hawker	Seamstress
4	Seamstress	Bricklayer's Labourer
5	Rag & Bone Collector	Shoe Maker
6	Framework Knitter	Agricultural Labourer
7	Washerwoman/Charwoman	Blacksmith
8	Matmaker	Coal Dealer
9	Bricklayer's Labourer	Gardener
10	Glove Stitcher	Hawker

A useful contemporary viewpoint came from Hugh Heinrick in 1872, during his tour of Irish communities in England. He contextualised the Leicester Irish against the national picture:

Proceeding northward, we first met at Leicester with evidences of that Irish life which afterwards becomes such a marked and powerful element in the population of the midland and northern towns. Here, as chiefly elsewhere in England, our countrymen bear the brunt of toil, and clear away the ruder obstructions in advance of the great army of labour. With few exceptions they are literally the hewers of wood and drawers of water. The English working man in the towns is generally skilled in some craft, or attached to some calling. The Irishman comes unskilled to England, and hence his destiny has doomed him to the most dreary

drudgery.¹⁶

Heinrick suggests that the situation of the Irish in Leicester was in certain respects typical of the community in the midlands and the north: most of the Irish were in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, having arrived with inappropriate skills or experiences for Britain. Both Barclay as local observer, and Heinrick with his national overview, stress the importance of these factors for the life chances of Leicester's Irish community. Heinrick did, however, note that there were "exceptional cases" which he described as "striking and creditable", and that there existed "a limited number who have risen from the ranks of labour."¹⁷ Heinrick averred that "the wage rate is good," and that if it had not been for the "one vice of drunkenness which degrades and disgraces our people all through England - the social condition of the Irish in Leicester would rapidly improve."¹⁸ The pattern emerging in 1881 and 1891 showed a slowly increasing middle class element.

Class I in 1881, barely 2 per cent of the total, contained 2 clergymen (one Catholic and one Protestant) a workhouse Master and a doctor; a decade later Class I reflected 3 per cent of the total of Irish-born males over 20 in work, with 3 doctors, 1 dentist, and a priest listed. A similar growth pattern existed in regard to Class II, which comprised 19 per cent in 1881 and 21 per cent in 1891. In 1881 this group was composed of printers, small businessmen, military pensioners and clerks; in 1891, it contained "independents" and pensioners, tax officials, small businessmen and managers.¹⁹

In these last two censuses, changing trends were very evident in relation to Class III, the skilled sector, where representation increased from 28 per cent in 1871, to 31 per cent in 1881, and to 35 per cent by 1891. The main pattern was the decline in domestic framework knitting (which by c.1875 was largely industrialised), and the corresponding increase in opportunities in industrialised boot and shoe manufacturing. The Irish were participating in this major shift in Leicester's industrial pattern. In both 1881 and '91

¹⁶HEINRICK, H. (1872), p.39.

¹⁷Possibly Heinrick met Barclay, or others, with self-confident and "educated" viewpoints.

¹⁸HEINRICK (1872), p. 39. His identification of a small minority of upwardly mobile Irish fits well with the evidence (discussed above) in the 1871 census.

¹⁹The opportunities presented by the British civil service and government bureaucracies are perhaps most well-known re Michael Collins, London GPO desk man turned IRA leader; Barclay, who joined the Gaelic League in London in the late 1890's, at the height of the Irish cultural renaissance, remarked on those fellow members "employed in the Customs, or the Post Office;" *Memoirs*, p.96.

only 1 Irish male described himself as a framework knitter; in contrast, in the same two years there were 35 and 38 involved respectively in the footwear industry. In 1894, Denvir noted of Leicester that: "the staple industry is boot and shoe making, a branch of trade in which Irishmen are tolerably numerous in most places."²⁰ This rather reserved judgement suggests a community still mainly perceived as working class, yet there was some limited evidence of Irish upward social mobility; but on the whole the community remained rooted in the working class until the post-1944 social and educational reforms and a wider socio-economic spread of in-migrants from c.1970. Almost a century later, sufficient community self-confidence amongst first and second generation Irish began to alter the overall picture presented by the Irish in Leicester in 1891.

(c) The Roles of the Agricultural and General Labourer

There is ample evidence of Irish involvement in agriculture in Leicester from at least as early as c.1800; by c.1900 it was in general and steady decline. Redford (1926/76) described the general context within which Leicestershire was situated between c.1800-1850; the census data gives some indication of numerical representation; certain inferences can be drawn from the evidence relating to neighbouring Lincolnshire; and lastly, oral history and biographical testimony help to round out the picture.²¹

Redford's evidence portrays Irish involvement in agricultural life in the eastern and east midlands counties. He described Irish migrants in 1774 reaping in Hertfordshire, Huntingdon, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire; Irish (and Scottish) casuals worked in the "Midlands hosiery districts." He described how Irish and English merged their economic interests as mowers and haymakers respectively around Middlesex and Hertfordshire, a pattern which lasted until c1875. Redford suggests that Irish farmworkers (as opposed to urban workers) "earned a good character as being sober, well conducted, and inoffensive, living hard and labouring hard." Yet, throughout the 1830's, there were rural riots, which started in Cambridgeshire and

²⁰DENVIR, J. (1894), p.430; the trend was county-wide.

²¹See O'DOWD, A; Sweeten that to your Liking - Irish Seasonal Workers in Fact and Fiction; in *Folk Life - A Journal of Ethnological Studies*, Vol. XX, 1981-82, pp.76-90; she itemises 2 main sources; documentary material and traditional material (ie folklore and oral history). These, and other sources, are used here. She includes a Mayo labourer whose evidence to the 1835 *Report on the Poorer Classes in Ireland* underlined the importance and extent of begging, a factor commented on adversely by Joseph Dare in Leicester; see section re-poverty.

Lincolnshire, and developed later in Leicestershire, as a result of resentment at Irish intrusion and competition.²² It is hard to distinguish whether friction was due to economic competition, to prejudice, or to male machismo; often several elements seem to have been present, as Leicestershire evidence indicates.²³

The census material can assist in two ways: by detailing directly those involved in farm labouring, and by indicating the proportion of those so doing in relation to the total numbers of Irish in the whole county. In the early years of the century, before the massive urban expansion, some towns were still sufficiently small in size to permit migrants to commute daily to the countryside. York still contained vestigial large urban gardens, and orchards from earlier centuries as well as new outlying market gardens. Leicester figured on both these counts.²⁴ Joseph Dare recorded in 1852 a visit he had made "at the request of a benevolent gentleman, so see to the requirements of an Irishman, who had been taken ill in one of his fields."²⁵

An early pull factor existed in the attractive wage rates (compared with Irish rates and job opportunities) on offer in the Leicestershire area. In Rutland in 1794, wage rates were consistent throughout the area and it was noted that:

A great many farmers board their labourers in hay time and harvest; if they are hired for the whole time then their wage is from 6 to 8s. a week, and if only for the harvest month, from 34 to 38s. for the time.²⁶

In Leicestershire itself the wage rate situation was rather more complex; even so, by c.1807, all the rates had improved (eg in piece work, the rate for threshing had increased from 1s. 0d. per quarter in 1786 to around 2s. 6d. in 1807). As well as field work, there were opportunities for male and female farm servants.²⁷ The Irish worked in Leicestershire across both categories. Push factors operated also; the 1836 *Report* on the Irish poor instanced low Irish wage rates, bitter poverty, and the resulting

²² REDFORD, A. (1926/76), *Labour Migration in England 1800-1880*, pp. 133, 137, 143, 145 and 162.

²³ See incidents cited in crime chapter between Irish and English agricultural labourers in Leicestershire, and similar examples are commonplace.

²⁴ See LCRO reproduction map of Leicester in 1828, for numerous green spaces; and BARCLAY (1934), p.61: "the whole space between Dorset St. and the Belgrave turn was, about 1885, occupied by gardens." See FINNEGAN (1982) on Irish in York and their annual involvement in local chicory cultivation by daily commuting from the city, pp.28-32.

²⁵ DARE, Rev. J., *7th RLDMS 1852*, p.9.

²⁶ LCRO; 'Gen. View of the Agric. of the Co. of Rutland by John Crutchley c.1794; Finch Mss; pp.16-17. In 1861, in Lincs, weekly wages averaged 12s. to 15s, compared with just 6s. In 5 Irish counties (including Mayo); see BARBER, S, *Irish Migrant Agricultural Labourers in 19th Century Lincolnshire*, in *Saothar*, No. 8, 1982, p.19.

²⁷ LCRO; *Review and Abstracts of the County Reports to the Board of Agriculture* by William MARSHALL (1818); re Leics. p.220.

mendicancy as factors pushing Irish people into seasonal migrational farm work in Britain.²⁸

In 1845 the *Chronicle* reported:

IRISH REAPERS - While employed in this country at the time of harvest these persons generally earn from 1/8d. to 2/6d. a day and from their skill and industry in plying the rake and the sickle, they well deserve their wages.²⁹

It is clear that Leicestershire had become used to a Hibernian workforce prior to at least 1837, when the *Chronicle* carried a brief trade notice referring to a temporary shortage of Irish labourers in the south. Barber noticed the same drop in Irish numbers in Lincolnshire c.1833, and put it down to the effects of new farm machinery. Leicester presumably was similarly affected.³⁰ The implication was that Irish labour had, probably, first made its appearance felt in the 1820's.³¹

The most informative local source lies in the memoirs of the Ellis family, Quakers who lived at a prosperous farm (still standing) in Beaumont Leys (now a suburb of Leicester). John Ellis was a successful large-scale dairy farmer who possessed the entrepreneurial skills necessary to simultaneously invest in local railway expansion.³² A daughter, Eliza, kept a useful diary of farm life pre-1850; the Irish arrived annually, "as regular as swallows," the Quin family from Roscommon doing so until they were too old to undertake the journey from Ireland (see full quotation on title page). In particular, the Ellis memoirs pay tribute to the diligence and honesty of these Irish migrant workers. One, Patrick O'Gara, became a permanent servant, being accepted, literally, into the bosom of the family, attending the family Bible readings every Sunday evening.³³

O'Gara, who "lived in", was not a lone example of an Irish servant in Leicestershire farms. In 1881, a group of 7 elderly Irish, all except one aged 70 or over, and described as "farm servants", were inhabitants of the Leicester workhouse.³⁴

²⁸ 3rd Rep't Royal Cmssn on Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland, *Parliamentary Papers*, XXX (1836).

²⁹ LC, 4 Oct. 1845.

³⁰ LC, 16 Sept. 1837. See BARBER, S., in *Saothar*, No. 8, 1982, p.11.

³¹ O'DOWD, A (1981-2) and others point to the importance of cheaper, easier and more frequent travel post-1816 as a result of new steamer ferry services.

³² THIRSK, J. *Agrarian History, 1540-1950*, in *VCHL*, Vol. II (1954) p.231 + 237.

³³ ELLIS, M. (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, p.11 + 12. As late as 1891, a 36 year old Irish farm worker, Martin Cassidy, was 1 of 3 workers on Daniel Brig's farm at Beaumont Leys; author's census database (mss. item). See also Flora THOMPSON (1939), *Lark Rise to Candleford*, who describes similar regular annual visits by a family called O'Hara, pp.257-8 and DENVIR (1894) on same pattern in Lincs, p.153-4; 412-4.

³⁴ ACD, 1881, Reel 128, Leicester Workhouse, p.47.

Predictably, almost all were from Connaught (3 from Galway, 2 from Sligo, 1 each from Roscommon and Dublin). A 15 year old boy living in Lower Green St. in 1861, John Coleman, whose Irish father was an agricultural labourer, was enumerated as a "farmer's boy." At Tilton (12 miles from Leicester), Michael O'Bern, an Irish-born widower of 48, was a cowman.³⁵ As well as the descriptive incidents about Irishmen with their sickles (refer Crime Chapter), an incident in 1854 highlighted the Hibernian workforce at Wing in Rutland, when an Irish reaper dropped a broken match which almost led to the destruction of 13 acres of standing wheat.³⁶

The censuses detail those Irish agricultural labourers living in the city:

TABLE 11		Numbers of Irish-born Agricultural Labourers Living in Leicester 1841-91				
Year	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
No.	4	49	82	12	37	8
Source: ACD, 1841 to 1891.						

The massive growth in 1851 and 1861 is to be expected;³⁷ the steep decline in 1871 is perhaps partly explained by Hugh Heinrich's comment of 1872:

The wandering Irish labourers in the agricultural districts have become an extinct institution. Landlord law and the "Crowbar Brigade" have made the source from whence they were supplied a desert. The groups that did the hay and harvest work for the English farmer and for a period enlivened their dull homesteads are no more to be met with, or are seen only like late and deserted birds of passage who have been left behind by the flock. Even in agricultural England we can see traces of the ruin inflicted on the Irish people by the "curse and crime" of the alien rule.³⁸

Whilst a recovery of sorts operated in the 1880's, by the turn of the century a marked and permanent (though not total) decline locally had set in; around 1891-1901, "the flow of Irish labourers, making annual visits at harvest time, dried up for lack of demand."³⁹

³⁵ACD, 1881, Reel 90, (Mss. Item).

³⁶LC, 23 Dec. 1854; clay pipes were being smoked.

³⁷O'DOWD, A (1981-2), *Sweeten That*, p.78; cited O'GRADA re the 1860's seeing the greatest number of seasonal workers (100,000) entering GB annually; in *seasonal Migration and Post-Famine Adjustment in the West of Ireland*, in *Studia Hibernica*, 13, (1973), p.61.

³⁸HEINRICK, H. (1872); (Ed. O'DAY, 1990); *A Survey of the Irish in England*, p.114.

³⁹THIRSK, J., *Agrarian History, 1540-1950*, in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed)(1954), *VCHL*, Vol. II, p.250. DENVIR, J. (1894), p.412 noted a "slight increase" in numbers entering Lincs also in 1885, which possibly benefited Leicester.

The Leicester figures for Irish seasonal migrants seem to partly buck the major trends identified by J.H. JOHNSON (1965), who argued from statistics that "the Great Famine of the 1840's, which struck the poorer sections of the rural population with particular severity, brought a sharp decline in the movement." If 1847 is accepted as the worst famine year, with gradual recovery continuing until c.1852, then the county figure of 63 for 1851 seems generous. Johnson notes that the decline continued throughout the century, with odd upward fluctuations related to agricultural market forces, mechanization and British rural depopulation. Again, Leicestershire defied Johnson's general end-of-century trend, with a sharp decline from 1881 to 1891, and no apparent turn of the century recovery.⁴⁰

Both Leicester memoirs and oral history accounts refer to migrant farm labourers with Roscommon roots, which links well with the census evidence. Virtually all Leicester references across 1851-91 refer to just three counties equally: Roscommon, Galway and Mayo. These three counties also feature very prominently in criteria used by Johnson (1967) who compared by county for temporary labourers (c.1834), for temporary emigrants (c.1900), for migratory agricultural labourers, by poor law unions, and in relation to the Congested Districts (c.1902). Connacht clearly supplied virtually all of those seasonal agricultural migrants visiting Leicestershire, in line with national patterns.⁴¹

A residual element of migrant Irish did continue to come to Leicestershire for farm work, as oral history accounts testify. In the mid-1890's, gangs from Roscommon travelled by train to the borders of Leicestershire and Warwickshire (around Anstey) and worked their way back across Leicestershire farms, cropping potatoes, mangolds, beets and turnips, and living in barns. As late as c.1910, Irish worked at Great Casterton (and during World War II there was a temporary revival in respect of the east midlands sugar beet crop).⁴²

⁴⁰JOHNSON, J.H., *Harvest Migration from 19th Century Ireland*, in Trans. of Inst. of Brit. Geographers, Reprint No. 41 (1967), p.97-112. Johnson echoes Heinrich's point; "the social groups which supplied the migrants were decreasing in size." p.98.

⁴¹See JOHNSON, J.H. (1967), *Harvest Migration*; p.100-107. In the Leicester data only those labourers clearly enumerated as farm or agricultural were included; none featured for 1871; 22 were identified. BARBER (1982) on Lincs. noted that the Irish there in 1851 came from Mayo, Sligo, Fermanagh and Roscommon (mainly Mayo). DENVIR, J. (1894), p.412, stressed the Mayo-Lincolnshire axis and its long history.

⁴²ISW/OHA; interview on 27.12.1990 with Thomas G. Finneran, of Solihull, re his father, born 1880, near Ballinasloe, who came to the midlands aged 14; HASBACH, W. (1908), *A Hist. Of the English Agric. Labourer*, notes Irish women field workers in Warks, and also low wages and living standards for agricultural labourers in Leics. by 1908. Farmer King of Gt. Casterton used Irish labour, cited by Ms. J. Bicker of the Vaughan Archaeological & Hist. Soc. Leic; ISW/OHA interview with Mrs B Greasley (summer 1988) re-beet crops. See also JACKSON, J.A. (1963), p.100 + 104: 1,398 men from S. Ireland were in seasonal sugar-beet work as late as 1947.

Leicestershire therefore did host Irish agricultural workers, but in declining numbers after c.1870. The *Agricultural Commission Report* of 1867 highlighted the relevant factors. Western Leicestershire had extensive coal mining, as well as stocking-making and seaming; the eastern portion was mainly laid down in grass, apart from an arable sector in the Vale of Belvoir. Labour opportunities were therefore limited from the outset, for both indigenous and migrant labour. As a result of these factors, and the prevalence of small farms throughout the county, few required private gangs.⁴³ Leicestershire was therefore of limited attraction compared with Lincolnshire and Warwickshire.

As well as transient labourers, there were, of course, substantial Irish elements who settled permanently into the Leicestershire rural situation. In 1851, there were in total 1,734 Irish-born enumerated as Leicestershire residents; 857 lived outside the county town, (in comparison with 877 in Leicester itself). It is possible to break these figures down (See Table 12).

Apart from in the county town, and in the larger market towns such as Hinckley, Loughborough and Ashby, the Irish presence in 1851 was diluted, being less than one per cent (0.75) across the whole county. In the village of Quorn, for example, in 1851, there were just 5 Irish-born of a total of 1,899 people.⁴⁴ All were female, and related by marriage to their households; three were seamstresses by occupation. At Exton village (Rutland), there was just one Irish-born woman, married to an agricultural labourer, with 2 children.⁴⁵ In Rearsby in 1851, there were just 5 Irish-born enumerated: 3 females, a young servant, and a married framework knitter with 6 children.⁴⁶ This sparse representation is reflected, for example, in the slow and insubstantial growth of Catholic structures outside the main towns of the county. By 1891, with an Irish presence of 1,697 in the county, the representation of Irish relatively was much less than in 1851, with the increase in the size of the county's population considered.

Whilst agricultural labouring involved some minimal skills, the same could not be said of general labouring, which was omnipresent, however insecure. (See Table 13). Agricultural and general labouring have been combined here for analysis.⁴⁷ There

⁴³P.P. *Royal Commission on Agriculture* (1867), p.75; Mr Stanhope's reports.

⁴⁴Private Database set up by Hist. Dept at Quorn Rawlins School; J. Kelly.

⁴⁵Private Database at Rutland Museum; P. Drinkall, ref. 00221.

⁴⁶ACD, p.52.

⁴⁷This is for simplification; ag. labs. were semi-skilled; category IV does include a minority (in overall terms) of other semi-skilled men.

security.⁴⁸ In fact, Table 13 indicates that labouring and semi-skilled work was more prevalent in 1861 (at 63.7 per cent) than it was in 1871, when it approximated to the 1851 figure. Taking the census figures for Leicester for 1851, '61 and '71, the

TABLE 13		IRISH-BORN GENERAL LABOURERS AND SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS (MEN 20+) IN LEICESTER 1841-91										
YEAR	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891	
Gen.Lab	48	35.2	84	31.6	83	29.2	126	46.0	81	32.0	80	33.0
Semi-skilled	10	7.3	65	24.4	98	34.5	26	9.5	45	18.0	19	8.0
Totals	58	42.5	149	56.0	181	63.7	152	55.5	126	50.0	99	41.0
Notes: (1) Semi-skilled here includes all (not just Agric. Labs) in Reg.Gen Category IV. (2) The percentage is taken from the general breakdown of census returns (see pie. diagrams) across the period; Table 5 & 6.												

proportion of general labourers (male, 20+) respectively at each census were 4.1 per cent, 3.8 per cent and 4.7 per cent; the Irish equivalents were 31.6 per cent, 29.2 per cent and 46.0 per cent. Across the decades, then, the number of general labourers (males 20+) in the Irish community was between 8 and 9 times greater than in the general population.⁴⁹

A small but regular number of Irish came to Leicester as cattle drovers.⁵⁰ These were tough, unruly, and generally lodged in the core Irish area, where most of the agricultural labourers also congregated. Thomas Doyle lodged (1 of a group of 10) at Bedford Street in 1851; in the same year John Harris, drover, was 1 of 5 lodgers at Abbey Street. A decade later (1861) one Anthony Docherty, drover, stayed at Bedford Street. Both streets contained numerous Irish, often in lodging houses, throughout the study period. From c.1875, a few Irishmen prospered as cattle dealers. John Flanagan appeared in 1881 and 1891 as a cattle dealer, which indicated that, together with his Irish-born wife and son, he had become a permanent resident in the town, and one with more stature than just a drover. By 1891, there were, in fact, 2 Irish cattle dealers in the

⁴⁸Although an over-simplification, the gist of Heinrich's comment holds: HEINRICK, H. (1872), p.39. BARCLAY, T., *The Wyvern*, 28.6.1895.

⁴⁹Census, Leicester, 1851, 1861 and 1871; see bibliography.

⁵⁰See ch. on Crime re cases involving Irish drovers, who are also mentioned in *Rep't on Poor in GB*, (1836) App.II, p.8 + 9.

town, the second being one Owen Higgins, with his Irish-born wife and daughter.⁵¹

(d) Gender roles in occupations, especially in the hosiery and footwear trades

The migration of Irish females to Leicester would have shared similar characteristics with other female migration patterns, but with some important differences; for example, some concentrations in certain local industries; and a notable absence of women in the servant capacity.

Connolly (1915) noted that "in Ireland the female worker has hitherto exhibited, in her martyrdom, an almost damnable patience the daughters of the Irish peasantry have been the cheapest slaves in existence to their own family and to all social parasites of a landlord and gombeen ridden community."⁵² The novels of Patrick MacGill also explore the theme of working women's servitude.⁵³ O'Tuathaigh has stressed of Irish women up until the Great "Famine" that their's was a subject and subsidiary role to the male, mainly domestic.⁵⁴ Paradoxically perhaps, women migrating might have been expected to have low expectations due to subjugation; or alternatively, high expectations as a result of liberation. In practice, whilst some single women migrants may have enjoyed partial independence, marriage and family led to similar obligatory responsibilities, with the only difference being within an urban rather than a rural context.

The migration process was tough from the outset: "Women as well as men tramped every foot of the road after leaving the boats," noted Barclay.⁵⁵ He described a typical middle-aged Irish female in Abbey Street - a picture akin to Mayhew:

I miss the old *calaighs* in plain shoulder-shawls and bordered caps, who used in these parts, years ago, to squat on their hunkers and smoke *dudheens* - I miss them.⁵⁶

⁵¹ACD, 1841-91; DENVIR (1894), p.413, noted similar concentrations in certain streets and lodging houses in Lincs.

⁵²CONNOLLY, J. (1915), *The Reconquest of Ireland (Women)* in ELLIS, P.B. (1973) *James Connolly-Selected Writings*, pp.189-195.

⁵³ Writing from a later time perspective for this particular study period, his basic contentions held true for the earlier period of the nineteenth century also. See, for example, his novels *Children of the Dead End*, and *The Rat Pit*. Modern compilations of Irish female migrant experiences bear witness to the continuity of trends; eg. See SCHWEITZER, P. (Ed)(1989) *Across the Irish Sea - Memories of London Irish Pensioners*, p.3-7; 121-3; 74-75; 99-100.

⁵⁴O'TUATHAIGH, G., *The Role of Women in Ireland and the new English Order*, in McCURTAIN, M. & O'DONNCHA, C. (Eds)(1978), *Women in Irish Society-The Historical Dimension*, p.26.

⁵⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.11.

⁵⁶BARCLAY, T., *Leicester Slums in The Wyvern*; 28 June 1895, a *calaigh* was an old woman, and a *dudheen* a clay pipe.

He depicted realistically the world of Irish migrant working women. Census data analysis relating to the occupations of Irish-born women in Leicester from 1841 to '91 is our starting point.

Enumerated male Irish workers outnumbered enumerated female Irish workers at every census; this was not because male migrants automatically outnumbered females for the opposite was in fact the case; many women, occupied full-time in demanding family situations, were not described as working persons. The picture which emerges of women at work is therefore of limited accuracy; even so, it provides an interesting contrast with the pattern for Irish-born males (20+) in Leicester across the period. (See Pie Diagrams, Tables 5+6, Occupations) and Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4; and also Table 14 and 15 showing occupations of Irish-born Males and Females broadly grouped in Rank Order for 1851 and 1861).

As with males, the 1841 figures for Irish women (20+) were quite different from the 1851 analysis. Over one-third (38 per cent) of Irish-born women in 1841 were in skilled trades; only 21 per cent were in unskilled occupations, and 13 per cent were semi-skilled. Far more women than men in 1841 were in Class II (27 per cent). There were no women in Class I at any of the censuses between 1841 and '91 - an indicator of the historic prejudice and exclusion shown towards women at all levels of society.

A decade later (1851), the percentage of semi-skilled women was still virtually the same (14 per cent). The representation of both skilled females and of those unskilled (47 and 34 per cent respectively) had increased, mainly at the expense of those women in Class II, which was down by four-fifths to just 5 per cent.

These proportions roughly pertained until the century's end; unskilled work involved approximately one-third of the Irish-born women at each census; the numbers classified as semi-skilled (class IV) dropped from almost 20 per cent in 1861 and '71 to just 10 per cent in 1881 and '91. The proportion in group II remained stable (at between 10 and 13 per cent) whilst those women in skilled occupations stabilised at 37 and 38 per cent in 1861 and '71 respectively, jumped quite dramatically to 51 per cent in 1881, and fell back slightly to 44 per cent in 1891.

The percentages give a very bald picture of the Irish-born womens' world of work. It was the case that greater diversification of employment opportunity, and the opportunity to be upwardly socially mobile, were evident from the statistics analysed; the main bar existing was to categorisation in Class I. (However, even for Irish-born males,

TABLE 14	OCCUPATIONS OF IRISH-BORN FEMALES BROADLY GROUPED IN RANK ORDER FOR 1851 AND 1861						
1851	Occupations	Nos.	%age	1861	Occupations	Nos.	%age
	At Home/No Occupation	136	43·6		At Home/No Occupation	84	36·7
	Sewing	63	20·2		Factory/Hosiery	47	20·5
	Miscellaneous	29	9·3		Hawker	19	8·3
	Factory/Hosiery	23	7·4		Shop Work	15	6·6
	Hawkers	15	4·8		Sewing	25	10·9
	Shop Work	4	1·2		Miscellaneous	9	3·9
	Servants	14	4·5		Servants	8	3·5
	Washer Woman	10	3·2		Washer-Woman	9	3·9
	Domestic	8	2·6		Domestic	8	3·5
	Nurse/Midwife	4	1·3		Nurse	3	1·3
	Lodging-House Keepers	5	1·6		Lodging-House Keepers	2	0·8
	Governess of Infant School	1	0·3				
	TOTAL	312			TOTAL	229	
Source: ACD, 1851 and 1861							

Note: For comparison, in Nottingham in 1841, 39/53 working Irish-born females were in textiles; in 1851, 166/226 were similarly engaged; see MURPHY, P J (1993), p.23 and 58.

TABLE 15 OCCUPATIONS OF IRISH-BORN MALES BROADLY GROUPED IN RANK ORDER FOR 1851 AND 1861							
1851	Occupations	Nos.	%age	1861	Occupations	Nos.	%age
	Labourers (Agricultural)	125 (61)	38.2 (18.7)		Labourers (Agricultural)	135 (84)	55.3 (34.4)
	Hawkers	58	17.7		Hawkers	20	8.2
	Dealers	15	4.6		Dealers	13	5.3
	Brokers	1	0.3		Factory/Hosiery	21	8.6
	Skilled/Semi	37	11.3		Skilled/Semi	28	11.5
	Factory/Hosiery	34	10.4		Miscellaneous	11	4.5
	Umbrella Makers	1	0.3		Umbrella Makers	1	0.4
	Mat/Brush Makers	15	4.6		Mat/Brush/Basket Makers	7	2.9
	Miscellaneous	11	3.4		Servants	3	1.2
	Non-Manual	10	3.0		Chelsea Pensioners	2	0.8
	Army	1	0.3		Non-Manual	2	0.8
	Chelsea/Greenwich Pensioners	9	2.7		Publican	1	0.4
	Victuallers/Lodging House Keepers	8	2.4				
	Servant	1	0.3				
	Glove Manufacturer	1	0.3				
	TOTAL	327			TOTAL	244	
Source: ACD, 1851 and 1861							

Note: for comparison, in Nottingham in 1841, 66/206 working Irish-born males were FWKs; in 1851, 53/392 were similarly engaged; see MURPHY, P J (1993), p.23 & 58

Class I designation was elusive, being 1.5 per cent in 1841, only 0.1 per cent in 1871, and rising marginally to 2 and then 3 per cent in 1881 and '91 respectively).

Several historians of women's migration have noted the large numbers of Irish women in household servant situations, and the occasional positive concomitants of this (Finnegan, 1982; Lees, 1979; and Diner, 1983).⁵⁷ Very few Irish indeed, female or male, entered servant positions in Leicester at any stage. Two probable reasons for this trend were the visible poverty among the Irish, and deep-rooted prejudice amongst employers. Prejudice was pervasive in Leicester (see relevant chapter); a local English lady told in 1835 of how her nurse had used a "monster" Irish figure to frighten her into good behaviour.⁵⁸ The agitator Gavazzi specifically warned of the dangers of having Irish Catholics as servants in a well publicised speech in Leicester in 1854.⁵⁹

Those Irish coming to Leicester from c.1830 onwards had then a limited number of choices regarding domestic, workshop or industrial occupations. These centred around the framework knitting of hosiery - already well established - but in decline; the slowly developing (from 1835) boot and shoe manufacturing trade; worsted yarn spinning, elastic web weave production, and light engineering. Those Irish settling in the county had the additional, and much taken up option, of labouring in local collieries (especially in the Whitwick/Coalville area).

Hosiery had lured migrants from as far away as Ireland. The trade was relatively easy to learn; with equipment usually rented, capital outlay was unnecessary; its domestic basis kept families free of factory regimentation; and the tasks of winding, seaming and footing offered all family members, young and old, opportunities. The temptation for such workers was to marry young and raise large families. The reality by the 1840's was so different however that "as poor as a Leicester stockinger" became an oft-quoted local adage.

⁵⁷FINNEGAN, F (1982), p.101 and 104; LEES, L.H. (1979); p.93; and DINER, H. (1983), Ch. 4: Broom, Loom and Schoolroom: Work and Wages in the Life of Irish Women, p.70-94.

⁵⁸See *Leicester Conservative Standard* (1835) 'Early Prejudices Against the Irish,' by Mrs Head; p.501-3.

⁵⁹LC, 22 April 1854; 'Fr. Gavazzi's 2nd Lecture.' The poverty factor was noted in nearby Nottingham in 1836: the children of the poor Irish "being doomed to a scanty and precarious living from their poverty, shabby dress and precarious habits, (are) rarely become domestic servants." Leicester would seem to have been no different in this respect. 1836 *Rep. On State of Irish Poor in G.B.* App. re Nottingham by Rev. R. Wilson, CP.

The decline continued up until c.1850, and had serious effects on all involved, including Irish migrants. The main problem was periodic chronic underemployment and unemployment, with fluctuations in labour demand, and resulting low wages.⁶⁰ The apparent ease with which framework knitting could be taken up by whole families was misleading. The Parliamentary *Report* of 1845 into the trade listed the problems: the truck system; the long-term irregularity of work; overcrowding, and the exploitation of cheap labour; and inflated frame renting. The trade cycle from c.1800-50 was frequently irregular; trade unions were ill organised and purely local; and the framework machines were in any case on the fringe of obsolescence.⁶¹

Only with the post-c.1850 developments of a buoyant domestic market, new railway networks to exploit Leicester's central position, and the diversification of industry and modernized techniques, was the corner turned. The demand for female labour increased so much that by 1900, 3 women were employed in hosiery for every 1 man. (See Table 16).

The trade picked up from c.1860, but problems of rationalisation remained. Whilst general economic stability led to better overall economic conditions, other changes occurred with the gradual introduction of steam technology, and the gradual withdrawal of child labour, especially after the 1870 Education Act.⁶² By 1890, 95 per cent of the knitting industry had embraced steam mechanisation; this, and female sweated labour, led to seriously decreasing opportunities for older men.⁶³ These changes are reflected in the data concerning both the Irish-born (20+), and the wider Irish community, in Leicester's textile trades. (See Tables 17 and 18).

A complementary relationship existed between the hosiery and footwear trades: by 1881 women outnumbered men in hosiery by 5:3 and men outnumbered women in footwear by 9:4.⁶⁴ These figures can be contrasted with Irish male and female involvement in both industries in 1881.

⁶⁰See McKINLEY, A.R. & SMITH, C.T.; Social and Administrative History since 1835, in *VCHL* Vol. 4, pp. 251-302. Also, for a highly detailed analysis of local industrial growth in 19th C. re hosiery, footwear and elastic web manufacture, see ASHWORTH, C., HODGE, V.W. and MARTIN, J.D., *VCHL*, Vol. 4, p.303-327. For a useful shorter analysis, see EVANS, R.H. and PYE, N. (Ed)(1972), *Leicester and its Regions*; ch. 12, Leicester and Leicestershire 1835-1971, p. 288-310.

⁶¹From ASHWORTH, C. (1958) *Hosiery Manufacture* in *VCHL*, IV p.303-314. Only 1 Irish-born person at each census appeared as a frame smith, probably a middleman renting out frames to others.

⁶²See figures for scholars in Education chapter

⁶³ASHWORTH, in *VCHL*, IV, p.310-314.

⁶⁴SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present*, Vol. II, *Modern City, 1860-1974*, p.4.

TABLE 16 (a)		IRISH-BORN WORKERS AGED 20+ (IN DATABASE) IN THE FRAMEWORK KNITTING/HOSIERY TRADE AND BOOT & SHOE TRADES 1841-91.				
YEAR	Numbers of Males (20+)			Numbers of Females (20+)		
	FWK/HOSIERY		FOOTWEAR	FWK/HOSIERY		FOOTWEAR
1841	12	3	7	3	1	---
1851	12	2	9	2	9	2
1861	10	8	9	2	10	4
1871	9	3	35	6	4	13
1881	2	1	34	5	9	9
1891	1	3	42	--	11	7
Notes: (1) FWKs are assumed to be domestically organized; "hosiery" implies factory work. (Seamers, woolcombers etc not included). (2) From c.1871, it is clear from the enumerators' entries that mechanisation of both the hosiery and the boot and shoe trade was underway. (3) Re FWK; it is sometimes difficult to judge from enumerators' entries about numbers of females in the trade; hence only those women listed as actual FWKs and hosiery workers have been added in this column. (4) The third column shows clearly how the domestic sector in knitting contracted whilst the industrialised factory sector expanded.						

These figures (in Table 19) indicate that in hosiery by 1881, the concentration of Irish-born women over men was even greater than that in the "all Leicester" figures, which underlines the general assumptions made about Irish women entering lighter and more varied occupations than Irish men. Also, although those occupations were in sweated trades with lower wages,⁶⁵ the trends of preponderance are replicated in the footwear industry by 1881, where the same emphasis was repeated, with slightly fewer Irish-born females involved than in the city's overall gender pattern. This supports Denvir's claim that, by 1894, in Leicester, "the staple trade is boot and shoe-making, a branch of trade in which Irishmen are tolerably numerous."⁶⁶

Women and young people were more likely to be exploited, both within and outside the Irish community. Lees noted of London that "it was only in industries

⁶⁵Seamers/seamstresses were amongst the most commonly exploited (see LEES, L.H., (1970)) p.95 on Irish needle women in London; in Leicester, seamstresses comprised only 2/42 women in 1841, but 29/135 in 1851; from 1861 onwards they actually comprised a much less significant fraction of the Irish female workforce.

⁶⁶DENVIR, J. (1894), p.430.

TABLE 16 (b)		YOUNG PERSONS (U<20) IN THE TEXTILE TRADES AND IN BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURING IN LEICESTER. 1841-1891 (IRISH-BORN AND REST OF IRISH COMMUNITY).									
YEAR		THE TEXTILE TRADES					BOOT AND SHOE INDUSTRY				
IRISH-BORN ONLY		Males under 20		Females under 20			Males under 20		Females under 20		
1841		6	(11)	54%	5	(8)	62%	---	(11)	---	(8)
1851		8	(99)	8%	18	(56)	32%	---	(99)	---	(56)
1861		3	(50)	6%	16	(55)	29%	1	(50)	2%	(55)
1871		4	(32)	5%	16	(51)	31%	2	(32)	6%	(51)
1881		5	(32)	16%	4	(32)	12%	---	(32)	---	(32)
1891		2	(28)	7%	9	(27)	33%	9	(28)	32%	(27)
REST OF IRISH COMMUNITY		FIGURES FOR WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY (EXCLUDING IRISH-BORN U-20s)									
		Males under 20		Females under 20			Males under 20		Females under 20		
1841		5	(14)	36%	4	(6)	67%	1	(14)	7%	(6)
1851		26	(100)	26%	27	(106)	25%	1	(100)	1%	(106)
1861		10	(69)	14%	28	(62)	45%	7	(69)	10%	(62)
1871		17	(209)	8%	34	(210)	16%	29	(209)	14%	(210)
1881		8	(287)	3%	35	(200)	17%	29	(287)	10%	(200)
1891		4	(252)	2%	23	(236)	10%	32	(252)	13%	(236)

Notes

- (1) "Wider Irish Community" = all non-Irish born; ie the second generation children.
- (2) Figure in brackets = total actually working in that group.
- (3) Source = ACD.
- (4) Third figure = percentage value (rounded off).

TABLE 17		IRISH-BORN FRAMEWORK KNITTERS AND GENERAL TEXTILE WORKERS IN LEICESTER (AGED 20+), 1841-1891.				
	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Males	25 15 x FWKs	22 14 x FWKs	18 all= FWK/hose	16 12=FWK/hose	7 3xFWK/ hose	10 3 x FWK/ hose
Females	11 4 x FWKs	37 15 x FWKs	47 20 x hosiery	31 16 x FWKs	40 17 x FWKs	25 No FWKs

TABLE 18		NON-IRISH BORN FRAMEWORK KNITTERS AND GENERAL TEXTILE WORKERS IN LEICESTER COMMUNITY (AGED 20+), 1841-1891.				
	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Males	33 29 x FWKs/ Hose	39 29 x FWKs	18 13 x FWKs	24 15xFWK	20 10 xFWK	19 14 x hosiery (4 x FWK: 10 x hose)
Females	6 5 x FWKs	23 10 x hosiery	15 6 x FWKs	21 6 x FWKs	31 17 x FWKs	40 27 x hosiery No FWKs

Notes:

- (1) Abb. FWK = Framework knitters; includes framesmiths, glovers, hosiery, woolcombers*, seamers, rotary and overlockers.
(The definition is wider than that used in the previous table q.v.)
- (2) Textiles = all branches, including FWK (ie worsted, lace, muslin, cotton, spinners, weavers, wool pickers, and elastic web weaving.
- (3) Textiles here excludes dressmakers, seamstresses and general factory hands.
- * (4) It is clear that FWK was at the physical core of Leicester's Irish community, for *The Woolcombers' Arms* was next to St Patrick's Church/School until demolished by Fr. Hawkins in the 1890's.
- (5) The chapter on 'Why Irish Came to Leicester' details non-Irish born spouses and second generation Irish at that particular census.

offering a high proportion of low skilled jobs or artisan trades having large numbers of sweated workers that more than a small number of Irish were employed." Unlike the London Irish, however, there were very few opportunities for Irish young people to enter apprenticeships: only 2 Irish-born males under 20 were identified across the period.⁶⁷

⁶⁷LEES, L.H. (1979), p.94.

TABLE 19	RATIOS OF MEN TO WOMEN FOR IRISH-BORN AND FOR ALL LEICESTER IN THE HOSIERY AND FOOTWEAR TRADES IN 1881			
1881	HOSIERY		FOOTWEAR	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
All Leicester	5 (16)	3	4 (12)	9
Irish-born only	5 (16)	1 (3)	3 (12)	9 (37)
NOTES: (1) The numbers in brackets for Irish-born refer to those identified arithmetically on the 1881 database. (2) See footnote for source of All Leicester figures.				

Otherwise Lees's general judgement holds true for Leicester.

Denvir's judgement on the boot and shoe industry is over-simplified. The trade became of real significance in 1871, with around half of all Irish skilled men involved; this pattern remained almost precisely the same into 1881 and 1891 in percentage terms, whilst at the same time framework knitting declined rapidly. (See Tables 16-19) (eg only 11/77 Irish men (20+) were involved in hosiery in 1871, and involvement declined even more steeply in 1881 and 1891).

The income of young persons (ie under 20) was vital to the average family economy. Barclay's account is typical for the comprehensive picture it gives of childrens' work (see title page to this chapter). Between the age of 8 (in 1860) and his middle teens (when he left home, which again was fairly common) he worked successively as wheel-turner at a rope walk, as a weaver's yarn-winder, as a boot-finisher's sweater, as an osier rod-peeler for a basket maker and as a rotary hand's help in hosiery.⁶⁸ His working week was 70 hours, his hourly rate 1/4d (0.25p). Only as the century progressed did this economic degradation gradually become ameliorated, with reform legislation and compulsory schooling.

There were comparatively far fewer Irish-born youngsters (U-20) than there were second-generation Irish (see Tables 16a and 16b), and this is true of all the censuses from 1841 to 1891. Table 16 (b) compares the involvement of Irish-born under-20s, as opposed to non-Irish-born under 20s in the textile and footwear trades. In 1841, of the

⁶⁸BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.14-15.

Irish-born more than half the young males and almost two-thirds of young females were involved in textiles; from 1851, however, this pattern changed, with male involvement reduced drastically whilst the involvement of young females basically halved in proportionate terms. For those Irish-born working youngsters, there was, conversely, an increased presence in footwear manufacturing, a presence especially marked in the case of young males.

In the case of the non-Irish born under-20s, the decline in textile occupations was far more gradual, especially amongst young females. There was a corresponding increase in job opportunities for young males in the boot and shoe trades, which was again more noticeable in the case of male under-20s as opposed to female under-20s.

Probably the biggest single change to the pattern involved the numbers who entered the job market later who are returned as "Scholars." Although compulsory education became the norm only from 1870, figures for the Irish community show altered trends from as early as 1851 (see Table 20 and discussion in Education chapter).⁶⁹

TABLE 20		MALES AND FEMALES UNDER 20: WORKERS AND SCHOLARS AMONGST THE IRISH-BORN AND THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY, 1841-1891						
YEAR	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Scholars	Worker	Scholars	Worker	Scholars	Worker	Scholars	Worker
1841	---	11	---	8	---	14	---	13
1851	27	65	12	44	47	53	57	49
1861	16	34	18	38	86	41	69	51
1871	14	27	22	37	110	114	109	115
1881	14	22	15	17	122	165	115	85
1891	9	31	12	20	111	141	111	125
Notes: (1) Source: <i>ACD</i> . (2) 20 is a rather high cut-off point for an analysis involving scholars, but the overall pattern is generally correct.								

⁶⁹See Education Chapter for a breakdown of male and female scholars by ages, and by implication the ages of entry into the job market at different periods; also, the problem of "half-timers" is covered in that section.

(e) The Irish Presence in Railways and Heavy Industries

Some railway construction and navvying work was available, mainly in the earlier and later decades of the study period.⁷⁰ In the Whitwick collieries from 1851, 72 Irish labourers were at work. An increase in numbers in Buckminster was "attributed to the presence of a number of Irish labourers employed by Lord Huntingtower." Railways were "employing a few labourers" at Leicester St. Margaret's, the parish which came to host the great majority of Leicester's Irish up until c.1881. All navvying work was nomadic and transitory, information being passed by word of mouth.⁷¹ Some Irish soon realised the earning potential of servicing labourers by lodging house keeping, an opportunity open to Irish women as well as men.⁷²

The population of Barrow in 1841 "had included several persons employed on the works of the Midland Railway":

It was in these years that Catholic worship came back to Barrow. The Midland Counties Railway as it was first named, was built between Leicester and Loughborough from 1838 to 1840. Among the navvies were a number of Irish Catholics. Mr. Worswick, whose family later on lived at Birstall Hall, bought land and supplied materials, and the workmen did their share gratuitously in erecting St. Alban's chapel in 1839.⁷³

This example of Irish self-help was not an isolated one (see Education Chapter). The Worswick's philanthropy represented an indirect subsidy from the Irish and the working class generally, for most entrepreneurs then had no hesitation in keeping wages minimal and in using the Irish on occasion to regulate the wages of others.⁷⁴

Railway work continued to present opportunities: around 1871, at Ashby de la Zouch and Dadlington; at Keyham and Scraptoft (on the outskirts of modern Leicester)

⁷⁰Unless indicated otherwise, all of the information recounted in this section is from the 'Commentary' section, ch. on 'Population' by SMITH, C.T. in HOSKINS, W.G. & MCKINLEY, R.A., (Eds)(1955), *VCHL* (Vol. III), p.203-209.

⁷¹See, for example, Donal MacAmlaigh's *Diary of an Irish Navvy* for 20th C; and also SULLIVAN, D (1983), *Navvy man*; COLEMAN, T. (1965), *The Railway Navvies* and HANDLEY, J.E. (1970) *The Navvy in Scotland*, for the historical perspective.

⁷²See discussion re "Blind Jack" Corbett in Crime Chapter, and census data analysis in this chapter.

⁷³See BASTOW, J. (1970), *Development of RC Educ. in 19th C. in 5 Counties of Diocese of Nottingham*, p.61. EMERY, Rev. A., (1939), *St. Alban's, Barrow-on-Soar, 1839-1939*: p.7. STEVENSON, P. (Ed), (1989), *The Midland Counties Railway* p.38: Worswick himself certainly earned vast sums, eg £56,619. for 6 miles of the MCR in Leics. The 1831 census noted at Glenfield: 80 labourers were employed excavating the tunnel and laying tracks; in St. Margaret's parish Leicester, as well as factory work, "railways were mentioned as employing a few labourers;" see *VCHL*, Vol. III (1955), p.204.

⁷⁴For Irish rail labourers working in exploitative situations, see COLEMAN, T. (1965), p. 70 for poor conditions and p.98 for low pay grievance.

and Hungarton in 1881 and at Edmondthorpe in 1891. There was always the temporary alternative of agricultural labouring on a seasonal basis.⁷⁵ Only a few Irish found permanent railway jobs; from 1841-91, only 12 unskilled, 7 semi-skilled and 4 "blue collar" jobs went to the Irish-born in Leicester. These limited opportunities came with rail expansion ; after 1850, Leicester was part of the Birmingham midland network.⁷⁶

By the time the Midland Counties Railway commenced work on the Manton (Rutland) to Kettering line in the mid 1870's, navvies arrived, *en famille*, in organised train loads. Miniature settlements developed; temporary but solid hutments were erected, and service providers (including clergy) followed. 2,500 men lived in temporary habitation; another 1,500 in nearby villages.⁷⁷ The tunnel at the Corby section required 20 million bricks, and 1,000 men; with "knock-on" development, this section alone required a range of workmen, including brickmakers, bricklayers, blacksmiths, carpenters, fitters, miners, mechanics, and navvies and labourers of all descriptions.⁷⁸ Rev. Barrett, author of a detailed history of the construction, on seeing a turf sod walled hut, reacted thus:

It appeared to Mr Barrett that all these huts needed was the hills of Connemara in the background and Paddy and his pig at the door to make the scene complete - and then you could have imagined yourself in what he called the wild regions of the Emerald Isle. Indeed, he said, the pig was often there.⁷⁹

The stereotype does not detract from the reality of Irish involvement. Barrett represented the Navvy Mission, inspired by the Irishman Conor Magee, local Anglican Bishop at this time. The Mission attempted useful reform in 1889, by introducing the 'Leicester Plan,' designed to decasualise labouring. The attempt failed (probably because it struck at the freedom of choice element in navvying).⁸⁰

In 1892, workmen on the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway extension presented a beautifully executed illuminated address to the Liberal MP for

⁷⁵See BASTOW (1970), who quoted a letter in the *Derby Mercury* of 1856 on this trend amongst Irish navvies.

⁷⁶ENGELS, F., (1845/1987), *Condition of the Working Class in England*, p.61; ACD 1841-91.

⁷⁷Some physical remains of this local line still exist, ranging from the multi-arched viaduct Haringworth, to navy buildings such as a wooden hut at Oakham (now a hen run) and the corrugated iron mission chapel still in use, at Abbey Lane (see LM, 10 July 1993).

⁷⁸BARRETT, Rev. W.D. (1880), *Life and Work Amongst the Navvies*; this was by a CofE cleric, who covered the missionary work among the men, largely carried out at the behest of Magee. The mission appears to have had genuine charitable as well as religious intentions; the grateful navvies made a formal presentation to Magee in April 1879.

⁷⁹COLEMAN, T. (1965), p.84.

⁸⁰Patrick MacGill, the "navvy poet" was bitterly opposed to religious missions, and his attitude may have been quite widespread. See *Children of the Dead End*, (1914) where it is a major theme.

Harborough (Leics), John William Logan, describing him as "a true friend of the working class." Logan, like his father, a railroad magnate, was genuinely solicitous for his workforce, some of whom had been employed by the firm for 30 or 40 years. The address was signed by 14 men; 6 had Irish names: James Kaven (Chairman), Jim Kinahan, James Kelly, Coleman Neale, Edward Hopkins and Fred Collins (Treasurer).

These railmen had reasons for admiring Logan: he was sympathetic to labour; he keenly supported Irish Home Rule (see Politics); and finally, he had sympathised with the railway gangs in the unusually severe winter of 1891-2, when - instead of laying off the work force, without pay, as was usual - he kept on the men on full pay for 6 weeks until weather conditions improved. Given Logan's humanitarian and political proclivities, it is not surprising that so many Irish rail workers were willing to participate in the presentation.⁸¹

In Leicestershire generally, there was still a legacy of Irish activity in heavy industrial work. The 1891 Census observed the Irish migrants' preference for the "big towns and the centres of industry which are most accessible to him;" Leicester was specifically mentioned here as being "a mining and industrial" county.⁸² By 1900, heavy industries were in decline, and their communities becoming derelict. The reformer Mary Booth wrote to Beatrice Webb from the rural tranquility of Gracedieu in Leicestershire:

"We have a fearfully poverty stricken population, left behind in the race, their special industries being partly superseded, partly done elsewhere - a violent Irish element, disorderly."

Some Irish in the Whitwick colliery district were so affected. For the Irish in Leicester, the employment pattern was more varied, with noticeable opportunities for entering an enhanced variety of jobs and doing so at several levels above basic labouring. The old image lingered on well past 1900 in local tradition. A road near Coalville and Whitwick, built by Irish labourers c.1890, is still known as "Irish Hill" locally.⁸³

During Leicester's early industrial growth, unregulated building usually occurred amongst the poorer area of low quality housing, areas attractive to new arrivals such as

⁸¹LCRO, Mac; Illuminated Manuscript presented to John William Logan, MP; 25th Jan. 1892. The Irish signatories may not have been first, or even second, generation; but the mutual loyalty factor still holds good.

⁸²Census 1891, Gen. Report, Vol. IV p.62.

⁸³Quoted in JACKSON, J.A., (1963), p.87; coal was being challenged by electricity, and foreign imports. For "Irish Hill," see CARSWELL, J. et al (1969), *Ours to Defend*, p. 10, 11 & 17, memoirs of Frank Saunders.

the Irish. Leicester had a network of heavy, pollutant industries based on canal transport and coal, in the Belgrave Gate-Navigation St-Wharf St-Gas St. area. There were personnel links between the Belfast and the Leicester gas companies. However, whether in labouring or administration, numbers of Irish in gas remained negligible.⁸⁴

Two iron foundries were sited nearby to the gas works and the canal wharf.⁸⁵ Many Irish lived in the surrounding area (see Maps in Settlement and Tables 1-6) only minutes away from St. Michael's chapel in Causeway Lane and St. Patrick's in Royal East Street; some obtained employment. From 1841-91, only 13 men were involved in the iron industry, 3 Irish-born and 10 from among the wider Irish community, in trades such as dresser, turner, moulder, fitter, and labourer. Irish representation in this sector, as in gas, was minimal. Irish migration to industrial locations outside the city, at Measham, Whitwick and Coalville, helps to explain then the growth of Irish settlement in Leicestershire.

Some Leicestershire Irish took to coal mining. Whitwick grew from 500 persons in 1830 to 1,449 by 1851. In 1841, there were just 5 Irish; by 1851 there were 125 Irish-born, of whom 34 were colliery labourers.⁸⁶ This represented a large increase in a short timespan. De Lisle saw the manifold connections between Irish migration, industrial exploitation, and Catholic growth in a letter he wrote in 1860 to George Spencer:

It surely must be for some providential purpose that God has inspired so many Irish to settle in England of late years. Thus in our neighbouring Parish of Whitwick there are actually 900 Irish, all come within the last 6 years, attracted by the demand of labour in the coal mines of the district.

De Lisle, who exaggerated his figures, had mixed motives:

Later please God when I open mines in the next Parish of Sheppeshed, where we are now boring with fair prospects, we shall want many more Irish to aid us in working them, for our own population will not suffice, but we must have good ones, who will really help us to Catholicize our

⁸⁴ISW/OHA, interviews with Ms. K. McDonagh. See Bill Naughton's autobiography *One Small Boy* (1988) for reference to Irishmen in coal and gas jobs c.1890 in Lancashire.

⁸⁵See RIMMINGTON, G.T., *Leicester Foundries 1845-1914*, in *TLAHS*, Vol XL, 1964-5, p.64.

⁸⁶OWEN, C. (1984), *The Leics & S. Derbs Coalfield 1700-1900*, p.202. This figure includes 33 personnel at Mount St Bernard's; if these are removed from the calculation the remaining figure of 87 is still quite impressive. The figures for 1861 had doubled to 169 Irish-born in Whitwick, not including 23 staff at Mount St. Bernard's, or the 72 Irish-born inmates of the boys' penal colony, ACD, Whitwick 1841, HO 107, 6961/End and 5971/End.

Harborough (Leics), John William Logan, describing him as "a true friend of the working class." Logan, like his father, a railroad magnate, was genuinely solicitous for his workforce, some of whom had been employed by the firm for 30 or 40 years. The address was signed by 14 men; 6 had Irish names: James Kaven (Chairman), Jim Kinahan, James Kelly, Coleman Neale, Edward Hopkins and Fred Collins (Treasurer).

These railmen had reasons for admiring Logan: he was sympathetic to labour; he keenly supported Irish Home Rule (see Politics); and finally, he had sympathised with the railway gangs in the unusually severe winter of 1891-2, when - instead of laying off the work force, without pay, as was usual - he kept on the men on full pay for 6 weeks until weather conditions improved. Given Logan's humanitarian and political proclivities, it is not surprising that so many Irish rail workers were willing to participate in the presentation.⁸¹

In Leicestershire generally, there was still a legacy of Irish activity in heavy industrial work. The 1891 Census observed the Irish migrants' preference for the "big towns and the centres of industry which are most accessible to him;" Leicester was specifically mentioned here as being "a mining and industrial" county.⁸² By 1900, heavy industries were in decline, and their communities becoming derelict. The reformer Mary Booth wrote to Beatrice Webb from the rural tranquility of Gracedieu in Leicestershire:

"We have a fearfully poverty stricken population, left behind in the race, their special industries being partly superseded, partly done elsewhere - a violent Irish element, disorderly."

Some Irish in the Whitwick colliery district were so affected. For the Irish in Leicester, the employment pattern was more varied, with noticeable opportunities for entering an enhanced variety of jobs and doing so at several levels above basic labouring. The old image lingered on well past 1900 in local tradition. A road near Coalville and Whitwick, built by Irish labourers c.1890, is still known as "Irish Hill" locally.⁸³

During Leicester's early industrial growth, unregulated building usually occurred amongst the poorer area of low quality housing, areas attractive to new arrivals such as

⁸¹LCRO; Misc; Illuminated Manuscript presented to John William Logan, MP; 25th Jan. 1892. The Irish signatories may not have been first, or even second, generation; but the mutual loyalty factor still holds good.

⁸²Census 1891, Gen. Report, Vol. IV p.62.

⁸³Quoted in JACKSON, J.A., (1963), p.87; coal was being challenged by electricity, and foreign imports. For "Irish Hill," see CARSWELL, J. et al (1989), *Ours to Defend*, p. 10, 11 & 17, memoirs of Frank Saunders.

the Irish. Leicester had a network of heavy, pollutant industries based on canal transport and coal, in the Belgrave Gate-Navigation St-Wharf St-Gas St. area. There were personnel links between the Belfast and the Leicester gas companies. However, whether in labouring or administration, numbers of Irish in gas remained negligible.⁸⁴

Two iron foundries were sited nearby to the gas works and the canal wharf.⁸⁵ Many Irish lived in the surrounding area (see Maps in Settlement and Tables 1-6) only minutes away from St. Michael's chapel in Causeway Lane and St. Patrick's in Royal East Street; some obtained employment. From 1841-91, only 13 men were involved in the iron industry, 3 Irish-born and 10 from among the wider Irish community, in trades such as dresser, turner, moulder, fitter, and labourer. Irish representation in this sector, as in gas, was minimal. Irish migration to industrial locations outside the city, at Measham, Whitwick and Coalville, helps to explain then the growth of Irish settlement in Leicestershire.

Some Leicestershire Irish took to coal mining. Whitwick grew from 500 persons in 1830 to 1,449 by 1851. In 1841, there were just 5 Irish; by 1851 there were 125 Irish-born, of whom 34 were colliery labourers.⁸⁶ This represented a large increase in a short timespan. De Lisle saw the manifold connections between Irish migration, industrial exploitation, and Catholic growth in a letter he wrote in 1860 to George Spencer:

It surely must be for some providential purpose that God has inspired so many Irish to settle in England of late years. Thus in our neighbouring Parish of Whitwick there are actually 900 Irish, all come within the last 6 years, attracted by the demand of labour in the coal mines of the district.

De Lisle, who exaggerated his figures, had mixed motives:

Later please God when I open mines in the next Parish of Sheppeshed, where we are now boring with fair prospects, we shall want many more Irish to aid us in working them, for our own population will not suffice, but we must have good ones, who will really help us to Catholicize our

⁸⁴ISW/OHA, interviews with Ms. K. McDonagh. See Bill Naughton's autobiography *One Small Boy* (1988) for reference to Irishmen in coal and gas jobs c.1890 in Lancashire.

⁸⁵See RIMMINGTON, G.T., *Leicester Foundries 1845-1914*, in *TLAHS*, Vol XL, 1964-5, p.64.

⁸⁶OWEN, C. (1984), *The Leics & S. Derbs Coalfield 1700-1900*, p.202. This figure includes 33 personnel at Mount St Bernard's; if these are removed from the calculation the remaining figure of 87 is still quite impressive. The figures for 1861 had doubled to 169 Irish-born in Whitwick, not including 23 staff at Mount St. Bernards, or the 72 Irish-born inmates of the boys' penal colony; ACD, Whitwick 1841, HO 107, 6961/End and 5971/End.

Anglo-Saxons.⁸⁷

Hinckley also experienced Irish settlement, despite the town's pauperism pre-1850. Hinckley's stocking-knitting industry was seriously hit in the 1840's, which may account for only 18 Irish-born enumerated in 1841. This increased to 58 in 1851, but declined steadily thereafter, from 44 in 1861 to 33 in 1871.⁸⁸ This contraction was shared to a lesser extent by Loughborough, where the Irish-born, 90 in 1841, peaked at 151 in 1851, and thereafter declined from 109 in 1861 to 87 a decade later. The Irish presence in small Leicestershire towns rose and fell with the employment market.

(f) The Upwardly Mobile and the Middle Class

A small minority of Irish-born persons had attained both lower and upper middle class status by the 1881 census, especially doctors, almost all of whom were of northern Irish extraction. Some, apparently Catholic Irish, entered the civil service, especially the Inland Revenue. Other Irish males and females (probably Catholics) made their way as minor entrepreneurs in three fields: lodging house keeping, marine store dealing, and the second hand clothes and rag trades.

The elite was undoubtedly the medical profession,⁸⁹ which featured as early as 1861.⁹⁰ Invariably aged around 30, they resided at respectable premises, and were Protestant. Possibly Leicester's Protestant cultural profile was an attraction. Dr. John Sloane, a GP, was resident in 1861, and by 1871 was married with 3 children (and employing 3 servants), all of which suggests a degree of acceptance and attendant career success. A Belfast man, Dr William Johnston, married with 2 servants in 1881 lived in Upper Charnwood Street, a new area of "respectable" middle class homes. By 1891, the town boasted 4 Irish-born doctors, one each of whom were from the Counties Down and Tyrone.⁹¹ This trend was not a temporary one, for in 1902, 3 Irish medical professionals appear in local authority posts. One became M.O. and Public Vaccinator

⁸⁷De LP., Letter, 25 Feb. 1860, in PURCELL, E.S., (1900), *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle*, Vol. I & II, p.186. The figure of 900 is incorrect.

⁸⁸BEAVIN, H. (1983), *The Book of Hinckley*, p.32.

⁸⁹For a survey of Irish in medicine see LYONS, J.B. (1978), *Brief Lives of Irish Doctors, 1600-1965*.

⁹⁰An entry for a "surgery" run by a Mr Annison in Church Gate in 1841 is doubtful, as the "where born" mark is unclear, being either Scotland or Ireland.

⁹¹Doctors; data 1861-91 from author's census database. A Dr. John Sloane was house surgeon at the L R Infirmary from 1855-9; see FRIZELLE, E R (1971), *The Leic. Royal Infirmary 1771-1971*, p.105; this may be the one listed in 1861.

for the Shardlow Union; a second emphasised that he was “of Scottish descent, Ulster Plantation” and described himself as a “Medical Electrician and Physical Methods Therapeutist;” the third, born in India, was educated and trained in Dublin and Belfast.⁹² Protestant, northern Irish doctors continued to be represented at Leicester’s Royal Infirmary in the new century.⁹³

The Protestant profile of Leicester’s medical profession was then the rule, to which there were only a few exceptions. On name evidence, one Connell B. Loughnan described as an “Accoucheur, Medical Assistant,” may have been a Catholic.⁹⁴ A dentist from Cork, William O’Hara, may also have been a Catholic.

It would seem that a Protestant profile was evident regarding most of those Irish-born in middle class positions outside medicine. The evidence is based rather loosely on surnames, and more precisely on the fact that until reforms were finally enacted Catholics were debarred from a wide range of civil and administrative positions.⁹⁵ Clergymen of any denomination will generally be excluded here, although it could be argued that some Irish Catholic males were substantially elevated in status after ordination (see careers of priests in chapter on RC church growth).⁹⁶ Some examples are worth relating briefly to exemplify the Protestant supremacy in occupations.

The Chaplain of the County Jail in Leicester in 1851 was one Rev. William Fox, from Dublin; his wife was Indian-born, a link with the imperial Raj, and this is reinforced by the different birthplaces of their two teenage children, Liverpool and Hampshire (Fox may have previously been a military chaplain, posted at Aldershot). The chief officer at this Jail in 1871, Sir Edward H. Meredyth, “Baronet, late Captain in the Army,” was also from the same Irish mould. A decade later, it was the Governor’s wife, Elizabeth Walker, who was Irish-born. Such opportunities, then, could benefit Protestant Irish of either gender.⁹⁷

The only other Irish-born amongst the professionals were recorded in 1851: Edward McKenna (35), Clerk to Her Majesty (apparently re-Ordnance Survey) and

⁹²PIKE. T.W. (1902), *Leics & Rutland Contemporary Biographies*, p.128, 124.

⁹³Eg Prof. E.R. FRIZELLE, an Ulsterman, became one of the most prominent and senior of LRI’s long-term appointments, and also the “official historian” of the hospital.

⁹⁴ACD 1871, p.52; his 65 year old f-in-law was a Michael Corcoran.

⁹⁵Discussed in the Leicester context in the Chapter of Prejudice; see DeLP, *A Few Remarks on the Soc. & Pol. Condition of British Catholics*, (1847), EARL OF ARUNDEL; p.24-29 re exclusion from posts in prisons, workhouses, hospitals, the armed forces, and as servants. See MacLYSAGHT, E (1985), *The Surnames of Ireland*.

⁹⁶Protestant opponents consistently harped on this theme; see analysis of *Leics. Conservative Standard* references in prejudice chapter.

⁹⁷ACD: 1851, p.54; 1871, p.73; 1881, p.64, 1841, p.22+23.

Frederick Rowan (24), a civil engineer. These may have been Catholic (as the surnames are quite common ones); otherwise, Catholic middle class representation until c.1881/1891 is sparse. Three Irish women achieved some occupational status as nurses with the post-Crimea reforms, working in asylums and hospitals. In 1881, the first more senior nursing appointment for an Irish woman was recorded: Fanny Davys (33, unmarried) from Sligo, was a Hospital Sister at the main Infirmary. By 1891, three Irish-born nurses were employed as "Trained Nurses" at the General Infirmary,⁹⁸ and a trickle of Irish nurses continued post c.1900.⁹⁹ The real break-through of the Catholic Irish into health professions came only after c.1940 with expanding nursing and medical opportunities in the 1939-45 War and in the NHS.¹⁰⁰ The professional contributions of significant numbers of nuns to education is acknowledged elsewhere (see Education).

Despite the spread of Irish across the socio-economic classifications evidenced by the 1841 census data (analysed above), from c.1850 to c.1900 the predominant image observed by both insiders and outsiders was one rooted in poverty and economic deprivation. Heinrich noted c.1872 of Leicester that;

..... here, even amid the most adverse and depressing influences, we met with evidences of the force of Irish genius and the power of Irish patriotism. The educated intelligence is limited, because of the position of the people; but the exceptional cases are striking and creditable.¹⁰¹

The adversity referred to is presumably the prejudice, on grounds of race and religion, observed by Barclay. Only a "limited number" had "arisen from the ranks of labour," and this development was linked, in Heinrich's view, with a commitment to Home Rule. Barclay must have been prominent in this grouping, with his self-confident autodidactic profile, but his serious leftist perspectives would have precluded success as an entrepreneur.

Less didactic colleagues, such as the Irishman Dominic McCarthy, achieved

⁹⁸ACD: 1861, p.53; 1871, p.73; 1881, p.62 and p.67; 1891, p.67.

⁹⁹OHA/ISW; interviews with Ms M. McDonagh, March 1991, and with Mrs. E. Brennan, July 1991; the latter, however, noted that in the early days she was the only Irish nurse on the staff at Groby Rd. Her family sent her to UK for training as they could not afford the fees involved in Ireland. The Dominican Sisters offered care nursing from 1906; See KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), p.58-9.

¹⁰⁰One RC Irish doctor to make his name in Leicester as a neuro-specialist was Dr. Arthur Coholan post-1918 who came via a British Army medical career - typical for many Irish doctors - but who is more widely known as the writer of the 1930's hit song *Galway Bay*. The *Who's Who in Leicester* (1935) lists 2 interesting examples of Irishmen who were ex-military: Dr. John E. O'Connor, Co. Cork in 1869, trained at QCC and TCD, became MO of H for Leics & Rutland in 1902, served in both the Boer and the Great Wars; Major Thomas W G Kelly was of Co. Dublin extraction, trained at TCD, became MO of H for Mkt. Bosworth, served in the same wars, and was ex-RAMC; p.124 and p.99.

¹⁰¹HEINRICK, H. (1872) p.39.

success in terms of economic power - not as capitalist exploiters, but as highly successful organisers of a boot and shoe manufacturing co-operative. McCarthy, a Mayoman who became a national organiser in the Boot and Shoe trades union, was by 1910 a member of the General Committee of the Leicester Industrial Co-operative Society¹⁰² Unlike the ascetic and rather down-at-heel Barclay, the McCarthys represented a confident, aspiring family, rising into lower middle-class respectability and security. Dominic's daughters became clerical employees of the Co-op, and sufficient capital was accumulated to purchase a property, which was left to his son John. In 1915, John Senior was still active on the Leicester Co-op Management Committee.¹⁰³

Perhaps the outstanding example of a local Irish entrepreneur turned politician was Michael McCarthy (no relation to Dominic McCarthy) of Whitwick. He left West Cork in 1868 for the post of deputy head at the Cistercian Boys Reformatory; he eventually settled, surviving varied financial fortunes, and fathered 13 offspring. The local Irish of Whitwick, mainly miners, supported his business and political endeavours. He became surveyor and town planner for Coalville, Local Board member, and Liberal Councillor for the span of 32 years. He was an important subscriber to most local Catholic funding initiatives, and an "exceptional case" as defined by Heinrick.¹⁰⁴ Another Irish publican, James Commons, married with 6 children, had settled in Whitwick, had prospered commercially, and emerged as an articulate defender of Home Rule.¹⁰⁵ Commons represents a strong strain of an emerging Irish community self-confidence.

The Leicester McCarthy's burgeoning bourgeois self-confidence came out in a variety of ways: as well as organising Irish language and dance classes, the family built up a reasonably extensive library of Irish works, covering politics, current affairs, history,

¹⁰²OHAISW; interviews with his son John W. McCarthy 1986/87 and correspondence; the whole family knew Tom Barclay very well, 1 of John's sisters, Florence Kathleen, being taught Irish by Barclay and his English friend Dick Hancock (see Barclay's *Memoirs*, p.102); see THOMSON STEPHEN, J. (1911), *Social Redemption, or the 50 Years Story of the Leicester Co-operative Society Limited, 1860-1910*, p.30 and 40.

¹⁰³ANON. (1915), *Leicester, A Souvenir of the 47th Co-operative Congress - Whitsuntide 1915, including some aspects of Co-operation in the Midlands*, p.155 photo; p.166 McCarthy listed.

¹⁰⁴Whitwick Hist. Group files, *The Catholic Standard* (Dublin) 7 Feb 1969. McCarthy's public house gloried in its own bottled beers, with the clear message of a shamrock embossed as a trade mark on the glass bottles, 1 of which is owned by the WH Group. The 1881 census, in fact, described him as "Shopkeeper and Aerated Water Manufacturer." (ACD, p.79); ACD, Whitwick 1891, p.77.

¹⁰⁵ACD, *Whitwick*, 1881, p.1; 1891, p.1; H.R. pamphlet courtesy of WHG.

literature, poetry, drama and song.¹⁰⁶ This collection profiled the leading works of the cultural renaissance and nationalist revival of the 1890-1920 period, and both the McCarthys and Barclay were at the centre of this development. Barclay spent 18 months in London in the 1890's, immersing himself in Gaelic League cultural activities around traditional music, dance and language. In Leicester, he formed a branch of the Gaelic League at St. Patrick's School, and a supplementary Gaelic class for Irish colliers at Whitwick. Twice before c.1910, Barclay visited Ireland to hone up his ethno-cultural credentials.¹⁰⁷

Barclay's mother, however, was more representative of that group of ambitious Irish who elevated themselves economically by keeping a lodging house, or by running a small business such as a marine store or a second hand clothes operation. Barclay eventually took his mother out of the rag and bone warehouse to keep house for him. "She was not satisfied, however, simply to do that, and turned the front room into a second hand clothes shop." He went on to refer to her as a "kind", shrewd, practical woman."¹⁰⁸

Money was to be made as rag and bone merchants and as marine store dealers. The trade involving the collection of various type of surplus derivative and "scrap" materials (ranging from animal fats to metals) which would be re-processed, recycled or sold on; it could include illegal fencing. Denvir (1894) underlined three key aspects to marine store dealing, and its economic attractiveness to Irish migrants: it was a popular trade amongst the Irish migrant community; it crossed generations and was therefore self-evidently of economic importance; and it became an internally recognized path to social mobility amongst the Irish.¹⁰⁹

The number of Irish-owned marine shops in Leicester steadily expanded from just 1 in 1851 to a high point of 8 in 1881. In all the censuses from 1871 to 1891, it is noteworthy that female rather than male ownership predominated (on paper at least), suggesting that despite the nature of the trade, it was seen as conferring both

¹⁰⁶OHA, ISW, interview with J. McCarthy, this self-confidence meant, for example, that after Easter 1916, the family organized local collections for the relatives of those insurgents imprisoned or shot. The family book collection was donated to the ISW by John (Jnr).

¹⁰⁷See BARCLAY, T. (1934), Ch. VI, *The Gaelic League and Ireland*, p. 95-110. Through Barclay, the Irish in Leicester c.1900 had access to the works and influences of cultural revivalists such as Pierce Beasley, W.P. Ryan, P.T. Macginly, Michael Brennan, Fionan MacColm, Sean O'Cahan, Dr. Henry, Ms. Agnes McHale, Dr. Annie Peterson, 'Prof.' Reidy, Jack O'Brien, Ms Edith Drury, Patrick O'Connor, Art O'Brien and Francis Fahey (creator of the Southwark Irish Junior Literary Club in the 1890s). Barclay himself felt isolated as a "Midlander" at this London gathering of an élite.

¹⁰⁸BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.51 and 46.

¹⁰⁹See quotation from DENVIR, J. (1894) examining these factors in Note (3) to Table 22.

TABLE 21		A PROLETARIAN ELITE : IRISH-BORN LODGING HOUSE KEEPERS, MARINE STORE DEALERS AND CLOTHES/RAG TRADERS IN LEICESTER 1841-91						
YEAR	Lodging House Keepers		Marine Store Dealers		Second-Hand Clothes & Rag Traders		Main Locations of Irish owned or managed Lodging Houses	
1841	M	0	M	0	M	1 rag dealer	Bedford St. (1)	
	F	1	F	0	F	1 "rag Woman"		
1851	M	5	M	0	M	11 {4 dealers; 1 labourer; {6 rag & bone	Bedford St. (1); Abbey St. (5); Green St. (2)	
	F	3	F	1	F	1 rag dealer		
1861	M	10	M	2	M	3: 1 picker/sorter/dealer	Abbey St. (2); Green St. (1)	
	F	2	F	1	F	9 {3 clothes dealers {6 rag sorters		
1871	M	4	M	1	M	0	Abbey St. (5) Bedford St. (1)	
	F	4	F	3	F	8 {7 rag sorters {1 waste dealer		
1881	M	0	M	3	M	0	Lower Garden St. (1)	
	F	1	F	5	F	6 {1 clothes dealer {3 rag sorters {2 waste dealers		
1891	M	0	M	1	M	3 {1 clothes dealer {2 rag sorters	NIL	
	F	0	F	3	F	10 {7 rag sorters {3 waste sorters		

Notes: (1) M = Male; F = Female; LHK = lodging house keeper; MSD = marine store dealer; all are aged 20+; source = ACD.

(2) Re - M.S. Dealers, in both 1871 and 1881, 1 of the females listed was a "labourer", and not "dealer."

(3) In 1861, there were also enumerated 3 second hand clothes dealers, another apparently fringe economic activity which could involve exporting old clothes to Ireland.

(4) A marine store dealer is described in DENVIR, J. (1894), p.454: "He becomes a collector of rags, old ropes, bones, old metal, rabbit and hare skins, and other apparently waste materials, for which trade has its uses. Sometimes, he gives ready money for his purchases, sometimes he adopts the barter system, and gives, in exchange, crockery, or other articles useful in a household; and in this way, realises a double profit. By dint of pinching and screwing he is able to leave the hawking to others and to set up what is termed a 'marine store', where, instead of trudging about in search of trade, the trade comes to him. Along with this, in consequence of the barter system, many of these marine store dealers develop large businesses in china and crockery ware, hardware of every kind, fur, wool, and every conceivable article of trade and commerce."

respectability and economic independence.¹¹⁰

Female enterprise was also to the fore in the second hand clothes and rag trades. In 1894, Denvir noted the economic significance of Irish involvement in the trade, remarking that "there is still good business done (by) proprietors over which you not unfrequently see an Irish name."¹¹¹ Mayhew observed the Irish input into the enormous London trade in old clothes, and export activity to Ireland, where urban and rural poverty created a notable demand (until c.1950, and economic regeneration).¹¹² Handley also pointed to the economic significance of the trade amongst the Irish in Scotland,¹¹³ especially the export side. The Leicester Irish presumably benefited accordingly. Table 21 indicates the scale of the operation: from just 2 dealers in 1841, there were 12 in 1851 and 1861, and 13 in 1891. Apart from the 1851 enumeration, when desperate men clutched at employment straws, from 1861 women easily predominated in the second hand clothes and rag sorting trades.¹¹⁴

The third main outlet for Irish entrepreneurial growth was in lodging house keeping.¹¹⁵ The Irish in Leicester were prominent in two respects: for management and/or ownership of such premises, and for questionable standards of operation. The issues over overcrowding and health are dealt with elsewhere; here the concern is with the business nature of the activity. Again, Mayhew's London Irish informants identified some owners as ex-travellers (ie vagrants) who had saved sufficiently, so that "a few of the proprietors may be classed as capitalists." Cheap furniture and sometimes a small salary for a "deputy", were the only investments needed. The only snag was local authority inspection and registration, where and when that existed. In Leicester, town council inspection commenced in 1848.

Leicester had its own Irish rookeries, defined locally in two ways. "Loosely, it could refer to any houses in which numerous separate tenants lodged. Strictly, it meant those that accommodated tenants constantly on the move, often staying only a night at

¹¹⁰A historical footnote on Irish Scrap dealers: a family from Armagh, the Murphy brothers, who came to Leicester c.1935, and who dealt in scrap, especially metal, after 1945, invested in property and were, by 1993, the 28th richest family in Britain, worth £272 million; see *LM*, 5.4.1993, 13.4.1991, 18.9.1987; 13.9.1995. By 1995 indeed, the heir, Ms. Freddie Murphy, was 2nd richest woman in the UK (after the Queen) according to the *Sunday Times* list of the 'Richest 500.'

¹¹¹DENVIR, J. (1894), p.454.

¹¹²See Penguin Edtn/Ed. NEUBERG, V (1985), re- "Dolly Shops" and secondhand clothings and footwear and the Irish, p.493-4; also the QUENNEL Edtn (1950), *Mayhew's London*, p.211-2 and 220 re wholesale clothes exchange and "Erse" - speaking dealers, and *London's Underworld*, p.307.

¹¹³HANDLEY, J.E. (1943), p.272-3.

¹¹⁴The male involvement in 1851 is reflected in the high numbers of men now involved (1998) in low-paid service industries (such as school and office cleaning), previously female purlieus.

¹¹⁵This does not include small-time operators who took in just 1 or 2 persons.

a time."¹¹⁶ All migrant casual labour utilised such facilities, especially Irish seasonal harvesters. Barclay remarked on Leicester's Irish thus:

The more thrifty took larger houses, and began to lodge the new arrivals and the *greeceens*. The *greeceens* were the raw recruits that came over every summer to reap the harvest, before the advent of the reaping machine. They had never been out of Erin before, and were regarded as greenhorns by our Anglicised Irish.¹¹⁷

There is some confirmatory evidence for Barclay's assertion in the poor rates data (refer Table 22); (ie. if any person owned property, he or she could be obliged to meet poor law tax levies). In 1834, one Margaret Doyle was registered as an occupier (not owner) of a house in Orchard Street, an area heavily Irish by 1851, and John and Mary Lynch of Abbey Street also featured, as they had 4 lodgers by 1841.¹¹⁸ Table 22 attempts to cross-relate those Irish registered as liable for the Poor Rate in 1847 with the census returns for 1841 and 1851.¹¹⁹

In general, the evidence from the poor rate record for 1847, when linked with census data from both 1841 and 1851, suggests, not surprisingly, a paucity of entries for the post-Famine period c.1851. Although 8 entries were traced for 1851 as opposed to 7 for 1841, the Irish population was far wider in the latter year. Also, certain key Irish locations, such as Abbey Street and Garden Street, show no Irish-born or relatives at all as being liable for this charge. Fraud and deliberate avoidance aside, the picture is reinforced of a relatively more wealthy Irish community existing in 1841 compared with the vastly expanded product a decade later.

However, if legal ownership eluded many Irish, occupation and sub-letting did not. Leicester may have offered a parallel to London, where there too many of the immigrants were cottars from Mayo, Galway and Roscommon who patched up derelict properties and added sheds for extra room space.¹²⁰ Whilst some Irish owners or deputies were no doubt ready to exploit their own ethnic market, standards were not especially high for the mass of indigenous inhabitants of the same social strata. The Irish

¹¹⁶SIMMONS, J. (1976), *Life in Victorian Leicester*, p.12.

¹¹⁷*The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149.

¹¹⁸LCRO 7D67 *Poor Rates* St Margarets, No. 218, 2nd Qu. of 1834; after the 1834 Municipal Corporation Act, some non-owners opted to pay rates in order to get the vote. Lynch was a labourer; it is not clear that he was the owner.

¹¹⁹Only a limited number of Poor Rates Books survive in LCRO; therefore the data for comparison is also limited, but still useful.

¹²⁰GAGE, J., *The Rise and Fall of the St. Giles Rookery - an Account of the notorious slums in the parish of St. Giles; Camden History Review*, No. 12, 1984, p.20.

TABLE 22 RATE PAYERS IN THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN SELECTED STREETS IN LEICESTER IN 1847, CROSS-REFERENCED WITH THE 1841 AND 1851 CENSUSES									
Names	Addresses	LCRO Poor Rate Book; page ref.	Census cross reference		Husband (1841)	Wife (1841)	No of Children	Occupations	
			1841	1851					
JORDAN, William	Wharf St.; occupiers only	p.111	✓	✓	William (40), L	Elizabeth (35) Ir	2 sons (13+6) + 1 dtr (9)	Hair dresser	
HUBBARD family	Wheat St.; occupiers only	p.108	✓	—	Thomas (60) L	Mary (55) IR	1 son (24)	Stocking Maker	
HADDEN, Judith	Gas St.; occupier only	p.115	✓	✓	Benjamin (75) L	Judith ()		Independent	
HORSPOOL, Susannah	Archdeacon Ln; occupier only	p.209	✓	✓	Widow		2 dtrs (25 + 20)	Independent	
RIDDINGTON, Mr. J.	Garden St.; occupier only	p.213	✓	—	Joe (28) IR	Elizabeth (24) L		Shoemaker	
COX, John James: clay pipe maker	Bedford St.; owner + rate payer	p.157	✓	✓	John (50) Eng	Esther (40) IR	3 dtrs (15,15+14), + 1 son (12)	Pipe maker (ie clay, for tobacco)	
MADDEN, Michael; optician*	Green St.; occupier only	p.216	—	✓	Michael (30) IR	Sarah (26) L; pool	2 dtrs (6 + 3)	Spectacle Maker	
LICHFIELD, John, Woolcomber	Mansfield St.; occupiers only	p.222	—	✓	John (49) London	Eleanor (47) IR		Woolcomber + worsted spinner	
MURPHY, Jos	Belgrave Gt; rated; occupier only	p.191	not listed		—	—	—	—	
GALLAGHER, Mchl (or John?)	Belgrave Gt; rated; occupier only	p.191	—	✓	John (48) IR	Mary (29) IR	1 son (7) + 1 dtr (1)	Clothes dealer	
FENNING, John	Belgrave Gt, rated, occupier only	p.191	✓	✓	John (35) IR	Mary (35) IR	1 dtr (3) 1 son (15)	Weaver; Grocers by 1851	
CONNOLLY, E.	Green St.; occupier only	p.216	not listed		—	—	—	—	
LYNCH, John	Abbey St. (Status unclear)		✓	—	John (40) IR	Mary (45) IR	None	Labourer	
Notes: (1) Source: LCRO 7D67 Poor Rates Books, No. 235, second quarter of 1847; 1st ✓ = 1841 entry; 2nd ✓ = 1851 entry. (2) For certain key Irish streets, no Irish-associated owners were listed in 1847 at all: ie Abbey St., Royal East St., Garden Street., Orchard St., Woodboy St., Britannia St., Gravel St., and Dover St. (3) Husband and wife data is from 1841 census, unless marked * for 1851. (4) William Jordan's wife, Elizabeth, is listed in the 1841 Census, as is Mrs. Sarah Madden, wife of Michael, in 1851. (5) Those names not cross-referenced with census, but present in 1847 rates records, are persons who were not present at those particular censuses. (6) The John Gallagher of Belgrave Gate seems the likely occupant (p.14 in ACD)									

TABLE 23		NUMBERS OF IRISH-BORN LODGERS IN LEICESTER'S IRISH COMMUNITY 1841 TO 1891	
Census Year	No. Of Irish-born Lodgers	%age of Irish-born Community	Notes to each census year
1841	90	18.9	Most were under 30, and male; males predominated at all censuses.
1851	151	17.2	excluded 8 "visitors".
1861	117	13.7	included significant numbers of whole families, not just single men.
1871	96	10.9	excluded a small number of boarders.
1881	103	10.9	33 more were boarders, who were often relatives or in-laws; lodgers were not necessarily poor.
1891	77	7.9	48 boarders need considering here.
Notes: (1) Source of numbers of lodgers is <i>ACD</i> . (2) Source of numbers of Irish-born is Census. (3) See chapter on housing for further analysis			

appeared, because of other differentiating factors (race, religion, language, dress) more noticeable. That some could at times be villains, such as "Blind Jack" Corbett, there is no doubt (see references in Crime chapters to court case); most were merely generating income, but doing so at a time when local authority rules were being enacted and enforced, based increasingly on legitimate sociological research approaches.¹²¹ Lees (1979) stresses the earning capacity that a home represented for Irish women struggling to balance their domestic budgets. As well as bed, there was board, laundry and mending to contract for; women cut off from external jobs during their family's developmental cycle, when children had to be fed and were too young to earn - when therefore expense was greatest - readily accepted the limitations imposed by lodgers for the ensuing economic advantages.¹²² Barclay's mother kept a lodger, and the adolescent Tom himself, after crossing swords with his father, found lodgings with another Irish family in the town.¹²³ This pattern was typical.

¹²¹ See PELLING, H. (1965), *The Origins of the Labour Party*, p9; Dare of the LDMS, and the successive MOHs in Leicester, exemplified this trend.

¹²² LEES, L.H. (1979), p.115. Corbett bears out the truth of Barclay's observation re the "more thrifty" Irish as being enterprising: Corbett was himself a mere Abbey St. lodger in 1841 (*ACD*, p.15) until he moved into the business himself, for several decades (see below)

¹²³ BARCLAY, T. (1934), p. 51 and 38-9.

Outside of the trinity of marine store dealing, second hand clothes and lodging house management, some expanded opportunities for Irish Catholics emerged from c.1881 onwards in terms of lower middle class/upper working class economic roles. Both the census and local directory evidence point to this conclusion.¹²⁴ The 1846 data here is misleading, for whilst very few Irish were registered in the selected streets, 8 appear in Table 7 dealing with Irish entries in *White's 1846 Directory*. From 1861, with the initial post-"Famine" settling down period, entries increased steadily for these streets immediately surrounding St Patrick's School-Chapel.

This upward trend continued until the late 1880's and the turn of the century, but after c.1890 the number of Irish entries declined, a direct indication of the break-up of the Irish core and the increasing dispersal of Irish families to the new artisan

TABLE 24		IRISH SOCIAL MOBILITY IN LEICESTER from c.1846 TO c.1904 FROM LOCAL DIRECTORY EVIDENCE (Source: LCRO) (*see Footnote 124)						
Selected streets (ie around St Patrick's school-chapel)		Numbers of Upwardly Mobile Irish in selected Years based on Entries.						
		1846	1861	1877	1882	1887-8	1904	1911
Abbey Street		---	2	2*	4*	2*	2	---
Royal East Street		---	1	3	6*	6*	3	2
Wharf Street		---	3	4	7*	2*	5	3
Woodboy Street		---	---	2*	3**	2**	1	1
Bedford Street		2	4**	3**	11***	4*	1	--
Burley Lane		---	---	---	1	4*	3*	1*

terraced developments. The incidence of the asterisk symbol (see footnote) indicates the centrality of the Bedford Street area to the Irish, and more importantly it offers evidence of stability setting in during the 1870's and consolidating throughout the 1880's. Even so, the types of occupations considering themselves worthy of *Directory* status were still somewhat humble in status and limited in number.

Small shopkeepers were most evident in 1877-8; 8 of the 14 entries concerned

¹²⁴LCRO; the available directories consulted were *Wright's* for 1861, 1867-8 and 1904; and *White's* for 1846, 1877 and 1882. The asterisks represent the number of entries which re-appear in subsequent years. Surnames were selected on basis of informed visual recognition and MacLYSAGHT (1985).

either food or tobacco shops. In 1882, 11 of the 32 entries related to these two same trades, with the addition of 5 clothes dealers, 2 publicans and 2 marine store (waste) dealers. By 1887/81, the food and tobacco retail interest had contracted noticeably, to just 5 entries, whilst 4 clothes dealers and 3 bootmakers still operated, and 2 new small concerns, newsagents, were listed. Some of the other businesses reflected that of Mrs Sarah Conlon of No. 2 Abbey Street, whose entry of “coal dealer, greengrocer, shopkeeper/Court C” indicated the continued location of many of the Irish in the alleys and courtyards off Belgrave Gate. The entries for 1904 and 1911 decreased in number, but qualitatively represented the earlier pattern. A lodging house keeper still operated in Woodboy Street in 1904 and 1911. Self description illustrated an “up-market” tendency; by 1911, one tobacconist was wholesale as well as retail, whilst another business advertised itself as “refreshment/confectioner.”

One other Irish family enjoying commercial longevity was the Coxes, who were notable Leicester clay pipe makers.¹²⁵ John James Cox, aged 50 in 1841 appeared with his Irish-born wife Esther (40) and 5 children in the census of that year. The family remained resident in Bedford Street at all three censuses between 1841 and 1861; Mr. Cox appeared also in *White's Directory* of 1846 and in the *Poor Rates Books* for 1847. One local authority on clay pipe manufacturing puts the arrival of the Cox family as early as 1823,¹²⁶ and suggests that their unerring concentration on their original product was due to the fact that they made their pipes at their house in Bedford Street, away from the consumer shopping centre of the town. Business was good, for son William termed himself “Gentleman” in his 1851 census return. Another cogent incentive would have been the Irish market in situ in Bedford Street and the surrounding area. Barclay reminisced in 1895 of “the old *calaighs* in plain shoulder-shawls and bordered caps, who used in these parts (ie Abbey St. and Green St) years ago, to squat on their hunkers and smoke *dudheens*.”¹²⁷ As well as the culture of smoking in bars and at wakes and other social settings, there was the political partisanship exhibited by one's choice of decorated bowl motif (see chapter on Politics).

The other Leicester pipe maker with Irish connections (through his father) was

¹²⁵ACD, 1841, p.7; 1851, p.10; and 1861, p.8.

¹²⁶See DANIELL, J.A., *The Making of Clay Pipes in Leicester*, in *TLAHS*, Vol. XL, 1964-65, (p.59-62) on both Cox and Flanagan.

¹²⁷*The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.150; a *calaigh* was an old woman, and a *dudheen* a pipe (Gaelic). One of the illustrations in Mayhew (of the female Irish street seller) exactly mirrors this image; see *Mayhew's London* (QUENNEL Edtn, 1969), p.36.

William Flanagan (of Shropshire) who came to Leicester c.1885, working first at Frog Island and then Bath Lane, where he ended trading in 1919 (and died in 1921). Flanagan produced in bulk (around 40 gross per firing); his wife's input was essential, covering packing, transport and retailing. This mode of economic organisation reflected the old structures of domestic production. Both families represented successful small scale business enterprise in action, and, whilst there were Irish connections, they were not always typical of the wider community.¹²⁸

(g) CONCLUSION

The Irish in Leicester then enjoyed a varied cross-section of occupations in 1841, with noticeably more skilled persons, which was followed in 1851 and 1861 by a pattern where labouring of one sort or another was the dominant strain. Evidence suggests, however, that a significant proportion of male and female workers were attracted by and to textiles, in particular framework knitting. As this became mechanised, and as the boot and shoe industry similarly reorganised itself, increasing numbers of Irish were to be seen in these trades from c.1871.

There was very little in numerical terms to represent a significant middle class; although a tiny minority of Irish professional men found situations, progress generally took the form of movement from unskilled to semi-skilled and skilled jobs in the artisan sector, with some men and women entrepreneurs making good as lodging house keepers, marine store dealers and small shopkeepers.

Lees (1973) spoke of the London Irish as "an extreme case of a group that clustered at the bottom of society." This judgement would be to some extent valid for Leicester's Irish population from c.1851 to c.1881, after which the skilled sector began to expand again. By the 1890's there was undoubtedly a wider variety of occupations engaging the Irish, and firm evidence of some upward mobility in progress. Lees's conclusion regarding London has a general application to the Irish in Leicester.

Some persons were better fixed than others to rise within this hierarchical structure. The lack of access of training and to education clearly blocked many from joining the favoured few in the "aristocracy of labour" as in the ranks of the middle class.¹²⁹

¹²⁸Flanagan was involved in connection with proselytism, q.v.; his pipe-making equipment is now in Leics. Museums.

¹²⁹LEES, L., *Metropolitan Types*, in DYOS, & WOLFF (1973), *The Victorian City*, Vol. II, p.425. Also, see HMI criticism of curriculum delivered at St Patrick's School c1900-c1915.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY (PART II): SETTLEMENT AND PROBLEMATIZATION

The private abodes of the Irish especially demand superintendence. It is a custom with them in taking a house, for one responsible person to rent it, but ten or a dozen others also make it their nightly rendezvous after their wanderings for rags and bones, and such things - or for the sale of wood in all directions. I went myself to one of these houses at the request of a benevolent gentleman, to see to the requirements of an Irishman who had been taken ill in one of his fields. I called on a Sunday morning, and then counted nine men, two women without shoes or stockings, and several children; all inmates of a place scarcely large enough for a single family. It is probable that more than these crept in here "under night's sable cloak," for Paddy Cardimugh was brought in from the street to answer my inquiries. The Scripture-reader whose especial business is to visit the Catholic Irish, informed me that as many as twenty grown-up persons may be often found herding together in these private houses. Filth, degradation, and disease are the sure results.

Rev. Joseph Dare, *7th Report of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, 1852, p.9.

The two worst cases were amongst the Irish. Two or three Irish children were observed by a benevolent lady on the race-course the Sunday before last; these children were in such a "ragged filthy condition as to be a disgrace to a Christian country. Could anything be done for them?" I made inquiries of a respectable neighbour whom I have known for twenty years, and who has known these same Irish families four or five years. The mother of two of the said children lives in that respectable locality, "Pork-shop Yard." She has offspring by several men - is "enceinte" and perpetually drunk. She sends out her children in this condition on purpose to excite commiseration; if the children were dressed up tidy to-day, the clothes would all be stripped off, sold for drink, and the children driven forth naked to play the same game tomorrow. The other Irish case is that of a man, a widower, who shortened his wife's existence by ill-treatment. He lives, himself, by gathering rags and bones and begging. He takes no care whatever of his children. They are sent at large in rags and dirt to obtain subsistence in any manner they are able. A better garment or a pair of shoes would be immediately taken from them for drink: the boy seen on the race-course was recently in prison for theft. Should not the Irish generally be referred to their own priest? They are a great calamity to our large towns. Wherever they locate they introduce crime, disease, and wretchedness. There is scarcely an Irish case deserving of relief. The police should have orders to clear the public walks and race-course, especially on a Sunday of all such objects as referred to above. They are sent there for the express purpose of preying on the unwary.

Rev. Joseph Dare, *9th Report of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society* 1854, p.10

I know personally that much evil was done last winter by indiscriminate giving at the door. A benevolent, but inexperienced, person stated that he had given eight or ten sixpences daily for some time to parties calling at the door, and that they chiefly came from B Street and neighbourhood. Now nearly the whole of these would consist of Irish, and our less reputable poor The majority of begging cases come from the common lodging houses and the resident Irish. Except in extreme cases, these latter are not allowed, and very properly, any out-door relief; for the smallest out-door allowance would be an inducement for the recipients to send for their relations by the hundred to come and share their good fortune. But they will not submit to the necessary regulations of the Union House, so they have recourse to mendicancy. They are encouraged to pursue this course by their faith.

Rev. Joseph Dare, *10th Report Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, 1855, pages 6 & 10.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY (PART II): SETTLEMENT AND PROBLEMATIZATION

PAGE	CONTENTS
114	(a) Introduction
115	(b) Housing and Settlement patterns
128	(c) Families and Community: Questions of Transience
140	(d) Health and "Contagion"
148	(d) The Impact of Poverty: Paupers or "Pariahs"?
158	(e) Conclusion

LIST OF TABLES

120	1.	Settlement of the whole (larger) Irish Community in Leicester by parish, 1841-1891.
120	2.	Settlement of the Irish-born only in Leicester by parish, 1841-91.
121	3.	Core Streets of Irish Settlement in Leicester, 1841-91 (ie with 90 persons or more).
122	4.	Subsidiary Streets of Irish Settlement in Leicester, 1841-1891 (ie with 50 to 90 persons)
124	5.	(a) Numbers of lodgers amongst the Irish Community in Leicester, 1841-91.
124		(b) Numbers of English, Irish-born and effectively Irish, in Selected Streets from 1841-71 (Abbey Street, Green Street and Bedford Street).
129	6.	Distribution of the Irish Community in Leicester (1841-91) by streets (alphabetical; A as sample).
131/2	7.	Turnover of People in the wider Irish community in Leicester 1841-91: Diachronic decennial analysis (Parts 1 & 2)
133	8.	Diachronic decennial analysis of family surname units re-migrant transience in wider Irish community.
133	9.	The Longevity Pattern in the wider Irish community of units crossing over at each Census from 1841-81.
133	10.	The Longevity Pattern re: numbers of units in a decennial time

PAGE

pattern (ie units present for between 10 and 50 years).

- | | | |
|-------|-----|---|
| 136/7 | 11. | Age and Sex Structure of the Wider Irish Community in Leicester at all censuses from 1841 to 1891. |
| 138 | 12. | The Wider Irish Community in Leicester 1841-91: Street Settlement Pattern Analysis for the whole period. |
| 145 | 13. | Tuberculosis Mortality Statistics for Selected Trades in Leicester in 1859, 1861 and 1866 (from MOH Reports). |
| 155 | 14. | Numbers of Irish-born Paupers enumerated at Censuses from 1841 to 1891 (Male & Female). |

MAPS

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| 116 | 1. | The core Irish Streets in N.E. central Leicester, c.1835, |
| 117 | 2. | The streets of N.E. central Leicester c.1900. |
| 141 | 3. | Locations of Reported Diarrhoea Cases in N.E. Leicester in 1880. |
| 142 | 4. | Locations of Reported Cases of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Measles and Typhoid in N.E. Leicester in 1880. |

(a) Introduction

This and the preceding chapter deal with the broad social structure of the Irish community in Leicester c1841-91. This second chapter deals with issues of settlement patterns and the problematization of the Irish in terms of housing, vagrancy, poverty and health.¹

The pattern of Irish settlement altered between c.1841 and c.1891; this section will identify reasons for this change. Even before 1851, a core of settlement had developed around the foci of Green Street, Abbey Street and Bedford Street, and these were accompanied by a whole series of smaller clusters, virtually all the Irish being in the poor and most proletarian parish of St Margarets. By 1881, it was clear that this pattern had changed: much wider dispersal was underway, yet, paradoxically, the old core areas still had a significant Irish representation. The implications of this for questions of integration and assimilation will be discussed; evidence is apparently contradictory, for dispersal and some cultural dilution co-existed beside the maintenance of community religious, political and cultural structures, both organisational and physical.

A recent study of the Irish in Liverpool and Lancaster by Pooley (1989) raises four key points relevant to Leicester.² He points out the problems surrounding usage of terminology (eg the subjectivity generally involved in definitions of segregation and clustering. In this study the terms "ghetto", "core", and "colony" have all been used, but clearly still leave problems whether in primary or secondary sources). Second, Pooley demonstrated that Irish-born migrants were widely distributed throughout the urban hierarchy in mid-Victorian Britain, often being drawn to small towns with specific labour opportunities, and Leicester features in this sense (see Occupations). Pooley's third point related to the domination of the conventional stereotype (ie a ghettoised class of poor) in the face of evidence relating the existence of some Irish in skilled and middle-class jobs, and these same living in more geographically dispersed and socially disparate situations. His final point was that all the Irish, not just a bourgeois minority, had opportunities to significantly interact with non-Irish elements (outside of marriage). Both of these latter considerations are relevant in Leicester's case.

¹ Occupations are introduced separately.

² POOLEY, C, *Segregation or Integration? The residential experience of the Irish in Mid-Victorian Britain*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds) (1989), pp. 60-83.

The evidence regarding Leicester is supportive of Pooley's general conclusions in regard to housing and settlement issues. The problems of terminology are self-evident. The second suggestion, that Irish migrants were widely distributed throughout the urban hierarchy, will be shown to be true of Leicester in the 1841-91 period (see Tables in Occupations chapter). The second half of this chapter deals with the problematization of the Irish in Leicester. They were usually viewed as carriers rather than sufferers of disease, and as "pariahs" rather than paupers. This fear of contagion helped account for the segregated patterns of residency in the town. Hall (1998) demonstrates that the Irish were viewed as "disordered" families in need of regulation; whose savage and barbarous habits "demoralized" their English neighbours.³

(b) Housing and Settlement Patterns

For this section, all Leicester streets hosting Irish-born persons were tabulated alphabetically and numerically, being entered on the record as they appeared as "Irish" streets on each successive census. Broadly speaking, the lower a street's position is on the list has two implications: it was usually built later, and the Irish began to move there after c.1861/1871. In other words, the lists reflect the expansion of consecutive and increasingly newer artisan suburban terraced housing, and the gradual movement outwards of the Irish spatially and in time. This pattern holds true for all the streets analysed,⁴ (including Abbey Street, Bedford Street, Belgrave Gate, Green Street and Garden Street), not just those with minimal Irish representation.⁵ (See Map 2 and Table 7)

Housing and community health were closely inter-related factors in Victorian Leicester. Whilst not numerous, the Irish were well represented in the various stages of local urban development.⁶ Of 4 growth areas available, the Irish tended towards the poorest: St Margaret's and the Wharf Street district. By 1846, this central area saw the

³See HALL, C, *A Family for Nation and Empire* (p.26-31) and HICKMAN (p.150-2) in LEWIS, G (1998), (Ed), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*.

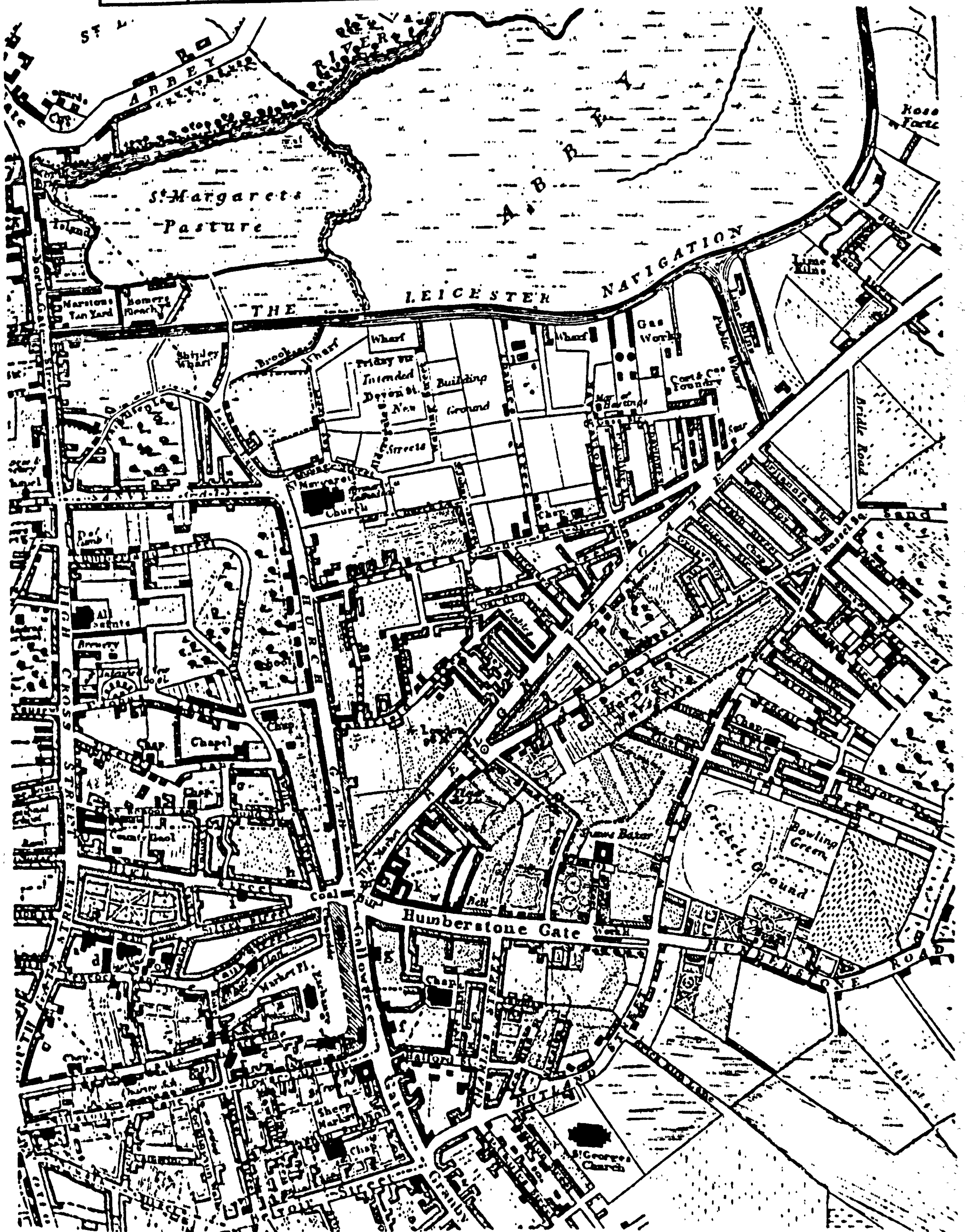
⁴See this author's *Distribution of Irish in Leicester by Streets (Alphabetical) 1841-91 and A.C.D 1841-91*.

⁵Barclays piece on the Abbey St -Green St slum in his 1895 series in *The Wyvern* is in part retrospective.

⁶For housing in Leicester see GILL, R, (1985), *The Book of Leicester*, Ch. on Victorian Growth, p.47-52, and also in EVANS, R.H, *Expansion in the 19th C.*, in BROWN, E.A. (Ed)(1970), *The Growth of Leicester*. p.68. For medical provision, see HEYDON, S., *The Provision of Medical Care for the Poor in Leicester in the 1830's*, in *TLAHS*, Vol. LV, 1979-80, pp.65-71; and FRIZELLE, E.R. & MOSS, B.J.L. (pp.551-564) in *The Development of Medicine, Health and Social Services* in PYE, N. (Ed)(1972), *Leicester and its Region*. See also SIMMONS, J. (1976) *Life in Victorian Leicester*, pp.10-20.

MAP 1

THE CORE IRISH STREETS IN N.E. CENTRAL LEICESTER, c.1835: the town still had ample green spaces, with speculative inexpensive terrace housing beginning to develop along both sides of Belgrave Gate. (Source; LCRO, Fowler's Survey Map of 1828)



MAP 2

THE STREETS OF N.E. CENTRAL LEICESTER c.1900; the area has now become totally built up; an Irish presence remains even though dispersal has been underway since the 1870's. (Source OS MAPS of Leicester N.W. (1902) and N.E (1913).



rapid growth of narrow streets, such as Gravel Street and Sandacre Street (see Map 1). Between c.1820 and c.1870, growth also centred around those streets built off Belgrave Gate on the Britannia Street-Woodboy Street side.⁷ In the 1830's the Bedford Street and the Russell Square district were developed.

One modern account gives the flavour of these areas:

In some streets, specifically those between Bedford Street and Wharf Street there were dozens of brothels, lodging houses, pubs, tiny lock-up shops and squalid little courts, where several families shared a single tap in a communal yard.

It is important to note that from c.1870, with new suburban artisan housing, the Irish began to redistribute themselves, although a reduced core remained in the older areas until the 1930's; one observer noted in c.1945 that "the humble dwellings of the early Irish settlers have all been cleared."⁸

Little was to change for many of the Irish in terms of unhealthy living conditions in the half-century from Barclay's birth in 1852. He described his various childhood homes. The family lived in such well known Irish and proletarian locations as Burley's Lane and Woodboy Street, all with problems of overcrowding, inadequate ventilation and poor sanitation.⁹ In 1857, Bishop Ullathorne remarked at length on the problems of the absence of decent accommodation for the Irish: "The poor have come, through force of circumstances, to be a migratory race, and especially the poor Irish terribly in want of a home are our poor, dear Catholic Irish."¹⁰

Leicester's Irish in-migrants were not only moving into speculative low-cost, low standard housing units, but these were situated in an industrial blight zone, amongst the canal wharves, the gas works and the iron foundries.¹¹ In 1895, Barclay noted: "The Irish settled in Green Street - perhaps attracted by the name in the 'back lanes' ie Lower Garden Street, that opens out of Abbey Street, some property has been condemned I went into Abbey Street, where, leaving out the Slaughter houses,

⁷McKINLAY, R.A. & SMITH, C.T. (Eds)(1958), *VCHL, VOL. IV, Housing*, p.291.

⁸GILL, R., (1965) *The Book of Leicester*, p.48; KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.53.

⁹BARCLAY, T., (1934), pp. 3,4 and 11. In the 1850's the Corporation had objected to single entry units in Denman Street and Wharf Street, see LCRO, 20D 72/55, *Minutes of Local Board of Health*, re Sept. 1853; the writer noted "I am sorry in any case to see houses so closely congregated as those will necessarily be in such a locality."

¹⁰ULLATHORNE, (1857), *Notes on the Education Question*, p.48-53.

¹¹EVANS, R.H., *Expansion in the 19th Century*, in BROWN, E.A. (Ed)(1970), *The Growth of Leicester*, p.68. Another typical example concerned a chemical works - complaint of fumes caused by varnish making in Belgrave Gate on 22.2.1854; see LCRO, 20D 72-55, MOH Report of Local Bd. of H, 1853-6.

marine stores and bakeries, the remainder are public houses and lodging-houses.”¹² Only very small numbers of professional and middle class Irish, and Irish servants, lived outside St Margarets, in the Newarke, and St. Martins. (See Tables 1 and 2).

Retrospectively, Barclay noted that “in Leicester the Irish are as nothing compared with such towns as Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester;” he nonetheless discussed Leicester’s Abbey Street-Green Street area as “an Irish colony” similar to those found elsewhere. “To show the fondness of the Irish for the same spot,” declared Barclay, “I may mention that one man has lived in Green Street 40 years, and before the building of the present house lived in a previous one on the same spot.”¹³ His judgement is borne out by the preference for long-term settlement within a certain district (even if not in the same premises) shown by the data on Table 3 and 4, indicating streets with long-term Irish residency (from c.1841 to c.1891) with numbers of effectively Irish ranging from 50 up to 668 persons. Of Abbey Street and Green Street, Barclay was quite correct in using the term “colony,” and it is clear that Abbey Street’s 81 effectively Irish of 1841 shows its importance before the “Famine” influx. Green Street boasted numbers similar to those of Abbey Street in 1851, 1861 and 1871 (see Tables 3 and 4). Using the slum clearance plans in archives, it is possible to reconstruct part of Green Street’s Irish population as it was in 1871. It provides an excellent microcosm of the whole; in particular it offers evidence of self-selected grouping by area of origin in Ireland (principally Galway and Mayo); (Map 1 and Table 6).¹⁴

Other Irish slum areas detailed by Barclay were Bedford Street and Britannia Street. Bedford Street housed around 80 persons of Irish birth or extraction at every census from 1841 to 1871, and 46 such still resided there in 1891; on an average of census totals, it was superseded only by Green Street and Abbey Street. (See Table 3) Like Abbey Street, Bedford Street was an Irish centre before the “Famine” (78 effectively Irish in 1841). Barclay described its “miserable” courts and lodging-houses, marine stores, factories, pubs and secondhand clothes shops.¹⁵ In 1895 Barclay lauded the new model lodging house in Britannia Street, a location always with a good sprinkling of Irish (see Table 3). He compared it with the mean streets of his childhood,

¹²1877 saw the first Model Bye-Laws, entitled: Series IV, New Streets and Buildings; 1875 witnessed the first of a number of Public Health Acts; *Why Building Control* Leic City Council.

¹³*The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII, p.149-150.

¹⁴*City Council Surveyors Maps; ACD, 1871*, p.12-17; 1871 was chosen as the enumerator had identified Irish birthplaces; the street was just as Irish in 1851, 1861 and 1881.

¹⁵BARCLAY, T., in *The Wyvern*, 31.5.1895, No. 188, Vol. VIII p.85.

TABLE 1 SETTLEMENT OF THE WHOLE (LARGER) IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER BY PARISH, 1841 TO 1891								
YEAR	PARISHES IN LEICESTER							
	St Margarets	St Martins	St Marys	St Nicholas	All Saints	Blackfriars	St Leonards	Newarke
1841	534	31	69	16	38			
1851	1078	52	117	--	86			
1861	1097	19	167	--	21			
1871	1170	25	342	73	77			
1881	1100	--	168	58	34	10	74	34
1891	1029	6	240	38	50	5	34	17
Notes:	(1) Source: ACD/General Census 1851-91. (2) Irish community here means Irish-born, their spouses and children. (3) Blackfriars, St. Leonards and the Newark became recognised parishes after 1871. (4) The overwhelming majority was concentrated in St Margarets whilst a significant minority, mainly of middle class (who were most probably Protestant), and of servants (who were most probably Catholics) lived in St Mary's parish.							

TABLE 2 SETTLEMENT OF THE IRISH-BORN ONLY IN LEICESTER BY PARISH, 1841 TO 1891								
YEAR	PARISHES IN LEICESTER							
	St Margarets	St Martins	St Marys	St Nicholas	All Saints	Blackfriars	St Leonards	Newarke
1841	298	16	35	3	22			
1851	647	20	56	--	32			
1861	598	13	87	--	8			
1871	506	14	121	24	30			
1881	473	--	49	20	14	2	22	24
1891	409	4	81	16	16	2	12	12
Notes:	See Table 1 above..							

TABLE 3 CORE STREETS OF IRISH SETTLEMENT IN LEICESTER FROM 1841-1891 (ie 90 persons or more)										
Street Name	Numbers of Irish (including non-Irish spouses and children) at each Census									
	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	Total	Supplementary Commentary		
*Abbey St.	81	132	150	130	124	51	668	See BARCLAY, T., <i>The Wyvern</i> , 18.6.1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII		
*Green St.	11	124	154	136	77	--	502	as for Abbey Street		
*Bedford St.	78	83	83	88	28	43	403	See BARCLAY, T., <i>The Wyvern</i> , 31.5.1895, No. 188, Vol. VIII		
Belgrave Gt.	24	90	18	39	33	30	234	as for Abbey Street		
Lwr Garden St.	--	5	25	57	56	21	164	as for Abbey Street		
Lwr Green St.	14	22	15	43	47	18	159	as for Abbey Street		
Gravel St	--	8	16	42	35	56	157			
*Britannia St.	17	10	24	18	12	24	105	See BARCLAY, T., <i>The Wyvern</i> , 5.7.1895, No. 193, Vol. VIII		
Oxford St.	18	23	22	13	21	2	99			
Mansfield St.	12	18	---	14	36	19	99			
*Jewry Wall St.	--	---	---	35	38	22	95	See BARCLAY, T., <i>The Wyvern</i> , 12.7.1895, No. 194, Vol. VIII		
Garden St.	11	11	24	56	14	5	91	as for Abbey Street		
Baker St.	--	25	8	3	23	32	91			
(Dover St.)	--	7	30	16	21	12	(86)			

Notes: (1) Source LCRO; Censuses 1841-91 inclusive; *ACD*; file and print-out.

(2) Dover St. is included as its total of 86 is not far short of 90, and it was close to Holy Cross RC Church.

(3) c.1841, Bedford St was known, and shown on early maps, as Barkby Lane.

(4) all marked * featured in Tom Barclay's series analysing *Leicester's Slums* in 'The Wyvern' in the summer of 1895.

TABLE 4		SUBSIDIARY STREETS OF IRISH SETTLEMENT IN LEICESTER FROM 1841-1891 (ie 50 to 90 persons)									
		Numbers of Irish (including non-Irish spouses and children) at each Census									
		1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	Total	Commentary		
	Dover St.	--	7	30	16	21	12	86	Located close to Holy Cross RC Church and Schools		
	*Royal East St.	14	28	13	--	4	14	73	Location of St Patrick's School-Chapel.		
	*Woodboy St.	4	3	19	26	9	11	72	Home of the Barclay family; Police Station.		
	The Newarke	--	1	--	71	45	9	22	Location of 17th Regt. Military Barracks		
	*Wharf St.	20	18	15	3	8	1	66			
	*Sanvey Gate	11	6	5	13	9	17	61	Location of a Police Station		
	*Archdeacon Lane	15	6	10	8	3	11	53			
	*Humberstone Gt.	10	13	2	13	3	9	50			
	*(Burleys Lane)	10	4	1	10	19	4	(48)			

- Notes: (1) The Newarke's figures for 1871 and 1881 were inflated artificially by the location there of the barracks for the 17th Leics. Regiment, which recruited heavily in Ireland.
- (2) New police stations were established in areas of working class and Irish habitation, such as on Woodboy St. and on Sanvey Gate; see Crime chapter.
- (3) All streets marked * were within easy walking distance of St Patrick's School-Chapel.
- (4) As Dover St.'s total of 86 was close to the 90 limit, it also features on Table 3.

with their "dismalest, squalidest, worst hovels."

Very little attention has been paid to Irish settlement in local secondary accounts; one confined itself in purely negative terms to the briefest of descriptions:

Irish immigrants, in Leicester as elsewhere, were a source of trouble. They tended to concentrate in one part of St Margaret's parish, around Belgrave Gate and Abbey Gate, and the houses they occupied there were often overcrowded.¹⁶

Most primary and secondary sources are heavily influenced by Rev. Dare's negative outlook on the Irish; (see sources, Chapter 1).

In 1852, at the height of the "Famine" influx and dislocation, Dare propounded his basic theme on the effect of the Irish on Leicester's housing problems; (refer title page quote). The tone is dismissive, such as his use of "herding" to describe the overcrowded Irish lodgers. Dare was re-emphasising a message he had first propounded in 1842: "A closer surveillance must be brought to bear on the lower classes of dwellings, the abodes of the newly-arrived Irish, and especially those pest holes called ready furnished rooms." He echoed his themes in 1851: "Our worst localities are in Belgrave Gate, and are chiefly inhabited by Irish people, and the frequenters of lodging houses."¹⁷

Irish householders and Irish lodgers increasingly featured on official gendas. The proportion of Irish-born lodgers was highest in 1841, when the Irish-born population was only around half of what it was to be for the rest of the period. (See Table 5a)¹⁸ The proportion remained broadly similar in 1851, and from 1861 to 1891 it dropped, until it was less than half the proportion for 1851. This indicates a gradual contraction in socio-economic disadvantage through these decades. York exhibited a similar pattern.¹⁹

There was much public criticism of the Irish and their lodging house habits in Leicester from c.1845 to c.1865, directly in Dare's regular annual *Reports of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, and indirectly in the unsavoury reporting of crimes and misdemeanours. (See Crime chapter). From the critics' point of view, overcrowding was insanitary and conducive of immorality; from the lodging house keeper's view it represented profit; from the Irish lodgers' view it offered cultural familiarity and a

¹⁶McKINLEY, R. A. (Ed)(1958), *VCHL*, Vol. IV, p.263 and ELLIOTT, M. (1979), *Victorian Leicester*, p.118-121.

¹⁷DARE, Rev. J., *RLDMS*, 7th (1852) p.9; 2nd (1846) p. 11; 6th (1851), p.7.

¹⁸This 1841 deficit may reflect the availability of suitable premises, as St. Margaret's parish, and the areas to be popular with the Irish, were still being developed by speculative builders.

¹⁹FINNEGAN, F. (1982), p.77-78.

TABLE 5(a)		NUMBERS OF LODGERS AMONGST THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER, 1841 TO 1891			
YEAR	Total No. of Lodgers	No. of Irish-born	Irish-born as % of all lodgers	Whole community	
				Male	Female
1841	95	90	95%	70	25
1851	165	151	92%	123	42
1861	133	117	88%	84	49
1871	117	96	82%	79	38
1881	130	103	79%	85	45
1891	127	77	61%	79	48
Notes: (1) Visitors and boarders, who were very few in number, are not included here.					
(2) In 1891, 60% were aged under 25.					

TABLE 5(b)		NUMBERS OF ENGLISH, AND IRISH AND EFFECTIVELY IRISH, IN SELECTED CORE STREETS FROM 1841-71			
Residents	Street Name	1841	1851	1861	1871
All Residents	Abbey Street	165	469	647	954
Irish only	Abbey Street	81(49)	132 (28)	150 (23)	130 (14)
All Residents	Green Street (+ Lwr)	---	248	236	504
Irish only	Green Street (+ Lwr)	25 (-)	146 (59)	169 (72)	179 (35)
All Residents	Bedford Street	806	1115	1156	989
Irish only	Bedford Street	78 (10)	83 (7)	83 (7)	88 (9)
Notes: (1) Sources = <i>Census Leicester City</i> , enumerators tally pages; and <i>ACD, Irish in Leicester</i> .					
(2) Irish here includes effectively Irish/wider Irish community.					
(3) Fig. in brackets = %age of Irish/effectively Irish (rounded)					

modicum of shelter. Council inspection threatened income; police monitoring was akin to harassment; (see Crime chapter). Therefore small operators were inclined not to register, but rather to camouflage their activity from public view. Ultimately, some of the Irish operators came to accept local authority registration.

The “camouflage” factor is attested to by Dare’s *Report* of 1850:

The *private* dwellings of the Irish should be examined as well as the Lodging Houses. Many of these, I understand, are crammed at night by beggars and rag and bone collectors, though ostensibly held by single families. The influx of these people is a great nuisance.²⁰

The emphasis on “private” was Dare’s own. As early as 1847 Dare identified the Irish as a problem:

There is a house also in Abbey-gate, occupied by an Irishman, his wife, and six children; there is one room on the floor, and one up-stairs - and yet twelve or fourteen men crowded in here during the harvest. What must be the consequence of such disgusting habits?²¹

Dare’s focus on the Irish was unrelenting; in 1853 he reported:

A much closer surveillance must be brought to bear on the lower classes of dwellings, the abodes of the newly-arrived Irish, and especially those pest-holes called ready furnished rooms these places realise exorbitant rents.....²²

By the mid-1850's, local authority pressure was in fact being exerted, and some Irish landlords (or their deputies) were in trouble. The licensed common lodging house at No. 15 Abbey Street, registered to one Louise Quinn, was faulted under health regulations. Thomas Mitchell of Green Street, however, was reported for being unregistered and overcrowded. Mrs Mitchell attended the Corporation office and was cautioned. Thomas (40) who lived at No. 22 in 1851, was married to Ellen (40), with four children (one of whom was disabled); they had 2 lodgers. All 6 of the Mitchell

²⁰DARE, Rev. J., 5th RLDMS, 1850, p.20-21. In his 10th Report 1855, Dare estimated that Leicester's common lodging houses dealt with 587 persons nightly; 4,109 weekly; and 213,668 annually; p.10.

²¹DARE, Rev. J., 2nd RLDMS, 1847, p.21-22.

²²DARE, Rev. J., 8th RLDMS, 1853, p.16. A perusal of the surviving Poor Rates Books for this early period shows a non-Irish rentier class owning large tracts of terraced housing; these were the real beneficiaries, the actual slum landlords, and it appears that many of the Irish “keepers” were probably deputies.

family were Irish-born, as was one of the lodgers.²³ The private rented sector avoided reform because of implied increased costs; nonetheless, the pressures of reform led to slow change in the Irish rented sector.

By 1871, the core area for Irish lodging houses, Abbey Street, had just 2 registered premises out of 6 enumerated. By 1891, 4 of the Abbey Street premises were registered. The Hanleys maintained the trade across forty years, operating successively in Green St, Abbey St, Lower Garden St. and finally Abbey St.²⁴ The majority were small operators, with only a few lodgers, often family or persons from the same area of Ireland, who continued in business throughout the period. Barclay, echoing Mayhew, described a typical Irish landlady:

I went into Abbey-Street, where, leaving out the slaughterhouse, marine stores, and bakeries, the remainder are public houses. Enter we a lodging-house kept by a quiet widow, who will not have the drunkard and the rowdy inside her door if she knows it. The rooms are plentifully furnished with drawers and crockery; on one wall is a picture of the Crucifixion, on another the ascension of Mary into heaven. Rosary beads hang over the mantlepiece, and St. Patrick, mitred and crozier in hand, banishes the snakes.²⁵

One Irish family enjoying long-term careers as keepers were the Corbetts, Mary and "Blind Jack," or John. From 1851 to 1871 they ran businesses in Abbey Street.²⁶ As Table 5(a) indicates, the Irish lodging houses were, as would be expected, in those core Irish areas of Abbey St., Bedford St., Green St and Lower Garden St. The decline in professional lodging house keeping amongst the Irish, which began c.1885 was attributable not only to registration enforcement, but to higher consumer expectations and competition from the vastly improved "model" lodging houses of the last two decades of the century.²⁷ (See lodging house keeping in Occupations chapter).

One particular "model" was built in an area with Irish migrant associations, in Britannia Street. The Victoria Model Lodging house was efficiently run and well

²³LCRO, 20 D 72.55, *Reports of MOH to Local BOH* 26 Oct. 1855; also p.208, 35 and 79. Mr. Mitchell had applied previously (29 Sept. 1854) for a licence for No. 11 Green St, but the officials reported that he no longer lived there. This may have been an example of budding Irish entrepreneurship. See also ACD, 1851, p.30, re Ms Quinn. The MOH entry for 1 Dec. 1854 re: 15 Abbey St. confirms that the Quinns were still resident, an interesting example of comparative landlord longevity. This latter entry passed No. 15 as satisfactory.

²⁴ACD, the picture was not consistent, in that some keepers at a particular census would give another occupation, even when lodgers were enumerated at their address.

²⁵*The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p. 149; article: Leicester Slums: Abbey Street and Green Street, see Mayhew's 1856 description in NEUBERG Edtn, *London Labour and the London Poor*, p.57.

²⁶ACD, Nos. 5 + 13 Abbey St. in 1851; No. 3 in 1861; and No. 11½ in 1871, by which time Jack Corbett was deceased.

²⁷See section on Health.

provided with basic facilities; an Irish travelling workman would immediately recognize the dancing figure with the hat, the shillelagh and the frieze tail-coat carved on the facade.²⁸

With standards improving, Irish lodging houses had to improve also. Even so, the picture painted by Barclay towards the turn of the century was not entirely problem-free:

..... inspectors have been turning certain lodging-houses in Abbey Street upside down In Green Street rents are rather high and improvements rather low, if not absent altogether. In the "back lanes," ie., Lower Garden Street, that opens out of Abbey Street, some property has been condemned.²⁹

Barclay's survey indicated the longevity of the problems of rented accommodation in the Green Street/Abbey Street Irish environment.

Tables 5b focuses on the 3 streets most associated (numerically, in folk memory and in local history) with the Irish: Abbey Street, Green Street and Bedford Street. In 2 of the 3 streets, the Irish, their spouses and children, lived alongside significant numbers of non-Irish at every census between 1841 and 1871. The greatest proportional concentration of Irish in Abbey Street was in fact in 1841, before the "Famine" influx;³⁰ from 1851, in relative terms, it was halved. In Bedford Street, the Irish proportion varied between around 7 and 10 per cent at all censuses examined. Only of Green Street, which boasted 58.9 per cent Irish in 1851 and 71.6 per cent in 1961, could the term "ghetto" be conceivably used; and even here, by 1871, the proportion was reduced to 35.5 per cent. Abbey Street certainly approached "ghetto" status in 1841, but declined in absolute terms thereafter. Local recall, however, indicates that whatever the limits to be noted after statistical analysis, the impact on collective memory and popular culture was still exaggerated.³¹

To conclude therefore, it is clear that whilst a few core streets acted as ethnic heartlands, such as Abbey Street, Green Street and Bedford Street, even these by 1891 were suffering a loss of Irish. Conversely, a much larger number of streets held smaller

²⁸ *The Wyvern*, 5 July 1895. This building still gets news coverage even today: see *LM* of 30 Jan. 1995 (History File); 15 Jan 1993, and *Leicester Link*, Oct. 1991, No. 80, Discovering Leicester.

²⁹ *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149.

³⁰ Even though Abbey Street's Irish community expanded in 1851 and '61, so too did the overall population of the street.

³¹ See Crime Chapter, and references to policing Wharf St. in strength.

proportions of the Irish community by 1891, which suggests that levels of integration and assimilation were being reached. Barclay noted, sadly, of Green Street: "more than half the inhabitants of the street are English, and the rest, - the Irish, - are (allow me the bull) "quite English, you know."

Barclay suggests, probably accurately, that some of those Irish first came to Leicester not long after the 1798 Rising.³² By 1898, there is a sad litany of cultural desertion and erosion, and especially cited are the second and third generation, who neither knew about nor cared about their ethnicity, the language, their political traditions, their music and dance inheritance, even their very names. In defence of these, the Protestant and Anglo-centric profile of the town, the effects of the Catholic education system, so strongly emphasised throughout the nineteenth century, must have had an effect. Paradoxically Barclay makes no mention of religion suffering such marginalisation, and the evidence suggests that substantial numbers of Irish Catholics still identified and practised (as witnessed by attendance at St Patrick's Church and Schools - see Education and RC development chapters).³³ A local journal in 1900 noted that :

In the heart of Leicester slumdom you will find St Patrick's Church for years it has performed a splendid mission, particularly amongst the Irish element of the town. It is round this little temple of the church of their native land that the Hibernian section of our community loves to live you find them there foregathered in considerable numbers any Sunday morning.

Despite then the solid evidence of locational and numerical dispersion, the perceived image c.1900 of the Irish in Leicester stressed their central place in "Leicester slumdom," and their retained desire to reside as close as possible to their own Church of St. Patricks.

(c) Families and Community: Questions of Transience

Household analysis is useful, but does not address the external relations entered into by the Irish in Leicester. Key questions present themselves: how cohesive was the Irish community? How segregated was it? How did they interact with their English

³²They did so perhaps as sons and daughters of Irish political refugees, which would explain the close early links with the Liberals and the joint Catholic - Protestant civil rights defence association of the late 1820's; see Politics chapter.

³³The Wyvern, 26 May 1900.

TABLE 6		DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER 1841-91 BY STREETS (SAMPLE)						
Street Names starting with		Year of Census					Total of Irish community resident across the period	
A		'41	'51	'61	'71	'81		'91
ARCHDEACON LANE		15	6	10	8	3	11	53
ABBEY ST		81	132	150	130	124	51	668
ALEXANDER ST (AS)		5	5			5		15
ALBERT ST			14	1	8		5	28
ALBION ST			2		4	7	6	19
ALBION HILL			3			2		5
ALLENS YARD			2					2
ARTHUR ST				4	2			6
ARNOLD ST					3	5	6	14
ASHWELL ST					5	6		11
AYLESTONE ST					9	5		14
ATKIN ST + GEORGES YARD					2		5	7
ASYLUM ST					4	3	8	15
ALICE ST					3	9		12
ASYLUM					3			3
ANN ST						3	4	7
ARGYLL ST						9	7	16
AYLESTONE RD						4		4
ALL SAINTS RD						5	2	7

Notes: (1) Source: *A.C.D; 1841-91* and author's *Distribution of Irish in Leicester by Streets 1841-91*.

(2) - Archdeacon Lane includes Gunton's Yard
- Abbey Street includes Cresswell's Yard
- Atkin Street includes George's Yard

(3) Streets were added to list as they appeared as locations of the Irish in each successive census

(4) All are in St Margarets, except for AS (All Saints).

neighbours? How transient was the community? Lees pointed to a dichotomy of analysis: migrant dislocation led to a loss of familial and social ties, and could tend towards social disintegration; group cohesion and mutual support could assist the retention of ethnic and psychological identity.³⁴ Lees advanced the view that: "Rather than adopt the beliefs and customs of their host population, they adapted their Irish heritage to life in foreign cities." This is perhaps a little over-optimistic, especially in the case of Leicester. Famine dislocation, economic incentives requiring mobility, moonlight "flits" to avoid the rent man, one's next door neighbours, the distance from a Catholic chapel, an external cultural climate of hostility, all these factors affected the style and depth of cultural identity and practice.

The totals of Irish-born from census to census do not vary very greatly (see Tables 1 and 2, and introductory chapter); this fact, however, disguises rates of mobility (see *Why the Irish Came to Leicester*). In 1851, on surname evidence, 15.75 per cent (49/311) of the 1841 Irish group remained in Leicester.³⁵ In 1861 there were 154 Irish-born who had been in residence in 1851, around 21 per cent of those traced.³⁶ Many of the 1851 arrivals would have been victims of economic *force majeure*, and once recovered, would have moved on to other locations. Also, in 1851, (as in 1841), Irish male in-migrants outnumbered Irish females, which is generally an unexpected conclusion, given the wider statistical propensity for female migration.³⁷

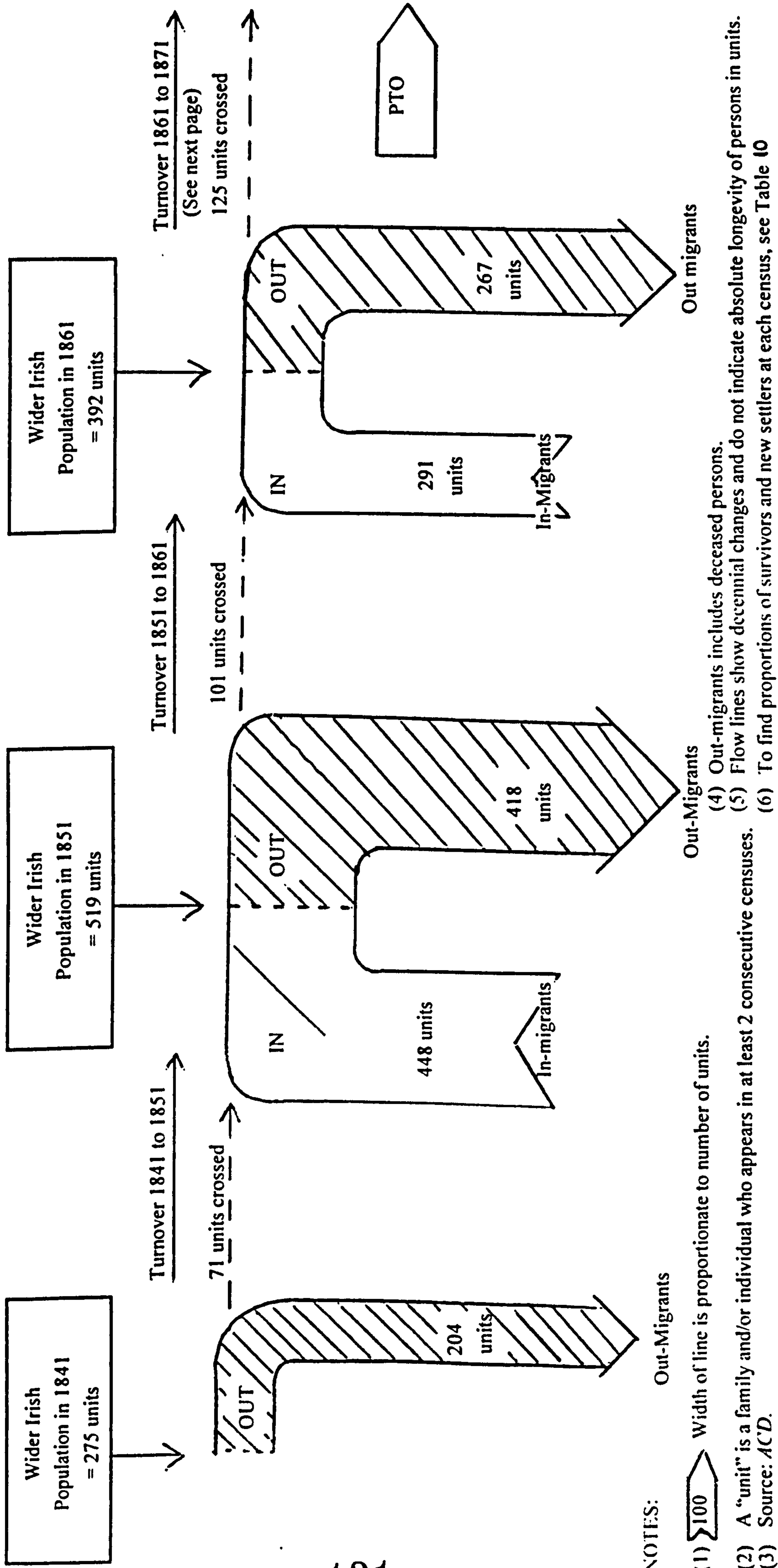
A detailed diachronic decennial analysis of the wider Irish community database for all decades 1841 to 1891 inclusive was undertaken, with interesting results. The pattern of settlement and transience which emerged (see Tables 7, 8, 9, 10) is very significant in that at each inter-census decade (apart from 1841-51 and 1861-71), a broad average of a quarter of the Irish community stayed on in Leicester. In 1861-71, this figure actually exceeded 40 per cent; this may be explained by three factors: a lessening of social disruption after the famine period dislocations of c.1845-c.1855; an increase in migrant confidence in Leicester's economy, with the modernisation of textiles production and the expansion of footwear manufacture; and the end of the bitter inter-religious disputes of the "second Reformation" period of c.1835-c.1860, which culminated in a

³⁴LEES, L.H. (1979), p.46.

³⁵ACD; surname comparison analysis; note, however, that just 25/49 were families.

³⁶There is a margin of error here in that most, but not all, of each catchment of Irish-born could be traced; eg 733/877, or 83.6%, in 1851. See main Introduction.

³⁷See NOLAN, J.A. (1989), *Ourselves Alone*, p.91-92.



NOTES:

- (1) Width of line is proportionate to number of units.
- (2) A "unit" is a family and/or individual who appears in at least 2 consecutive censuses.
- (3) Source: *ACD*.
- (4) Out-migrants includes deceased persons.
- (5) Flow lines show decennial changes and do not indicate absolute longevity of persons in units.
- (6) To find proportions of survivors and new settlers at each census, see Table 10

TABLE 7

TURNOVER OF PEOPLE IN THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER 1841-1891: DIACHRONIC DECENNIAL ANALYSIS - PART 1 (contd. overleaf)

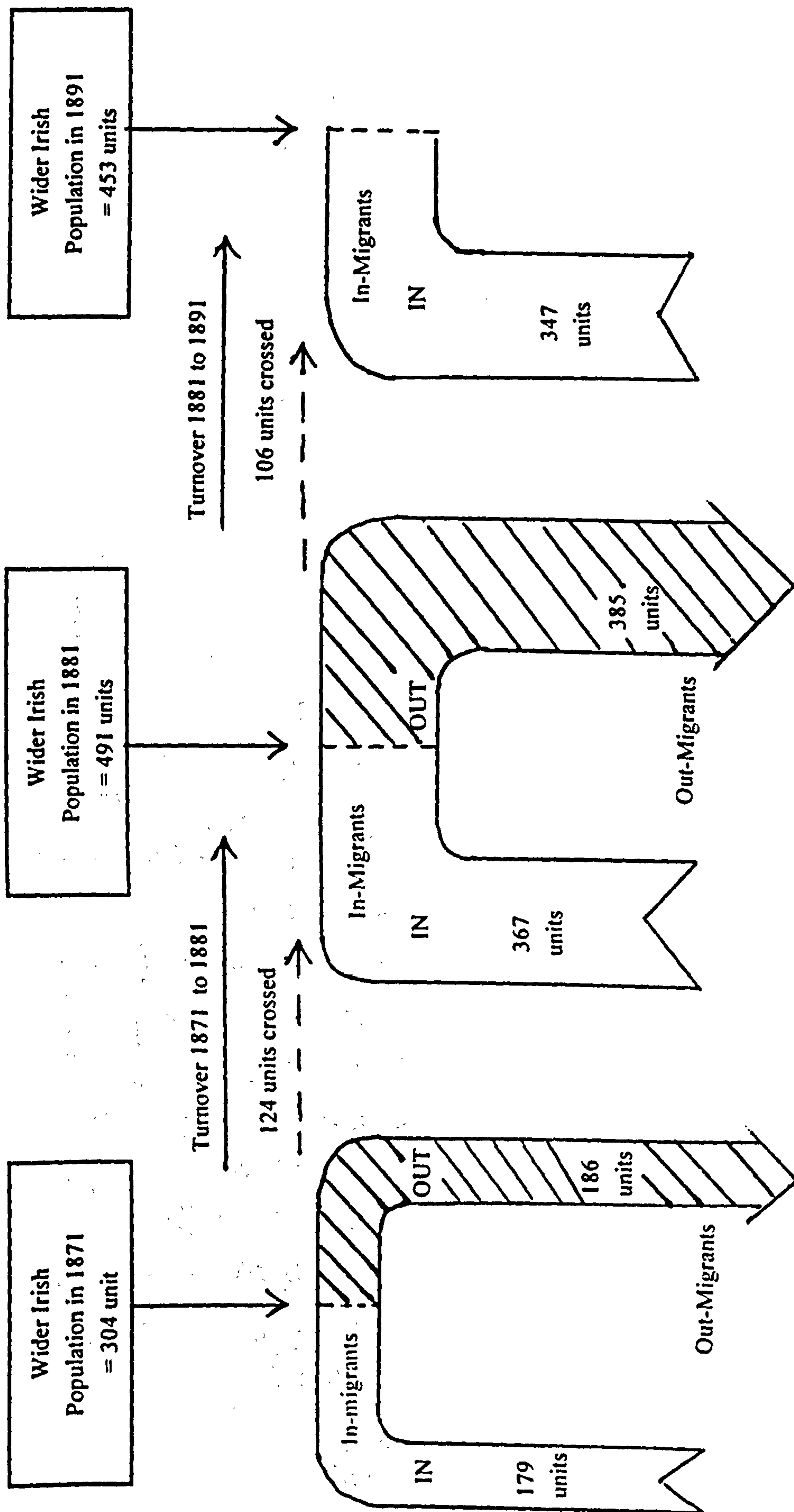


TABLE 7
continued

TURNOVER OF PEOPLE IN THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER 1841-1891: DIACHRONIC DECENNIAL ANALYSIS - PART 2

TABLE 8	IRISH SETTLEMENT IN LEICESTER : 1841 TO 1891 BY DIACHRONIC DECENTENIAL ANALYSIS OF FAMILY SURNAME UNITS RE-MIGRANT TRANSIENCE AND WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY						
	CENSUS DATES		1841-51	1851-61	1861-71	1871-81	1881-91
No's of Irish surname units (regardless of family size			519	392	304	491	453
No's of Irish units transferring across decades			71	101	125	124	106
No's of Irish units transferring across decade as %ages			13.7	25.8	41.1	25.2	23.4

1

2

3

Notes: (1)

(2)

(3)

Source: ACD, 1841-91.

A surname unit is defined here as all of an extended family living at one address at a particular census. Most were nuclear families (ave. = 2 parents + 3 children); a few were individuals (eg unmarried lodgers) or aged surviving relatives.

The number of units in 1841 was 275; approx. 25% stayed over.

TABLE 9																	THE LONGEVITY PATTERN IN THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY OF UNITS CROSSING OVER AT EACH CENSUS FROM 1841 TO 1881																
CURRENT YEAR		1841					1851					1861					1871					1881											
The other census years in the study		51	61	71	81	91	51	61	71	81	91	51	61	71	81	91	51	61	71	81	91												
Units in that year which survived to register at other censuses		30	19	11	4	3	--	23	19	10	14	--	--	29	23	19	--	--	--	28	28												
Total of units crossing for that census		67					66					71					56					46											

gradually decreasing degree of antagonism towards the Irish as Catholics.

At every census, apart from 1891, the vast majority of settlers comprised nuclear families, often with 4 or more children. By 1881/91 a few surviving aged family members, and second or even third generation units, were identified with younger and newer elements arriving. (See table 11 re: age and gender structure)

In a clear majority (80 per cent plus) of married couples, the wife was Irish and the husband English. Presumably, therefore, many of the Irish wives may have migrated independently, and may have been Protestant and co-existed in mixed marriages (which reflects other local evidence; see marriage section in chapter on RC growth); and may have met English husbands whilst the latter were on military service.

In a large number of cases, it was possible to trace families across more than one generation; it was not possible to trace English-born females who married. This data suggests that the Protestant Irish presence may have been higher than the usual assumed small margin; and also that, despite group and personal dislocation, significant numbers of Irish-born in their family contexts remained, thereby providing a residual skeletal infrastructure for arriving migrants to lock into.

What was noticeable, and not predicted, were two other factors; that the long-term residing Irish were spread across all sections of the community, and not concentrated in any one socio-economic sector; also, whilst many lived in the recognised core areas of Irish settlement in Leicester, the numbers who stayed on were in fact spread across all the areas of Irish settlement, not just in the core streets. Whilst all levels of occupation were represented amongst transferring residents, the key occupations listed were probably those of lodging house keeper and marine store dealer, for both of these provided services (accommodation and commercial) to the migrant community, and were therefore community foci, as indeed were the churches and the schools.

The numbers transferring decennially did not vary wildly vis-à-vis longevity patterns. The rate was reasonably constant for 1841 to 1871, when it peaked; it dropped successively by about 15 per cent in 1871 and 30 per cent in 1891. (See Table 9). Even so, as Table 10 indicates, the longevity pattern showed that the longer the time span, the smaller were the number of units crossing over. The main motive for nuclear families to remain appears to have been the fact that a large family (2 parents and 4 or more children) represented a stakeholding in the community; and that as older children married, parents felt disinclined to move away from them in much the same way that modern Irish

migrant parents feel obliged to stay when their children are being educated, and later create families and homes, in Britain.

As the section on housing and residence shows, part of the Irish did concentrate throughout the period in the core area around Abbey Street-Green Street-Bedford Street; it is also clear that these never at any stage comprised all the Irish in the town; and after 1871 the rate of dispersal into other streets increased (see Table 6). Even with "Famine" dislocation, a pattern existed, which had its roots in the 1841 settlement and probably predated even these.

Lodging houses existed on main routes, and the poor and needy were drawn towards charitable resources. Davis has shown that tramps and vagrants, who included Irish workers, were drawn to the double attraction of cheap lodgings and charities in the Avon Street slum district of Bath.³⁸ Barclay notes that in Leicester, Cockmuck Hill was similarly attractive during the early decades of Irish in-migration:

I went up higher, towards Belgrave-gate, and had a look at the slab that tells the why and the wherefore of the alms-houses in the "Cock-muckill yard" founded 1782, and managed by the guardians of the parish of St. Margaret. These are small two-roomed huts.³⁹

And he added for good measure that he missed the old Irish women with their clay pipes who used to squat for a smoke "in these parts." A local historian referred in 1891 to "Cock-muck-Hill Houses" as "wretched tenements The demolition of which the well-to-do residents of that quarter had subscribed to procure, as they were a nuisance to the neighbourhood."⁴⁰

³⁸DAVIS, G., *Beyond the Georgian Facade: The Avon Street District of Bath*, in GASKELL, M. (Ed)(1900) *Slums*, p.153.

³⁹*The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII, p.150.

⁴⁰See FIELDING-JOHNSON, T (1891/1908), *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester*, p.272, who noted their original location near the Bedford St/Belgrave Gt. junction, and that they were of pre-Reformation foundation, demolished and rebuilt in 1782 in Abbey St. see photo of stone name tablet, LCRO, City Council photos, DE 3763 series; (slum clearance data).

TABLE 11		AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE OF THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER AT ALL CENSUSES FROM 1841 TO 1891 (Notes on next page)						
1841 Age Group	Number Male	Number Female	1851 Age Groups	Number Male	Number Female	1851 Age Groups	Number Male	Number Female
0-9	85	71	0-9	144	147			
10-19	60	66	10-19	145	129			
20-29	67	46	20-29	103	99			
30-39	59	53	30-39	87	96			
40-49	53	50	40-49	81	61			
50-59	26	14	50-59	64	59			
60-69	8	16	60-69	27	19			
70-79	7	3	70-79	7	14			
80-89	1	1	80-89	2	6			
90-99	---	---	90-99	---	---			---

1861 Age Group	Number Male	Number Female	1871 Age Groups	Number Male	Number Female
0-9	161	146	0-9	204	238
10-19	111	126	10-19	177	188
20-29	107	117	20-29	92	130
30-39	77	77	30-39	95	107
40-49	95	82	40-49	101	108
50-59	48	46	50-59	73	56
60-69	37	45	60-69	40	41
70-79	5	11	70-79	12	12
80-89	2	3	80-89	1	6
90-99	1	---	90-99	1	1

TABLE 11 continued

TABLE 11						AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE OF THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER AT ALL CENSUSES FROM 1841 TO 1891					
1881 Age Group		Number Male		Number Female		1891 Age Groups		Number Male		Number Female	
0-9		168		145		0-9		154		128	
10-19		153		171		10-19		129		140	
20-29		117		114		20-29		120		134	
30-39		81		87		30-39		106		89	
40-49		84		91		40-49		82		71	
50-59		68		54		50-59		54		65	
60-69		39		40		60-69		36		50	
70-79		17		17		70-79		33		21	
80-89		2		2		80-89		3		5	
90-99		0		0		90-99		0		0	

Notes:

(1)

This data is derived from information entered on *ACD, Irish Community in Leicester 1841 to 1891* inclusive; it refers to the wider, effectively Irish elements as well as to the Irish-born.

(2)

Any numerical differences with the whole database figures are due to factors such as omitted data (human error), illegible originals, faded text etc. A data age check revealed the following missing persons: 2 in 1841; 27 in 1851; 7 in 1861; 5 in 1871; 28 in 1881; none in 1891.

(3)

The exceptionally elderly revealed in 1871 were Mark Tierney (p.17), Thomas Carroll (p.42) and Catherine Arbo (p.25).

(4)

It is clear that life expectancy started to improve for both males and females in 1871, a trend which continued until 1891, when noticeably more males and females reached the 70-79 bracket. This reflects the pattern identified by FINNEGAN (1982) re the wider Irish community in York from 1840-75, where a significant increase in life expectancy commenced during the 1870's (pp. 79-93).

TABLE 12		THE WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER 1841-1891: STREET SETTLEMENT PATTERN ANALYSIS FOR THE WHOLE PERIOD			
Total Numbers from Irish Community resident	No. of Streets	No. of Irish	Supporting data		
Streets with 400>	3	1,573 (21%)	Green St. (502); Abbey St (668); Bedford St (403)		
Streets with 90>	10	1,294 (17.3%)	Lwr Garden St. (164)	Garden St (91)	
			Gravel St (157)	Oxford St (99)	
			Mansfield St (99)	Jewry Wall St (95)	
			Belgrave Gt (234)	Britannia St (105)	
			Baker St (91)	Lwr Green St (159)	
Streets with 50>	9	581 (7.8%)	Woodboy St (72)	Humberstone Gt (50)	
			Wharf St (66)	Dover St (86)	
			Sanvey Gt (61)	Burleys Lane (48)	
			Royal East St (73)	Archdeacon Lane (53)	
			The Newarke (72)		
Streets with 25>49	32	1,189 (15.9%)			
Streets with 15>24	68	1,167 (15.6%)			
Streets with <14	314	1,683 (22.5%)			
Notes: (1) Source = General Censuses 1841-91; ACD.					
(2) Some minor variations occur from year to year because the exact location of Courtyards to Streets tended to vary.					
(3) The Newarke featured more in 1871-91 as the local HQ of the Leics Regiment, which held significant numbers of Irishmen.					
(4) The overall total in this tabulation = 7,487 persons.					
(5) The figure in brackets is the percentage of Irish in that street band.					

Given this alms-giving and shelter provision factor, the popularity of the locale with the arriving Irish is better understood. Paradoxically, core concentrations developed, with a fairly rapid turnover of Irish within them. Family finances, new arrivals, deaths, illnesses, and various other factors led to constant mobility, removals, "moonlight flits" and so on. Concentrations of Irish tended to be in certain streets rather than in whole neighbourhoods, and in certain houses rather than in whole streets. In 1851, when 207 Irish-born lived in Abbey Street-Green Street, only 6 resided in nearby Mansfield Street, and 4 in Garden Street. Similarly, 99 Irish-born lived in Green Street, but only 12 in Lower Green Street. Therefore, communities, or a sense of community, existed in separated enclaves, rather than in large sectors of streets. Possibly, some of

those Irish in more isolated enclaves, such as in Crab Street and Britannia Street, leaned more heavily on each other despite (or because of) being in a sea of English neighbours. Others would submerge themselves culturally, or become themselves submerged.

The Barclays, for example, were in Abbey Street in 1851, and in a court off Woodboy Street by 1861. Barclay discussed the anti-Irish feeling he experienced as a child growing up in this area, where there were few fellow Irish.⁴¹ Yet, one family of Irish neighbours, the Dillons, provided a link with ‘things Irish’; even in a residential unit as small as a courtyard, the Irish lived at the opposite end from the English.

The street pattern analysis for the wider Irish community across the entire 1841-91 period is quite revealing (see Table 12). Whilst 3 core streets hosted 21 per cent of the Irish, and 10 streets hosted another 17.3 per cent, 51.8 per cent lived in streets boasting less than 50 Irish, and 22.5 per cent lived in streets with less than 14 Irish and effectively Irish. Whilst it is true that most Irish lived in St. Margaret’s parish, this was equally true, to approximately the same extent, for the English in the town.

Individual street totals vary across the decades. Between 1851 and 1861, Belgrave Gate and Royal East Street *both* witnessed a diminution (from 90 to 18, and from 28 to 13 respectively). By 1871, no Irish were recorded in Royal East Street, whilst Belgrave Gate was semi-restored with 39. Tables 5b & 12 clearly show the physical distribution process of the majority of the Irish over time, many families ending in areas completely detached spatially from the core centres.

That movement existed even within the core areas is also evident. One family, the Rileys, moved often, but always within the core area.⁴² The Riley history stressed the central importance of St Patricks for regular observance and education; many of the Irish living in more isolated streets would be similarly drawn together with the School-Chapel as a focus. This describes the side of the ethnic identity coin which Barclay, because of his commitment to secularism, ignored and underrated. The external pressure of Protestant, indigenous mass culture, and the perceived racial differences of the Irish, both visual and linguistic, ensured the survival amongst a large number of a ghetto mentality, especially in terms of religion.⁴³

⁴¹See Education chapter, section on identity.

⁴²ISW/OHA; interviews with Mr Pat Riley.

⁴³See Barclay’s comment in *The Wyvern*, 1896, quoted above, about the style of celebration on 17th March.

(d) Health and "Contagion"

Joseph Dare cited the Irish as harbingers of disease; the charge was also levelled by a prominent local doctor in 1843 in an influential treatise delivered formally to the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society. It was also "printed in extenso" in *the Leicester Journal*. Amongst the chief causes of the deterioration of sanitary conditions, Dr. Shaw cited "the evil example of Irish immigrants of the lowest class." The Irish factor was then, proffered to the governing elite of Leicester as a serious and "evil" example even before the panic reaction and social dislocation of the "Famine" migration took place.⁴⁴ This possibly represents the first Leicester manifestation of the scene-setting negative stereotyping described by Busteed et al (1992) in relation to the Irish in Manchester, when Kay-Shuttleworth's report on the Irish in 1832 depicted them, in negative terms, in the wider cultural and socio-economic senses as criminals, as professional parasites, *ad infinitum*. Adopted by middle-class elements with a racial, political and social agenda, this depiction of the Irish also suited extreme conservative elements in the working class; and Leicester like Manchester had its Orange Lodges, its strong Anglican power base, and a rabidly conservative press element. (See chapter on popular anti-Catholicism). Hall (1998) explains the political misuse made of Irish ill health patterns; ill-health (like poverty) was a moral problem. The Irish were a "demoralized", and therefore separate, ethnic group, an "enemy within" who should go back home.⁴⁵

Medical professionals and local government officers were preoccupied, rightly, at this time with the seven "zymotic" diseases: smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough, simple fevers, and diarrhoea.⁴⁶ Whilst the Irish, together with the wider working class, endured all these diseases, they were in particular associated with the three then most dreaded health hazards: fever, tuberculosis and smallpox. At all health surveys across the period, the Irish were well represented in

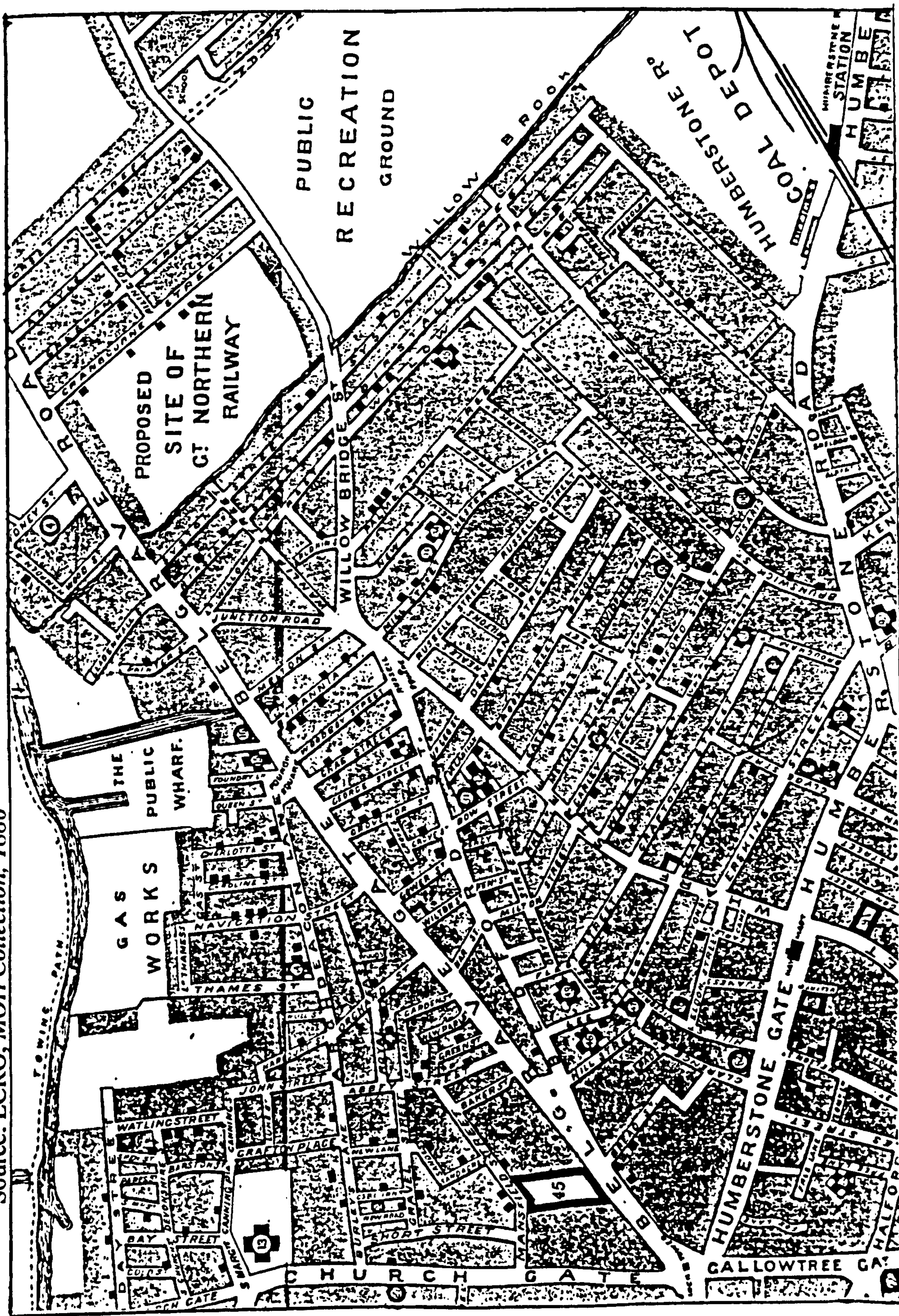
⁴⁴LCRO, Abstract of Dr Shaw's Paper on *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Class*; TLLPS, 9th Session, 1843-4, p.95-6.

⁴⁵BUSTEED, M.A., et al, *The Myth and Reality of Irish Migrants in mid-19th Century Manchester: A Preliminary Study*, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed), (1992) *The Irish World Wide*, Vol. 2, *The Irish in the New Communities*, p.26-34. See HALL, C. in LEWIS, G. (ED)(1998), p.150-6.

⁴⁶BIGGS, J.T. (1912), *Leicester: Sanitation versus Vaccination*; this was a lengthy case against compulsory vaccination. The corporation in 1854, in a survey of "Zymotic disease," reported on Whitwell's Yard in Denman Street thus; "the state of this yard has been repeatedly before the Board" because Whitwell, the owner, insisted on running a piggery on the site; see LCRO, 20 D, 72-55, Rep't of MOH to Local Bd. Oh, 1853-6, 9.6.1854; the figures for Irish in Denman St. were 7 in 1851.

MAP 3 LOCATIONS OF REPORTED DIARRHOEA CASES IN N.E. LEICESTER IN 1880

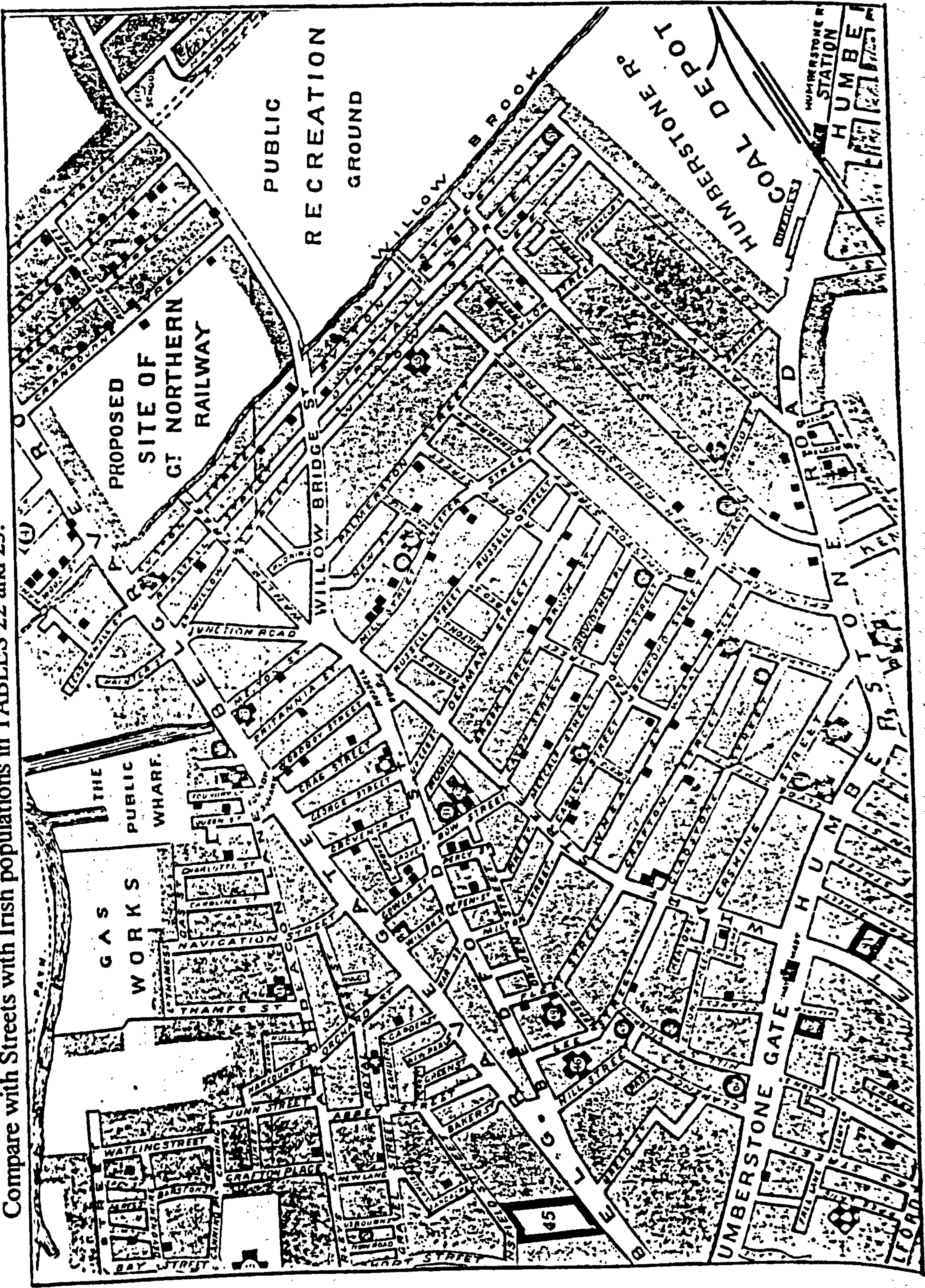
Compare with Streets with Irish populations in TABLES 22 and 23.
Source: LCRO, *MOH Collection, 1880*



MAP 4

LOCATIONS OF REPORTED CASES OF SCARLET FEVER, DIPHTHERIA, MEASLES & TYPHOID IN N.E. LEICESTER IN 1880

Source: LCRO, MOH, 1880
 Compare with Streets with Irish populations in TABLES 22 and 23.



those streets identified as serious problem areas.⁴⁷ Barclay made numerous references to ill-health in Leicester's working-class areas.⁴⁸

Fever was associated with the Irish in two main ways; specifically the "Famine", and generally with migrants seen as carriers. "Black 47" stands out in local health records for references conjoining the Irish and the threat of fever. Dare's *Mission Report* for that year noted:

Taking the whole of the year, it has been very sickly; but, excepting the fever, not perhaps of a fatal character I found fever in the depth of winter; and the Irish introduced it again in the hay-making season I had called, by request, at a lodging-house in Abbey Street, where fever was raging. The Irish congregate here in a manner that must generate disease. There is a house also in Abbey-gate, occupied by an Irishman, his wife, and six children; and yet twelve or fourteen men crowded in here during the harvest The guardians have judiciously made the Bridewell a fever-house for them; when recovered they should be taken home. They are spreading disease in all our larger towns. In lodging houses they are frequently put in the same beds in which others, who have had the fever, have lain or even died.

It is clear that a lack of hygiene and health consciousness was not the sole prerogative of the Irish; the Irish served as a focus, as a communal scapegoat. Some offered help and sympathy: "..... a poor widow, with many children, gave part of her scanty clothing to an Irish woman who was lying *totally naked* in a fever, of which she died in a few days."⁴⁹ Dare's observations were reflected in local authority reports. In September 1856, in Royal East Street, home of the newly opened St Patrick's School-Chapel, "fever and diarrhoea prevail to a considerable extent ... the channels (in Wood St) are in a very bad state and are always stagnant and offensive."⁵⁰

The Irish dimension was also reflected in Loughborough: "In 1847, the Board was faced with the necessity of erecting a fever ward, because of the cases of typhus brought in by vagrants (mainly Irish)." The Catholic Chapel used by the Irish in Loughborough (on Ashby Road) suffered from being in a location with defective

⁴⁷See LCRO, Health Comtee list of "worst locality" streets re sewage 1854, 20D 72/55, minutes 16 June, MOH reports for 1868-73, and 1880. See RICHARDSON, C., *The Irish in Victorian Bradford* (1976), who uses same technique for identifying Irish health patterns, p.15-17.

⁴⁸See BARCLAY, (1934), p.3, 7, 9 & 10, 71.

⁴⁹DARE, Rev. J., *2nd RLDMS*, 1847, pp.20-23.

⁵⁰LCRO, 20 D, 72-55, *Report of MOH to Local Bd of H*, 1853-6; date refs 14.12.1853, 29.9.1854; 19.9.1856.

sewerage and drainage.⁵¹

The fear of scarlet fever was outpaced only by the utter dread of smallpox.

Barclay starkly recalled:

We all had smallpox, and one of us died, and then father began to drink more; and as if dirt and dinginess and bickerings and hidings and rags and assaults of vermin were not hell enough

Barclay, born in 1852, was obviously speaking of his childhood, and the association of the Irish with this disease was made locally in the Leicester press in 1857:

Several deaths took place in Whitwick from that "fearful malady" the smallpox, two of which were in a confined court or passage called Irish-Yard, and it is feared that the epidemic is increasing.⁵²

In Leicester, smallpox deaths doubled, from 52 fatalities in 1852 to 104 in 1864.⁵⁴ An "unvaccinated child of vagrants" died in 1856. The 1864 outbreak was blamed on a "traveller" who stayed in a common lodging house. In 1865, one death occurred in a lodging house in Abbey Street, at the very core of Irish settlement.⁵⁵

The great Leicester child killer, acute diarrhoea, remained locally endemic until the Great War. In 1870, of 220 children and 20 adults identified, parental occupations were shown to be a relevant factor. 51 children were from hosiery and textile families, 56 from shoemaking households, and 32 from labouring backgrounds; all of which were occupations with heavy concentrations of Irish workers.⁵⁶

The connections between family health and occupational hazards had been aired formally in Leicester at a Literary and Philosophical Society meeting of 1860. An expert speaker noted that "towns connected with the hosiery and lace manufacture like ... Leicester, usually showed a high mortality in pulmonary diseases. In those engaged in the shoe manufacture gastric affections were very prevalent."⁵⁷ The Irish in Leicester, adults as well as children, were prominent in both of these industries (see Occupations

⁵¹LCRO; BÉCHERAND, A., *The Poor and The English Poor Laws in the Loughborough Union of Parishes, 1837-1860*, p. 76 and 104.

⁵²BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.12.

⁵³LC, 20 May 1857.

⁵⁴LCRO, *Report of MOH, 1880*, p. 16-26; BIGGS (1912), p.375.

⁵⁵See DAVIS (1990) who stresses the link made between the Irish, vagrants, and incoming diseases; p.153., and HALL (1998).

⁵⁶LCRO, *MOH Report, 1871*, p.13-14. The Abbey Sewage Pumping Station helped the situation from 1891.

⁵⁷WOOD, R.H., *Sanitary Science: its relation to the Masses*; in *TLLPS, 2nd Session, 1859-60*, p. 211-12; speech of 23 Jan. 1860.

analysis).

In fact, the local MOH reports make the relationship between work and health abundantly obvious. This was especially so in the case of consumption, or tuberculosis,

TABLE 13 TUBERCULOSIS MORTALITY STATISTICS FOR SELECTED TRADES IN LEICESTER IN 1859, 1861 AND 1866 (MOH REPORTS)				
Year	Hosiery & Textiles	Boot & Shoe trade	Labouring & Building trades	Source Ref
1859 (age 2 +)	35/43	7/43	33/99	1861, p.21
1861 (age 2 +)	51/70	9/70	18/98	1861, p.22
1866 (age 15 +)	14/29	12/29	6/42	1866, p.16-17
Source: LCRO MOH Reports; the lower fig = total of deceased; top fig = no. in that trade.				

as Table 13 graphically indicates.

Again, in three economic spheres in which the Irish were well represented, in the case of labouring - very well represented, there was a dramatic pattern in the numbers reported as succumbing in those three industries (Refer Table 13, T.B. Mortality Statistics for selected Trades in Leicester, 1859-66).

The Irish settlers were not only prone to illness and occupational disease, but equally susceptible to industrial accidents. In agriculture, an apparently open-air, healthy activity, risk was a factor. Dare recorded in 1852 a request for help "from a benevolent gentleman, to see to the requirements of an Irishman who had been taken ill in one of his fields."⁵⁸

As might be expected, those Irish in Leicestershire coal mining were especially at risk.⁵⁹ Heavy underground work, such as coal hewing, was suited ideally only to those in the 20-50 age range. Irish mining families not only endured xenophobic violence, but also blame as the carriers of smallpox and typhoid in the 1857 outbreak. In midlands coalfields in 1868, one man was killed for every 131,034 tons of coal raised.⁶⁰ Not

⁵⁸DARE, Rev. J., 7th RLDMS, 1852, p.9.

⁵⁹See OWEN, C. (1984), *The Leics. & S. Derbs. Coalfield 1700-1900*, p.202.

⁶⁰PALMER, R. (1974)(Ed), *Poverty Knock*, quoting SIMONIN, L., (1868), *Mines and Miners*; p.55.

surprising, therefore, was the presence of an Irish-born collier in the Leicester Royal Infirmary at the censuses of both 1861 and 1871.⁶¹

The great "Whitwick Pit Fire" of April 1898 was a terrible conflagration, reported nationally: "Seven more Bodies Recovered - Inquest and Funeral - Pathetic Scenes."⁶² 35 miners died, leaving 27 widows and 34 children under 14 years of age. The family of Patrick O'Mara, aged 49, consisted of his wife and 12 children, aged from 1 to 23 years. "O' Mara was identified by his lamp, candle box, strap, knife and other articles. The body by the deceased man's son." Patrick O'Mara was second generation.⁶³

The O'Maras were not unused to misfortune, for the family had experienced a road accident death in 1853, at the hands of the mine owning family. On a "pitch dark" night, on 31 January, a de Lisle family coach "knocked down and drove over an Irish labouring man, Omeara, and broke his leg;" on 9 February Mrs de Lisle's diary recorded: "Poor Omeara died from injury caused by iron tyres having driven over him and broken his leg."⁶⁴ There was no mention at all of compensation. The deceased was James, Patrick's father.

The underlying reality of any form of labouring was the sheer physical strength necessary for survival. Heinrick in 1872 computed that the work duration of men in "general labour" was just 15 years; after that, lighter work was essential.⁶⁵ In 1864, one Thomas Cassidy of Leicester "began working in a frame at 10 years old, and then worked about 10 hours; would not pass 12 hours" (ie. per day).⁶⁶

Some idea of the Irish mortality rate c.1825-60 is discernible from burial register data for the nearby town of Hinckley. Of a total of 261 names, 14 (5.4 per cent) are clearly identifiable as being of Irish descent or birth. Five of the Irish list belonged to one family, the Quigleys; all were children, who died between the ages of 6 weeks and 5½ years in the decade 1838-48. The Quigleys in 1841 comprised the father, William, a tailor, and his wife Margaret, both Irish-born; they had 6 children, 5 of whom survived. In fact, apart from 3 adults, two of whom died in their twenties, all of the deceased

⁶¹A.C.D.; 1861, p.52, Richard Gester, aged 15; 1871, p.73, May-born Bartholomew Burke, aged 38.

⁶²See *Coalville Times*, 13 Jan. 1899, re inquest; *The Wyvern* of 6 May 1898, No. 341, Vol. XIV. p.47, re detailed report. See also JONES, C., & STOKES, A. H. (1898), *Whitwick Colliery-Underground Fire-Report to H.M. Sec of State for Home Dept:* (p.28); and *The Whitwick Colliery Disaster-Particulars of the Victims and Descendants*; Whitwick Historical Group.

⁶³A.C.D., Whitwick, 1851, p.2, HO/107/2084.

⁶⁴De LP, *Diary of Laura de Lisle*, 31 Jan 1853 and 9 Feb. 1853. The de Lisle's were charitable, but the diary reveals no further details.

⁶⁵HEINRICK, H. (1872), p.92.

⁶⁶*Children's Employment Commission, 2nd Report, 1864*; pXXXVI re Hosiery in Leicester; Cassidy is an Irish surname; not in census for 1861/71. The quote is strangely worded, in that it understates the rigorous working day.

Catholics with Irish names were children. This affords some measure of the high level of socio-economic deprivation in both Hinckley and Leicester, where framework knitting was the staple in both cases.⁶⁷

Particularly poignant then was the extreme vulnerability of the young. Sick children, both Irish-born and second generation, are regularly listed in the School Log books.⁶⁸ Parental ignorance was a factor: at St. Peter's (Hinckley) in 1876 they demanded that the newly installed zinc ventilation tubes be closed up.⁶⁹

Apart from basic charitable provision and local philanthropy, adults could resort only to faith healers and to folk practices.⁷⁰ Barclay described one of his mother's tactics, employing the sacerdotal and sacramental powers of the Catholic Church:

What is "chin-cough" and how should it be cured? I suspect chin-cough was whooping-cough: mother's cure for it was a drink out of the chalice. I and my brother were taken to the chapel, and kneeling before the altar-rails, the kind priest gave us a drink out of the sacramental chalice: I don't know was the liquor wine or water, or whether it cured us.⁷¹

There is little doubt about the commitment of many clerics to helping the sick and poor; Leicester had its own hero-cleric figure in Irish-born Fr. Cyril Bunce (O.P.). At St Patrick's from 1872 to 1885, he went to Holy Cross in 1890, and in 1893 aged just 51 "died of typhoid fever caught attending the sick poor."⁷²

Real improvements would come only with systematic welfare provision and slum clearance after c.1920. As late as 1895, Barclay profiled Abbey Street's "slaughter-houses, marine stores, bakeries ... public houses and lodging houses;" food production was still being conducted alongside abattoirs and their accompanying refuse, and living accommodation was intermixed with industrial enterprises. It is not surprising, then, that health volunteers and professionals were still busily engaged amongst the inhabitants of

⁶⁷ ACD, *Hinckley, 1841-91*: Reel 16; fiches 2503/4, and *Hinckley Burials from 1827 to Feb 1858*, in *St Peter's Parish Magazine*, No. 399, Sept. 1960; the complete list contains 261 names. In Hinckley Library Local History section.

⁶⁸ With the sole exception of St Patrick's, whose 19th C. Log Books appear lost.

⁶⁹ BROMLEY, R. (1974), *Holy Cross School*, p.23. BURRILL, M.B. (1986), *Sacred Heart School*, pp. 2, 3 + 6. HARRISON, Fr. M. (1958), *St. Peter's Hinckley*, p.35, 39 and 42; the building records of St Patrick's (Leicester) show that the installation of "Tobin Tubes" for ventilation was a necessity there also.

⁷⁰ Dare mentions recourse being had by stricken persons in Leicester to "the wise women of Wing" (a village in Rutland); see *RLDMS*, 1852 p.8-11. See HEYDON, S; *Medical Care for Poor in Leicester in 1830's*; *TLAHS*, LV, 1979-80.

⁷¹ BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.9.

⁷² GUMBLEY, W. (1955), *Obituary Notices of the English Dominicans, 1555-1952*, entry No. 209.

the Abbey Street area right through the 1920's and 1930's.⁷³ As late as 1951, a special local media feature on slum housing in St. Margarets, entitled 'Leicester's Black Spots,' featured a Mrs Flanagan sharing an outside water tap with several other households in Wheat Street. A century after Barclay's birth in the slums, an Irish presence was still evident, until the clearances which started c.1930 and were completed by c.1960.⁷⁴

(e) The Impact of Poverty: Paupers or Pariahs?

Irish migrants were arriving in a town beset with long term economic problems, a town where the press and informed opinion soon concurred in isolating the Irish from the care agenda. By 1846 in Leicester, the average life span was 25 years. By 1847, the arrears of poor rates in St Margaret's parish, where most Irish would reside, totalled £3,000. The mayor headed an emergency committee, and in the first fortnight of its existence raised £3,480 to help 1,700 families.⁷⁵ Leicester was to be no "bed of roses" for migrants.

Concern about the numbers of Irish poor appeared in Leicester as early as 1836 when the respondent to the government questionnaire on the proportion of Irish migrants who were poor noted that of around 300 then in the town, "about 200 are of the class of poor, but not receiving pay as paupers."⁷⁶ This was an early indication of a prejudiced and differentiated approach locally to the Irish poor.

The attitude of Leicester's newspaper-reading population and opinion-formers towards the "Famine" serves indirectly as a gauge of their opinion towards Irish migrants entering the town. Views about the starvation in fact varied, from supportive and sympathetic to negative and hostile. In 1838, an articulate working man wrote an open letter to the Liberal Thomas Paget, prematurely denouncing the exporting of foodstuffs from Ireland despite the need of the Irish populace.⁷⁷

⁷³Councillor Emily Fortey (St Margaret's Ward), JP, an RC local government Labour activist and fighter for women's rights, worked from c.1918 in "the then dreadful streets and houses of Belgrave Gate," especially re mother and baby health and nursery provision; see 'A Torchbearer' (1946), p.37-38.

⁷⁴*Illustrated Leicester Chronicle*, 25 Aug. 1951, p.1. photo feature and report showing surviving 19th C. slum interiors and exteriors.

⁷⁵SEARSON, G.R., (1850), *Liberalism in Leicester*, p.9, 145, 88, 136-7.

⁷⁶Rep't on State of Irish Poor in GB, pp. (1836), App. G, p.164 (Vol. XXVIII). Also, *The 3rd Rep't of the R.C. on the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland* pp. XXX (1836) stressed the utter poverty of many of the peasantry and the vast extent of mendicancy existing. The former Report stoked the flames of English concern by referring to Irish mendicants in Britain "who roam about the country for the purpose of collecting alms" (p. xlii -xlviii). Also, the 1st Rep't of S C on Emigrant ships, .PP (1854), Evid. of S. Redmond, referred to the destitution and poverty of some of the Irish migrants; pp.88-9.

⁷⁷LC, 31 Mar 1838, Jabez Weston's letter.

On 29 November 1845, *The Chronicle* carried news of the scarcity of and pestilence in the Irish potato crop,⁷⁸ together with a sympathetic account of the Corporation's attitude towards Ireland; it described government parsimony as "an outrage upon humanity ... deserving of the utmost execration."

A year later, however, a certain ambivalence presented itself. Although the *Chronicle* was broadly Liberal (in comparison with the rabidly Tory *Journal*) it began to feature contradictory analyses. A piece entitled 'Irish Pigs and Irish Men' noted ironically the good physical condition of the Irish hogs imported at Liverpool and compared them with the emaciated human cargoes offloading to escape starvation. Yet, in the same edition, it carried a piece defending market forces and noting "that alms had so strange a fascination for the Irish peasant, that he would prefer a charitable sixpence to a well-earned shilling." It went on thus:

..... the spirit of low jobbing was so ingrained in the Irish character, that the relief intended would seldom reach the cases of genuine distress, but be absorbed by the lazy, the crafty, and the turbulent; and that the government works would speedily degenerate into one vast gigantic mischief and abuse.⁷⁹

It concluded with the wild claim that financial aid to date was being spent on arms to use in murdering landlords and administrators. Local gentry and aristocrats like the Herricks certainly were informed on conditions in Ireland by Irish relatives:

It is a moderate calculation to say that in this country the poor are dying at the rate of one hundred per day, Hoping Sir that you may never pass a Christmas surrounded by such misery."⁸⁰

A letter of 1849 was cold hearted in its economic objectiveness:

Our grain harvest has been good and in well managed farms is now secure but the potatoes are in many places nothing there is neither church nor parson in the parish and the Roman Catholic priests are starving hoping Sir that your more fortunate country may never furnish such a tale⁸¹

Herrick wrote again from Cork in 1854: "the Famine taxation and other matters

⁷⁸LC, 29 Nov 1845; presciently, it also offered a discussion on the suitability of Indian corn as a food substitute.

⁷⁹LC, 19 Dec 1846.

⁸⁰Herrick Mss, C.482, Bodleian Lib, Oxon; fols. 311-3213, JEH to WH from 69 Lwr Baggot St, Dublin 26 Dec 1846.

⁸¹Herrick Mss, Bodleian Lib; C482, fols 318-320; letter from Bellmount, Crookstown, Co. Cork, 28 Sept. 1849.

... has deprived my family of many comforts to which they had always been accustomed."⁸² Herrick was typical of a number of Leicestershire gentry families with estates in Ireland at this period.⁸³ Such families also articulated their fears and concerns regarding Irish politics. Herrick denounced "that ridiculous donkey Smith O'Brien," of the Young Ireland movement in his letter of 1849. In April 1847, Lord Bentinck wrote to the Martins, an Anglican family at Anstey, near Leicester, denouncing public works for the stricken Irish, and advocating absolute use of workhouses.⁸⁴ Some few reactions were positive. James Ellis of the local Quaker family, "deeply sympathising with the sufferers" in Ireland in 1849, bought a large farm at Letterfrack (Co. Galway) to regenerate the local economy. He stayed for eight years. Laura de Lisle, of the key Catholic county family, noted that 24 March 1847 was the "Day appointed by Queen Victoria for a general Fast on account of the Famine in Ireland and Scotland." There appeared no further reference to the plight of their Irish fellow-Catholics; this mirrors their later lack of interest in assisting the Irish in Leicester.⁸⁵

In January 1847 in Leicester, the Mayor and prominent Liberals set up a fund to deal with "Irish Distress and Destitution." However, a plethora of negative and unsympathetic articles more than counterbalanced any sympathy offered. In general, the gist was that the Irish had only themselves to blame; the "one cause" was "the total want of self-reliance and self-respect which the Irish evince as a people." Even the normally tolerant *Chronicle* joined in:

But there is no forethought, not even a grain of the commonest prudence instilled into the Irish mind to induce it to look forward to the consequence of the insanity which draws all labour to public and useless works, instead of confining it to useful agricultural purposes, although the pay for the one is less than that for the other. The cause of this is an inherent defect in the Irish character - the love of an easy indulgence, the satisfaction of today and the reckless indifference to the events of the morrow And if the dream of Ireland was to the effect that England was an El Dorado of wealth, then surely, the Ministerial measures are of a character to foster the national Irish constitutional improvidence and to render Ireland henceforth the great word pauper-house of England - the

⁸²Herrick Mss, Bodleian Lib, C.482, fols 329; WH to WH, from Shippool, Co. Cork, 11 Feb. 1854.

⁸³See files in LCRO re the Herricks, the Martins, the Hartopps, the Frewens, and other local gentry.

⁸⁴LCRO, Martin Mss DG. 6/D/98, Bentinck, 3 April 1847. Bentinck was a Tory who opposed Whig policy on Ireland.

⁸⁵ELLIS, E (1883), *Memoirs*, p. 93-97; H.L. from Co. Galway, 19 May 1856. Ellis may have profited from the provisions of the Encumbered Estates Act. DeLP, L's Diary, 24 March 1847.

natural colony of ease, indolence and poverty.⁸⁶

Here again, the public view reflected the private view: concern over cost. The same edition, in a piece on *Irish Mendicants*, declared “send all back who apply for relief without having been residents.”

It was left to the Rev. Dare, in November 1852, to offer the most damaging of labels for the Irish, a description recycled in the press coverage, which referred to “the Pariahs of English Towns - the Irish.”⁸⁷ With this agenda in place, it is no surprise to discover that outdoor relief for the Irish in Leicester was seriously discouraged. The Irish were forced to seek economic amelioration elsewhere, at Mount St Bernards monastery.

There is then conflicting evidence as regards the attitude of the host community to poverty and relief. Dare habitually isolated examples of extremes involving the Irish, and publicised them. As early as 1850, Dare remarked: “The influx of these people is a great nuisance. They should be sent home to grow flax and corn in their own beautiful island.”⁸⁸ He detailed graphically Irish cases involving fraudulent claims, degenerate and drunken women, and the misuse of children.

Dare deplored fraudulent supplicants; and highlighted two cases involving the Irish in the town of 1854; (see title page).⁸⁹ Both the women and the men in the first and second accounts respectively are accused of negative acts they “would” do given the opportunity; it is suggested by Dare that the Irish should be excluded from care programmes; let their own priest be responsible. Dare concludes sweepingly “There is scarcely an Irish case deserving of relief.” He followed with an item about the “low cunning” of the Irish wood chopper who sought his raw materials on credit whilst he carried several gold sovereigns secreted in his clothing (see Occupations chapter for full quotation); here too his justifiable annoyance spilled over into wholesale condemnation: “And thus there is no believing any of their statements.” There is little sympathy to be found here, let alone support.

Soon, Dare featured the Irish again; in 1855 he used Irish cases to illustrate his

⁸⁶LC: 5 Sept 1846, to Oct 1846, 23 Jan 1847, 5 Feb 1847, 13 Nov 1852; and *Leicester Journal* 7 Aug 1846 (attacking O'Connell and the Young Irelanders), 12 Nov 1847, 5 Feb 1847.

⁸⁷*The Chronicle*, 13 Nov. 1852

⁸⁸DARE, Rev. J. *5th RLDMS*, 1850, p.21; this was written at the time of the ending of the great “Famine” trauma.

⁸⁹DARE, Rev. J., *9th RLDMS* 1854, p.10. “Enceinte” is a now disused term for being pregnant.

opposition to unregulated private charity because it became habit-forming for recipients; (see quotation on title page). Dare's comments make it absolutely plain that at this time, c.1855, the official local authority policy towards the Irish was one of total refusal of outdoor relief, with assistance being granted only inside the regulated and segregated confines of the workhouse. Here are all the elements of current social debate today: the deserving and the undeserving poor, and the threat perceived from destitute immigrant scroungers. Dare was nothing if not consistent, and his new suggestion that the Irish adopt self-help, and that their own church should assess and monitor need, was a recurring theme in his influential commentaries. His account of the pregnant Irish beggar woman of 1854 (see above) asked "Should not the Irish generally be referred to their own priests?" A decade later he mused thus:

These resident beggars are supplemented by the lodging-house strollers, and the least reputable of the Irish immigrants the Irish who beg should be kindly directed to the Priest, not on account of their faith, but because it is almost impossible to arrive at just conclusions as to their real conditions. There could be no objections to act under his advice.⁹⁰

In 1861, Dare had again linked his concern over "indiscriminate alms giving" with Irish impostors, and both of his cases featured Irish families in well known locations, Orchard Street and Abbey Street.

They came from Ireland and began business in the "wood line," which is generally a pretence for indolent and irregular habits She supplied them with a hundred weight on credit They then gave up wood selling, and left the debt unpaid. The wife broke up her private abode, and took her husband and children into a common lodging house. The man did no work of any kind, and the woman actually maintained four or five children, herself and her husband, by begging. She went out daily on her predatory rounds, deceiving the unwary by all manner of bare-faced fabrications But the Irish woman whiningly and impudently denied the whole of the circumstances.⁹¹

These portrayals of the Irish poor by Dare exhibit an obsessive long-term preoccupation with Irish miscreants. Paradoxically, however, Leicester received far fewer Irish proportionately than did other towns. Furthermore, Dare's analyses were

⁹⁰DARE, J., *18th RLDMS*, 1863, p.5.

⁹¹DARE, J., *16th RLDMS* 1861, p. 7 + 8.

never brief, but disproportionately lengthy. In 1855 he noted "we have in "our midst" an organised system of vice and beggary"⁹² The constant critical reiteration, in a respected, widely circulating, semi-official local journal, only enhanced an already negative image. The local press regularly used Dare's *Reports*, thus ensuring a wider readership.⁹³ The task of emerging from the nether regions of public opinion was to be long-term and difficult for Leicester's Irish. A century later, local government officials were still echoing Dare's sentiments.⁹⁴

Positive attitude and action came from only a very few of their English fellow-Catholics in Leicestershire. The Cistercians and the Rosminians were the only agencies to be proactive. The Rosminians were organising relief for Ireland from December 1846, with effective fund raising in Italy and effective liaison with the Catholic authorities in Ireland.⁹⁵ The Rev Joseph Dare may not have known it, but some in the Catholic Church were in fact trying to address the problem of the Irish poor.

The main work on the ground locally was carried by the Cistercians of Mount St Bernards', only 12 or so miles, a relatively easy walking distance, from Leicester. Numerous references in the Abbey archives attest to the monks' charitableness,⁹⁶ such as that to "24 Irish reapers" assisted one day in 1846. In 1846, the Abbot made reference to the Irish needy who had been assisted:

..... We have numbers of the Poor Irish who after having been out of the Church for 5, 10, 20 or even 50 years, stay for a week or a fortnight, make their general Confession and go away blessing us and Providence. We have at present 4 little orphan children (Irish) whom I am having instructed. Last night one or two and twenty slept here without a home and in the greatest distress."⁹⁷

Between 1846 and 1850, the Abbey served 128, 269 portions of food, and provided lodgings for the homeless poor for 29,773 individuals. "Four parts out of five of those

⁹²DARE, J., 10th RLDMS, 1855, p.13.

⁹³eg see LC of 13 Nov 1852 re 7th RLDMS.

⁹⁴See JACKSON, J.A. (1963), *The Irish in Britain*, p.156-7. There were a few instances where the benefit of the doubt was extended to the incoming Irish. These all tended to involve the Ellis Quaker family; see *Letters of Eliza Ellis* (1883), p.11-12.

⁹⁵RCAL, at Rosmini House in Durham; see *Letters of Antonio Rosmini Serbati, Founder*

⁹⁶MSBA; see file: The Poor in Leics.; eg. Edmond Lafond's visit of 24 June 1848; the *Family Herald*, 21 April 1849; Notes of a visit, 1850: in 1848 M St B. "Relieved with food 32,000 persons, and gave occasional lodgings to 7,000 more." For 1847, the figures were 36,000 and 12,000 respectively. Not all of these could have been Irish.

⁹⁷MSBA, J. B. Palmer, Prior to Lady Shrewsbury, 22 September, 1846.

who have received this relief have been natives of Ireland."⁹⁸

Clearly, many Irish were helped; and many of those must have been close to expiry due to the distances covered on foot.⁹⁹ These impressive figures would suggest that the Abbey was seen as the centre of charity in the region, whereas the nearby town of Leicester was not. What was the attitude of Leicester's town council to the poor?

Under the 1834 Act's provisions, Leicester's Board of Guardians was set up in 1836 to administer the Poor Law Union.¹⁰⁰ Voting was on party lines, the Conservatives ruling until 1845. Little attempt was made to enforce the principles of the new law, until 1837, when out-relief was withheld. In the severe conditions of 1841-42, a new labour test led to riots which necessitated military intervention; the labour test in May 1848, when 19,000 of a population of 60,000 were seeking relief, led to almost a week of riots, centred on the Irish core streets, but apparently involving very few Irish (see Crime chapter). Although there was much political opposition to the new Poor Law, by 1851 the massive costs of outdoor relief led to the construction of a new workhouse with capacity for 1,000 persons. "The policy of refusing out-relief in all except a few cases" was successful in reducing expenditure. As a result, only 202 out of 1,378 applicants for relief in January/February 1858 accepted workhouse conditions.

Table 14 concerns the Irish dimension to Poor Law relief in Leicester in the study period. In 1841 and 1851 they constituted significant proportions of those in workhouses; this situation was less pressing in 1861 and 1871, despite rising again in 1881; it was much reduced (0.4 per cent) by 1891. In 1851, 4.6 per cent of those in workhouses were Irish-born, which co-relates closely to the 4.9 per cent of paupers in Leicester's population at that time. By 1861, however, only 1.8 per cent of all paupers were Irish-born, whilst the overall percentage of paupers in the population was 3.3 per cent. Roughly speaking, about half of those Irish who were pauperized were entering the workhouse.

There was in fact a historical pattern pertaining to local authority treatment of the Irish poor in the Leicester area. The Leicester Settlement Books reveal a few Irish cases. Andrew Flynn, a pauper living in Green Street in 1835, was removed to

⁹⁸MSBA, letter to *The Tablet*, 15 March 1851, from "A Friend to Charity." It could be argued that de Lisle was indirectly charitable towards the Irish in that he helped fund MSB.

⁹⁹See chapter 'Why the Irish came to Leicester' re Geraghty family.

¹⁰⁰Outline details here are from 'Soc. & Admin. Hist. Since 1835' in McKINLEY, R.A. & SMITH, C.T (Eds)(1958), *VCHL*, Vol. IV, pp 251-302.

Hereford.¹⁰¹ The amounts spent by the parishes in the 1830's remained typical until the workhouses opened, with St Margaret's easily facing the highest costs.¹⁰² For example, as of 20 May 1836, St Margaret's parish, where most of the Irish settled, spent £5,703 on poor relief, out of a total for all Leicester of £12,274; this represented 46.5 per cent,

TABLE 14		NUMBERS OF IRISH-BORN PAUPERS ENUMERATED AT CENSUSES FROM 1841 TO 1891 (MALE & FEMALE)											
CENSUS YEARS													
	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	1	1	2	10	4	9	9	7	18	10	16	11	
Annual Total	2 (39)		12(263)		13 (700)		16 (715)		28 (910)		27 (704)		
As % of all Paupers	5.1%		4.6%		1.8%		2.2%		3.1%		3.8%		

- Notes:
- (1) Source = Leicester Censuses, 1841-91.
 - (2) In 1851, total of 263 includes Union (143) and Infirmary (120).
 - (3) From 1871-91, the figures refer to Leicester Union Workhouse (Sparkenhoe St).
 - (4) In 1881, the Workhouse Master/Bookkeeper was a northern Irishman, Charles Gardiner, from Portadown, who was almost certainly a Protestant.

or almost half, of all city relief expenditure. As the *1836 Report on the Irish Poor* noted (see above), 200 of Leicester's estimated 300 Irish were classed as poor; the great majority of Irish, around 67 per cent, were therefore perceived as a burden from their earliest days of settlement. One local historian has remarked that "in Bradford about a third of the outdoor poor were Irish who were more subject to poverty than English workers. However, this does not openly appear as a problem in Leicester." This was because as the *1836 Report* indicated, those Irish were "not receiving pay as paupers," presumably because of official discouragement. The "Famine" arrivals coincided with Leicester's worst levels of poverty, in 1848-49.¹⁰³ In fact, one study of poverty in

¹⁰¹LCRO, 18D 62/15; *Settlement Book of 1836*; and 18 D 62/16; *Settlement Book of 1837* p.118, 21/12/1837): In 1837, the case of Mary Watts was raised. Married to a Troop Sergeant Major of the 1st Dragoon Guards in 1813 at the parish church of Timolin in Co. Kildare, Mary lived in Marble Street with her four children, her husband having died in 1833. Presumably Mary was of Irish birth, her husband an English serving soldier. This case was left unresolved.

¹⁰²LCRO, 26 D 68/2, *Poor Law Minute Books* eg for 20/5/1836.

¹⁰³LCRO, THOMPSON, K.M. (1982), *The Leicester Poor Law Union, 1836-71*; p.112. Bishop Ullathorne (1857) noted that in one midlands town, the Irish formed 50% of the extremely poor but only 5% of those receiving help (p.9), Catholics were excluded from most English charitable foundations. Source: CHAMBERLAIN, B.G. (1961), *Report as to the Administration*

Leicester in the 1834-71 period asserts that "there were migrants to the Borough from outside the county, but they were few in comparison with the majority, who were native-county paupers who on average had travelled 10 miles from home."¹⁰⁴ Dare's histrionic strictures seem unnecessary exaggerations against such a background of relatively modest Irish representation, even though in 1844 the Town Council drew attention to earlier legislation for the removal of the Scotch and Irish Poor in relation to its serious concern over the outcomes in settlement cases, which it described as "a complete lottery."¹⁰⁵ An example from Loughborough amply illustrates this point:

7.8.1849 - case of Catherine Callaghan:

"The Guardians are desirous of departing from the Regulations and Customs relative to out relief she being an able-bodied inmate of the Workhouse and being desirous of getting to her relatives at Newport in Wales, the Guardians have agreed to allow her sufficient to pay her expenses there if the Poor Law Board will sanction them in doing so."

In February 1851 the Leicester poor law authority received a letter from the Select Vestry of Liverpool enquiring about the impact of Irish pauper immigrants, and requesting a return of the cost of such paupers to Liverpool.¹⁰⁶ The Leicester Board speedily replied thus:

From some cause this Union has not been burthened with any great number of these persons, but the Guardians still are of opinion that it is a system most oppressive to certain localities, and fraught with very serious evils. I am directed to state for your information that the total number of Irish relieved in this Union since the 26th March last (excepting those permanently resident) has been but 176 persons, of all classes; and, our expenditure upon them, including the cost of removing two families to Ireland is £61 5. 0.¹⁰⁷

In point of fact, the writer was referring to the period from Lady Day 1850 to 19 February 1851. In 1850 the Leicester Union dealt relief to 3,883 persons; in 1851 it offered relief to 2,949 cases; 176 Irish was a rather marginal figure within these sorts of limits. Removals to Ireland continued; in the August of 1852 it was "also ordered that

of Poor Law in the Leicester Union (Vol. 73), in LCRO. In the 10 years 1848-58, the worst years for poverty in Leicester were 1848 (20.2%), 1849 (9.5%) and 1858 (7.1%); (percentage of population relieved).

¹⁰⁴INNOCENT, G. (1989), *Aspects of the Practical Working of the New Poor Law in Leic. & in Leics., 1834-1871*, MA, Univ. Of Leic.

¹⁰⁶LCRO, *Rep't on the Law of Parochial Settlement*; Leic. Council, 23 Oct 1844 and L'boro Workhouse Min. Bk.

¹⁰⁸LCRO, Leicester Poor Law Union, G/12/8a/1-59.

¹⁰⁷LCRO, G/12/57a/9 and 26 D 68/244; Poor Law, Leic. City, Gen. out letters, May 1850 - July 1851; No. 261, 19 Feb. 1851.

Thomas Talbott be appointed to convey Mary Hall and her 2 children to Liverpool in order to effect their removal to Ireland."¹⁰⁸ The Poor Removal Act, however, undermined the non-resident system by making many former non-resident paupers irremovable.¹⁰⁹ In Leicester the poor rates doubled, and irremovability prevented the actual removal of non-settled and Irish paupers. Boards became more concerned about the loss of the deterrent value of removals, especially with respect to the Irish poor, and some ignored this Act, successfully bluffing Irish paupers into accepting removal (eg Bradford). The Removal of Irish Paupers Act of 1861 charged the removing union with the responsibility of conveying the pauper to his ultimate destination in Ireland.

Analysis of the inmates of the workhouse in 1881 indicates that 34 were Irish born (3.73 per cent), which was a considerably higher rate than any of the other dispersed regional areas listed. 28 (3.1 per cent) were actually paupers, 18 males and 10 females. This proportion was similar to that for all of the S. Midlands, and two-thirds of that for the N. Midlands; and this writer noted that "the Irish population in the Workhouse was often seen as a major migrant group in many English towns." In Leicester the Irish formed 12.76 per cent of unskilled labourers, a lower proportion than in the north western entry ports of Manchester and Liverpool. This research concluded that the poor in Leicester were organically of the working class, and that impersonal economic forces rather than "moral" failings were the causes of their impoverishment.¹¹⁰ In particular, household fortunes were tied to the vagaries occasioned by the decline in hosiery and the emergence as a new staple of the footwear industry. The Irish were as vulnerable to such changes and fluctuations as were the host community (see Occupations). Heinrick offered a somewhat prejudiced view, blaming Irish impoverishment on association with the English poor. Heinrick would have been more accurate to question employer attitudes rather than the example of the English poor.

Certainly by the turn of the century, whilst Irish employment patterns were more varied, there were still 27/704 (or 3.8 per cent) Irish born in the Workhouse.¹¹¹ The records of a local police-aided clothing charity offer evidence of the vulnerability of

¹⁰⁸LCRO, 26 D 68/6, Poor Law Min. Bk. 3 Aug. 1852, p.370.

¹⁰⁹The effects of this Act on Leicester are given in THOMPSON, K.M. (1982), *The Leic. Poor Law Union, 1836-71*, p. 119-120.

¹¹⁰See PAGE, S., *Pauperism and the Leicester Workhouse in 1881*, in *T.L.A.H..S*, Vol. lxiii, (1989), p.92-93.

¹¹¹HEINRICK, H. (1872), p.36; and ACD, 1891.

children as late as the 1890's, (on the basis of Irish surnames; see Education Chapter).¹¹² Bishop Bagshawe's sharp critique in 1885 of current capitalist economics hit hard at those with "accumulated land or wealth":

"Unhappily in England the State, governing chiefly in the interest of the wealthy and land-owning classes, leaves this unjust and barbarous power almost uncontrolled So too it has robbed the poor, or allowed them to be robbed, of vast quantities of recreation and common land, necessary both for their maintenance and their health of body and mind The law, moreover, allows the poor to be worked without regard to rest or health."¹¹³

Recording the problem was one thing; serious amelioration lay in the future.

(f) Conclusion

The Irish community in Leicester then tended to share the generally rather low standard of living enjoyed by the English working class in the period c.1840 to c.1890. Across all the indices examined, housing and health conditions tended to reflect those which pertained in Irish communities in locations such as Bradford and London. As is still a worldwide pattern poor in-migrants to towns tended to become located in affordable areas, and thus the association between the Irish newcomers and the slums became a commonplace. The very real factor of poverty amongst the Irish, especially the Famine migrants, is attested to sympathetically in the record of those who tried to help, especially the Catholic authorities (the Cistercians on the ground at Mount St. Bernard, and the Rosminians by international fund collecting). Long-term poverty associated with poor and low quality housing and limited job opportunities, was very difficult to eliminate. Questions of diet, nutrition and overall health remained problems until the 1890's and beyond. As well as physical deprivation, the Irish suffered lasting damage from their unsympathetic portrayal locally as alien parasites by the Rev. Joseph Dare, whose influential *Reports* affected public opinion via the press and local government. Dare said nothing positive about the Irish; his detailed negative portrayals

¹¹²LCRO; Charity Records, Application Forms for aid from the Police-aided Asscn for Clothing the Destitute Children of Leicester.

¹¹³NDA and DeLP; BAGSHAWE, (1885), *Mercy and Justice to the Poor*, p.17-19. He attacked especially the evils of landlordism in Ireland. His peroration has, sadly, a contemporary ring to it, a century later. Bagshawe was an embarrassment to establishment Catholics of the De Lisle type, and was marginalised towards the end of his episcopate.

racialized and problematized the Irish community. Only with the gradual dispersal from c.1875 from the core streets of settlement around Abbey Street and Green Street into newer areas of artisan housing did the Irish concentration begin to dissolve, and this process culminated in the slum clearances c.1935. This, together with mixed marriages, led to the gradual development of the integration and assimilation processes for many of the migrants and their descendants.

CHAPTER 5

THE IRISH DIMENSION TO CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT IN LEICESTER

..... there is little Barney Branagan in the street, without shoes or stockings, and the whole number of his tattered garments amounting to two, quietly going to be entrapped into some establishment where he will be taught to swear at the Pope and laugh at the Blessed Virgin.

From *The Rambler*, Vol. III, March 1855, Part XV, p.159; held in the Dominican main archive.

Meanwhile *Prayer* your work of sanctifying the Irish People is undoubtedly an incalculable auxiliary for the general object. If only the Irish were but true and vital Catholics in their lives and practice, as they already so gloriously are in the integrity and the heartiness of their Faith, they would indeed be a standing evidence of the truth of Catholicity to their Anglo-Saxon fellow subjects and fellow-countrymen. The Irish are a noble people, brave like lions, generous to a fault, hearty, affectionate and full of gratitude for kindness. If they would crown all these noble qualities with a hearty conversion to God, their example would be overwhelming and omnipotent - as it is, I often hear Anglican clergymen who have made tours in Ireland say how chaste the young women and men of Ireland are compared with those of their own country Parishes here in England, where alas! vice is now nearly as general as if the people were heathens! It surely must be for some providential purpose that God has inspired so many Irish to settle in England of late years. Thus in our neighbouring Parish of Whitwick there are actually 900 Irish, all come within the last 6 years, attracted by the demand of labour in the coal mines of the district. Unhappily these Irish are sadly given to drinking, and as they earn from 15 to 25 shillings a week they have plenty of means to gratify this sad passion, and the result is much scandal, quarrelling and fighting Later please God when I open mines in the next Parish of Sheppeshed, where we are now boring with fair prospects, we shall want many more Irish to aid us in working them, for our own population will not suffice, but we must have good ones, who will really help us to Catholicize our Anglo-Saxons.

Ambrose de Lisle to Rev. Ignatius Spencer, 25 Feb. 1860, in PURCELL, E.S. (1900), *Life and Letters of Ambrose de Lisle*, Vol. I. p.186-7.

In the heart of Leicester slumdom you will find St. Patrick's Church. Like the neighbourhood in which it stands, it is a seedy-looking place, but for years it has performed a splendid mission, particularly amongst the Irish and foreign element of the town. It is round this little temple of the church of their native land that the Hibernian section of our community loves to live, and it is within the walls of this little place that you find them there foregathered in considerable numbers any Sunday morning The people who trooped into St. Patrick's last Sunday morning were for the most part very poor. There was a distinctly Irish look about the entire congregation Most of those present had made themselves smart before coming to worship, but there were those there who, not having the wedding garment, still did not absent themselves from the worship of the great Bridegroom It was very pretty to see these poor people, waifs of society many of them looked, bowing reverently to the altar as they entered the church, and again as they entered their seats; very impressive to see them devoutly kneel down in prayer for several minutes before seating themselves.

St. Patrick's is only an epitome of a church. Everything is on a small scale. The place is only about as big as a couple of good sized drawing rooms joined together, and with the hundred and fifty or so worshippers that assembled on Sunday morning, it looked quite full. Although it is probably the very poorest church in Leicester, much money has evidently been spent on decoration, on pictures, effigies, &c., to make the place attractive, and this has been achieved, though, of course, the whole looks cheap and tawdry compared with the grandeur of wealthy Catholic churches in this and other countries Considering the neighbourhood in which St. Patrick is, the poverty of its finances, and the difficulty of rendering the best musical settings of the Mass, it was surprising to find a very creditable performance given by the organ and choir At the usual break in the middle of the Mass, the officiating priest, a young man with a very devout and pleasant manner, stepped into the pulpit and made a few announcements. He has a brogue which distinctly proclaims his nationality, but he spoke in pretty and musical tones.

'Round The Churches,' *The Leicester Guardian*, Saturday, May 26, 1900

CHAPTER 5 **THE IRISH DIMENSION TO CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT IN LEICESTERSHIRE**

PAGE	CONTENTS
163	(a) Introduction
163	(i) Recognising the Irish dimension.
165	(ii) The clash of interests pre-c.1850.
168	(b) The Irish dimension develops, c.1851 to c.1875.
180	(c) Religious observance and cultural Catholicism:
180	(i) from the cradle to the grave
188	(ii) The Hibernian shepherd: guarding the flock
194	(iii) Sacramental observance: theory and practice
202	(iv) Marriage, mixed and otherwise
211	(d) The leadership contributions of the Irish male and female Religious:
211	(i) the role of the priests and brothers
217	(ii) the role of the sisters
223	(e) Conclusion

LIST OF TABLES

Page	Table No.	Title
169	1	Numbers of RCs in Leicester 1676-1829
172	2(a)	Irish and non-Irish Baptisms at Holy Cross RC Church, 1816-1842 (Graph)
173	2(b)	Irish Baptisms and Marriages at Holy Cross/St Michael's/St Patrick's 1843-60 (Graph)
175	2(c)	Irish Baptisms and Marriages at Holy Cross/St Michael's/St Patrick's, 1843-60 (figures only).
176	3(a)	Total numbers of RC Baptisms at Holy Cross in 1831-3
178	3(b)	Contributions from Leicestershire Parishes to the Nottingham Diocesan Mission fund c.1872.
186	4	Examples of the cult of Irishness and of St. Patrick in use in Leicestershire in the 19th Century (Hymns)
197	5	Statistics for Leicestershire (RC Diocese of Nottingham) 1881 : re Numbers and age pattern of Catholics, and numbers of penitents and communicants.
197	6	Religious attendances in Leicester : 1851, 1872 and 1882.
200	7	Ratio of Irish:English marriages at St. Patrick's, 1874-1900.
200	8	Ratio of Irish:English Baptisms at St. Patrick's, 1874-1888.
200	9	Ratio of Irish:English Confirmations at St. Patrick's, 1876-99.
204	10	Leicester's Irish community : marriage data from census records, 1841 to 1891 (ethnic origin).
204	11	Summary of 1841-91 marriage data : Percentages.
207	12	Marriage patterns in Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley and Whitwick (1841 to 1891) showing wholly Irish, and mixed, pairings (percentages).3
209	13	Irish mixed marriages in Leicester and York, 1841 to 1871.
216	14	Biographical summaries of long-serving, influential and effective Irish priests in Leicestershire, c.1840 to c.1930.

(a) INTRODUCTION

(i) Recognising the Irish dimension

This chapter will identify and evaluate the Irish contribution to Catholicism in Leicester, which has, to date, either been marginalised or ignored.¹ It will critically examine sources; discuss informal as well as formal observance; and evaluate the leadership and personnel contributions of Irish males and females.

The most recent survey (Lacey, 1985) of the Catholic revival in the east midlands selects a traditional agenda: the Cistercian and Rosminian initiatives; and the aristocratic families, especially the de Lises. The Irish dimension receives attention only in terms of a brief coverage of poverty-stricken migrants. This replicates Kimberlin's (1946) study of Catholicism in Leicester. The only inclusive work on the Irish, by the diocesan historian, Garrett Sweeney, was written half a century ago and is unpublished.² A recent thesis unquestioningly echoes older accounts.³ Leicestershire was more accessible to the Irish than is acknowledged; statistically significant Irish in-migration pre-1850 into Leicester, Loughborough and Hinckley took place (see Chapters 1 & 2). Mount St. Bernard's Abbey had Irish constitutional roots and numerous Irish personnel, but it is outside the scope of the present study.⁴

Trappes-Lomax (1954) produced a lengthy account of county Catholicism in the 1550-1950 period. While dealing extensively with numerically negligible English recusant gentry, he "discussed" the Irish dimension in just seven succinct lines:

The Irish immigration, which began about 1826 and increased rapidly from about 1840, has contributed to the number of Roman Catholics in the county. The most obvious and important manifestation of all this is found in the creation of Mass centres. In consequence there has been both an absolute increase in Roman Catholic numbers from some 800 about the year 1830 to over 22,000 in 1950, and an increase relative to

¹Two useful summaries are JONES, G. (Ed) (1989), *The Descent of Dissent - A Guide to the Non-conformist Records at the Leicestershire Record Office*, pp. 54-55, 71 and 73; and in THOMPSON, D.M. (1969), *The Churches and Society in Leicestershire, 1851-1881* p.294-9. The standard works are BECK, G.A. (Ed) (1950), *The English Catholics, 1850-1950*; HASTINGS, A. (1986) *A History of English Christianity, 1920-1985*; BOSSY, J. (1975), *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850*, and NORMAN, E., (1984) *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*.

²See LACEY, A.C. (1985), *The Second Spring in Charnwood Forest*, p.9, and KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), *The Return of Catholicism to Leicester 1746-1946*. A brief account by SWEENEY, G. c.1950 is *A Short History of St Barnabas Cathedral, Nottingham; 1850-1950*. It addresses the Irish dimension to East Midlands Catholicism; his most useful work is a typed mss in NDA, unpublished: *A History of the Diocese of Nottingham in the Episcopate of Bishop Bagshawe, 1874-1901*.

³HOLT, E. (1989) *Catholic Conversions in Mid-19th Century Leicester* (dissertation, Cantab.) p.2. NDA. See GANDY, M. (1993), *Catholic Missions and Registers 1700-1850, Vol. 2, The Midlands and East Anglia* p.16-19.

⁴The Abbey is just 12 miles from Leicester.

the county's population from just over 0.4 to 3.5 per cent in the same period.⁵

These brief observations do not reflect adequately the contribution of those Irish migrants, male and female, lay and religious, who in their respective ways made real inputs into Catholic development in city and county. (see Table 1). A recent history noted:

The establishment of Holy Cross Priory in 1817 undoubtedly encouraged the growth of Catholicism in Leicester, but perhaps of even more importance to the growth of the Roman Church was the steady stream of Irish immigration especially after the Great Famine of 1845/6.⁶

The only historian to deal adequately with the Irish input locally is Sweeney, who observed:

Before this year (1850) there had already been an immense increase in the numerical strength of the Catholic body. And this increased by another 50 per cent with the full tide of Irish immigration in the years 1840-50. It is possible to give approximate figures for the counties of the present Nottingham Diocese: 2,160 in 1773; 4,000 in 1826; 16,000 in 1840 and 20,000 in 1850. Very few seem to have penetrated into Leicestershire.

Sweeney's latter observation is revised above (see Chapter 2). The Whitwick coalfield, framework knitting, and seasonal farm work all attracted the Irish.⁷ In 1860 de Lisle, Leicestershire's Catholic leader, admitted that he viewed the Irish as the spear-head of an anticipated Catholic revival; "we shall want many more Irish who will really help us to Catholicize our Anglo-Saxons."⁸

Kimberlin's (1946) study is informative but stereotypical. Kimberlin, a Conservative councillor, justified his Catholicism in an English context, emphasising defensively (and misleadingly) the Englishness of the Dominicans.⁹ His account brought in the Irish briefly as Famine refugees, drunken and rowdy, but nonetheless amenable to their pastors; he also marginalised women. The recent LCRO publication over-

⁵TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B., 'Roman Catholicism,' in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed), (1954), *VCHL*, Vol. II, pp.55-73. The total entry comprises 17½ x A4 pages. This at least contextualises the Irish arrivals in a reasonably accurate timescale, p.70.

⁶ELLIOTT, M., *Belief and Disbelief in Victorian Leicester*, in *T.L.A.H.S* Vol. LVI, 1980-81; p.88. This observation emerged in a non-religious journal, where perhaps there existed a greater possibility for acknowledging the Irish dimension than existed in older, local, Anglo-centric Catholic accounts.

⁷SWEENEY, (1950), p.30.

⁸See title page.

⁹KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.12.

emphasises the role of the gentry. A useful critical view comes from John McCabe, Franciscan turned secularist, a man of Irish roots, resident in Leicester and a colleague of Barclay. Barclay's autobiography is, of course, a key local source.¹⁰

Ambrose de Lisle (1809-1878), the key local gentry Catholic, had serious problems in relating to Irish migrant Catholics, despite having other Irish connections. He was to relate positively with Holy Cross; less so with Irish incomers at St Patricks. Similarly, whilst de Lisle is intimately associated with the Cistercians' county base, that Abbey's Irish associations are generally ignored. It will be argued that the power groupings in Leicestershire Catholicism did little to relate to the needs and aspirations of incoming Irish arrivals until Bishop Edward Bagshawe's incumbency from 1874. Until then, response was minimal and basic. The Leicester Catholic experience mirrored a paradoxical combination of Gallican gentry influences intermingled with ultramontane, Italianate celebration, both trends personified in the powerful de Lisle family. Exactly how the Irish made their influence felt is discussed below.

(ii) The Clash of Interests pre-c.1850

To understand the significance of the Irish input, it is necessary to look at the foundations laid by the Irish from c.1815. Matthew (1936) pointed to the underlying significance of the Pugin-de Lisle-Shrewsbury English Catholic aristocratic nexus in the midlands in the 1830's.¹¹ De Lisle, who effectively was the most powerful layman in Leicestershire, had experiential limitations. A recent biographer notes that he "had no experience whatever" of Irish migrants.¹²

This is however inaccurate, as De Lisle had several contacts with Irish migrants at important stages of his early conversion from Anglicanism to Catholicism:

In 1824 Father Thomas McDonnell (of) Birmingham, came to Loughborough to see de Lisle who was preparing to be received into the Church. They met at the home of an Irish woman. We do not know her name or where she lived, but it would seem that her house was

¹⁰JONES, G. (Ed.) (1989), p.54-5, 71 and 73. See BARCLAY, T. (1934), *Memoirs and Medleys*, and also McCABE, J. (1897), *Twelve Years in a Monastery*. McCabe entered the novitiate in Killarney c.1850; he was second generation Irish, spending his early youth in Manchester, p.20. He entered the Franciscans in 1885, spending much time in London. He spent time in Leicester, became a secularist, and a colleague of Barclay.

¹¹MATTHEW, D. (1936/55), *Catholicism in England - The Portrait of a Minority: Its cultures and Tradition*, p.195.

¹²PAWLEY, M. (1993) *Faith and Family, the Life and Circle of Ambrose Philipps de Lisle*, p.21. Pawley too is keen to limit the extent of the Irish contribution.

a point of contact between the few Catholics of the neighbourhood and priests of the Midland area. Fr. McDonnell came again in 1825, and received De Lisle into the Church at the house of an Irish paviour outside Loughborough.¹³

De Lisle then experienced three early points of contact with the Irish. It is surprising that on such an auspicious occasion the names of his Irish religious benefactors are not recorded.¹⁴ Also, whilst his munificence to the Cisterians indirectly assisted materially those masses of poor Irish congregating at the Abbey c.1847-55, the Irish in Leicester received little support

It was the O'Connellite demand for repeal of the Union, and the harsh impact of the culture clash between Irish incomers and English "hosts", that forced de Lisle to clarify his thinking on the Irish and Irish issues. They were, in his mind, at best embarrassing fellow-Catholics, and at the worst, political adventurers of a type both alien and repugnant to a seigneurial Catholic country squire of Conservative mien. Matthew (1936) has emphasised the urban-rural Catholic culture clash in the 1830-60 period.¹⁵ He defined the "new Catholic life" as "those great masses of town populations, largely Irish in origin, who gradually transformed the Catholic scene."

Leicester exemplified Inglis's conclusion that:

Social exclusiveness and spiritual introversion, the natural deposit of history on English Catholics, made it difficult for them to remember that they and the Irish newcomers were one body in Christ.¹⁶

The Catholic question and Irish settlement in Leicester were reflected strongly in local politics as early as the 1820's. Leicester's Catholics were represented at the inaugural meeting in Birmingham in 1824 of the new Metropolitan British Catholic Association led by Rev. McDonnell, which openly looked to the Irish model and experience.

The Association's new committee contained Messrs Lynch, Honan and Flynn. All three, presumably of Irish background, re-appear as activists at the Leicester branch of the Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty in late 1826. In fact, 6 out of 13 activists

¹³NDA, *Catholic Reference Book*, 1949: CUMMINS, Rev J.D., St. Mary's Loughborough (no p.ref). See also PAWLEY (1993) pp. 20-21, and WARD, B. (1912), *The Eve of Catholic Emancipation*, Vol. III, 1820-29.

¹⁴GILLOW, J. (1885), *A Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, Vol. IV, p.372-8. McDonnell had an Irish father.

¹⁵See MATTHEW, D. (1936), p.187.

¹⁶MATTHEW, D. (1936), p.186. INGLIS, K.S. (1963), *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*, p.134.

were apparently Irish, almost half. There is clear evidence of liaison and active co-operation between these Catholic Irishmen and Leicester Protestant dissenter interests.¹⁷ For example, Richard Seal was not only a Friend's committee member but also part of a framework knitters' delegation which publicly demanded support for Catholic emancipation in Leicester's election of 1826.¹⁸

These facts put Leicester on a par with Cardiff, whose similar experience was charted in a seminal work by Hickey (1967).¹⁹ Irish settlement, whilst limited, was extant and increasing before the "Famine" years. The migrants contained class divisions, and were not a monolithic bloc of the socio-economically deprived. Leicester's Irish too were involved in systematic political co-operation with English dissenters in the 1820's and 1830's, and had recognized the importance of education by creating in 1824 the Catholic infant school near Belgrave Gate. Clearly, numbers of these early migrants were certainly not illiterate, and had ambitions for their families and their community. This leadership grouping could have played some role in mobilising community responses in the 1840's and 1850's (such as the building of the new St. Patrick's School).

Again, like the Cardiff Irish, they supported pastors for their community, not only in the core Irish area around Abbey Street, close to the small chapel of St. Michaels (Causeway Lane) but also at Holy Cross main church. If this strata of support had been absent, the waves of arrival post-1845 into Leicester would have entered into an even bleaker context than to a town which experienced the large scale mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism.²⁰

De Lisle, via Mc Donnell, flirted very briefly with the O'Connellite Friends; the sustained support of Leicester Liberals for O'Connell's agenda and for Irish reforms, however, meant that natural Tories, such as de Lisle, soon stopped empathising with Irish aspirations.²¹ O'Connell's Leicestershire profile was enhanced by frequent visits to Leicester's Liberals.²² He was the "star" speaker in the 1841 campaign to free the jailed William Baines, a Dissenter who refused to pay his church rates.²³ De Lisle hoped

¹⁷DAE, *The Truth Teller*, 25.9.1824, p.1-4; 14.10.1826, p.67; and 16.12. 1826, p.394-5.

¹⁸PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), *Radical Leicester* p.150, 162.

¹⁹HICKEY, J. (1967), *Urban Catholics*: p.61, 65, 87 and 95.

²⁰PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), p.152, describes graphically the 1826 Election, when "the Catholic religion was presented, or rather misrepresented, in the darkest colours."

²¹PURCELL, E.S (1900), *Vol. I and II*, p.291, p.302-9.

²²LC, 9 April 1836, on O'Connell's visit to Loughborough. LCRO, Paget letters, DE1274/13; D. O'Connell to T. Paget, 26 March 1836, and SEARSON, R. (c.1850), *A Quarter Century of Liberalism in Leicester*, p.19, 66

²³SIMMONS. J., (1974), *Leicester Past and Present*, Vol. I, p.167-8; LC, 30 Jan. 1841.

(quite unrealistically) for a Rome-Canterbury rapprochement. This, together with his transcendent belief in British imperialism, meant that any identity with the aims and aspirations of Irish migrants was foredoomed.²⁴ The open sympathies of some Leicester migrants for Fenianism would have further eroded any sympathy he had for proletarian Irish emigrés.²⁵ De Lisle was determined to prevent an Irish storm of disestablishment from rocking his English boat of re-union.²⁶

This hardening of attitude against migrant political causes in Leicester was compounded, ironically, by other Irish influences on de Lisle's thinking. William Monsell (1812-94), Aubrey de Vere (1814-1902) and Lord Adare all converted to Catholicism. They exhibited sympathy for the Irish peasantry and empathy for Celtic culture, but in the long run all remained politically conservative, becoming influenced by the liberal Catholicism of the European Catholic philosopher Montalembert who was anti-Ultramontane, Anglophilic and pro- laissez faire.²⁷ Irish Catholics arrivés therefore faced a double obstruction: Conservative Catholics as well as establishment Protestants.

De Lisle was presumably unaware of the contradiction in his symbiotic understanding of Irish migrants: they could be servants of God's will as missionaries, and of Ambrose's will as labourers.²⁸ (See title page). Norman has commented that:

Phillips de Lisle was not unique in his distaste for the link of Catholicism and national politics among the Irish, another cause for their poor reputation in England. Of the Famine he wrote, "God has visited that wretched and untameable race with those chastisements which are inseparably the lot of all Catholic nations that disgrace the Name of the Church."²⁹

Irish Catholics in Leicester were in a "no win" situation.

(b) The Irish dimension develops, c.1851 to c.1875

Most commentators now agree that an Irish presence was felt in English

²⁴ELLIOTT, B. Ambrose Philipps de Lisle 1809-1878, in *TLAHS*, Vol. LV, 1979-80, pp.78-82.

²⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.6 and see Politics.

²⁶De Lisle had been advised about the need for Irish disestablishment c.1830 by Boylan, a senior Irish RC cleric based in Rome; LCRO, MF 482/DeLP, letters of 3.6.1832, 21.5.1831 and 17.1.1832.

²⁷ROANTREE, D.S. (1901), p.99 and p.204-5, and PAWLEY, M. (1993), p.30.

²⁸PURCELL, E.S. (1900), Vol. I, p.186-7; *A de L to Rev. I Spencer*, 25 Feb. 1860.

²⁹NORMAN, E. (1984), p.218: citing ALLEN, letters of A P de L to Montalembert, in *Dublin Review*, 228, No. 463 (1954), 318 (Jan. 1849).

Catholicism prior to the "Famine" exodus. Mathew (1936), Bossy (1975) and Norman (1984) all stress the pre-1850 Irish input.³⁰ What situation did the earlier Irish migrants enter into?

The Midland District c.1850, which included Leicester, had a reputation for promoting low-profile gentry Catholicism.³¹ A standard work notes that "until the establishment of the Priory of Holy Cross in 1817, there were very few Roman Catholics in the town."³²

A discreet mass centre at Causeway Lane operated from c.1771 to c.1785; and did so again with the Irish influx. A local source questions Kimberlin's figures (see Table 1) for numbers of Catholics c.1815.³³ This would suggest that in the Catholic revival in Leicester, the Irish arrivals were important. In 1798, a permanent chapel, dedicated to St. Michael, was established on an upper factory floor in Causeway Lane. According to Kimberlin:

The old chapel in Causeway Lane was still used and Mass was said there on Wednesday mornings, certainly up to the year 1850, but the precise date it ceased to be used is not known.

TABLE 1	ROMAN CATHOLICS IN LEICESTERSHIRE: 1676-1829			
LOCATION	c.1676	c.1767	c.1780	c.1829
Hinckley	4	18	8	40
Leicester	4	24	37	400/500
Loughborough	2	--	4	--
Notes:				
(1) Source: McKINLEY, R.A. & SMITH, C.T. (1958), which questions the reliability of the Leicester figures.				
(3) The priests who served Leicester at this early period (1785-1825) were Dominicans; see KIMBERLIN (1946) p.21.				

In fact, a solid case can be made for Causeway Lane being the focus of Irish settlement, both before and after 1841. Even after Holy Cross opened in 1819, "Causeway Lane,

³⁰See HICKEY, J. (1967), p.61, 65, 87 and 95; JACKSON, J.A. (1963), *The Irish in Britain*, pp 3-7; and MATTHEW, D (1936/55), NORMAN, E., (1984), pp. 6 + 7, quoting BOSSY, J. (1975), p.287.

³¹HUSENBETH, F.C. (1862), *Life of Milner*, p.97.

³²TRAPPESS - LOMAX, (1954), *VCHL*, Vol. II, p.64.

³³NICHOLS, J. (1815), *The History and the Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, Vol. I, Part II, p.389. "it is secluded from observation, being situated behind the house of the officiating priest he makes no proselytes. It is believed that not a family or individual have been added to this small congregation in the space of fifty years. I rather think several have seceded in that space of time."

however, was still kept up, for we find it in use much later." This 1898 source is quite informative on Causeway Lane after c.1841:

It was the custom of Fr. Nicholds to say Mass in Causeway Lane on Wednesday mornings, and on Tuesday evenings he frequently gave lectures there on the subject of some Catholic doctrine or practice, when the chapel was crowded. It is unknown when this ceased.³⁴

An 1863 source notes that "Causeway Lane Chapel is still occasionally used," and also uses the term "present chapel". Causeway Lane site was therefore still in use c.1863.³⁵ This extended operating period for St. Michael's fits with the picture, borne out by census evidence, of a centre servicing a large "Famine"-inspired influx of Irish into Leicester necessitous of facilities for both worship and education.

St. Michael's was overstretched even before the 1840's. A Catholic philanthropist provided a large factory room, a situation typical of early migrant settlement.³⁶ St. Michael's was the author of its own ultimate desuetude, for once it came into use as a permanent chapel, its increasing attendances overwhelmed the space available.³⁷ This overcrowding factor is also used to explain the project for building an entirely new church, on what was to develop into Holy Cross on the fashionable New Walk. A Flemish priest, Fr. Caestryck, arrived c.1815; the Dominican priory opened in 1819.³⁸ This demand partly came from demobilised Irish catholic soldiers and their families who were settled, or stationed, in Leicester. (See below).

Kimberlin contrasts Holy Cross's low numbers with Causeway Lane's crowds. He states that Causeway Lane was used for Mass up to around 1850.³⁹ It is very probably the case that in Leicester, as in some other towns, a move was being made to offer the English and Irish separate provision: St. Michael's was to be kept separate from Holy Cross in its suburban milieu, which was an ideal base for a much more slowly increasing, largely English, and partly middle-class, clientele.⁴⁰ A more proletarian Irish mission expanded, based on settlement close to the Causeway Lane site, in the years

³⁴KIMBERLIN, (1946) pp. 16 and 19, St Michaels was demolished in 1939, ANON (1898), *Priory Church of H.C. Leicester* p.8 + 9; the source was Dominican.

³⁵*White's Directory*, 1863 pp.174-5.

³⁶KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.16; also YOUNG, U. (1933), *Life of Ignatius Spencer*, p. 82 talks of a new W. Midlands mission at Aston in a converted warehouse/chapel, next to small houses serving as sacristy and presbytery c.1833; similar examples are in SAMUEL, R., in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1985), pp.267-300.

³⁷McKINLEY et al (1958), p.389.

³⁸GILLOW, J. (1885), *Bib. Dict of English Catholics*, I, p.372, gives 1814 for Fr. Caestryck's arrival in Leicester.

³⁹KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.19.

⁴⁰BDA; the *Catholic Lay's Directories* for 1818-20 and 1822 indicate that Holy Cross had an ongoing financial problem.

1820 to 1850.⁴¹ Holy Cross was something of a “white elephant” until c.1840. It endured serious resource limitations as late as 1835.⁴²

If efforts were being made to cater for Irish arrivals, they were misdirected if based on the Holy Cross site, for the evidence places most Irish arrivals in the Belgrave Gate area of cheap housing development in the already overcrowded Anglican parish of St. Margarets, close to Causeway Lane. The Leicester Dominicans chose to keep their main efforts in an enterprise physically removed from what after c.1850 became the base for the impoverished and socially embarrassing Irish arrivals.

A standard history gives c.1826 as the starting point for Irish arrivals, with an acceleration c.1840.⁴³ An analysis of the surnames in the earliest baptism Register, for 1785-1814, tabulating only readily identifiable Irish, throws up 19 per cent (16/85) examples.⁴⁴ There is a clear association between Irish men and British military service during the French Wars 1802-11, for 8 entries, one half, involve Irishmen in the British Army. Especially important is the fact that, as all 16 baptisms are on the 1785-1814 register, they pre-date the building of Holy Cross church, and strengthen the claims of Causeway Lane chapel (St. Michaels) to being the centre for Leicester Catholicism at this period.

Of the combined Leicester/Hinckley Baptismal Index (1785-1814), the incidence of all Irish surnames listed is 26 per cent (56/218), just over a quarter of all entries. This compares well with the 19 per cent of Irish surnames (children only) in the Leicester 1785-1814 sample discussed above.⁴⁵ So far then, the combined baptism figures reveal the Irish impact on Leicester’s Catholic catchment:

1800-1815	:	19 per cent (Leicester, St. Michaels)
1785-1814	:	26 per cent (Leicester & Hinckley)
1814-1819	:	27 per cent (Leicester, St. Michaels)

This same data helps to establish the ratio of Irish/English baptisms from 1815-35. If *all* the entries for the 1815-35 period in Leicester are considered, of

⁴¹BDA; *Laity's Directory*, 1822, page re Leics, refers to Holy Cross's ongoing financial problems.

⁴²BDA; *The Catholic Magazine* (1835), p. CCXXVI.

⁴³TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B.,(1954), *V.C.H.L.*, Vol. II, p.70.

⁴⁴SIMMONS, J., (1974), *Leicester Past and Present (II)*, p.34; the detailed ref was to Brit. Mus. Add. Mss. (BMAS) 32632.

⁴⁵BMAS, 32, 632, folios 101-120 Leicester and Hinckley Baptismal register, 1785-1814. As Holy Cross new church finally opened only in 1819, it is possible to extract the representation of Irish families in the short period 1814-1819 when, for obvious physical reasons, entries must have been made either at Causeway Lane chapel (or, possibly, at the priest's house). Taking the entries from 11 September 1814 to 7 November 1819, 13 out of 48, or 27 per cent of parental surnames, were identifiably Irish. Or, to express it another way, 27 per cent of those children baptised had Irish surnames. (Only two, McGinis/Meginis and Burke (e), matched with the 1800-1815 selection analysed above.

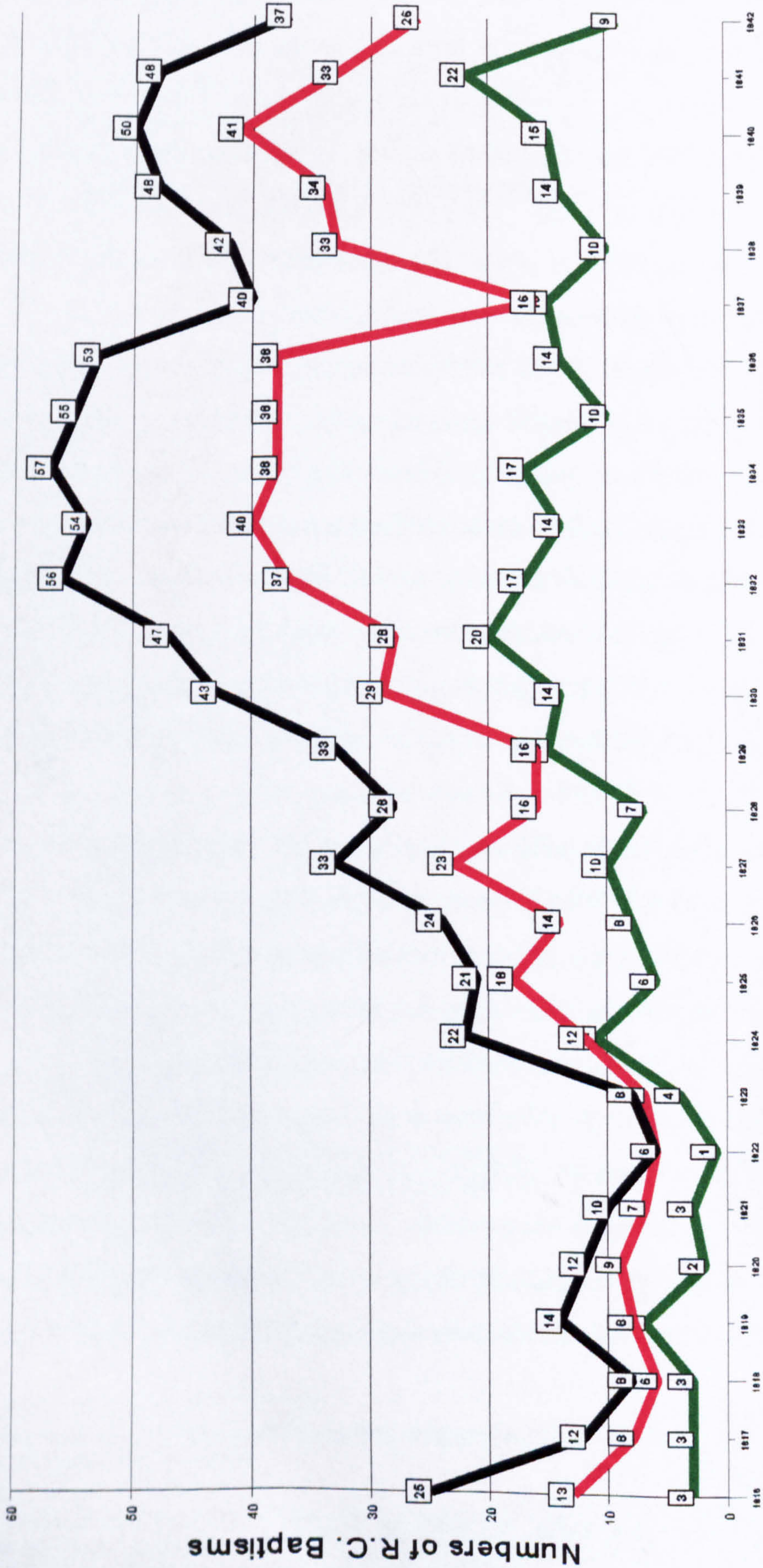
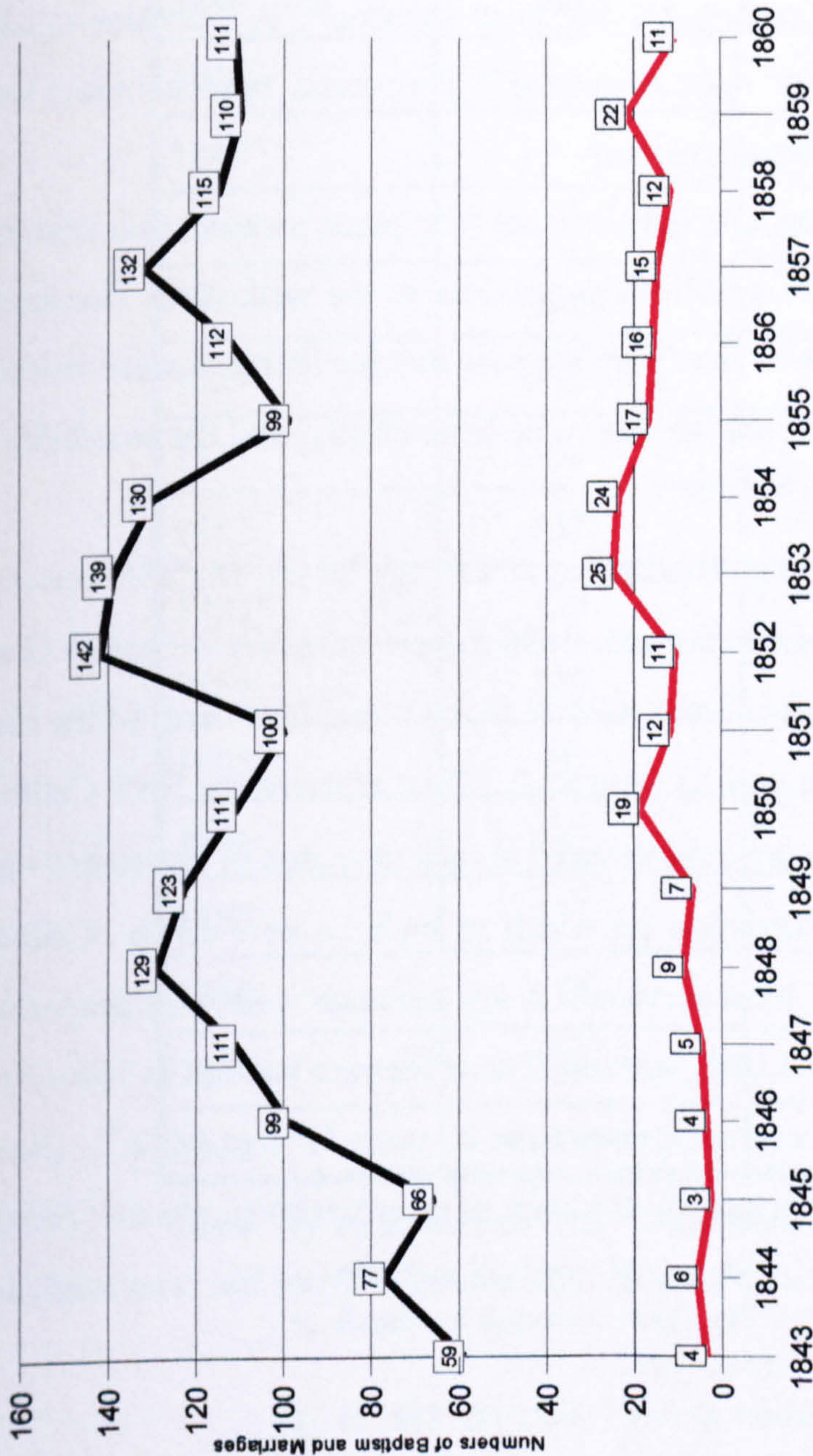


TABLE 2(a) IRISH & NON-IRISH BAPTISMS AT HOLY CROSS RC CHURCH, 1816 TO 1842	
KEY:	Notes:
— Total of all baptisms	(1) Source: LCRO, Holy Cross Baptismal Registers MF. 144
— Irish baptisms	(2) The number of Irish baptisms has to be an underestimate as all those children born in Ireland would, obviously, have been baptised before entering Britain and therefore do not feature in these statistics
— Non-Irish baptisms	



KEY:

— Baptisms

— Marriages

NOTES:

- (1) Source: See Table 2 (c) for details.
- (2) Figures are not available for Baptisms from 1846 - 48, and for marriages in 1846.

TABLE 2(b) BAPTISMS AND MARRIAGES AT HOLY CROSS & St. MICHAEL'S/St. PATRICK'S, 1843-1860

approximately 1600 entries, 485 involve an Irish surname. In other words, 30 per cent were identifiably Irish.⁴⁶ This pattern can be clearly detected on Table 2(a), showing all baptisms at Holy Cross from 1816 to 1842, before the great Irish exodus. This proportion is significant numerically and indicates a steadily developing Irish presence in Leicester's Catholic population - ignored in existing accounts, and an important preliminary stage of Irish in-migration.

Seasonal harvest labour encouraged further migrants.⁴⁷ The Irish moved to Lincolnshire, crossing Leicestershire, serving local farmers.⁴⁸ A Leicester Quaker family, the Ellis's, noted the regular summer pattern.⁴⁹ Peripatetic farm labourers were attracted to already existing Catholic centres.

In August 1858, for example, an ugly incident took place between four Irishmen carrying sickles and a group of English labourers close to the wall of the Dominican nunnery at Atherstone; it may well have been the case that the Irishmen were working in the area because the convent would provide some basic charity, and the possibility of attendance at a religious service.⁵⁰

The figure of 30 per cent Irish baptisms as an average for the 1815-35 Leicester entries can be compared with evidence from the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor in Great Britain*, which reported 300 Irish in Leicester c.1835, of whom 200 were "of the class of the poor, but not receiving pay as paupers." This indicates an Irish Catholic catchment, two-thirds of whom were impoverished in their new area of settlement - not a very promising economic foundation on which to build a new urban Catholic community with a building debt to be serviced. A key question was: what proportion of baptisms from 1831-33 involved Irish parents? The replies are laid out in Table 3a.⁵¹

The Holy Cross baptisms register embrace the 25 years 1816 to 1842.⁵² (Refer Table 2a). The analysis is based, again, on evidence of clearly Irish surnames. For the patterns of marriage from 1841-91, an analysis of the census database has been used (and is discussed below).

⁴⁶BMAS. 32, 632; folios 121-296 inclusive. These 485 Irish surnames were tabulated alphabetically, and compared with the Irish surnames in the 1841 Census, the results show a 37% co-incidence of names.

⁴⁷GWYNN, D., *The Irish Migration*, in BECK, G.A. (Ed)(1950), p.266.

⁴⁸See BARBER, J. *Irish Migrant Agricultural Labourers in 19th Century Lincolnshire*, in *Soathar*, No. 8, 1982, p.10-32.

⁴⁹ELLIS, M. (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, p.11.

⁵⁰LJ 6 August 1858.

⁵¹1836 *Report on Irish Poor in GB*, App. G, No. VII pp 156 and 164.

⁵²This period, of 1816-42, covers a quarter of a century; it was physically possible to analyse because there is a printed, and more early legible, transcript of the microfilm; this print-off goes up only to 1853. Even then, there are problems of omissions in the 1843-53 entries; so the analysis ends at 1842.

TABLE 2(c)		BAPTISMS AND MARRIAGES AT HOLY CROSS AND ST. MICHAEL'S/ST. PATRICK'S, 1843 TO 1860	
Year	No. of Baptisms	No. of Marriages	
1843	59	4	
1844	77	6	
1845	66	3	
1846	--	--	
1847	--	5	
1848	--	9	
1849	123	7	
1850	111	19	
1851	100	12	
1852	142	11	
1853	139	25	
1854	130	24	
1855	99	17	
1856	112	16	
1857	132	15	
1858	115	12	
1859	110	22	
1860	111	11	

Notes: (1) Parish Records - Holy Cross Church (in LCRO);

(a) *Marriage Registers*: 1842 - 1908.

(b) *Baptismal Registers*: 1843 - 1855

1856 - 1880

(2) In 1842 and 1861, 7 and 16 marriages respectively were recorded.

TABLE 3a	Total Nos of RC Baptisms at Holy Cross, 1831-3.	Rev. Oxley's 1835 Government Return of Irish		Recent analysis (1995) of Registers for Irish	
YEAR		in Nos	as % age	in Nos	as % age
1831	46	12	26%	20	46%
1832	55	16	29%	17	31%
1833	54	16	29%	14	26%
Notes:					
(1) The % ages are the Irish proportion of total RC entries.					

The military factor affecting Irish Catholic settlement in Leicester was replicated; the 17th Regiment in 1852 had 50 out of 91 Irish soldiers. 41 of the Irish were Catholic (82 percent). Such units clearly needed a Catholic infrastructure.⁵³ Industrial rather than military opportunities brought the Irish Catholic element to the Whitwick coalfield area. Whilst in 1841 the Irish presence was negligible, by 1851, Whitwick boasted 120 Irish-born, which reached 169 by 1861.⁵⁴

By the 1851 census, Leicestershire had a total of 234,957 persons; there were 15 Catholic churches and chapels, with 13 priests serving these. At masses said on 30 March 1851, there were 1,893 Catholics; at the same time, those who were Irish by birth in the county totalled 1,738. A crude juxtaposition suggests that, assuming all the Irish to be practising Catholics, then 91.8 per cent of Leicestershire's Catholics in 1851 were Irish. This is an exaggeration; but, given the likelihood that the rural Irish worked in agriculture or in market towns, then it may well have been the case that there were proportionately more Irish amongst the Catholic population in the areas outside the county town.

On Sunday, 30 March 1851, in Leicester, with its population of 61,000 people, 24,747 attended a church (59.5 per cent); of these, 636 (2.5 per cent) were Catholics. At this time, the Irish-born population numbered 877; Catholics in the town were served by 2 priests at Holy Cross.⁵⁵ These figures, and especially that given for the Irish, which does not include offspring born in Britain, explain the great need for expanded facilities after c.1845, and the subsequent opening of St. Patrick's in 1854 to ease the pressure.

⁵³JENKINS, R.P., 'History, Habits, Dispositions etc' in *For the Record* (Newsletter of LCRO) Sept 1991, No. 15, p.9-10.

⁵⁴1841-61, HO 107/5961/End and 5971/End.

⁵⁵1851 Data from HUGHES, P., *The English Catholics in 1850* in BECK, G.A. (Ed) (1950).

Most Irish lived in the Abbey Street core area in 1851. Given the non-proximity of Holy Cross, and the great expansion of Irish settlement, then the desperate need for accommodating the Irish arrivals must have been forcefully apparent.

D.M. Thompson's research took the 1851 raw data and offered a revised conclusion (omitting "Sunday School Scholars."). At Holy Cross, the attendance at the morning, afternoon and evening services was, respectively, 546, 56 and 497.⁵⁶ Morning mass was best attended, with 546 persons. Given the 1851 Census total of Irish in Leicester as being 877, of all ages, and allowing for the very young, the sick, and the elderly being non-attenders, the figure of 546 at mass still indicates a sizeable demand, a relatively high level of attendance, and a need for expanded facilities. In Leicester, therefore, the Irish factor in the town's Catholic growth was consequential and important, as it was in Hinckley, Loughborough and Whitwick also.

The Irish newcomers to Leicester fended for themselves:

In 1854 Fr. Nickolds erected a school chapel dedicated to St. Patrick, in Royal East Street near Belgrave Gate, at a cost of £1,000. This school chapel was served from Holy Cross Church, and a new mission was thus gradually formed. The roof was put on by the offerings of immigrant Irish labourers who commenced to come over with the famine rush of 1845-6-7-8.⁵⁷

One local source mentions "Fr. Nickold's gift to St. Patrick's;" no supporting evidence is offered for this. Certainly the CPSC in 1852 made a grant to St. Patrick's of £50.00, only a small part of the main sum. It is not known what proportion of the cost was represented in the roof "put on by the offerings of immigrant Irish labourers." A recent survey suggests that it formed a significant part of the £1,000 in terms of labour and materials.⁵⁸ Self-help was common then, in labour, cash and kind. Irishmen volunteered labour at the church in Barrow-on-Soar in the 1840's.⁵⁹ There is evidence from early this

⁵⁶THOMPSON, D.M. (1969), Table 15, p.66. Thompson's methodology, which allowed for the debate surrounding the 1851 religious data generally, was discussed in *The 1851 religious census: problems and possibilities*, in *Victorian Studies*, II, 1, (1967). Thompson reports just one RC church in 1851; whilst St. Patrick's new School-Chapel did not open till 1854, this 1851 figure does not appear to embrace St. Michael's at Causeway Lane.

⁵⁷KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), pp 22+23. This sum should not be confused with the £1,000 collected "chiefly in Ireland" by Fr. Cyril Bunce for the erection of the actual Church of St. Patrick (an extension) in 1873; Nickolds was PP at Holy Cross from 1841-77.

⁵⁸LM, 17.2.'95. In 1996, St. Patrick's was declared a Grade II Listed Building, partly because of its scissor-beam roof structure. See DANAHER, N. (1997), *St. Patrick's School, Leicester*.

⁵⁹See DENVIR, J. (1894), p.393 and 397-8.

century of Irish physical help being offered to both St. Patrick's and Holy Cross.⁶⁰

TABLE 3b		CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LEICESTERSHIRE PARISHES TO THE NOTTINGHAM DIOCESAN MISSION FUNDS c.1872		
Congregational Collections LEICESTERSHIRE		ADVENT 1871	LENT 1872	TOTAL
Leicester, Holy Cross		4 15 7	8 18 2	13 13 9
St Patrick's		0 9 1	0 16 2	1 5 3
Loughborough		1 5 0	1 8 6	2 13 6
Whitwick		1 3 0	0 0 0	1 3 0
<p>(1) Source: NDA, <i>NCM</i>, Vol. 4, No. 7, 1875, p.100.</p> <p>(2) The relative wealth of Holy Cross Leicester is obvious.</p> <p>(3) St. Patrick's, despite its members, could not match the payments of parishes with significant Irish segments such as Whitwick and Loughborough.</p>				

The key contribution from the Irish for St. Patrick's actually came from Ireland itself. It is testimony to the long-term poverty of the mission that the £1,000 spent in erecting the church extension in 1873 was in fact collected "chiefly in Ireland" by the Irish-born priest Fr. Cyril Bunce, who was justly described by Kimberlin as "a zealous worker." Bunce, a Dominican, lived beside his church. St. Patrick's was formally separated from Holy Cross, becoming a parish in its own right in 1873.

Despite the numerical preponderance of Irish at St. Patrick's, the main parish of Holy Cross seems to have been (perhaps not surprisingly) the more favoured in terms of allocation of resources. This was especially clear in terms of the educational resourcing,⁶¹ and mission collection totals (see Table 3b) from Holy Cross and St Patrick indicate the former's wealth in contrast with the latter's poverty.

Interestingly, the perceived difference in treatment between Holy Cross and St. Patrick's in Leicester, both Dominican creations, was mirrored in the similar Dominican purlieu of Newcastle on Tyne. There, a core parish exhibited clear social class divisions, with the largely English middle class conspicuous by their self-imposed apartness. In

⁶⁰OHA/ISW, interviews with Mrs Catherine Richardson, 1991. Mrs Richardson (née Lydon) was born in Leicester in 1913 from parents of Dublin and Galway extraction. Her father, William Lydon, from a west of Ireland small farm, was a rather tough, hard-working and hard-drinking character: "although he did not attend church on a Sunday, he would do jobs for the priest, such as mending the drains. One time (in the 1920's), although he had a broken leg in plaster, he climbed the roof to fix a new bell-rope to the bell."

⁶¹See chapter on education, especially re funding and building.

1905, the poor mission of St. Patrick's was established for a mainly Irish catchment in Newcastle; Leicester's similar Dominican inspired Irish "ghetto" parish was half a century older. Yet, what Archer remarks about St. Patrick's in Newcastle was equally true of its namesake in Leicester: "A sense of attachment to St. Patrick's was generated to a degree seldom associated with the main church." The oral history testimonies reflects this same dimension operating very clearly in Leicester. Whilst the church leadership in effect attempted the socio-cultural ghettoisation of the whole Catholic community, many Irish Catholics in practice rejected this model (for example, by out-marriage). In Dominican dominated Leicester, the deliberate separation seems to have been that of the largely disadvantaged Irish of St. Patrick's from the more English, and rather less disadvantaged parish, of Holy Cross. To quote Archer again, this time speaking of the "official church of the recent past,":

It was the guardian of the Catholic patrimony and, although this patrimony had belonged primarily to the Irish in England, and for the most part had drawn its strength from them, the church had contributed to its preservation by maintaining what was to some extent a distinctive culture.⁶²

Perhaps the most telling if oblique comment on the Irish contribution to Leicester's Catholic development came at the official opening of St Patrick's extension in 1873. At the formal luncheon at The Bell Hotel, presided over by Bishop Bagshawe, the last of the toasts was offered by a parish lay activist, Mr. J. Fleming (shortly to be an RC representative on the School Board):

(He) remarked upon the slowness of the movement in Leicester, there being as many Catholics when the town only contained 58,000 of a population (ie c.1850) as there were at the present time with a population of 110,00.

This comment was reported in the Leicester press, but not in the diocesan journal, which acknowledged the original source as being the Leicester paper. The Catholic authorities were afraid of failure; where would Catholicism have been in Leicester if it were not for the Irish arrivals of 1825-60?⁶³

⁶²ARCHER, A. (1986), pp.94-5, 102-3 and 228; "preservation", refers, of course, to the church as an institution.

⁶³Leicester Daily Post, 19 Aug 1875, and NCM, Vol. II, No. 5, Sept. 1875, p.98. The Magazine reprinted the 2 column report verbatim, except for Fleming's comment, which was suppressed. Fleming represented the emancipated Irish RC, enjoying upwards mobility. From c.1870 to c.1900 the family were waste dealers, of the "marine" store category.

(c) Religious Observance and cultural Catholicism:

(i) from the cradle to the grave

A good idea of what being a first and second generation Irish Catholic meant in Leicester can be gleaned from Barclay's memoirs.⁶⁴ The frequent reference to religion by an avowed freethinker is paradoxical. Despite poverty, the Barclays functioned as a Catholic family, with regular standard shared prayers, especially the Rosary.⁶⁵ Despite material inadequacies, Barclay's faith was vibrant; he described his young self as "what the Irish call a voteen." He even sketched the details of an altar on the family's bedroom wall.⁶⁶

The three influences on a child's religious development were: the parents, the church and the school. The school was significant, for he talked in positive terms of his teacher, John Mee, even though Barclay attended only part-time.⁶⁷ The second source of support lay in the church's programme; this was reinforced by daily, weekly, monthly and annual rhythms. The adolescent Barclay outlined the manifold network of activities and structures available.

Possibly the most significant input was provided by the parents; more specifically, the mother. Barclay's secularist editor willingly acknowledged the emotional, social and intellectual predicament faced by Barclay when he consciously abandoned his faith, even though this caused his mother deep pain.⁶⁸ Mrs. Barclay was unusually proficient at "self-help" as a Catholic mother:

She was held to be quite exceptional among her countrywomen in that she could read Dr. Gallacher's sermons in Irish often have I seen the tears come into her eyes over the sermon on the passion of Our Lord. This she used to read on a Good Friday. "Glory to God but you're the one!" neighbours used to exclaim. It did them good to hear a blessed sermon read in the first language they ever spoke.⁶⁹

⁶⁴e.g. see LEES, L. (1979), pp. 156-8 and 190, and see SAMUEL, R. (1985), p.283 and 286.

⁶⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.7 & 8.

⁶⁶BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.26 & 27. Mrs Hilda Reedy, recalled that her brother built a detailed replica of the altar at St. Patrick's Church. It stood on a chest of drawers in their bedroom; the children said their night prayers before it. Both her husband (born 1913) and his brother had been altar boys at St. Patricks; 13 May 1991. Also, the Burke family, Manchester: "Although she never made me go to church, she had an altar in the front room and would go on her knees in front of the crucifix"; see FIELDING, S (1993), p.54.

⁶⁷BARCLAY, p. 22. The school must have been St. Patricks, near his home.

⁶⁸BARCLAY, (1934), p. 22, 27-8, 15 and 47. Barclay respected others' convictions, and he organised requiem masses for both his mother's and sister's intentions.

⁶⁹BARCLAY, (1934), p.23.

Since 1736, Gallagher's *Sixteen Irish Sermons in an Easy and Familiar Style* had been creating an impact on the Irish-speaking peasantry.⁷⁰ Connolly has referred to them as "an outstanding work especially designed for Irish pulpits;"⁷¹ Corish termed them as being "the only addition to the catechism" available for common perusal.⁷² Gallagher had built up a reputation of opposition to wake custom;⁷³ if his writings appealed to Mrs Barclay and her Irish neighbours, these immigrants may have been more favourably inclined to formality than is sometimes supposed. This may be an early indication of the post-Famine inclination towards Tridentine-style observance and outlook.

There was evidence of informal practice amongst the Irish in Leicestershire. In 1846, the Cisterican Prior administering emergency relief to the Irish refugee influx, noted:

The numbers of poor Irish who, having been out of the church for 5, 10, 20 and even 50 years, stay for a week or a fortnight, make their general confession, and go away blessing us and providence.⁷⁴

As some Irish migrants gathered at an Irish-speaker's to share in a religious experience, an element of alienation from the existing infrastructure in Leicester is suggested. A Rosminian (Fr. Signini, who served in Leicestershire,) had used Gaelic among the Irish in South Wales, and in 1850 Fr. Sherlock heard confessions in Irish in the Black Country.⁷⁵ The native language not only provided a continuing association for those immersed in often traumatic processes of change; it also served "as a common bond of nationality and faith."⁷⁶

This cultural capital possessed and passed on by Mrs Barclay was the reflection at lay level of the phenomenon described by Samuel as the cultural "familiar relationship" which Irish priests could anticipate, utilise and engender with their Irish listeners.⁷⁷ Mrs

⁷⁰Gallagher was Bishop of Raphoe (1725-37) and of Kildare (1737-51).

⁷¹CONNOLLY, S.J. (1982), *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1780-1845*, p.78.

⁷²CORISH, P. (1985), *The Irish Catholic Experience - A Historical Survey*, p. 131.

⁷³CORISH, P. (1985), p.135.

⁷⁴MSBA, letter from J.B. Palmer, Prior, to Lady Shrewsbury, 22 Sept. 1846. Also, see A. De Lisle's letter of 1860 (on title page).

⁷⁵Fr. Castryck, at Holy Cross c.1814 to c.1834, spoke Flemish. For native Irish speakers, with a probably limited facility in English, his speech may not have been so easy to understand, an added problem for Irish settlers, to many of whom English was a second language to begin with. GWYNN, D., *The Irish Immigration*, in BECK, G.A. (Ed)(1950), p.267-8. DENVIR, J. (1894), p.418.

⁷⁶CONNOLLY, S.G., *The R.C. Church and the Irish Poor*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1985), p.286.

⁷⁷See section c(ii).

Barclay was significant because of the reinforcement she provided for a minority religion in a mode comprehensible to listeners; and for her community leadership function, involving the neighbours, and especially other women. A Dominican initiative made religious material more widely available: Holy Cross started a penny Lending Library.⁷⁸ This was probably designed to combat Protestant proselytism as much as it was intended to further educate Catholics.

Whilst the hold of Catholicism culturally was threatened by Protestant proselytism, Catholics themselves sought similar conquests. *The Leicester Conservative Standard* regularly excoriated popery and fanatically supported the ambitious Protestant missions in western Ireland (especially Nangle's at Achill) in the late 1830's, thereby conditioning Leicester evangelicals against Irish romanism.⁷⁹ The London-based Ladies Hibernian Female School Society counted Lady Bacham of Exton Hall, Rutland, amongst its supporters.⁸⁰ The Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society noted the "in Ireland The struggle is going on."⁸¹ The Anglican Rev Martin of Anstey noted how Protestant missionaries were learning Irish to take the battle to the enemy.⁸² Martin himself regularly visited the Warrens of Co. Cork, a family central to the "exclusively Protestant" Cork City Freeman, who provided a "framework for sectarian-orientated political warfare,"⁸³ and who were also related to the Leicestershire Herrick family of Beaumanor Hall.

A sensational Catholic coup occurred in 1851: an Irish draper, one Brady, succeeded in converting an Irish Protestant female to popery, to the disgust of Leicester's press.⁸⁴ In 1854, a prominent Puseyite Anglican, Rev. Anderdon of St. Margarets, joined the Roman fold; at a public meeting "several Irish women mounted the benches" accompanied by "some young men and boys who officiate in surplices at the altar of the Roman Catholic Chapel with their eyes starting with excitement as though they were just let loose from a madhouse." A tumultuous meeting ended with the women sarcastically offering "three groans" for the "Protestant Helliance."⁸⁵

The counter-proselytising of Protestants was well-considered. A second

⁷⁸BARCLAY, T. (1934), p. 31-32.

⁷⁹ See WOLFFE (1991), p.172; WHELAN, *Stigma of Souperism*, in PORTEIR, C. (ED) (1995), p.139-40.

⁸⁰LCRO, receipt for sub. of 19 May 1843.

⁸¹LCRO, *LAPTS*, 1849, p.8-9; 1850, p.12-13.

⁸²LCRO, DG 6/D/32, Martin Mss, letter to Selina, c.1851.

⁸³D'ALTON, I (1980), *Protestant Society and Politics in Cork, 1812-44*, p.24, 129, 132, 47-8.

⁸⁴LC, 4 Jan. 1851.

⁸⁵LC, 25 Feb. 1854.

generation Irish youth, one James Flanagan (1851-1918), converted to evangelical Methodism and used his "Celtic imagination" and "unmistakable Irish accent" to attract unwary papists to his mission hall.⁸⁶ Joseph Dare's Leicester mission boasted in 1850 a "Scripture Reader, whose especial business it is to visit the Catholic Irish."⁸⁷

Internal missions to bolster the faithful were organised amongst the Irish in Leicester. De Lisle in 1860 requested the Passionists to preach to "our Irish (who) are sadly given to drinking scandal, quarrelling and fighting."⁸⁸ The Rosminians in the 1840's imported the Italian street preaching techniques (*svegliarini*) into Leicestershire: Gentili spoke in Leicester, as did the second generation Irish Rosminian Moses Furlong.⁸⁹ Gentili detested the heartless industrialized culture he saw, and had a long-term track record of positive work with the Irish (which may partly have led to his dispute with De Lisle); Furlong was physically impressive, and enjoyed special credibility, his father being an escaped Wexford insurgent of 1798. The Dominicans held their own missions, and Barclay's account of his experience of one as a schoolboy rivals the more famous hellfire description in James Joyce's autobiography.⁹⁰ Barclay noted the terrifying impact of the printed sermons of Fr. Furniss, a phenomenon also commented on by Gilley.⁹¹ Leakage and poor responses were not eliminated. In 1891, the new Leicester parish of Sacred Heart hosted the Redemptorists, who sarcastically criticised the low turnout of less than half (180/450) the parishioners, describing them as "milk and water Catholics."⁹² Despite this culture of fear, backsliding continued.⁹³

Catholicism in the home was supported in traditional ways. Barclay observed:

I went into Abbey Street Enter we a lodging-house kept by a quiet widow, who will not have the drunkard and the rowdy insider her door if she knows it. The rooms are plentifully furnished with drawers and crockery; on one wall is a picture of the Crucifixion, on another the ascension of Mary into heaven. Rosary beads hang over the mantelpiece, and St. Patrick, mitred and crozier in hand, banishes the snakes.⁹⁴

⁸⁶RUSSELL, R.W. (1920), *Life of James Flanagan*, p. 1, 29, 38, 49050, 76-7, 135-6.

⁸⁷DARE, (1850), *RLDMS*, p.21.

⁸⁸PURCELL, E.S. (1900) Vol. 1, p.186-7; letter to Fr. J. Spencer, 25 Feb. 1860.

⁸⁹McHUGH, J. (1958), *Gentili*, p.52-3, 46-7.

⁹⁰BARCLAY (1934), p. 28-30, 12.

⁹¹GILLEY, S., RC Mission to Irish in London, 1840-60; *Recusant History* 10, No. 3, 1969, p.138.

⁹²SHARP, J. (1989), *Redemptorists in GB and Ireland 1843-98*, p.276, quoting Apostolic Labores, re 1891, p.348.

⁹³ARCHER, (1986) p.114; FIELDING (1993) noted that missions only temporarily boosted sacramental attendance rates, p.47-8.

⁹⁴*The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895; No. 192, Vol. VIII; p.149. This echoes accounts by Mayhew. Ms Kathleen McDonagh, b.1911 of Irish parents, recalled, on either side of the clock in the family living room 2 pictures: 'I am the Light of the World' and 'The Ascension of Our Lady Into Heaven'; OHA/ISW; interviews 1990/91.

This popular cultural practice was supplemented with images. St. Patrick dignified the entrance to the school named in his honour; Loughborough's convent schools received from the Catholic Poor Schools Committee statues of the Madonna in 1849 and 1853. This reflects the changing attitudes in Catholic public worship, increasingly affected by European manifestations of celebratory Catholic ritual.⁹⁵ The 1841 Leicester census told of two young Italian "image dealers" operating in the Bedford Street area, heavily populated with Irish incomers.⁹⁶ One wry testament to the strength of Marian devotion in 1850's Leicester is to be found in Barclay's autobiography, which is, ironically, peppered with such references.⁹⁷

Marian and other devotion was expressed actively in processions. Photographs exist of May and First Communion processions regularly held in Sacred Heart parish in the 1890-1940 period; they were well attended in respect of both participants and non-Catholic onlookers, thus enhancing the Church's image internally and externally.⁹⁸ Personal evidence testifies to the special significance that participation held for both parents and children. These were high profile, town centre events.

One female respondent recalled the May procession at St Patrick's post-1918, when "people fought to keep their faith." She felt that "there was an element of cruelty" still in anti-Catholic attitudes. She felt "proud to be Irish, an Irish Catholic," even though she was second generation. These Leicester processions clearly mirror those described by Fielding in the 1880-1940 period: "Irish Catholics used them to assert their national as well as religious identity."⁹⁹ The processions could still lead to inter-religious tension and hostility.

The May procession at Holy Cross, Whitwick started c.1843, and continued for around 60 years. A full band played; in 1895, the hymns included *O Sacred Heart*, *Hail Glorious St. Patrick* and *This is the Image of our Queen*; the event thus embraced both Marian and Patrician elements. 10,000 attended in 1901, just 700 of whom were Catholics; parish sodalities took part in 1899.¹⁰⁰

Whilst the Catholic educational process attempted to incorporate and

⁹⁵ CPSC Archives, 2nd Ann. Rep't, 1849, p.113; 6th Ann. Rep't, 1853, App.B.

⁹⁶ ACD, 1841, St. Margaret's parish, Reel 9.

⁹⁷ BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.7, 10, 12, 15, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 40; 11 references in all between p.1 & p.40.

⁹⁸ See BURILL, M. (1986), *Sacred Heart School Centenary*, photographs on p.8-15.

⁹⁹ See LM of 28.2.85; photo from Ms Tina Cox of procession c.1935; and LM of 24 Oct 1998, p.10. OHA/ISW: interviews with Mrs. C. Richardson (née Lydon), b.1913, May and August 1991. FIELDING, S. (1993), p.72 and 73.

¹⁰⁰ ROBINSON, A.E. (1981), *Holy Cross Whitwick, 1837-1937*, p. 29-30. See Table 5.

denationalise the Irish, it would seem that where individual clerics had a spirit of independence, and some political acumen, a nationalist Irish profile of sorts could be maintained and developed, as Fielding suggests above. Fr. O'Reilly in Whitwick was clearly such a man.¹⁰¹ The hymns at Whitwick in 1895 indicated a strong sense of ethnic and religious identity (see Table 4). Litvack (1996) has explored the psychology and theology of these hymns.¹⁰² "Patrick-Hymns" reflect stability in the face of insecurity, and Irish Catholic triumphalism over Protestant hostility and proselytism; they also acted as conduits for confidence-building. Birthright and a sense of exile, geographical and spiritual deprivation, were all given expression. The continuous popularity of *Hail Glorious St. Patrick* (1853) sent a clear message, being printed in the diocesan magazine in 1875, and positioned rather pointedly beside an article entitled 'The Destiny of Ireland.'¹⁰³

The second hymn, *O Sacred Heart*, was originally *Hymn for Ireland* (Francis Stanfield, 1865).¹⁰⁴ It has less to do with militancy and resistance, and rather more to do with reconciling Irish Catholics with English Protestants; the original setting was far more direct in emotional references to "exile," "Erin's sons", and "England's shore." The new interpretation, with the removal of almost all Celtic references, is an example of the incorporation process depicted by Hickman. The reconciliation theme is most pronounced in the local stanzas on *St Patrick's Day*. (q.v)

This conscious cult of Patrick as national community patron was further reflected in Leicester when the Rev. James O'Haire served at Sacred Heart from 1892-4. A noted African missionary (1866-75), O'Haire wrote a biography of Patrick. A powerful statement, it catalogued the sufferings of Irish Catholics throughout modern history; of the Famine, he declared: "But as usual the people were firm; food and clothing were offered to them and their children if they would barter their faith; but, despising the bribe, the crowds of Catholics died from starvation, in the presence of relentless rulers and

¹⁰¹See HICKMAN, M., Incorporating and Denationalizing the Irish in England: the role of the Catholic Church, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed)(1996), *The Irish World Wide and Religion and Identity*, pp.196-216. (Ch.8).

¹⁰²LITVACK, L.B., The Psychology of Song; the theology of hymn: songs and hymns of the Irish migration, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed)(1996), as above, Ch.3, p.70-89.

¹⁰³This hymn written by a Sr. Agnes in Co. Cork in 1853, is still sung in most of Leicester's RC churches around the Feast of St. Patrick; the local Bishop attends a special mass at St. Patricks in Beaumont Leys. See RAL, *Nott. Cath. Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 11, March 1875, p.220.

¹⁰⁴See MAYHEW, R. (1989) *Hymns Old and New*, Nos. 428 and 191 (a).

TABLE 4	EXAMPLES OF THE CULT OF IRISHNESS AND OF ST. PATRICK IN USE IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN THE 19TH CENTURY
----------------	--

(a) **HAIL GLORIOUS
ST PATRICK**

All 5 verses appeared for diocesan consumption in the *Nottingham Catholic Magazine*; Vol. 1, No. II, March 1875, p.220

(b) **HYMN FOR IRELAND, later
Called O SACRED HEART**

Verse 2 contained a celebration of Irish faith and a call for the conversion of England.
Sung at Holy Cross Whitwick, May 1895.

(c) **ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

appeared in *The Angelus*, Vol. 1. No. 3, March 1876, p.68.

It is the good St. Patrick's day,
Let wrongs with patience bourne,
Be blotted out from memory's page-
Dear Erin's wrongs we own.

And Erin would forget the past,
If we greet her with a smile,
And its light would be reflected back,
From the beautiful Green Isle.

St. Patrick prayed, in that dear land,
The Faith might never fail,
And fire and sword her sons will brave
When foes their Faith assail!

Should Albion, once the Isle of Saints,
Embrace the Faith again,
Her tears will flow for Erin's woes,
Till they wash out the stain.

Then hand in hand, our standard true-
The Cross we'll raise on high-
If foreign foe invade our land,
We'll conquer or we'll die.

"Union is strength,"-a motto wise-
Our banner shall adorn;
The Shamrock and the Rose we'll wreath
When Victory wins her crown.

The Angels and their Queen will smile,
To see the old feud cease;
St. Patrick, and St. George rejoice
Their children dwell in peace.

So down the stream of life we'll float,
No storms the tie shall sever,
Till anchored in the port of Heaven,
Where Love shall reign for ever. (F.L.)

The Angelus circulated in the diocese, this copy being in the NDA. The message of reconciliation between "the Shamrock and the Rose" is quite clear; the Irish are to "forget the past" in the interests of a united front in the face of any foreign threat. The identity of F.L. is unknown.

mockers of the Good Samaritan."¹⁰⁵ Numerous other examples of the Patrick cult appeared in the diocesan Catholic periodical in the mid-1870's. The variety of topics was wide-ranging, such as the promotion of the Nun of Kenmare's (Sr. M.F. Cusack) book of devotions, *St. Patrick's Manual*, for use "especially among the faithful Irish;" temperance approaches in the diocese to celebrating St Patrick's day; and an interesting emphasis on how the establishment on both sides of the Irish Sea were joining Irish Catholics in the patronal celebration.¹⁰⁶ A theme common to most reports was temperance, signifying the Church's preoccupation with negative images and with control.¹⁰⁷

Barclay identified the contradictions that the religious dimension could introduce into the celebration of St. Patrick's Day.¹⁰⁸ Barclay noted of the Leicester celebration of 1896:

There is one thing that some Irish import into their festival that they will have to get rid as they have got rid of the drink and the head-breaking; I allude to intolerance. They are so bigoted on the question of religion that they cannot - some of them - conceive why so many should go away from Roman Catholicism. They must learn that nationality has nothing to do with religion, and be tolerant to others if they want others to be tolerant of them. The Catholic clergy could easily disperse all prejudice on the score of religion, and it is to be hoped they will the subject of religion must not be introduced in their national gatherings.¹⁰⁹

Ironically perhaps, Barclay hit the secular target but missed the religious point: for many Irish then, voluntary identity with their Catholicism permeated and subsumed the other facets of their identity. Barclay was in a minority, however logical and informed was his stance. Considering that Catholics locally witnessed hostility and intolerance persisting into the 1920's and 1930's, he was perhaps asking rather a lot of

¹⁰⁵NDA; O'HAIRE, Rev. J. (1871), *A Glance at Ireland's Apostle and Ireland's Faith* (Dublin); p. 66; based on 2 lectures given at St. Mary's College, Capetown on 17 March 1871.

¹⁰⁶NDA; NCM, Vol. II, No. 1 May 1875, p.9 + 13; Vol. I, No. 11, March 1875, p.220.

¹⁰⁷The Whitwick-Coalville Catholics seem to have largely retained their independent Irish identity. up until at least around 1914, for at the laying of the foundation stone for the new R.C. school in 1902, the Coalville Town Band included *The Shamrock of Ireland*; in 1913, at a civic funeral, Whitwick Holy Cross Band included *The Minstrel Boy*, perhaps the most famous of Moore's Irish melodies. ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), p.12 and 30; the Holy Cross Band, all coal miners, contained four from one Irish family, the Slattery's.

¹⁰⁸See ULLAH, P., *Psychological Aspects of Identity amongst the Second Generation Irish*, in DANAHER, N. (Ed)(1985), *Irish Dimensions in British Education*, conf. Report, p. 10-12. See BARCLAY, T; *Patron Saints & National Festivals, The Wyvern*, 20/3/1896, p.351.

¹⁰⁹Barclay, T; 'Patron Saints and National Festivals'; *The Wyvern*, 20 Mar 1896, p.351; FITZGERALD (1989) argues that the Catholic Church by a process of gradualism succeeded in transforming the Patrician festival from a rowdy to a respectable celebration; it is interesting that Barclay, an opponent of Church influence, also found this development to be "very satisfactory."

a beleaguered cultural group.

Several methods then, were used by the Church to bolster internal support and external image. Given the constant strains within Anglo-Irish relations, there were few occasions when the Irish in Britain could comfortably publicise their nationalist credentials. Thus 17th March came to be associated with national pride and ambition as much as spiritual affirmation. Fielding has shown that the informal agendas of marches and processions were made clear in the multi-faceted appeal of certain types of hymn and in the open portrayal of badges, sashes, banners, slogans and other similar paraphernalia.¹¹⁰ St. Patrick's Day in Leicestershire was similarly notable: in Catholic schools, the formal recognition of the day was often unforthcoming, or infrequent; even so, parents recognised its importance as absence figures indicated (see Education chapter); where processions were held, those hymns and songs selected could be interpreted as reflecting Irish national as well as spiritual aspirations.

(ii) The Hibernian Shepherd: guarding the flock

Raphael Samuel has drawn attention to the preaching methodology employed by the Irish Fr. Sheridan of St. Patrick's Church, Soho, in London, in the 1880's. Sheridan developed a community education-recreation situation, where all present shared a cultural "familiar relationship". This interwove Irish folk beliefs, traditions, and stories with shared humorous appreciations.¹¹¹ This "interleaving of colloquial and religious effects" was a sophisticated didactic tool, and it was used in the Nottingham Diocese.

Loughborough convent library contains issues of the 1870's diocesan journal entitled *The Nottingham Catholic Magazine*, and the *Catholic Truth Magazine*.¹¹² These circulated across the diocese, Leicester included; They both exhibited the "familiar relationship" factor in terms of both fictional and non-fictional material.

The diocesan *Magazine* carried national and international items pertinent to Catholics, including delicate issues of politics. In 1874-5, articles included sympathetic coverage of Fenian prisoners and the developing Home Rule struggle. A policy of political even-handedness existed however, for other pieces emphasised Roman Catholic

¹¹⁰FIELDING, S (1993), pp.72-78; Catholicism and popular culture: The Church and processions.

¹¹¹SAMUEL, (1985), p.267-270.

¹¹²This *Catholic Truth Magazine* was a forerunner of the Catholic Truth Society's short, inexpensive publications (founded 1884). See INGLIS, K.S. (1963) p.136.

loyalty towards Her Majesty's Government.

The general approach was Hibernophilic. Fiction included mini-series of stories from authors such as Gerald Griffin, (the Irish popular novelist), and re-tellings of Celtic myths and legends such as the story of *Aodh of Meath* and *The Selfish Crotaire*. A non-fiction miscellany column from Dublin covered topics as varied as faction fighting, Daniel O'Connell, St. Patrick's grave and tourism in Killarney. More in-depth cultural commentary was also attempted: in September 1874 the *Magazine* discussed the work of the great Irish composer Carolan (1670-1738) as well as the contribution of John Henry Foley (1818-74), a contemporary Irish sculptor of note who worked in London. All of this was interleaved, literally as well as figuratively, with items of diocesan and parish news, covering school board affairs, temperance issues, bazaars, the work of St. Vincent de Paul society, the opening of new churches and the various other minutiae of Catholic community affairs - with the reporting of celebrations to mark St. Patrick's Day a speciality.¹¹³

The Nottingham Catholic Magazine in its revised mode commenced publication in May 1874, which date coincides with the elevation of Bagshawe to the bishopric of Nottingham.¹¹⁴ Given Bagshawe's marked predilection for the disadvantaged and for Home Rule, and his public attacks on landlordism and Orangeism, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the new publication reflected a policy decision from the very top vis-à-vis diocesan authority. This popular journal, therefore, reflected both cultural and political support for the Irish in the east midlands, reflecting the familiar "cultural relationship" described above.¹¹⁵

The *Magazine* had specific aims and objectives. Whilst its chief motive was "promoting Catholic interest," it also sought to combat the effects of "infidel and immoral publications." The new format was designed to win for it "the support of a large number of patrons rich as well as poor." The new editor, Rev. James Dwyer, aimed "to make the *Magazine* an acceptable introduction to every Catholic household." The Irish formed an important segment of the target catchment, and the market

¹¹³RCAL, NCM, Vol. 1, No. 3, July 1874 to Vol. 1, No. 12, April 1875; pp. 12-15, 17, 72-73, 70-71, 80, 91, 92-3, 100, 108-9, 112-3, 150-151, 219-220, 240.

¹¹⁴RCAL, NCM, new series, Vol. No. 1 May 1874; the old series was edited by the second-generation Irish cleric Canon Harnett and the new series replaced an earlier and apparently less successful magazine.

¹¹⁵Given the accession to church power of men like Bagshawe and Manning, it is perhaps not surprising that other church figures identified more openly and to some extent formally with a positive Irish dimension.

researchers modelled their agenda accordingly.¹¹⁶

This dimension found a national parallel. The *Catholic Truth Magazine* was inexpensive - at 1d. it was readily available and accessible. It featured regular series about two fictional Irish females: Kate Brady and Biddy Maguire.¹¹⁷ The Kate Brady stories dealt with serious issues real to ordinary Catholics in their day to day lives; Biddy Maguire approached the status of community *seanachie* (story-teller) and was the vehicle for the injection of humour via elements of stage Irishness. Kate's typical predicament was centred on the pressure exerted on young, vulnerable Catholics in care to be proselytized. Kate was described as "an Irish girl and an obstinate Catholic."

These morality tales had all the sophistication of contemporary melodrama: cunningly insidious Protestants were constantly engaged in devices to cajole or persuade Catholics to break the rules; incredible pressure was exerted by means of enhancing the deep guilt associated with such betrayals.¹¹⁸ In certain senses, the Kate Brady saga, delivered in instalments, corresponded with today's television "soap opera," for - despite the author's disclaimers about sensationalism - the stories were intensely emotional and deliberately catered for standard Catholic tastes. There was also the appeal to the Irish Catholic parishioner: Kate was depicted as a "descendant of the Irish Kings."

Much more directly "Irish" was a piece entitled '*Biddy Maguire's Letter to the Editor.*' It was in the style of humorous and condescending court reports in the popular press.¹¹⁹ Biddy's "letter" was full of Irish "bulls", ironic commentary, and a stage-Irish phonetic style. Part of the irony identified was at the expense of well-to-do English Catholics. In a subtle way, the "letter" dealt effectively with the problem of the English-Irish cultural clash; it hit out at the gentry, taking it to task over seigneurial attitudes to clergy such as "Fr. Rafferty":

Oh! many and many a time I've minded them, treating the priest as a paid servant like myself, instead of like an image of their Lord and Master. "We'll have Benediction at such a time, Father Rafferty." Will you? thought I, not if I were priest you wouldn't, if you talked like that. Thinks I, if any priest has got an horsewhip to lay over the backs of the poor, let him lay it over the backs of the quality too. I would if I were a

¹¹⁶RCAL, NCM Vol. 1, No. 1, New Series, May 1874, p.10-11.

¹¹⁷The "Biddy" literary stereotype of the middle-aged or elderly Irish Catholic was certainly common; eg another Leicester priest, the famed Dominican Fr. Vincent McNabb, prior at Holy Cross from 1908-14, employed a "Biddy in the basement" female character to promote certain basic Catholic viewpoints.

¹¹⁸RCAL, CTM Vol. 2, No.3, March 1870, p.4. Barclay powerfully describes this "guilt" induction; p.29.

¹¹⁹RCAL, CTM, April 1871, p.8.

priest, if they treated me that way, or my name's not Biddy.

Here was an appeal to the loyalty of the poor in their support of their priests. Biddy Maguire's letter had as much to say about economically secure English Catholics and their attitudes as it did about Celtic stereotypes.¹²⁰ The overt Irish dimension was not accidental:

The Irish were among the groups most newly touched by education, and it was therefore timely of the society to publish material intended to protect the faith of working-class Catholics.¹²¹

The Catholic authorities in the east midlands clearly anticipated this trend. In addition to targeted publications, a variety of formal and informal customs, events and organisations existed in the Catholic infrastructure to assist in shepherding the flock. Some of these were avowedly Irish, or had Irish associations. Miraculous cures were in vogue in English Catholicism throughout the nineteenth century. Barclay described how his mother's cure for whooping-cough was "a drink out of the chalice. I and my brother were taken to the chapel, and kneeling before the altar-rails, the kind priest gave us a drink out of the sacramental chalice."

Organisational structures with an Irish dimension existed to buttress spirituality and piety. At the Sacred Heart in 1901, the Bishop's appeal "had something to do with St. Patrick's Association. (It was St. Patrick's Day.)"¹²² At Coalville, Fr. O'Reilly's mission boasted of 3 parish organisations, one being the Children of Mary (Boys and Girls). A Mrs. Lavin ran the parish library. In 1900, Whitwick Holy Cross boasted its own soccer team, 4 of whom were Irish; by 1907, male parishioners had a branch of the Knights of St. Columba, suggestive of some upward social mobility amongst the Irish.¹²³

Probably the most influential Catholic organisation in the last quarter of the century was the League of the Cross, founded by Manning to combat the alcohol menace.¹²⁴ The League was particularly impactful in Leicester, due to the promotional

¹²⁰The skills of the Irish in terms of self-mockery and irony, especially in courtroom and begging situations, has been remarked upon by several historians; see, eg, THOMPSON, E.P. (1968), p.477.

¹²¹INGLIS, K.A. (1963), p.137.

¹²²*The Wyvern, 'Round the Churches,'* The Sacred Heart, 23 March 1901. Lees (1979) has shown how St. Patrick's societies of various kinds proliferated in London from the 1840's onwards, see p.190-2.

¹²³NDA; ELLISON, R. (1915), *A Short History of the Coalville Catholic Mission*, p.23, 38 and 43. Re Whitwick football team, see photo in Coalville Library collection; and see stained glass window donated by KSC (No. 314) at Holy Cross.

¹²⁴LEES, (1979), p.210-211; Lees emphasises the importance of the League in pushing sobriety and temperance to the top of the Catholic agenda nationally.

abilities of Fr. Francis Hays (1870-1943) of St. Patrick's.

Hays possessed useful credentials. His Irish mother was a sister of the famed Mgr. Nugent of Liverpool, founder-member of the League. His experience included time with the Irish in Salford and in Stillorgan (near Dublin). From 1894-96 he was curate at St. Patrick's; the Irish of Leicester had a reputation for alcohol abuse (see chapter on Crime). His predecessor Fr. Bunce was credited with calming revellers in Royal East Street, richly endowed with pubs.¹²⁵ Heinrick noted that "but for the one vice of drunkenness the social condition of the Irish in Leicester would rapidly improve." Joseph Dare, the Unitarian missionary in 1865 highlighted:

..... the lower portion of the Irish who live in the back streets, from the Old Cross downwards, spend the after part of the Sabbath in utter disregard of its sacred character. Pitch-and-toss, drinking and brawling, make the neighbourhood another Donnybrook Fair.¹²⁶

The arrival of Fr. Hays, therefore, brought new leadership. His obituary noted:

In 1896 he founded the "Catholic Temperance Crusade" and he was a vice-president of the "United Kingdom Alliance" - a non-denominational organization of which Cardinal Manning had previously held the vice-presidency.¹²⁷

When Hays left (1896), a tribute was paid to his work amongst Catholics in Britain and Ireland:

He established the Catholic Total Abstinence League of the Cross, in Royal East-Street Schools, inaugurating it with a public meeting. This organisation he leaves in a flourishing condition. He did not confine himself to his own religious body he promised to do his utmost for temperance, and the return of temperance candidates at elections. He is an excellent platform speaker, and the Leicester Temperance Societies will lose in him one of their best workers.¹²⁸

The 'Schools' were St. Patrick's. (Refer Table 14)

Hays' work in Leicester was effective in both the short and long term. In 1895,

¹²⁵KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.23, ISW/OHA and interview with C. Richardson.

¹²⁶LCRO, 20th RLDMS, p.13 + 14.

¹²⁷NDA, Obituaries, Fr. Francis C. Hays, died aged 73, 19/5/1943.

¹²⁸The Wyvern, No. 224, Vol. IX, 7 Feb. 1896, p.243.

Leicester Catholic Temperance Society (a League branch) met in St Patrick's for its first gathering. Hays chaired an attentive audience of 49; an independent paper noted that the Society was "evidently taking root - and promises to be a success." The newly elected council of eight included seven with Irish names.¹²⁹ A decade later, in 1905, 600 members met for an annual reunion with a mass tea-party and entertainment at the Temperance Hall.¹³⁰ (Two local teachers sang, Ms Belton and Mr Lilley; both were destined to be future heads of St Patricks and Holy Cross respectively.¹³¹

The two most numerous, popular and long-lasting of church-based social activities were bazaars and tea-parties. Both were designed to raise funds, involve everybody, and keep the men from alcohol. (See chapter on education).¹³² Press reports covering the 'Niagara in Winter' grand bazaar in 1895, and the Catholic Temperance Society founders' meeting at St Patricks in 1895 both mentioned Irish families such as the Rooneys, the Rochfords, the Fitzgeralds and the O'Connells.¹³³ Research on church bazaars in Canada shows parallels with the Leicester examples:

The object of bazaars was to obtain as much money as possible for charitable works. They required the participation of all family members Men and boys constructed the booths, made some of the articles for sale and bought others. Women and girls organized the collections of goods, baked, knitted, provided various crafts, and worked in the booths, often for twelve hours at a time. Children played games, some of which were free but most of which required a penny for admission. Irish family members gained recognition in the newspapers for their dedication and effort. The women particularly showed a sense of unified purpose

Bazaars were inexpensive and profitable; in Canada "all bazaars had to be sanctioned by the Bishop who controlled their aims and profits."¹³⁴ Presumably the British episcopate operated similarly.

These efforts were complemented by the steady work of diocesan and parochial

¹²⁹ *The Wyvern*, No. 213, Vol. IX, 22 Nov, 1895.

¹³⁰ *The Wyvern*, 30 Dec. 1905, p.3.

¹³¹ See FIELDING, S. (1993), p.64: "Teachers seem to have been selected less for their professional competence and more for their devotion to the Faith lay teachers were often church organists, choir masters and presidents of confraternities and sodalities."

¹³² The Spanish Fair, for example, of 1897 was "the best managed and brightest bazaar the town had seen for years;" £1400 was raised; *The Wyvern*, No. 285, Vol. XI 9 April 1897, p.387.

¹³³ *The Wyvern* No. 203, Vol. VIII, 13 Sept. 1895, p.327, and No. 213, Vol. IX, 22 Nov. 1895, p.66. Also, "at the Leicester (St Patrick's) Bazaar, which has realized more than £500," various distinguished persons were present," NDA; NCM, Vol. II, No. 2, June 1875, p.30.

¹³⁴ NICOLSON, M.W; *The Education of a Minority: The Irish Family Urbanized*; in O'DRISCOLL, R. and REYNOLDS, L., (Eds) (1988), *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada* Vol. II, pp.770-771.

organisations. Highlighted in 1874 was "the admirable institution of St. Vincent de Paul, which contributes so much to alleviate the necessities of our poorer population."¹³⁵ This body targeted the Irish poor from its inception.¹³⁶

Other self-help welfare groups operated, such as the Catholic Order of Oddfellows. As well as offering a sound democratic and organisational base, attractive to the many then unenfranchised males, it included the twin safety-nets of a Sick Fund and a Burial Fund.¹³⁷ Canon O'Reilly of Whitwick was once a marshal of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, a similar organisation.

Catholic clubs other than temperance societies began to proliferate, but for men only. Fr. Hays was regarded as "one of the prime movers in the establishment of the Catholic Mutual Improvement Society for the benefit of young men."¹³⁸ A young men's social club formed at Holy Cross was the nucleus of the influential future Leicester Catholic Club.¹³⁹ Clubs developed at St. Peter's (1912), and at Holy Cross and St. Patricks (1914). The traditions of ethnicity and loyalty lasted well; for example, in 1936 "the Children of Mary put on a St. Patrick's Dance for a new altar in the Lady Chapel" at St Mary's in Loughborough.¹⁴⁰

(iii) Sacramental Observance: theory and practice

Standard Catholic practice post-c.1850 encapsulated regular attendance at mass, confession and communion. As these were internal yardsticks they will be used here. That Catholicism could take strong root in the young is clear from Barclay's evidence. His recollection of his first communion, a cultural and spiritual rite of passage, is powerful for the sense of family and community bonding articulated. His early commitment was strong, reflecting new Italianate practices:

I went to confession and communion monthly, and attended Novenas and Quarantores.

¹³⁵RCAL, NCM, Vol., No. 4, Aug. 1874, p.70. It has proved impossible to get info, about St. V de P archives locally.

¹³⁶RCAL, O'MEARA, K., (1878), *Frederick Ozanam: His Life and Works*, p.362. Reflecting on the failure of middle-class RCs to help the Irish poor, Ozanam noted that if an ordinary shopkeeper handed you your change wrapped in paper, "How then could a gentleman bring himself to press the hand of an Irish beggar?"; p.365.

¹³⁷RCAL, NCM, Vol. No. 1, May 1874, p.19. Interestingly, the article referred to the "Ancient Order of Hibernians, with its 200,000 men" active amongst the Irish in the USA, with similar welfare funds operating. This positive reference to the Irish-American initiatives is not surprising.

¹³⁸*The Wyvern*, No. 224, Vol. IX, 7 Feb. 1896, p.243.

¹³⁹*The Wyvern*, No. 285, Vol. XI, 9 April 1897, p.387.

¹⁴⁰CUMMINS, Rev. J.D. (1949), *Catholic Reference Book, Loughborough*, re St. Mary's.

As Barclay matured, "the sins of the flesh" began to influence his adolescent development, he travelled 7 miles out to Ratcliffe College to confess.¹⁴¹ This apparent sense of guilt reflected the Church's line on sexual and moral matters.

The importance attached to religious rites of passage is evident in oral history accounts. Fred Jordan, born 1909, was half Irish. Placed in an orphanage, he attended the 3 Catholic elementary schools in succession. He recalled his Confirmation aged 9, celebrated with a special breakfast. It was made clear to children that failure to attend mass was punishable: Barbara Morris, third generation Irish, recalled Monday morning interrogations at St Patrick's school c.1937.¹⁴² Similar episodes were recounted by Fielding in Salford in the 1880-1939 period.¹⁴³

In 1879, the diocesan return to Rome, gave Holy Cross 1200 Catholics, with 167 at school; St. Patrick's, "a good sized church," also enjoyed 1200, but with double the numbers of children, 319, at school. The 1885 *Relationes* indicated the social composition of the two congregations. Holy Cross included "about 1,000 Catholics, chiefly of the better class; a fair number of whom practice their religion. There is a mixed school, attended by 169 children." The mission of St. Patricks, in contrast, was situated in

"The north east part of the town, and has a very poor congregation, chiefly of Irish, of whom a great number are poor and devout. There is a good church, holding about 300 - and a Presbytery across the street. Large schools are attached to the Church, one mixed with 214 pupils, another for infants, attended by 217 children. The Catholics of the mission number about 1400."¹⁴⁴

What is compelling here is the growth of St Patricks after c.1880, when it began to outdistance its former parent parish in numbers of parishioners, and children in school. Yet St. Patrick's, despite being a mission of the more well-off Holy Cross, was nonetheless the poor relative. In the 1880's, St. Patrick's parishioners and their needs were demonstrably greater than those of Holy Cross.¹⁴⁵ The *Relationes* comments, obliquely, on the disparity in observance between Holy Cross and its mission: while just

¹⁴¹BARCLAY, T.(1934), pp. 17, 31, 35 & 37.

¹⁴²OHA/ISW: with Fred Jordan in Feb 1992 and July 1994; with Barbara Morris, July 1993 and June 1994.

¹⁴³FIELDING, S. (1993), p.64.

¹⁴⁴NDA, *Relationes* 1879, p.13; 1885, p.19

¹⁴⁵Holy Cross had its own problems: *The Wyvern*, 24 Feb. 1900, noted that "Leicester Catholics are not a wealthy body".

"a fair number" of the "better class" at Holy Cross practised their religion, the Irish of St. Patrick's comprised "a great number" who were both "poor and devout." A reported typical Sunday at St. Patricks in 1900 testified to this picture. (see title page) Despite the evidences of real poverty, attendance was high and commitment seemed genuine.¹⁴⁶

Diocesan statistics for 1881 make some comparisons possible with Irish communities elsewhere. Whilst the parish totals for Holy Cross and St. Patrick were 1050 and 1000 respectively, St. Patricks had half as many children again in the 3 to 13 age range as Holy Cross (339 : 220). This would partly account for the lower rates of observance noted in Table 5 for St. Patrick's, as would the 20 per cent fewer adults (17+). Even so, there is still a notable disparity between the attendance rates for Confessions and Communion between St Patricks and Holy Cross, to the detriment of the former.

Leicester's situation vis-à-vis sacramental participation can be viewed alongside evidence from Lees (1979) on London, Lowe (1989) on Lancashire and Fielding (1993) on Salford. Thompson's data on St Patrick's (Table 5) suggests that in 1881, just 36 per cent of parishioners partook of Easter confession, whilst a mere 9.2 per cent (an average across the three eucharistic opportunities) accepted communion. In Liverpool in 1871, the figure for obligatory "Easter duties" was 32 per cent. Poverty and limited physical access to facilities accompanied these apparent derelictions of duty. Lees quotes just 10 per cent as fulfilling these requirements in London in 1837 (when resources were admittedly much worse on the ground). As regards northern England c.1900, Fielding quotes communion figures for Manchester, Bury, Bolton and Newcastle which give an average of 41 per cent. This places Leicester's St. Patrick's (9.2 per cent) well below this "average"; surprisingly, Holy Cross emerges with 74 per cent and 14.6 per cent attendance at Easter confessions and communion respectively.¹⁴⁷ The disparity between the predominantly Irish and proletarian St. Patricks and the more anglicised and middle class Holy Cross is explicable mainly in relation to class considerations, which

¹⁴⁶ *Wyvern/Leicester Guardian*, 32 May 1902. The NDA statistical returns for 1887 give St. Patricks 1000 persons as opposed to Holy Cross's 1050. See THOMPSON, D.M. (1969), p.298.

¹⁴⁷ See LEES, L.H. (1979), p.180; FIELDING, S. (1993), p.49; and LOWE, W.J. (1989), p.119.

TABLE 5

STATISTICS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE (1881); Re: NUMBERS AND AGE PATTERN OF CATHOLICS, OF PENITENTS AND OF COMMUNICANTS

Place	Number of R.C.'s				Easter Confes-sions	Communions		
	Age 3-13	Age 13-17	Age 17+	Total		Palm Sunday	Easter Day	Low Sunday
Leicester: Holy Cross	220	150	680	1050	742	110	240	125
Leicester: St Patrick	339	150	511	1000	359	30	189	58
Loughborough	141	49	311	501	358	45	117	61
Whitwick	246	57	537	840	350	58	60	90

Notes: Source: *NDA*; THOMPSON, D.M. (1969), p.298.

TABLE 6		R.C RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCES IN LEICESTER: 1851, 1872 AND 1882			
Year	No. of Church Buildings	Accom-modation	Attendance		
			Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1851	1	---	546	56	497
1872	2	555	---	--	---
1882	2	900	547	--	863

Notes:

(1) Sources:

- for 1851: THOMPSON, D.M. (1969) Table 15. p.66, and LANCASTER, B (1987), p.64-9.

(2) For Leicester, *The Wyvern* offered more typical statistics for parish masses c.1900: 150 at St Patricks (26/5/1900); 300 at Holy Cross (24/2/1900); 55 at St Peters (31/5/1902) and 70 at Sacred Heart (23/3/1901). These give a total of 575, comparable with the 1872 and 1882 figures cited above, but indicative of a lack of growth in attendance, and, by implication, of an increase in leakage.

Fielding emphasises as a factor in this discussion.¹⁴⁸

This conclusion, however, has to be tentative for, as Table 6 indicates, religious attendances in Leicester amongst Catholics remained relatively stable. In terms of compulsory mass attendance, as opposed to voluntary evening devotions (on Sundays), the increase in accommodation from 555 in 1872 to 900 in 1882 was not reflected in an increase in mass attenders. As *The Wyvern* statistics for c.1900 (when four churches were available) indicate, the total mass attendance observed was 555. visits were to one service only; as it was the main service, the pattern suggested is one of decreasing attendance, of leakage (see note 2 on Table 6), which was a national characteristic.

In general terms, communion formed part of the mass service. The number of masses on offer probably serves as a rough indicator of demand. Patterns of Sunday services (mass, rosary and benediction) at Holy Cross and St Patrick's have been compiled for the 1850-1914 period. Once St Patrick's became a parish in its own right in 1873, the number of services increased, matching those of Holy Cross from 1876 until 1900. Both churches offered 3 masses. This suggests an increasing demand at St Patrick's pre-dating independence.

It is possible to obtain a realistic portrait of mass attendance in qualitative terms. Common features applied to the four Catholic churches by 1900 (the new ones being St Peter's and Sacred Heart). Identified were the poverty of parishioners, the paucity of resources (sometimes startling) and the rather disorganised, noisy and undisciplined "starting times" of services (regarding the frequency and continuation of late arrivals at mass.) Offsetting these factors were the fairly respectable numbers attending; the "reasonable to good" quality of the priests' discourses; and the successful efforts made at choral and musical provision.¹⁴⁹ This civilising tendency was marked in 1900 even at St Patrick's.¹⁵⁰

Gilley has noted this paradoxical culture clash in his account of "vulgar piety" at London's Brompton Oratory. In contrast with symphonic chorales, he noted "the tinsel glory of their bespangled and bedizened church;" the few extant photographs of the interior of St Patrick's depict it with numerous statues, hangings, prints and other

¹⁴⁸FIELDING, S. (1993), p.49; the working class parish of St. Patricks in Manchester had the eighth worst mass attendance level (36 per cent) in 1900.

¹⁴⁹*The Wyvern/Leicester Guardian*, 'Round the Churches' series; see Note 2, Table 6.

¹⁵⁰*The Wyvern*, 26 May 1900; see quote on title page.

decorations.¹⁵¹

An appreciation of the Irish community's commitment is available in the evidence of the take-up rates at St Patrick's for baptisms, confirmations and marriages. Lees noted that attendance at sacraments did not necessarily denote regular active Catholic practice. Catholicism mirrored the syndrome where members participated effectively only at key moments of their lives: birth, marriage and death. (See Tables 7, 8 and 9 re St Patricks, for 1875-1900).

By the 1870's, the heavy incidence of Irish arrivals was in abeyance, and this is reflected in those Irish surnames identified: approximately 35 per cent (347) of baptisms in the 1874-8 period were of children of one or more Irish parents; this is probably an under estimate, in that second generation females would not show in surname evidence if married to non-Irish spouses. This last point is strengthened by reference to the St Patrick's marriage statistics for 1874-79, where an average of almost 70 per cent (69.4) marriages involved at least one Irish partner.

The figures for confirmations, by their nature a non-annual event, are quite revealing, for - whilst the average incidence of Irish names in the 1874-99 period was around 49 per cent (48.6), it is clear that the Irish input was markedly greater in the earlier half of that quarter century. Between 1876 and 1888, the numbers of children with Irish names varies between 61.5 and 46.8 per cent; from 1896-99, the figure hovers around an average of 35 per cent. This is an indication of that decline of Irish immigration which occurred nationally after c.1880.¹⁵²

The marriage statistics for St. Patrick's illustrate clearly the Hibernian dimension at play; whilst an average for the period 1874-9 gives 70 per cent (69.4) as being between two Irish partners, for three of these six years, all, or nearly all, the weddings involved Irish spouses on both sides. (See Table 9). The Irish proportion decreases thereafter, doing so steadily between 1880 and 1900. In absolute term, the numbers are up; relatively, the decrease represents the gradual dispersal of Leicester's Irish from the key settlement area around Abbey Street out into the new artisan terraced housing, a process underway between c.1880 and the Great War. Even so, the annual average of Irish/English marriages for the two decades preceding 1900 saw a small Irish

¹⁵¹GILLEY, S. *Vulgar Piety and the Brompton Oratory, 1850-1860*, in GILLEY, S AND SWIFT, R. (Eds)(1985), 9.257-9. Also, see *The Wyvern*, 26 May 1900, re St Patricks.

¹⁵²See JACKSON, J.A. (1963), p. 11, in 1861 the Irish formed 3% of the total population; by 1881, 2.2%; by 1891, just 1.6%. Early confirmation figures (ie pre 1850) for Leicester are unavailable; in Stafford in 1835, 6/73 (8%) involved Irish names; see HERSON, J. (1988), p.21.

TABLES 7, 8 & 9		RATIOS OF IRISH : ENGLISH IN THE BAPTISMAL, MARRIAGE AND CONFIRMATION REGISTERS AT ST. PATRICK'S, c1875-c.1900 (ie. where one or both spouses have Irish surnames)			
(7) RATIOS OF IRISH : ENGLISH IN ST. PATRICK'S - MARRIAGES, 1874 - 1900			(8) RATIOS OF IRISH : ENGLISH IN ST. PATRICK'S BAPTISMS, 1874 - 88		
Year	Irish:English	%age being Irish	Year	Nos Of Ir/Engl	%age being Irish
1874	4/4	100	1874	20/55	36.4
1875	2/2	100	1875	25/45	55.6
1876	3/7	42.9	1876	13/55	23.6
1877	2/5	40.0	1877	32/80	40.0
1878	4/7	57.1	1878	28/105	26.7
1879	10/11	90.9	Total /Ave	118/340	34.7
1880	10/14	71.4	Source: LCRO St. Patrick's Register M/F 179		
1881	5/6	83.3			
1882	7/13	53.9	(9) RATIOS OF IRISH : ENGLISH AT ST. PATRICK'S CONFIRMATIONS, 1876-1899		
1883	5/17	29.4	Year	Irish:English	%age being Irish
1884	1/6	16.7	1876	80/130	61.5
1885	4/11	36.4	1878	83/149	55.7
1886	8/21	38.1	1883	121/268	45.1
1887	8/11	72.7	1888	58/124	46.8
1888	3/7	42.8	1893	32/113	28.3
1889	3/8	37.5	1896	44/132	33.3
1890	8/17	37.5	1897	46/138	33.3
1891	7/17	41.2	1899	32/85	37.6
1892	8/70	40.0	Total/Ave	496/1020	48.6
1893	9/14	64.3	Source: LCRO, St. Patrick's Registers, M/F 180		
1894	2/11	18.2			
1895	8/13	61.5			
1896	7/15	46.7			
1897	5/11	45.4			
1898	7/12	58.3			
1899	7/12	58.3			
1900	6/8	75.0			
Source: LCRO, MF 180, St. Patrick's Marriage Register ie 1 or both partners being Irish					

preponderance (54.4%).

In a rather strange way, the cradle to grave hold of Catholicism is exemplified in Barclay's references to his mother and sister. His mother was "a sincere and devout Catholic;" his sister Kate, another freethinker, eventually "made her peace with the Church, and died a Catholic." Barclay happily paid for masses for her eternal wellbeing. On his own deathbed, however, Barclay politely refused offers of a priest.¹⁵³

Death from illness and disease was never far off as the chapter on health testifies. Various accounts testify to the ravages of smallpox and tuberculosis.¹⁵⁴ Burial statistics for St. Patrick's show that c.1880, as part of the Famine influx generation was dying off, around 45 per cent of funerals involved Irish persons (44.2 in 1880 and 45.0 in 1881).¹⁵⁵ Although by the 1890's, Barclay would comment that: "The wake is gone for ever, though small regret have I for that," the implication is that in the mid-century, the wake traditions locally were still extant.¹⁵⁶ Oral history testimonies of funerals probably mirrored customs already in place. Coffins had to enter St Patrick's via the school's main door. An ex-pupil noted that the tradition of taking the coffined body into the home and inviting neighbours and kin to pay their respects continued in Leicester amongst Irish Catholic families until the 1950's.¹⁵⁷

Was Leicester affected by "leakage"? Connolly cites Lee's work on London, where formally practising Catholics were calculated at 30 per cent of the total, with the Irish in that category turning in an imprecise but lower rate of involvement. Connolly makes the point that, just as religious conformity varied across Ireland, then so too it must have varied amongst Irish migrants to Britain.¹⁵⁸ In Nottingham, the seat of the diocese, the Rev. Thomas Rimmer c.1840 highlighted the Irish element amongst non-attenders.¹⁵⁹

There are few such references to the Irish in Leicester. Two references to parish missions, at St Patricks and Sacred Heart, indicate some need for (see c(i)). As a minority, they may have maintained a group effort not only to build up their communal self-confidence, but also partly as a reaction to the sustained popular anti-

¹⁵³BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp.121-2 and 140.

¹⁵⁴OHA, ISW, Mrs. C. Richardson (May 1991) and Ms. B. Morris (July 1993).

¹⁵⁵LCRO, *St Patrick's Burial Registers*, MF 180.

¹⁵⁶*The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149.

¹⁵⁷OHA/ISW; Ms B. Morris, 25 July 1993.

¹⁵⁸See *Irish and Catholic: Myth or Reality?* In GILLEY, S. and SWIFT, R. (Eds)(1985), p.226.

¹⁵⁹CONNOLLY, (1985), p.228.

An oral history respondent showed how strong the cultural attachment could remain. Even though Ms McDonagh's mother would not send her to St. Patrick's because she felt the nuns were too strict, she was not allowed to forego indoctrination, attending the presbytery with similar cases every Saturday morning.¹⁶¹ One way or another, the message was transmitted.

(iv) Marriage, mixed and otherwise

One of the most sensitive and problematical areas of sacramental formality involved marriage, and especially mixed marriages. The rationale employed here will cover attitudes to marriage amongst the Irish and use evidence derived from census analysis. Connolly has remarked that "the most striking feature of marriage in pre-Famine Ireland was the early age at which it was entered into." Arranged marriages were much more prevalent post-1850. Partners married into their own social milieu. A dowry was still the norm. Connolly argues the view that sexual mores were strict, with Irish women being chaste, and a low illegitimacy rate.

Fitzpatrick commented that "cheap and effortless emigration softened the severity of Irish marriage in several ways."¹⁶² Infidelity, bigamy and economic hardship could all play a part in migration. The dislocation caused by migration and the vicissitudes of industrial life is clear from personal accounts. Barclay, for example, relates situations where both father and mother were forced to leave young children while they worked outside the home. Catholic marriages amongst the Irish in nineteenth century Leicester can be looked at in various ways: as a sacramental institution; as a cultural bonding mechanism; and as a regulator of male-female interaction. Guidelines were clear. Ullathorne expounded on women's responsibilities:

The mother has gone out to work, or is sick, and the child must stay to attend to the house, or nurse the baby. The father is at work a mile or two away¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ See relevant chapter.

¹⁶¹ OHAISW; Ms Kathleen McDonagh, 1990/91.

¹⁶² CONNOLLY, S.J. *Marriage in Pre-Famine Ireland*, p.78 and FITZPATRICK, D. *Marriage in Post-Famine Ireland*, p.126 in COSGROVE, A., (Ed)(1985), *Marriage in Ireland*.

¹⁶³ ULLATHORNE, (1857), *Notes on the Education Question*, p.50.

Barclay confirmed the picture, describing his own childhood role as surrogate nurse.¹⁶⁴

Ullathorne's doctrinaire approach did at least embrace male responsibilities:

Time was when each labouring man had his cottage, when his partner was the good housewife, and spun and made the clothes of the family with her daughters, baked her own bread, and brewed her husband's homely beer. And if the children could not read, the mother trained them up as Christians, taught them their prayers, their creed and their duties, and the pastor completed what the parents began But to what have manufacturers, and mining and railroad making brought working men? All is summed up in one word, they have ceased to have a home. And terribly in want of a home are our poor, dear, Catholic Irish.¹⁶⁵

Ullathorne signalled the Church's concern generally, and for Irish families in particular.

Barclay echoed Ullathorne's concerns more sympathetically:

..... mother was the grey mare of our family All work and no play, but still not dull Mother did all that was possible we went unwashed No fault of Mother's. She was not permitted, even had she the money and leisure, to indulge in beer and dominoes of an evening like my father; her consolation was an old Irish lamentation or love song and the contemplation of the sufferings of "Our Blessed Lord" and his virgin mother.¹⁶⁶

Mixed marriage put at risk not only religious factors such as Catholic faith and practice, childrens' education and, ultimately, personal salvation; also at risk was the question of ethnic, social and psychological identity:

Then, of course, I was married to an Englishman. It's more difficult for an Irish woman who married into an English family, to try to bring her children up good catholics and teach them Irishness, than it would be for two Irish people marrying in this country. All the responsibility of Irishness is on you.¹⁶⁷

Mixed marriages attracted negative treatment from both Church and State. In Britain, it was only in 1871 that mixed marriages celebrated by Catholic priests were recognised.¹⁶⁸ McCabe (1897) remarked on the pressures of mixed marriages on couples and children. Fr. McNabb stressed the moral desolation felt by some for

¹⁶⁴BARCLAY, T. (1934), p. 8 and 9.

¹⁶⁵ULLATHORNE, (1857), pp.52-3.

¹⁶⁶BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp. 9 and 10.

¹⁶⁷Noreen Hill, in LENNON, M. ET AL (Eds), (1988), *Across the Water - Irish Women's Lives in Britain*, p.100.

¹⁶⁸See CORISH, J., *Catholic Marriage under the Penal Code*, in COSGROVE, A., (Ed) (1985), p.72, 74-5.

TABLE 10	LEICESTER'S IRISH COMMUNITY: MARRIAGE DATA FROM CENSUS RECORDS, 1841-1891
----------	--

CENSUS YEAR	TOTAL NO OF MARRIAGES	ETHNICALLY MIXED MARRIAGES		BOTH PARTNERS IRISH	WIDOWS	WIDOWERS	NOS OF MILITARY PENSIONERS
		IRISH MEN TO ENGLISH WOMEN	IRISH WOMEN TO ENGLISH MEN				
1841	115	23	58	34	28	4	0
1851	223	66	71	86	41	7	15
1861	224	60	55	109	49	10	34
1871	290	80	85	125	55	11	24
1881	243	68	89	86	45	18	51
1891	198	93	84	21	59	30	14

TABLE 11	SUMMARY OF 184-91 MARRIAGE DATA : PERCENTAGES
----------	---

CENSUS YEAR	IRISH MEN TO ENGLISH WOMEN	IRISH WOMEN TO ENGLISH MEN	BOTH PARTNERS IRISH
1841	20.0	50.4	29.6
1851	28.9	31.1	40.0
1861	27.0	24.0	49.0
1871	27.6	29.3	43.1
1881	28.0	36.6	35.4
1891	46.9	42.4	10.6

- Notes:
- (1) Military Pensioners comprises all such pension categories: most were listed as Chelsea Pensioners (ex-Army); a few were Greenwich Pensioners (ex-Navy). Also, serving soldiers enumerated are incorporated as potential military pensioners (eg. 33 out of 51 in 1881); these were a large portion only in 1881.
 - (2) The very great majority of non-Irish partners were English, for both men and women.

marrying in a registry office.¹⁶⁹ One contributor recalled her sadness when her father re-married a non-Catholic, and when she herself married in a registry office. To her "great joy", she re-married later, with her husband's agreement, in a Catholic church and "was very pleased to be able to receive the sacraments again."¹⁷⁰

One can determine the approximate extent of the mixed marriages by identifying situations where Irish-born men and women were enumerated as having non-Irish partners. The latter, usually English, were mainly non-Catholic, especially in the earlier decades. The presumption of Catholicity is based on the premise that most Irish migrants to Leicester were of that persuasion. Marriage data from the Leicester censuses from 1841 to 1891 inclusive is tabulated in Tables 12 & 13. It is possible to draw some tentative conclusions and to make comparisons with Irish settlement elsewhere.

In terms of the raw Leicestershire data, Irish-born females marrying out generally outnumbered the number of Irish-born males similarly involved, especially so in 1841 and 1881. In 1861 and 1891, the situations were reversed, with a higher percentage of Irish-born men marrying out. In both 1851 and 1871, whilst more women than men married out, the excess was in fact rather marginal. These internal comparisons would appear to indicate that Leicester's situations in all year's (except 1841) was on balance pretty even; only in 1841 was there a really dramatic contrast when the number of women marrying out was approximately two and a half times the number of men. The "bulge" of Irish-born women over Irish-born men intermarrying may well be related to the availability of husbands with either actual, or potential, earning power as military pensioners; the 1881 figures provide the best example of this trend, although there were significant male military "pensioners" on the marriage registers in 1861 and 1871 also. These mid-Victorian decades are frequently cited for the evidence available regarding the especially high levels of recruitment of Irish-born men into the British armed forces.¹⁷¹

EP Thompson believed that "there was a great deal of inter-marriage." Lees, Lowe and Fielding all examine the subject.¹⁷² Lowe suggests that "it does not appear that marriage outside the Irish community was a major problem."¹⁷³ In Leicester,

¹⁶⁹McCABE, J., (1897), pp.190-1; McNABB, v. (1915), p.99-105.

¹⁷⁰OHAISW; Ms Catherine Richardson, May 1991.

¹⁷¹JENKINS, R.P., (1991), *LRO Newsletter*, 1991, No. 15, pp.8-10.

¹⁷²LOWE, W.J., (1989), LEES, L.H. (1979), and FIELDING, S. (1993).

¹⁷³LOWE, W.J., (1989). p.121, quoting Diocese of Liverpool, *Visitations*, Preston, 1855 (Lancs RO, RCLv.), and p.121-2.

however, at all times between 1841 and 1891, there were more mixed than endogamous marriages. What is not so easily proven regarding Leicester is the question of how many of the non-Irish spouses may, in actual fact, have been Catholic. A portrait of Salford slum life noted the infrequency of Irish-English marriages:¹⁷⁴

They certainly did not take place among the Irish population, owing to the intensity of the racial problem. The atmosphere was charged with hatred and passion against both Rome and Ireland, and it may be that these mixed marriages occurred amongst the native English population.¹⁷⁵

This evidence does not co-relate to the Leicester evidence which clearly indicates mixed English-Irish unions occurring from c.1840. Presumably the relatively limited Irish immigrant rates helped account for this.

By c.1880, most working-class Catholics understood their Church's deep apprehension of mixed marriage situations. Yet ethnically mixed marriages had become statistically significant both in Leicester and Leicestershire. By 1891 approximately 90 per cent of Irish men and women were married to non-Irish spouses; and this held true not only for Leicester, Hinckley and Loughborough, but also for the Whitwick coalfield area where, in 1841 and 1851, all marriages involving Irish persons had consisted of unions where both partners were Irish. (See Table 12).

Loughborough too witnessed a shift, from 62 (61.6) per cent of Irish marriages involving two Irish spouses in 1841, to only 12 per cent in 1891. In Hinckley, the 1891 census revealed no marriages at all where both partners were Irish. These local idiosyncrasies are probably explained thus: Loughborough had witnessed an Irish military presence in the early decades of this study, as had Leicester; Whitwick was in microcosm more akin to the great Irish industrial settlements of Lancashire, Yorkshire and in Scotland, where intermarriage between two Irish partners was more prevalent. Fielding has remarked, in the context of his view that mixed marriages were much more common

¹⁷⁴ROBERTS, R. (1971), *The Classic Slum*, p. 22-3; he added: "even up to the outbreak of the First World War differences in race, religion, culture and status kept English and Irish apart."

¹⁷⁵BURKE, T., (1910), *Catholic History of Liverpool*, pp.56-7.

**TABLE 12 : MARRIAGE PATTERNS IN LEICESTER,
LOUGHBOROUGH, HINCKLEY AND WHITWICK, 1841-91,
SHOWING WHOLLY IRISH, AND MIXED, PAIRINGS (%ages)**

LEICESTER	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Both partners Irish	29.6	40.0	48.8	43.1	35.4	10.6
Female partners Irish	50.4	31.1	24.2	29.3	36.6	42.4
Male partners Irish	20.0	28.9	27.0	27.6	28.0	47.0
LOUGHBOROUGH						
Both partners Irish	61.6	41.7	47.2	34.6	32.0	12.0
Female partners Irish	19.2	41.7	33.3	38.5	40.0	52.0
Male partners Irish	19.2	16.6	19.5	26.9	28.0	36.0
HINCKLEY						
Both partners Irish	16.7	43.7	33.3	15.4	0	0
Female partners Irish	83.3	31.3	33.3	53.8	33.3	77.8
Male partners Irish	0	25.0	33.3	30.8	66.7	22.2
WHITWICK						
Both partners Irish	100.0	100.0	85.2	79.7	39.5	38.5
Female partners Irish	0	0	7.4	11.9	7.9	5.1
Male partners Irish	0	0	7.4	8.4	52.6	56.4

Notes:

- (1) Re - the question of age at marriage, to the Government question "Do you find that the Irish in general, both males and females, marry at an earlier age than the native inhabitants?," the Rev. Oxley O.P's reply was "In this, there does not appear, in Leicester, any difference between natives and Irish;" *1836 Report on Irish Poor in G.B, Appendix G, p.164.*
- (2) It is not possible easily to determine whether any partners were second or third generation Irish.

during the middle of the nineteenth century, that "These figures come from a period when the Church had hardly begun to build its separate institutional network. After the 1850's mixed marriages became more infrequent"¹⁷⁶ Fielding cites Herson's data on Stafford and Finnegan's on York in support of this view (refer discussion below).¹⁷⁷ Part of the explanation for these trends lies in the gender balance of the Irish marriageable population. Taking the four towns in Leicestershire, Irish female partners in mixed marriages outnumbered Irish male partners in Leicester from 1841 to 1881, in Loughborough from 1851 to 1891, and most impressively in Hinckley in 1841, 1871 and 1891. In the case of Hinckley this probably means that there were more Irish-born females than males because of the local hosiery manufacturing industries which were open to and attractive to women employees. Whitwick, conversely, with its industrial tradition of collieries and associated activities, was particularly attractive to Irish male migrants, who therefore are predominant in the mixed marriage decennial statistics - (refer Table 12). There is evidence that after c.1914, Irish women rather than men became increasingly involved in jobs which opened them up to assimilating influences.¹⁷⁸

External comparisons can be made with analyses dealing with London, York and Stafford. If 1851 is selected as a base year, the Irish-born in York comprised 5.4 per cent of the population, in Stafford they made up 4.1 per cent, in London they represented 4.6 per cent, whilst in Leicester their proportion was just 1.4 per cent.¹⁷⁹

According to Finnegan, in York, at all censuses between 1841 and 1871, the numbers of Irish males married to non-Irish females outnumbered the representation of Irish females married to non-Irish males by between one third and one half. In Leicester, however, the situation was more complex, and did not show a regular pattern decennially. In general in Leicester the reverse situation held good: there were more Irish females married to non-Irish males in 1841, 1851, 1871 and 1881. Common to York, however, was the drop in mixed marriages after the Famine. In York in 1841, 31.4 per cent of all married persons in the Irish community were in mixed unions; this figure declined to 14.2 per cent in 1851; and to 11 per cent in 1861; by 1871, it was still only 15.4 per cent. The majority of these York mixed marriages were, throughout the

¹⁷⁶ FIELDING, S., (1993), p.70.

¹⁷⁷ See FINNEGAN, F. (1982), pp.69-71; and HERSON, J. (1988), pp.80-82.

¹⁷⁸ JACKSON, J.A., (1963), chs 4 and 5; see also individual accounts in LENNON, M. et al (1988), eg pp.96 and 100, Noreen Hill's autobiography.

¹⁷⁹ See: LEES, L.H. (1979), 153-4; FINNEGAN, F. (1982), pp.69-71; and HERSON, J. (1988), pp.80-82.

TABLE 13	IRISH MIXED MARRIAGES IN LEICESTER AND YORK, 1841 TO 1871 ¹⁸⁰							
	(2nd fig = %ages)							
	1841		1851		1861		1871	
	YORK	LEIC	YORK	LEIC	YORK	LEIC	YORK	LEIC
Irish males married to non-Irish females	59 59	23 20	80 32.7	66 29.6	89 38.2	60 26.8	105 40.9	80 27.6
Irish females married to non-Irish males	29 29	58 50.4	51 20.9	71 31.9	54 23.2	55 24.6	78 30.3	85 29.3
Total No. of Marriages	100 (12)	115	245 (114)	223	233 (90)	224	257 (74)	290

1841-71 years, between Irish-born males and non-Irish females.

Leicester showed distinctively different patterns emerging, with a much higher proportion of mixed marriages. The peak years for Leicester's mixed marriages were 1841, with 70.4 per cent, and 1891, with a rather startling 89.3 per cent. The figures for the intervening years were still quite distinctive, if not as extreme as those for 1841 and 1891; in 1851, for example, 51 per cent of Leicester's Irish marriages were mixed. How did these trends affect Leicester's Irish Catholic community?

A "factional" example from Leicester c.1895 came from McNabb whose theme was the disaster waiting those who eschewed a Catholic marriage:

He forswore the God of his native hills and wed her before the State official. It was a small thing in the eyes of Court A, who did not share his theological opinions. But Mrs. Bridget Concannon, who is now a great-grandmother and says her prayers in Gaelic, as if that tongue alone was current in Heaven, has been heard to say: "The poor lad! Shure, the devil sould him that day for a mess of porridge." (Her knowledge of Old Testament history is varied rather than accurate.) She used to say that the day of his marriage before the Registrar began his damnation.¹⁸¹

This morality tale served a variety of Catholic ideological and moral purposes.

Herson's analysis of Stafford indicates that barriers between English and Irish

¹⁸⁰Regarding marriage figures for York, the missing parts making up the totals were marriages where spouses birth place was not recorded: see FINNEGAN (1982) p.70, and figures in brackets.

¹⁸¹McNABB, V., (1915), p.100.

Catholics were already falling away in the 1842-71 period, much earlier than normally suggested in the literature. By 1871, 35 per cent of the Irish seem to have married ethnically-English partners. He tentatively suggests that this pattern had, by the 1870's, extended to Irish Protestants also, and that Stafford's Irish in-migrants may have integrated into the local society more quickly than their compatriots in the massed Irish areas of the industrial cities.

Herson's conclusions seem accurate when Stafford's small-town experience is compared with that of the metropolis. Lees reported that the London Irish generally married within their own ethnic group; there was little intermarriage with people of English ancestry. Whilst 24 per cent of her sampled families were listed in the 1851 census, and 20 per cent of those in the 1861 census contained one English-born and one Irish-born partner, virtually all of the technically English spouses were in fact second or third generation Irish. Inter-generational Irish marriages took place between new migrants and those settled, usually tying in to existing local networks.

The emerging general conclusion would appear to be that the greater in size the conurbation, the more likely were there to be marriages between two Irish partners (of first or even second generation). Yet, in Leicester, however, this trend was bucked. Leicester's small and non-expanding Irish catchment may partly have been the cause of this strange pattern, where by 1891 almost 90 per cent of Irish marriages were mixed. Leicester's dominant Protestant culture also contributed to this.

For Irish migrants, Protestant as well as Catholic, the rubrics regarding sex were clear and probably generally understood. These rubrics were promoted by ministers; both Catholic and Protestant clerics were trained to have negative preoccupations on sexual matters.¹⁸² There was also the utilisation of Irish storytelling traditions to get important messages across in magazines such as the monthly *Catholic Truth Magazine*.

This journal ran homely homily series with titles such as the *Adventures of Kate Brady*. This choice of name, so obviously Hibernian, would have had instant appeal to Catholic female readers of all ages. The elements of sensation and human interest were mobilised, dwelling on the "scenes of temptation and trials through which Kate went in keeping the Catholic faith."¹⁸³ Each month, Kate Brady faced a new trial; a situation not

¹⁸²LEE, J.J., *Women and the Church since the Famine*, in McCURTAIN, M. and O'CORRAIN, D. (Eds) (1978) *Women in Irish Society, the Historical Dimension*, p.40.

¹⁸³RCAL, CTM, Vol. 2, No. 3. March 1870, p.4.

unlike a TV cliffhanger.

Economic as well as moral imperatives could act as a deterrent to male-female relationships. Once Barclay had clearly comprehended "that he was likely to remain poor always, he determined never to marry and beget children to be subject to such horrible privations as those through which he had passed."¹⁸⁴ Barclay's was a minority opinion. The fact that he lived with one of his spinster sisters, attests possibly to the culture clashes provoked by their political and religious idiosyncrasies, and the resulting demarcation vis-à-vis both the majority English and mainstream Irish communities.

(d) The Leadership Contributions of the Irish Male and Female Religious.

(i) The Role of the Priests and Brothers

This section contextualises the contributions of Irish male clergy locally. Gwynn (1950) pointed to the inherent difficulty of limited or non-existent evidence. He also highlighted the exhausting workloads - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual - which these Irish slum clerics took on their shoulders: the creation of new, or expansion of existing, physical plant; around-the clock pastoral care for a clientele frequently steeped in socio-economic deprivation; and the prevention of "leakage".¹⁸⁵ E.P. Thompson (1963), stressed the almost symbiotic tie existing between the Irish priest and his migrant parishioners, a tie so strong that it stood the test of time and of long-distance human relocation. He also underlined political factors: the close support and leadership which some priests had offered the revolutionaries of 1798 and O'Connell's Catholic Association c.1810-1840. He also highlighted priests' extraordinary power and influence across a whole swathe of family activities:

Indeed, for many of the migrants the power of the priest increased. Torn up by their roots, the priest was the last point of orientation with their old way of life. Literate but not far removed in social class, free from identification with English employers and authorities, sometimes knowing the Gaelic, the priest passed more frequently between England and Ireland, brought news of home and sometimes of relatives, could be entrusted with remittances, savings or messages. Hence it followed that the most enduring cultural tradition which the Irish peasantry brought - to the third and fourth generation - into England was that of a semi-

¹⁸⁴BARCLAY, T. (1934),

¹⁸⁵GWYNN, D., *The Irish Immigration*, p.272 and 289, in BECK, G.A. (Ed) (1950),

feudal nationalist Church.¹⁸⁶

Clearly, an Irish priest ministering to an Irish congregation was ideal for cultural interaction. This analysis considers factors such as the individual's status, education, experience and responsibilities. Five priests, Egan, Bunce, Hawkins, Hays and O'Reilly, will be examined vis-à-vis their influence, leadership, contribution and external interactions.

Jackson (1963) noted that an underground church of the poor, after surviving the Gordon Riots, could claim both a psychological and practical victory in 1829.¹⁸⁷ Jackson also pointed to the inimical attitude of many English gentry Catholics towards Irish-born priests, noting that the "most distinctive feature" of Irish-style Catholic practice was:

the fusion of religion and nationalism in the Irish mind. In the centuries of struggle against the alien and Protestant master, national loyalty came to take an intense religious colouring, even a kind of 'mystical' quality, utterly unintelligible to the continental mind. To be a Catholic was to be a true Irishman; to be an Irishman was to be a true Catholic.¹⁸⁸

Connolly examined "the priest as holy man in the nineteenth century ghetto,"¹⁸⁹ arguing that the priest is better perceived not so much as a social worker, but rather as an "objective bearer of holiness." Amongst the Irish in British cities, the priest was saving souls as much as bodies.¹⁹⁰ Connolly pointed to the very real element of "blood Sacrifice" involved in serving migrant needs. Heroic clergy, often practising self-denial, gave their all for their congregations.¹⁹¹ Leicester later registered its own human expiation: Fr. Cyril Bunce, O.P. the highly thought-of Irish-born parish priest of St. Patrick's (1872-80), who "died from typhoid fever caught from attending the sick poor."¹⁹²

There were in Leicester a series of vitriolic attacks, transcending lampoonery, against Irish priests, concentrated in the mid-1830's in the rabidly rightist journal *The Leicester Conservative Standard*. Numerous and sustained negative references to

¹⁸⁶ THOMPSON, E.P. (1963/68), pp. 478-80.

¹⁸⁷ JACKSON, J.A., (1963), p.136 and p.139.

¹⁸⁸ JACKSON, J.A., (1963), p.137, citing HERBERG, W. (1956), *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, p.160.

¹⁸⁹ CONNOLLY, G.P., *Little Brother be at Peace: The Priest as Holy Man in the 19th Century Ghetto*, in *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 19, 1982, pp.191-206.

¹⁹⁰ CONNOLLY, (1982), *Little Brother*, p.197.

¹⁹¹ CONNOLLY, G.P., *The Transubstantiation of Myth: towards a new popular history of 19th Century Catholicism in England*, in *J of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 25, No. 1., Jan 1984, pp. 78-104.

¹⁹² GUMBLEY, W. (1955), *Obituary Notices of the English Dominicans from 1555-1952*, p.112, Entry No. 209; Fr. Bunce is buried at Mnt. St. Bernards Abbey

Ireland and to Catholics were made as a matter of course. One nine-page article concentrated on sexual scandal; a whole series denigrated Maynooth. These presented gross Irish stereotypes, damaging to Irish Catholic interests.¹⁹³ Yet before 1829, Irish priests apparently operated locally: a Rev. B. O'Brien (1802-8) at Nevill Holt;¹⁹⁴ and Rev. Albert Plunkett, who died in Hinckley in late 1814.¹⁹⁵ A more regular inflow of Irish male personnel came only later.

Nottingham diocese developed from 1842 an ongoing relationship with the Irish seminary of All Hallows. From 1851 until c.1910, 7 priests from All Hallows came to the Diocese. Just one, Fr. James McKearney, ordained 1899, served in Leicester, at St. Patrick's.¹⁹⁶ This was presumably because Leicester was firmly within the Dominican orbit. Leicester's Irish Catholics may have benefited more from the secular products of All Hallows rather than from the rather patrician Dominicans, most of whom were not Irish and therefore lacked a basic socio-cultural familiarity with St. Patrick's.

The Dominicans were c.1850 the long-serving local providers. Of approximately 64 Dominicans priests and brothers who served in Leicester from c.1800 to c.1900, just 19 were of Irish origin or descent, not a particularly large representation. Regarding St. Patrick's from c.1800-1900, 9 of a total of 38 personnel appeared to have an Irish background of some sort (ie 24 per cent). Possibly, some small attempt was being made to base personnel with Irish connections at St. Patrick's; even so, the 1 in 4 rate is low. In fact, a majority of Dominicans (15/25) serving St. Patrick's c.1850-1900 did so for only short periods (2 years or less, on average); this may have been because it was regarded as a tough assignment. Only 6 of these were Irish.¹⁹⁷

The wider diocesan picture vis-à-vis the ratio of Irish/English clergy is available for comparison for the period post c.1880. In 1879, of 57 secular priests, 24 (42 per cent) were English and 20 (26 per cent) were Irish. In 1885, of a total of 67 seculars, 30 (or 45 per cent) were Irish; of those, 27, (40 per cent) were English.¹⁹⁸

There is some substance to the criticism that the Dominicans were essentially English in their view of themselves. Matthew (1935) makes two salient points; both derived from an unimpeachable Dominican source. Pre-1850, the English Order had

¹⁹³ *Leicester Conservative Standard*, Parts I and II, 1835-7; pages 141-5, 202-3, 257-62, 102-3, and 482-491.

¹⁹⁴ TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B., (1954), *V.C.H.L.*, II., p.55.

¹⁹⁵ See *St Peter's Parish Magazine*, No. 399, Sept. 1960; Irish Catholic burials from 1827-1858; (Hinckley Library.).

¹⁹⁶ CONDON, K. (1986) *The Missionary College of All Hallows, 1842-1891*, see p. 82 and 235.

¹⁹⁷ GUMBLEY, W. (1955), *Obituary Notices*; the six were Riley, Portley, Kavanagh, Casey, Conway and Moran.

¹⁹⁸ NDA, Bagshawe file, *Relationes*, 1879 (p.17) and 1885 (p.29).

"some of the characteristics of the English yeomanry, declining with it;" in the main "the Irish passed the order by." The famous provincial, Fr. Bede Jarrett (b.1881), was described as being "intensely English it seemed his life work to reconcile Catholicism and the English mind."¹⁹⁹ This national view is heavily underscored by uncritical comments on Dominican anglophilia in Kimberlin (1946).²⁰⁰

Irishmen in strategic positions at diocesan level had some direct and positive impact on the Irish in Leicestershire, but only after c.1875. Whilst Leicester was in the Central District (pre-1851), Bishop Walsh, a second generation bourgeois London Irish priest, was Vicar-Apostolic from 1825, and part of the De Lisle circle. The "caretaker" bishop of the new diocese (of Nottingham) was Ullathorne (1850-51), a bluff Yorkshire man who at least had an informed view of the Irish and their needs on his agenda.²⁰¹ Joseph Hendren, (1851-3), and his successor, Richard Roskell, (1853-74) show no evidence of a special awareness of Irish needs.

The great exception was the third man in the post, the Rt. Rev. Edward Gilpin Bagshawe (1874-1901). A bourgeois English Oratorian, he was of great service to the Irish community in the east midlands. His political profile was notable for its forthright public espousal of Irish political and socio-economic causes, (see Politics). He recruited Irish personnel, although few reached Leicester pre-1900. The existence of some Irish personnel at central diocesan level meant that the commitment to Irish issues, and people, went beyond just the personal inclinations of Bagshawe.

The *Relationes* files of 1885 show a notable increase in Irish personnel; not all, however, received accolades. The very promising Mathew Joseph O'Reilly (a future Liberal Councillor and School Board activist), aged 32, was at Barrow: "Irish; able, amiable and zealous, has done well at his mission." Michael Hunt served Market Harborough; "31, Irish, able, well-read and pious; was succeeding excellently, but had a breakdown in respect of temperance which causes much anxiety for his future." A few Irish clerics lived under a cloud of either suspicion, or proven wrong-doing.

The Leicester secularist McCabe noted that "Ireland furnishes most of the recruits to the English orders and clergy." Twelve years of experience as a priest equipped him to comment informatively on seminary life; of pastoral work, he remarked

¹⁹⁹MATHEW, D (1936), p.267-8; Appendix I.

²⁰⁰KIMBERLIN, A.H., (1946), p.12.

²⁰¹*Catholic Directory*, 1875 (in BDA), p.82-3; see Education.

that:

Apart from the care of the sick and the dying, and the occasional necessity of reproofing wandering sheep, the duty "visiting," which is almost their only function on the six appointed days of labour, is far from laborious.

He criticised favouritism towards the rich; "the poor and uninteresting are forgotten." Whilst visits were frequently made to female parishioners, priests internally regulated themselves by mutual jealousy; petty abuses were explained as part of an historical pattern. McCabe perhaps over-emphasised the negative.²⁰²

The five most prominent and successful Irish male clerics in the Leicester area were Fathers Egan, Bunce, Hawkins, O'Reilly and Hays. Their professional and political achievements are catalogued fully (see Table 14). Egan and Bunce fall into the category of hard-working and devoted parish priests, whilst Hawkins, Hays and O'Reilly also developed their political teeth. The latter three were effective representatives on local School Boards; O'Reilly went on to serve as a Poor Law Guardian and a County Councillor for a decade.²⁰³ Hawkins, at St. Patrick's in Leicester for 14 years, was also a successful administrator (see Education/Politics).

The later development of St Patrick's parish was an accolade to the managerial and entrepreneurial skills of the street-wise Irish-born Fr. Hawkins. St Patrick's was situated between *The Woolcombers Arms*, *The Horn of Plenty* and a pigsty. In 1894, Hawkins bought 351 yards of adjoining property, including *The Woolcombers Arms*, for £1,100. In 1898, he sold the public house for £1700 (making a clear profit and keeping the rest of the land). In 1911, *The Woolcombers* lost its licence, and Hawkins bought it back for £225. In the meantime, he erected a handsome new entrance wing to the old 1854 St Patrick's school-chapel - thereby saving it from Department of Education closure threats, and later also opened a new and licensed, parish club, thereby recycling the profits of drink back into parish control.²⁰⁴ The diocesan reports to Rome c.1880 describe Hawkins well: aged 24, his entry read: "a pious and virtuous young priest, with great energy and prudence; has worked with wonderful success under most trying circumstances." This shrewd organiser was ideal for St Patrick's, "a poor parish,

²⁰²McCabe, J. (1897), p.16, 20, 29, 31, 156-7, 176-7, 191.

²⁰³The Dominicans had a variety of personnel who were intellectually and spiritually gifted, some of whom also dabbled in politics, like Irishman Vincent McNabb.

²⁰⁴DANAHER, N. (1997), *St Patrick's School-Chapel*.

	FR. ANDREW EGAN (Rosminian) b. 1823 - d. 1889	FR. GERALD CYRIL BUNCE O.P. (Dominican) b. 1842 - d. 1893	FR. WILLIAM ALOYSIUS HAWKINS (Secular) b. 1858 - d. 1918	FR. MATTHEW JOSEPH O'REILLY (Secular) b. 1855 - d. 1934	FR. FRANCIS CUTHBERT HAYS (Secular) b. 1870 - d. 1943
Early Life, Education and Training	<i>Born:</i> Clonmore (Tipperary) Aged 10 was taught Latin, Hist. Geog, Astronomy and Maths by friends and relations. - clerical school in Templemore - Oscott Seminary (UK) in 1843 Rosminian College at Stresa (Italy)	<i>Born:</i> Kilrush, Co. Clare; brought to B'ham as a child. - Training College, Hammersmith - Dominican postulant at Hinckley. - ordained 31 Jan. 1869.	<i>Born:</i> Birr Barracks, (Tipp.) - St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill, London.;- Seminaries at Valladolid and Lisbon. Ordained 1883 by Bp. Bagshawe.	<i>Born:</i> Virginia, Co. Cavan., - Virginia Grammar School - Cavan Seminary - St. Patrick's College, Cavan. Ordained 1882 by Bp. Bagshawe.	<i>Born:</i> Liverpool. Father was CoFE; his Irish mother a sister of famous Mgr. Nugent. Studied at St. Edward's College in L'pool; then to Blackburn, London (Bayswater) and Salford. Then to Stillorgan (nr. Dublin). Ordained Nott, 1894.
Early Postings	1845, to Ratcliffe College, Leics 1847, ordained at Oscott, and Asst. Priest at Melton Mowbray 1850 Rosminians left M. Mowbray	- Oct. 1869, to Holy Cross Leicester. - 1869-70: Served Market Harborough - 1870-71, p.p. at Husband Bosworth. - 1871-72: Littlehampton, as curate	1888-86: Chaplain, Derwent Hall 1886-88: at Grimsby 1888-89: at Lincoln 1889-94: at Steaford	1882-84: at Leicester (Sacred Heart). 1884-88: Quorn/Sileby/Barrow	At St. Patrick's, Leics., for 2 yrs (1894-6) St. Patricks, Nott, (1896-7); West Bridgford (1897-1900), Market Rasen, (1900-06); away till 1910.
Main Leicester(shire) Posting(s) and Responsibilities	1850 appointed to Loughborough parish. 1852/3: missionary work amongst troops stationed in locality. 1861: Spiritual Director at L'boro Convent c.1861 - opened Industrial School, staffed by nuns, to counter trade depression and unemployment 1850 - Mob attack on L'boro Church 1852 - Pope's effigy burnt in market place 1875 - sub. opened for new school - elected to L'boro School Board - organised lending library	1872 (20 Feb.) - served St. Patrick's Leicester (from Holy Cross) till 1880 -1880-85 appointed PP at St. Patrick's when it was separated from Holy Cross. Built both Church and Presbytery at Royal East St. Applied for School Grants. 1875 - invited Dominican Nuns to teach at Holy Cross and St. Patrick's Infant Schools. 1885 London, then Newcastle. 1890 re-assigned to Holy Cross.; 1893: died of typhoid fever caught from attending sick poor. Buried MSB Abbey.	1894-1907: St. Patrick's, Leicester (Royal East Street). 1906- raised to the Chapter 1907-18: St. Mary's Glossop 1914: Diocesan Inspector of Schools. - Pro-active member of Leicester School Board from 1895-1901 - earned 'Tirade of Fr. Hawkins' headline in <i>The Wyvern</i> , 1901, for his attack on Board Schools. - 1894: removed Dominican Nuns from St. Patrick's and from Sacred Heart.	1888-1934 Whitwick. Built a new parish church and presbytery. 1898 - important pastoral work at time of Whitwick Colliery disaster (35 dead). 1902 - New parish schools built. - 1893-1900: represented Whitwick on Leics Co. Council as Liberal. - Vice-chair Barrow School Board (4 years) - Troop Ship chaplain, visiting India on several occasions. - 1898 removed Sisters of St. Paul from Whitwick Schools.	.1894-96: St. Patrick's, Royal East St. Noted for mission of the poor. - Working re School Board & Poor Law Guardians elections. - Mens' Cath. Mutual Improvement Soc; - Series of Weekly "Popular Free Concerts" - Total Abstinence Campaigner - in 1895 set up League of the Cross at St. Patrick's; - worked with non-RC activists. 1904-10: abstinence tours. 1910-15; Barrow + Sileby. 1920-41: Beeston; served on Urban District Council.
Main Sources	HIRST. J. (nd.c.1890), <i>Slight Sketch of the Life and Character of the Rev. Andrew Egan, Priest of the Order of Charity</i> (RCAL)	GUMBLEY, W. (1955), <i>Obituary Notices for the English Dominicans</i> from 1555-1952, entry No. 209 (DCAL)	<i>Priests of the Chapter 1852 - 1955</i> (obituaries); ob.17 December 1918, in (NDA); <i>The Wyvern</i> (LCRO)	<i>Coalville Times</i> of 22 Feb 1907 of 29 Jan/26 Feb 1932; and of 24/31 Aug 1934 (courtesy of Whitwick Local History Group) + NDYB Obit (nd). P.141-2.	NDA, <i>Obits, Priests of the Chapter, 1852-1955; The Wyvern</i> , No. 224, Vol. IX, 7 Feb.1896, p.243.
TABLE 14	BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARIES OF LONG-SERVING INFLUENTIAL, AND EFFECTIVE IRISH PRIESTS IN LEICS, c.1840-C.1930.				

where hard work and rough fare is the usual lot of the clergy, but the hearts of the people are warm in the Irish quarter." He took charge from 1894-1907 in "a parish for which he was well suited by reason of his forceful character and physical powers. He was, in fact, a gigantic figure of a priest, and his heart was large in proportion."²⁰⁵ At St Patrick's until 1894, the Dominican incumbents had lived in a simple double cottage opposite the school-chapel, in the midst of their flock;²⁰⁶ Hawkins continued this tradition, thereby ensuring that the pastor of the Irish was physically as well as spiritually dwelling amongst his people.

These key Irish clerics were all complex individuals. Hawkins and O'Reilly emerge as the least dovelike whilst simultaneously showing high order skills of management and enterprise. Hawkins was politically abrasive, whilst O'Reilly, also politically astute, who served in Leicester and Whitwick, was renowned for sorting out "rough houses" at an Irish public house. Hawkins was also renowned for his personal lack of interest in wealth, and could reach out effectively to non-attenders for support for St. Patrick's. Bunce too could calm his Irish parishioners as the occasion demanded, and had the foresight to register for government education grants as early as 1874. All tried, apparently to the best of their abilities,²⁰⁷ and their efforts supported an Irish community slowly developing in self-confidence.

(i) The Role of the Sisters

The great untold story of Catholic expansion in Leicestershire concerns the role of the nuns generally, and the role of Irish nuns in particular.²⁰⁸ Lee (1978) remarked of the nuns that "some of their lay brethren may have conveyed the impression that nuns should neither be seen nor heard. (But) the desexualization of women in general had its counterpart in the depersonalisation of nuns in particular in the Irish imagination. Nuns were dehumanised in public images to a far greater extent than priests." This depersonalisation was also true in English Catholicism, and is reflected in Kimberlin's standard account of 1946. Analysis, evaluation and credit are overdue, especially to the

²⁰⁵ NDA, *Priests of the Chapter 1852-1955*, Canon Hawkins; by 1914, he was Diocesan Inspector of Schools; *Catholic Directory*, 1914, p.323.

²⁰⁶ KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), p.23.

²⁰⁷ OHA/ISW, interview with Mrs C. Richardson; 1991; ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), *Holy Cross Whitwick 1837-1937*, p.19.

²⁰⁸ Janet Nolan remarks of Irish women in the USA that "although it was widely noted that the Irish dominated the American Catholic Church by the late nineteenth century, the role of Irish women - both lay and religious - in this phenomenon received very little attention," see *Ourselfs Alone - Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920*, (1989), p.88.

Irish dimension, so significant in personnel terms. Also important was the role of the nun in an age of change for women. After 1829, private convent boarding schools for middle class girls became the norm in both Britain and Ireland,²⁰⁹ the Dominicanesses and Rosminians ran them in Leicester and Loughborough respectively.²¹⁰ These fee-paying schools attracted girls who were eligible as both teachers and nuns.

That it is not realistic to discuss English convents without reference to Irish attitudes and human resources is clear even in the context of Leicester, a town not especially Irish. The modern, professional outlook of the Dominican convent in Galway c.1880 may have been reciprocated by the Leicester Dominicanesses, for there were contacts involving personnel and fund-raising between Ireland and Leicester. Leicester was served by the Dominican Sisters from 1877, who also serviced Hinckley (1887-92). The Rosminians served Whitwick (1875-80 and 1888),²¹¹ and Loughborough.

To give an idea of the rapid expansion of convents in the diocese, around 1874, there had been only 6 female communities; by 1901, this number had risen to 26 (16 of which provided elementary school teaching staff).²¹² The emphasis here is on the two orders which survived long-term: the Dominicanesses at Leicester, and for purposes of comparison, the Rosminians at Loughborough.²¹³

The Dominican house in Leicester was long in gestation. Its foundress was Mother Margaret Hallahan. She had a typical second generation London-Irish upbringing, with a number of relatives involved in the religious life. She spent 23 years in service (1813-1839) before developing her religious vocation.²¹⁴ Formally educated for just 3 years, she experienced working abroad, in Belgium. Her successor commented: "Though untrained by human scholarship, she was possessed of a rare quickness of perception, a sureness of intuitive judgement and an executive decisive and firm."

That she was shrewd, practical and financially hard-nosed is clear from a consideration of the reasons why Leicester failed, between c.1843 and c.1875, to obtain

²⁰⁹See chapter on Education, *qv* see N. CHUILLEANAIN, E. (Ed), (1985), *Irish Women - Image and Achievement: Women in Irish Culture From Earliest Times*; see McCURTAIN, M., *The Historical Image*, pp.37-50. Also very useful in LEE, J.J. (1978) *Women and the Church Since the Famine*, in McCURTAIN, M. et al (Eds), (1978), *Women in Irish Society, the Historical Dimension*, pp.42-43.

²¹⁰RCAL, prospectus of Convent of Our Lady of Dolours; and 'Memories of convent schooldays in the 1920's', re Dominican Convent of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin at junction of Fosse Rd North/Glenfield Road., *Leicester Mercury*, 4.3.1995.

²¹¹SWEENEY, (c.1950), NDA, item A4, p.68.

²¹²A further 22 convents had been set up between 1874 and 1901, none of which survived; SWEENEY (c.1950), p.68. Also the Dominicanesses had made several unsuccessful efforts to penetrate Leicester before 1877; see Education chapter.

²¹³The Franciscan Minorsses came to Melton from 1901.

²¹⁴See GUMBLEY, Fr. W. (1938).

a permanent Dominicaness presence. Only in 1875, as a result of the 1870 Education Act, did a new opportunity present itself in Leicester, leading to a permanent foundation in 1877. Mother Hallahan died in 1868.²¹⁵

Ireland contributed to Leicester's development in two ways: as a source of personnel, and of funding. Even the critic McCabe acknowledged the importance of Irish female personnel:

Ireland furnishes most of the recruits it must be admitted that there is a large amount of earnestness and religious sincerity in the vocations of women

McCabe's reflections had, however, a sting in their tail:

Still the numbers of young girls who are received into nunneries is lamentably high, and the anxiety shown by nun teachers to inspire their pupils with a 'vocation' is extremely deplorable.²¹⁶

Did the Leicester situation justify McCabe's two contentions? His remarks respecting the numbers and quality of recruits drawn from Ireland are borne out by local evidence.²¹⁷ This also indicates the significant levels of financial support from Irish sources, including that which usually accompanied incoming Irish choir nuns.

Some Irish-born Dominican sisters can be traced by inter-relating the various different convent sources (ie *Annals*, *Council Minutes* and *Necrologies*). Between 1892 and 1898, the Rev. Joseph O'Kelly, OP, based at Tallaght near Dublin, advised Leicester convent of at least 6 young girls aspiring to be choir postulants.²¹⁸ He sometimes worked with the Sisters of Mercy of Swinford, Co. Mayo.²¹⁹ Sometimes, the dowry requirement was waived, on the assumption that the new arrival had, or would soon obtain, professional qualifications as a teacher.²²⁰

The convent records give numerous indications of family support for new entrants coming from Ireland. In 1898, with regard to one Ms McDermott, "it was settled

²¹⁵BROMLEY, R. (1974), p.5.

²¹⁶McCABE, J. (1897), p.234, 156-7, 176-7.

²¹⁷Each convent enjoys local responsibility for its own archive. Dominicanesses in Leicester were researched locally, the male order in Edinburgh.

²¹⁸DCAL, *Council Record*, L16 - A(i), 1888-1893, p.100. DCAL, *Annals*, L-18, A(ii) 1892-1927; entry of 16 Oct 1898, p.41.

²¹⁹This Swinford connection may well have developed further, into the area of matching job vacancies in England (in domestic service) with the work aims of young single Irish women. Some oral history correspondents recall a Sr. Benignus in Swinford in the 1920's and '30's, who found jobs for girls in England, and who processed them for departure down to providing tips about personal hygiene and behaviour; ISW OHA; interviews and tel. calls with Mrs Kathleen Danaher, (1995/96), who originated in Charlestown 6 miles from Swinford, and Winnie Devine, also ex-Charlestown. See SCHWEITZER, P. (Ed)(1989), *Across the Irish Sea*, p.51-2, 160.

²²⁰DCAL, *Council Records*, L16 -A, (i), 13 June 1892, p.71.

that the Mother Prioress should write and ask her brother Mr Phillip McDermott of Mayo, Ireland, if he is willing to give the £300 now, provided we give her board and lodging, and laundry, allowing her £5 per annum for Dress and clothes."²²¹

In early 1892, a Mrs. O'Neil of Dublin personally accompanied her postulant daughter Josephine to Leicester. Josephine was to become Sr. Mary Catherine; Mrs. O'Neil and another daughter journeyed again from Dublin specially. For an Irish family of comfortable farming or lower middle class background, there was the added social frisson of providing a child for the service of God and the Catholic religion, which brought with it respectability as well as expense.

In the winter of 1893, Miss Jordan and Miss Griffiths, two new postulants from Dublin, were met at Leicester Station by the Prioress and Sr. Clare. In the closing months of 1896, a Miss Tormey and a Miss Fallon arrived from Dublin, to enter as postulants. Two years later a Miss Murphy arrived - as yet another choir postulant. The spring of 1903 saw Mrs. Reid, another proud mother, journey from Ireland to be at her daughter's first profession as a nun.²²²

So effective, indeed, was the international Dominican recruiting network that in 1870, when Mother Gillespie of the American Holy Cross Sisters journeyed to Ireland, she encountered an unexpected level of difficulty in finding recruits because "the Dominican Sisters first, then the Sisters of Mercy and their Bishop have thoroughly gleaned the country." Diner's study of Irish women in America noted that the "presence of large numbers of girls from Ireland may have played a very important role in convincing significant numbers of Irish-American girls to take vows themselves and enter some of the same religious communities." It is clear that some similarities existed in Leicester. (See Education).

Did the Dominican nuns benefit from Irish entrants? Detailed cross-referencing of sources has helped establish the nature, duration and numbers involved in teaching (see Education). When all the Dominican necrologies were consulted, of 16 teaching nuns who resided in Leicester at some time, 8 were Irish-born, with a further 4 being of Irish parentage. Of the Dominican Sisters' teaching force in Leicester, 75 per cent was of Irish background. Almost certainly, some of the second generation Irish were

²²¹DCAL, *Annals*, L16-A(ii), 13 Aug. 1898, p.39.

²²²DCAL, *Annals*, L18A, 2.2.1893, 23.11.1896, 15.9.1893, 10.4.1903. Also, see SCHWEITZER (Ed)(1989), p.110.

influenced by nuns, many of whom were of Irish origin. For example, at the private boarding school, between 1875 and 1887, at least 4 girls trained as pupil-teachers.

Taking the necrology records as a whole, of all the Dominican sisters born before c.1885, 17 out of 39 were Irish born, 44 per cent (43.6), or almost half the total; a further 8 were identified as of Irish extraction, which increases the Irish element to 64 per cent,²²³ virtually two-thirds of the entire complement. The Irish contribution, then, to the Dominican sisterhood in Leicestershire was a markedly significant one, bearing comparison with international patterns at this period.²²⁴

This trend is also significant in Rosminian recruitment at Loughborough. 41 per cent possessed Irish surnames.²²⁵ Irish recruitment could be direct, or indirect (ie. via the boarding school).²²⁶ The *Admission Register* yielded useful data: by 1900, 296 female students had been entered; this increased to 361 by 1916, when the entries cease. *The Register* provided each girl's full name, the dates of her arrival and departure, her home residence, her father's occupation, and, revealingly, whether or not she in turn became a nun. Of the 361 names, 80 could be clearly identified as being of Irish origin, (based on residence or birth-place). In fact, 37 had Irish residence, mainly in towns, especially Dublin; where fathers' occupations were entered for these 37, they were generally either businessmen or professionals. Just 5 went on to become nuns, around 13.5 per cent, which suggests limited success in inculcating vocations. If the 5 are put against the 80 who were probably Irish, then the percentage of in-house students entering the order drops to just 6.3 per cent. 10 students with Irish surnames and middle class fathers came from Leicester; 2 became nuns. This second generation batch is significant in that it points to a few local Irish becoming wealthy enough to send their daughters to boarding schools between 1852 and 1909.²²⁷ So in relation to McCabe's two points, whilst it is true that for Leicestershire, Ireland did furnish English convents with a large amount of personnel, recruitment from the in-house boarding schools does

²²³The DCAL Necrologies (Obituaries) are: Vol. L9 (N), 1927-67; L9 (N) - 4(I), 1935-41; green Vol. L9 (N) - 6(I), 1947-53. These cover all sisters in the order, not just the Leicester congregation, but as many nuns served in various locations they are adequately cross-representative.

²²⁴e.g. Of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Adelaide (Australia) in 1871, 64 per cent (81/127) were Irish; Irish and Irish-Australian together comprised 90 per cent; see TRANTER, Sr. J.; *The Irish Dimension of an Australian Religious Sisterhood: the Sisters of St. Joseph*, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed) (1996), *Religion and Identity, The Irish World Wide*, Vol. 5, p.236.

²²⁵RCAL, 'Green' Necrology folders; a conversation with the Mother Superior, Sr. Bernard, solicited the Order's own internal estimates as being one-third each of English, Welsh and Irish personnel. In the case of the Irish, this was clearly an underestimation (14.6.1995).

²²⁶RCAL, *Boarding School Admission Register* (from 1850); and RCAL, *Letters of Antonio Rosmini Serbati* (1901), Vol. I and II; from part II of Vol. I; Letter No. CLVI-CCCLII (p.462)

²²⁷RCAL, *Admission Register*, analysis. Entry No. 410 was the last Irish one in October 1915; presumably the feelings raised by the 1916 Rising and its aftermath fractured the Irish connection after this date.

not seem to have been as irresponsible as McCabe suggested.

At this time, especially in Ireland and Britain, the female religious orders provided opportunities for able women to exercise their talents in leadership and organisational skills. McCabe's comment that "they frequently request priests to secure aspirants for their congregations," is borne out by the evidence from the Dominicaness archive, where it is clear that Fr. O'Kelly was actively involved as recruiter. Given the pattern involving him as a regular and long-term contact, both he and the convent obviously had an understanding that transformed itself into practical outcomes.²²⁹ Furthermore, many of the aspirants were genuinely imbued with enthusiasm, or they would not have survived the rigours of novitiate training and discipline.

Class rather than ethnicity influenced a nun's designation as choir or lay. There were important differences involving status, family background, mutual attitudes, convent tasks and apparel. In 1858, the Dominicans in Galway introduced lay sisters so that they could do away with hired domestics; this helped improve both discipline and finances.²³⁰ In Ireland, the expectations of lay sisters were not always rigorous.²³¹ As to dowries, these varied in size. A new Dominicaness in Galway in 1908, straight from their school, brought with her £500 from her father as her dowry; this compares well with the £300 Mr. McDermott of Mayo had provided for his daughter who entered the Leicester Dominicanesses in 1898. From c.1850-c.1950, the growing numbers of Catholic personnel in Ireland were drawn disproportionately from "the respectable and fairly comfortable class of the tenant farmers".²³²

A glimpse into the daily existence of lay sisters in Leicester is provided in St. Catherine's *Annals*. In 1889 a new duty rota outlined the lay sisters' tasks: Sr. Veronica ran the kitchen, Sr. Philomena the laundry, whilst Sr. Patrick was to clean and sew. In 1890, the conditions of appointment for lay sisters were clarified: they first had to serve for at least 12 months as a postulant, and a further 3 years as a novice; furthermore, they would have to secure at least two-thirds of all the votes of the sisters of the whole convent at their formal "clothing," and, indeed, at all the other stages of the process of formal profession.²³³ The necessity to seek support from the other sisters must have

²²⁹McCABE, J., (1897), p.156 and 176.

²³⁰CLEAR, C. (1987), p.94.

²³¹CLEAR, C. (1987), p. 92.

²³²GUINAN, Fr. (1903), *Priest and People in Doon*, cited in LEE, J.J, *Women and the Church since the Famine*, in MacCURTAIN, M. And O'CORRAIN, D. (EDS)(1978), *Woman in Irish Society* : p.37; DCAL, LI6A.

²³³DCAL, *Council Records*, L16 - A (I), 1888 - 1893; entries of 13 Oct. 1889 and 4 Jan 1890 respectively, p. 20 and p.28.

placed the onus on lay sisters to be obedient, obliging, and to work hard.²³⁴

One instance of revolt by an Irish lay Dominicaness occurred. Sr. Philomena, (Ellen Flatherty) refused, repeatedly, to carry out certain tasks. She was cautioned in December 1892 for being "impertinent" and threatened with expulsion; she repented. In August 1893 the Bishop himself came to hear her version of events. Sr. Philomena, this time together with a Sr. Agnes, were arraigned for "grave and repeated disobedience and disrespect." Agnes gave in under the strain, and remained in the order, after being served with a solemn warning; on 15 August 1894 Sr. Philomena left the convent to return to the secular life. At this distance, it is tempting to speculate: was Sr. Philomena an early practioner of women's rights in action; was she being singled out for reasons of class or ethnicity; or was she just a difficult person to deal with?²³⁵ It would seem that modernising, liberal tendencies towards female emancipation did not trickle down to the level of the lay sisters, but remained a factor only for choir nuns who enjoyed greater status socially and financially.

For an individual of working class background with talents and skills, such as Mother Hallahan, the possibilities of the sisterhood in the period were liberating. Her successors were humbled by such as Fr. Hawkins, the son of an Irish soldier in the British Army. The status of nuns ultimately was in the eye of the male beholder. Whilst nuns could be exposed to pressure inside the convent, and could also work on the "front line" as teachers and home visitors, an element of misogyny operated. Even if other pressures were survived, the male religious at the end of all enjoyed the ultimate grasp on clerical power. To male religious, in the final analysis, nuns were there to obey, whether Choir or Lay.

(g) Conclusion

Catholic development in Leicester in the nineteenth century clearly had a well defined Irish dimension to it in terms of the long-term commitment of lay participants, the leadership roles of male and female religious personnel; and its impact on the contemporary social agenda. The body of Leicester Catholics had a numerically

²³⁴DCAL, *Council Records*, L16 A(i), 1888-1893, Dec. 1892, p.84-5; 13 Aug. 1893, p.99; in L16 A(ii) 1894-917, 9-11; *Annals* L18 A, 1892-1927, 15 Aug. 1894.

important Irish proportion, even before the "Famine", and one which was prepared to work with English, Protestant, and liberal interests. From c.1850, in the city, both Holy Cross, and especially St. Patrick's, had significant Irish profiles in terms of parish catchment and activities.

Irish Catholics in this part of the east midlands shared many of those cultural characteristics analysed amongst Irish migrants in London, the Manchester area, and elsewhere. By c.1900, a large proportion was marrying out, despite the fact that in this period general religious observance was on the whole frequently maintained.

Male and female religious personnel, of Irish birth and descent, both in city and county, played a significant role in internal and external church activities.²³⁶ This was especially so after c.1875, with the added bonus of an actively involved bishop, Dr. Bagshawe, who was openly and sympathetically committed on Irish political and socio-economic issues, as the incumbent until 1901. The period of intense, overt local anti-Catholic prejudice, c.1830 to c.1865, was slowly declining across the period, which assisted a new spirit of confidence, and a renewed relationship with friendly Protestant elements. However, extreme Protestant opinion and activity persisted into the new century, and Irish Catholic elements continued to enjoy a varying level of acceptance.

Individual Irish priests were proactive, influential and self-confident about liaising with the secular authorities, some to the point of becoming successful local politicians. Irish female religious of the Dominicans and Rosminians played an essential role as educators. It seems to have been the case that in regard to the male religious, Irish interests in Leicester were best served less by the Dominicans than by those key secular clergy of the 1890-1910 period, most of whom were Irish born.

The failure until now to recognise and celebrate the Irish contribution to Catholic growth in Leicestershire is a reflection of those processes of incorporation and denationalization which imprinted on Catholic education. The English-born Bagshawe, an open friend to Irish causes, was succeeded in 1907 by a cleric with an imperialist and militarist part, who had fought with the British in the Sudan. Such an appointment symbolically closed the door on the diocese's politically heretical past.²³⁷

²³⁶A detailed analysis of the Irish contribution of Mount St Bernard's Abbey is beyond our scope; the Irish-born percentages of the personnel were as follows: 1841 (47%), 1851 (82%); 1871 (57%), 1881 (40%) and 1891 (29%).

²³⁷A century later, Bagshawe's name still does not grace any diocesan institution.

CHAPTER 6

EDUCATION: IDENTITY, INCORPORATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

"The Committee have had occasion to remark a great inequality in the resources of schools. One fortunate mission may have an endowed school, a wealthy and willing congregation, and a successful festive gathering year by year, to raise school funds. Travel ten miles, and you will find a numerous congregation of Irish, numbering among them not even a single shopkeeper, with work uncertain and wages low : the priest leading a life of apostolic privation, anxious for his school, but without resources to keep it open. The Committee's fund corrects these inequalities."

Second Annual Report, 1849, of the Catholic Poor Schools Committee. (page 35).

"The poor have come, through force of circumstances, to be a migratory race, and especially the poor Irish The battle with their present needs absorbs such strength of mind as they possess. Their thoughts are with the trials or relaxations of the hour. They are not much given to calculate the future. Many of the poor would not send their children to school were it not for the influence of the clergy. But in the manufacturing towns, and mining districts, they leave school at seven or eight years old, and taking the average attendance throughout England, not more than twelve per cent remain beyond their twelfth year; whilst, in the most populous places, the average of attendance is reduced to about ten per cent at beyond the age of eight or nine years at most; but after the age of seven and eight, the numbers always diminish very rapidly."

Bishop Ullathorne, (1857) *Notes on the Education Question* (page 48.)

"Again, parents have a right and a duty from God to educate their children, and bring them up in the knowledge and fear and love of their Creator, and of His holy revealed law. They have a right to be protected, and, if need be, assisted in exercising this their right and fulfilling this their duty. Now however their right to choose the schools and teachers they may think best for their children is seriously curtailed and threatened, religious education is made more and more difficult, while unlimited wealth and power are given to schools in which every Christian creed or formulary is proscribed, and in which no religious tenets may be definitely or authoritatively taught. Too often already are Catholic children compelled to attend these schools of religious indifference and unbelief. Unless Catholics strive hard they will soon all be forced to go there."

Bishop Edward Gilpin Bagshawe of the Diocese of Nottingham (1874-1901) in *Mercy and Justice to the Poor - The True Political Economy* (1885), (page 16.)

CHAPTER 6

EDUCATION: IDENTITY, INCORPORATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PAGE	CONTENTS
228	(a) Introduction.
232	(b) The Curriculum:
232	(i) The joint system debate.
233	(ii) The Aims and Objectives of Catholic education.
235	(iii) Curriculum and Identity: Meeting the Needs of Irish Pupils, Catholic and Protestant.
248	(c) The Allocation of Scarce Financial Resources:
248	(i) Patronage and Grants, c.1840 - c.1895.
251	(ii) The role of the Catholic Poor School Committee locally.
260	(d) Funding and Building: Bazaars, Begging and Tea Parties.
266	(e) The Role of Irish Nuns as Teachers.
274	(f) Conclusion.

TABLES RELATING TO CHAPTER 6

Page		
231	1	R.C. Poor School provision in Leicestershire from the Government Returns of 1833 and 1845.
238	2	Recognition of St. Patrick's Day at Holy Cross R C School (Leicester), 1880-1905.
239	3	Observance of St. Patrick's Day in Holy Cross R C School (Whitwick) c.1864-1905.
242	4	Achievement by Reference to Government Standards of Pupils in Leicester's R C Schools : Standards I to VI (1898-9).
252	5	Denominational Schools in Leicester in 1851.
253	6	Cash Collections in Leicestershire Churches for Catholic Education by CPSC, 1849-52 and 1875-6.
254	7	CPSC statistics re: physical state of R C Schools in Leicestershire in 1849.
255	8	CPSC Educational Statistics re: Needs Analysis for R C Schools in Leicestershire in 1852.
256	9	(a) CPSC Grants to Leicestershire Schools : 1849-1875.
257		(b) PRO Data for Leics. R.C. Schools 1874/5, 1881/2 and 1894/5 re: Pupil Numbers, Attendance and Government Grants
267	10	Irish Teaching Dominicanesses at Leicester.

(a) Introduction

There are few in-depth analyses of education provision for Irish migrant communities in nineteenth century Britain. Swift recently observed that "the themes of poverty, public health and housing have received proportionately more attention than education and crime."¹ Sources are disparate and geographically scattered; much local evidence lies in central government and Catholic national archives.² Particularly useful are Handley's accounts and the recent analysis by Hickman (1995). Beales (1950) provides a still useful general survey.

It will be shown that the church-state education of Irish Catholics in Leicester "was based on constructing children as different not only in terms of their class and religious backgrounds, but also in terms of their ethnicities." This reflected the institutional differentiation and segregation of the Irish Catholic working class, and resulted in a curriculum and infrastructure designed to denationalize and to incorporate the Irish in Britain. (Hickman, 1998).³

The central aim of this chapter is to examine the educational services offered by the Catholic church for the Irish of Leicester. An externally imposed, restricted curriculum failed to cater adequately for the pedagogic and individual needs of the Irish of whatever generation. The infrastructure was minimally funded throughout the period, self-help being a ubiquitous consideration. Patronage and central grants tended to register in the interests of small rural schools; the school which served the geographical and numerical urban core of Leicester's Irish community, St Patricks, was permanently short of resources. The Dominicans prioritised their central school at Holy Cross Priory, to the detriment of St Patrick's mission, even though the latter had the greatest pupil numbers and therefore the largest element of needs to satisfy.

Disadvantage was reinforced internally by parental shortcomings vis-à-vis expectations and attendance. Irish men and women, especially the Dominican nuns, played a significant role as teachers, even though this contribution has until now gone

¹See SWIFT, R; *The Historiography of the Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain: Some perspectives*, in BUCKLAND, P., and BELCHEM, J., (Eds) (1993), *The Irish in British Labour History*, p.15.

²ULLATHORNE (1857), *Notes on the Education Question*, BDA; this is a key document.

³HANDLEY, J.E. (1943), *The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845*, pp.280-283; and *The Irish in Modern Scotland* (1947); Ch. VII pp.191-239; HICKMAN, M. (1995), *Religion, Class and Identity: The state of the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain*; and Education for 'Minorities': Irish Catholics in Britain, in LEWIS, G. (Ed)(1998), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*, p. 140-176.

unrecognized.⁴ Until post-1944, very few Irish achieved upward mobility via their education.

Of the 3 Catholic schools in 1891, only St. Patrick's has not had its early history recorded - an indication of its marginalisation. Although children of Irish descent attended all 3 schools, St. Patrick's, as its name implies, and demographic evidence indicates, was designed to cater specially for the Irish migrants. From c.1860 it had the largest attendance, but was poorest in regard to gentry patronage and Catholic Poor Schools Committee (CPSC) grants.

In 1829, Catholics were educationally isolated. In 1847, the well-organized national bureaucracy of the CPSC emerged. By 1850, Catholic self-help produced a basic network of elementary provision. Prior to 1850, Leicester was in the Central District; post-1850, in the Diocese of Nottingham.⁵

From 1847, Catholic policy-makers sought an equitable share of government grants, thereby integrating Catholic schools into state planning; from 1870 until 1902, the priority was securing a fair allocation of local rates. Political and religious civil rights became as important as fiscal issues. The four main problems post-1870 were: the rating of voluntary schools; the linking of the state grant with the total of voluntary subscriptions; the impossibility of obtaining a grant where the local School Board claimed it could accommodate the denominational pupils; and the loss of time and wages involved by indigent parents having to make application to the Poor Law Guardians in person, during working hours, for remission of school fees.⁶

The proactive attitude of the CPSC compares with the wariness of Bishop Ullathorne, the Midlands incumbent c.1850. He was concerned that "freedom and independence of action" might be lost if state aid was to be received.⁷ He pinpointed the Irish as a problem:

Far beyond our natural share of the English poor we have the whole immigration of Irish poor thrown upon our unassisted hands, They are not only the very poorest of the people, but they are the least

⁴Detailed analyses have been carried out as part of this research on both Irish teaching personnel and on the attendance figures for Irish community children 1841-91; the length limitations of the thesis prevent their inclusion here.

⁵Records for the mid-century are in both the Birmingham and the Nottingham Diocesan Archives. The Dominican male order's local archives are in Blackfriars, Edinburgh; the Dominicaness records are in Leicester and at the Mother House in Stone, Staffordshire. Other relevant material is in the LCRO. All have been consulted.

⁶BEALES, A. in BECK, G.A. (1950), pp.367-8.

⁷ULLATHORNE (1857) p.7-9.

befriended.

Leicester reflected Ullathorne's conclusion: the Irish were marginalised socially and economically by their fellow Catholics. The CPSC report of 1849, (see title page), gives the clearest indication of such local pools of unrelieved Irish poverty amidst relative plenty.

The early prioritising of school provision over chapel construction is reflected in Leicester. Fielding emphasises the importance of the school in "creating a separate Catholic identity." Hickman remarks that:

..... one of the chief aims of Catholic state education in Britain has been to incorporate and denationalize the children of working-class Irish migrants state assisted Catholic elementary schooling came to be viewed as the principal long-term means of resolving the "problem" posed by the Irish Catholic working class.⁸

Catholic education had a limited dual role: to offer elementary education generally, and to service the religious needs of its clientele, especially new and potential converts.

Leicester, despite its vibrant Protestantism, boasted two Catholic elementary schools founded in 1824:⁹ at Holy Cross Priory, and at Belgrave Gate, later to be St Patrick's, where pupils were taught in a hired room both in daytime and the evening.¹⁰ (Refer Table 1 for evidence of situation in 1833 and 1845). In 1833, only Sunday School was available for both sexes; day school was for boys only; by 1845, there were five schools (ie schoolrooms) for Catholic children (Holy Cross with 2; Belgrave Gate, later St. Patrick's; and Shepshed and Whitwick in the county).¹¹ Presumably the Belgrave Gate 1824 foundation lasted until the purpose-built St. Patrick's was erected in 1854.¹² Irish consumer demand existed; parish registers indicate Irish in the Belgrave Gate area who patronised the nearby chapel at Causeway Lane. In 1846, Holy Cross had "a day and Sunday School, the former attended by about 90, and the latter by 150 children the school was enlarged in 1845 in Belgrave Gate is an Infant School, connected with the chapel;" (ie St. Patrick's).¹³

⁸FIELDING (1993), P.61; HICKMAN (1995), 12-16.

⁹KIMBERLIN, in *Catholic Education in Leicester After the Reformation*, Part I, *HCM*, Aug. 1957, No. 4, p.6.

¹⁰KIMBERLIN, (1946), 1746-1946, p.19.

¹¹KITCHING, J, Part II:, 1969, pp.1-12.

¹²RIMMINGTON, G.T. (1978), p.46, lists 3 RC schools in 1851. See Table 5.

¹³White's Directory, 1846, p.91-2. (in DPAL).

TABLE 1

R. C. POOR SCHOOL PROVISION IN LEICESTERSHIRE FROM THE RETURNS OF 1833 AND 1845								
	DAY		DAY & SUNDAY		SUNDAY		PROTESTANT	
	1833	1845	1833	1845	1833	1845	1833	1845
Places	1	5	-		2	-	-	
Rooms	1	7	-		2	-	-	
Boys	80	225	-		122	-	-	
Girls	-	205	-		122	-	-	
Totals	80	430	-		224	-	-	
<p>NOTES:</p> <p>a) For 1845, no "Day & Sunday" data was sought, and no entry was made under "Protestant."</p> <p>b) The 1845 returns listed "places required", the figure for Leicester being 590; a "day and Sunday" category was not included in this year.</p> <p>c) Source; KITCHING. J., The Catholic Poor Schools 1800-1845, Part II, in <i>Journal of Educ. Admin. & History</i>, Vol. II. No. 1, Dec. 1969, p.2-4.</p>								

The 1824 founding dates are supported by baptisms data indicating military mobilisation involving Irish Catholic soldiery, whilst the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor* estimates 300 resident in Leicester by this date.¹⁴ (See Settlement, and the development of Catholicism). The evidence suggests that St. Patrick's mission was to be the poor relation vis-à-vis Holy Cross as its parishioners were poor, low status immigrants.

Catholic activity was partly a reaction to local Protestant competition. Pre-1850 there was a significant expansion in provision,¹⁵ particularly evident in St. Margaret's, the largest parish, which absorbed by far the largest number of in-migrants, including the great majority of the Irish.¹⁶ In 1832, 19 separate Protestant schools functioned.¹⁷ These were a threat to Catholics in a proselytising age. Some few of the Irish may well have been Protestants, whose needs were different; (see (b) iii). Inter-faith rivalry over schooling was widespread. Large's analysis of the Irish in Bristol in 1851 notes bitter resentment at a local Catholic school attracting Irish pupils from the ragged school and local reformatory. Catholics felt equally strongly:

There is little Barney Branagan in the street quietly going to be entrapped into some establishment where he will be taught to swear at the Pope, and laugh at the Blessed Virgin.¹⁸

(b) The Curriculum

(i) The joint system debate

Liverpool Corporation from 1835-41 experimented with the "Irish System" in their schools. This involved interdenominational schools using agreed and supposedly non-partisan religious texts. The defeat of this experiment by an Anglican-Tory alliance, which powerfully linked hostility to Catholicism with "The Irish Question," ended prospects for such a system nationally. Hickman notes that many in the Catholic hierarchy pre-1850 "would have accepted interdenominational schools as long as the

¹⁴LCRO, microfilm MF 144 of *Holy Cross (& Causeway Lane) RC Baptismal Register, 1785-1814*; original in BMAS 32, 682 (F101-120), where 16/185 between 1800-1811 involve 1 or more Irish partners, (ie 19% of total). Also, see Appendix G, in 1836 *Rep. on Irish Poor in GB*, 1836 Vol. XXVIII, p.164.

¹⁵FIELDING-JOHNSON, T. (1896/1901) *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester*, pp.383-5.

¹⁶EVANS, R.H., *Leicester and Leicestershire 1835-1971*, in PYE, N. (Ed) (1972), *Leicester and its Region*, Ch.12, p.291.

¹⁷LCRO, *The Leicestershire Directory for 1832*, p.39.

¹⁸LARGE, D; *The Irish in Bristol in 1851*; in SWIFT, R and GILLEY, S., (1985), p.48; BDA, *The Rambler*, Vol. III, March 1855, p. XV.

Church retained full control of the religious instruction of Catholic children."¹⁹ Handley recorded similar findings in Scotland. The experiment was reflected in Leicester. In 1828, a plan had emerged for the establishment of undenominational infant schools. Its authors were Whig reformers; two owned estates in Ireland (Otway Cave, and Paget). Lack of funds, and the prevalent Tory-inspired anti-Catholic feeling of the late 1820's, explain the non-fruit of the project.²⁰

Given the profoundly Protestant local traditions, there is, surprisingly, evidence of joint co-operation in Leicester between Catholic and Dissenter "friends of civil and religious liberty" prior to 1829;²¹ and in 1838, a local editorial still vainly suggested that "we should follow the system so wisely ordered in Ireland, where the children of all religious sects could be educated in common, not falling prey to the storm of party and faction."²²

Leicester then experienced educational expansion from c.1835. The two Catholic schools were not properly resourced. In 1832, Dissenters but not Catholics in St. Margarets parish received funding.²³ Of 184 schools enumerated in 1851, 27 were identified as "public day schools"; 19 had religious affiliations : 12 Anglican, 4 Non-Conformist and 3 Roman Catholic. The spread of Protestant schools gave Catholics concern over competition and leakage.

(ii) The aims and objectives of Catholic Education

The aims and objectives of Holy Cross School have been described by Bromley:

Adults and children alike were hungry for the rudiments of the three Rs and the elaborate precise moral theology of the Catechism. A proletariat which endured the Hungry Forties in their red brick slums were avid not for wealth but for literacy, for theology, for philosophy.²⁴

¹⁹HICKMAN, M.J, *Integration or Segregation, the education of the Irish in Britain in Roman Catholic voluntary-aided schools*, in *Brit. J of Sociology of Educ.*, Vol.14, No. 3, 1993, p.297. For a full discussion, see HICKMAN (1995).

²⁰HANDLEY, J. (1943), *The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845*, pp260-261; see PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), *Radical Leicester 1780-1850*, p.161.

²¹See chapter on RC growth: and PATTERSON, (1954), p.163, p.65, and p.101.

²²In 1816, Fr. Joseph Berington wrote to Dr. Kirk that some of their fellow Catholic leaders were much opposed to joint teaching: "They seem to think, at least they say it, that they would rather the poor Irish children should remain ignorant and exposed to profligacy than receive normal instruction from a Protestant teacher." BDA, C2152, letter of 12 September 1816, from Berington to Kirk. LC (n.d) of 1838, cited in WILLIAMS, D (1960), *Leicester and Education Before 1870*;

²³RIMMINGTON, G.T. *Education, Politics and Society in Leicester, 1833-1903* (1978), p.39.

²⁴BROMLEY, R. (1974), *150th Anniversary, Holy Cross School Leicester, 1824-1974*, pp.4-5. Bromley, an ex-Anglican, taught at Holy Cross.

The claim that Catholics prioritised spiritual rather than temporal objectives is exaggerated. Barclay's experience of being forced from school to work aged eight was typical.²⁵ Yet there was support from Irish Catholics for education, as witnessed by the continued expansion of St Patrick's. The problem with Bromley's claims lie in their over-sophisticated and religiously triumphalist tones. Migrants supported Catholic schools for a variety of reasons : personal, community, cultural and ethnic, as well as religious.

At root there is a confusion between educational and religious objectives . Kimberlin indicates the early limitations in provision: teaching was voluntary, limited to the evenings, and for poor men and boys only.²⁶ Contact was being made dually - "for all interested in Catholicism or education." The underlying preoccupation of many English Catholics was the conversion of England. Tributes to the early Dominicans confuse the processes of conversion and education.²⁷

Converts of all classes were targets for Catholic education. Ambrose de Lisle wrote enthusiastically about the growing numbers of poor Protestant pupils at Holy Cross, remarking:²⁸ "I do believe in 30 years there will not be a Protestant in Leicester."²⁹ These sentiments represent a proselytising wishful thinking. A caring Catholicism found a fertile field in economically depressed north-east Leicestershire.³⁰ Catholic education in Leicester then, was perceived at two levels: elementary education with a religious input; and Catholic instruction for converts.

Kitching elucidates three functions for the early mission: delivering an education; promoting religious instruction; and serving as an embryonic pre-welfare state community centre.³¹ The first two explain the dichotomy in relation to Holy Cross School's developing functions. Bromley comments on "an English Dominican tradition that the child should be directed to those books and skills, which will develop his personality and culture without excessive concern for temporal gain."³² This is an

²⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.14.

²⁶KIMBERLIN, Part I, in *HCM*, August 1957, No. 4, p.5; see also KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), pp.16-19. This helps to explain why there were no female scholars in the 3-14 age bracket noted in the 1841 Census; see section (d).

²⁷KIMBERLIN, (1957) pp 4 & 5.

²⁸A de L to Kenelm Digby in DeLP; 25/9/1827, No. 1.

²⁹A de L/KD, 13 April 1830, De LP, No. 9.

³⁰BENCE-JONES, M. (1992) *The Catholic Families*, p.147.

³¹KITCHING, J., *The Catholic Poor Schools 1800-1845 : Part I*, in *J of Educ. Admin and History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, June (1969), p.3.

³²BROMLEY, R (1974), p.4.

oblique defence of a tailored proletarian curriculum, and difficult to reconcile with the realities of elementary provision.

Separate and highly privileged provision was made for middle and upper class Catholics. Mathew refers to those few well-to-do Irish who sent their sons to Stoneyhurst, the Catholic public school.³³ The 1879 and 1885 Diocesan reports to Rome noted around 10 private colleges for around 400 male and female pupils, such as Ratcliffe in Leicestershire. Very few indeed of these were Irish, apart from small numbers of reasonably well-to-do girls arriving from Ireland to be either nuns, or trainee teachers (see section e).³⁴

(iii) Curriculum and Identity : Meeting the Needs of Irish Pupils, Catholic and Protestant

That the second generation Irish might be different from their parents was part of central government's concern in the standard questionnaire of 1836:

"Do the Irish in your neighbourhood mix much with the native inhabitants, and adopt their habits and customs; or do they remain distinct from them, and retain their own peculiarities; and is there any difference in their respects between the Irish who come from Ireland and the children of Irish parents born in Great Britain?"

The Prior of Holy Cross replied: "Dependant on their location, associating with English or Irish, as their neighbours may happen to be, apparently falling into the habits and customs in general of the natives."³⁵ He did not mention the second generation; the route to assimilation appeared to be that most favoured by both the Irish and their hosts. Catholic education played its role in this process.

Given the Victorian pedagogic preoccupation with a basic curriculum, payment by results, and the consensus on educating people to fit their station in life, it is hard to accept Bromley's claims regarding Holy Cross. The paucity of resources and the nature of the teaching materials point to severe limitations.³⁶ The fact that auto-didacts like Barclay escaped indicates their tenacity, will power and innate abilities. Holy Cross

³³MATHEW, D. (1936/55), *Catholicism in England*, pp.185-6.

³⁴N.D.A. Bishop's *Relationes* File for 1879, p.16, and 1885. See HORNSBY-SMITH, M. (1978) *Catholic Education - the Unobtrusive Partner*, for a discussion of English Catholic class consciousness and elitism; p.4.

³⁵1836 *Report on Irish Poor in GB* (App.G,) p.164 156.

³⁶BROMLEY, R. (1974) p.4.

parish Lending Library offered religious books on payment of a penny. A wider learning opportunity presented itself when the Free Library opened in 1870:

..... I was one of the earliest borrowers What, be able to get books without buying or renting? Yes, it was no fiction. What rapture! *Handy Andy, Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*.....

A motivated second generation Irish child could then explore their cultural inheritance, but only by making independent efforts. Barclay understood the anglicization process:

outside the house everything was English: my catechism, lessons, prayers, songs, tales, games - "English, quite English."

His literacy and cultural identity he credited to his mother's efforts:

She was well acquainted with the old legends of Oisín, and Fionn, and Cúchullán, and the Gobáin Sair, and could sing and recite a goodly number of old Irish songs and poems transmitted orally from generation to generation But what had I to do with all that? I was becoming English! I did not hate things Irish, but I began to feel that they must be put away; they were inferior to things English. How could it be otherwise?³⁷

The class factor also intruded. Clear noted that most nuns would not educate children above their station, remarking that "a similar attitude was attributed to Mother Margaret Hallahan, an Irish woman." Hallahan led the attempts to involve nuns in education in Leicester in the 1860's.³⁸ This was the reality of a curriculum "without excessive concern for temporal gain;" it did not augur well for any second generation Irish student with intellectual or social ambition.

A revealing interpretation of the aims of Catholic education came when the new Holy Cross School opened in 1886. The Earl of Denbigh as guest speaker reiterated the themes of religious and moral training, attacked socialism, and supported constituted authority:

Lately a great number of persons had been admitted to the franchise, and asked to choose their rulers Children and older persons alike should learn the duty of obedience to constituted authority, the authority should come from God, through the Sovereign and officers who were

³⁷BARCLAY, T., (1934) p. 15-16, 23, 24, 3 and 10.

³⁸CLEAR, C. (1987), *Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland* p.119; Hallahan was in fact second generation Irish (see below).

legitimately set over the people. He trusted that education which was imparted at Holy Cross Schools would tend to make its recipients good Christians and loyal subjects - good Englishmen and good Irishmen. Hear! Hear!³⁹

The admission that enfranchisement necessitated improved education is interesting - especially as Denbigh's emphasis lay on the traditional value of obedience to established authority. Given the topicality of Fenianism and Home Rule, it was predictable that such a dignitary would abjure young and impressionable pupils about the dangers of radical Irish politics.⁴⁰ Some Leicester Irish had supported the Young Irelanders and then the Fenians,⁴¹ hence the Earl's injunction to be "good Irishmen."

Bromley's evidence reflects these assumptions about political consciousness and implied loyalty. The *Holy Cross Log Book*, (1887-1902), celebrated such events as a cavalry review, royal birth and wedding days, military victories, and a coronation.⁴² Whilst it is true that all pupils would participate in celebrations of state occasions, for those of Irish nationalist consciousness, the schools' activities would inevitably create conflicts in childrens' minds. Denbigh's injunction to be "good Irishmen" indicates that pupils were still identified as Irish, and therefore needed to be suitably conditioned. This corroborates Hickman's contention that the Catholic system incorporated and denationalized Irish pupils.⁴³

Patrician observance provides another gauge of Irish needs in education. (Table 2). Of a possible 50 occasions (ie between 1880 and 1905 in the two departments) when St. Patrick's Day could be legitimately marked, only 9 were celebrated - a 20 per cent rate of response. Barclay's comments on Patrician observance in Leicester in 1896 tend to suggest an active city picture (see notes 3 & 4, Table 2). As Gilley remarks, "patriotic religiosity was the salvation of the Irish slum."⁴⁴ The Irish colony at Whitwick seemed more overt in its declarations of cultural identity (Refer Table 3). An 1895 procession included the hymn '*Hail Glorious St. Patrick*', and at the foundation of the new school

³⁹Leicester Daily Post of 2 Aug. 1886; quoted in BROMLEY, p.8.

⁴⁰See SHORT, K.(1979), *The Dynamite War*.

⁴¹BARCLAY, p.6,11.

⁴²BROMLEY, pp.12, 21 and 11.

⁴³See HICKMAN in LEWIS, G (Ed)(1998), p.165-171.

⁴⁴GILLEY, S., The R.C Mission to the Irish in London 1840-1860, in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Oct. 1969, p.141. The Whitwick Holy Cross Church Silver Band, c.1911, had four Slattery's in its ranks, from a large family of Irish descent; (photo, Coahville Lib.)

TABLE 2 RECOGNITION OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, LEICESTER, 1880 - 1905 (from School Log books in LCRO, DE 2735/1+6, Girls and Infants/Boys)			
YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS + INFANTS	NOTE IN SCHOOL LOG BOOK
17.3.1880	✓		Today is a holiday in honour of the Feast of St. Patrick
17.3.1881	✓		Holiday - St. Patrick's Day
17.3.1884	✓		Half Holiday
17.3.1887	✓		St. Patrick's Holiday given
17.3.1896		✓	"A Half-holiday is given this afternoon as it is the feast of St. Patrick"
17.3.1896	✓		St. Patrick's Holiday given (afternoon)
19.3.1897		✓	Feast of St. Joseph recognized
17.3.1899	✓		Punch and Judy Show provided (ie no holiday)
17.3.1900		✓	Feast of St. Joseph recognised
17.3.1903		✓	Half holiday given in honour of St. Patrick
17.3.1903	✓		Half holiday in the afternoon
NOTES: 1 Although no Log Books are extant for <i>St. Patrick's RC School</i> pre-1912, later data shows that the School closed for one day, on or around 17 March, annually from 1912 to 1919. 2 In 1896, Barclay described St Patrick's Day celebrations in Leicester; "One had to be interested to see dozens of sturdy chaps, (having asked a day off from their labour,) dress in their best, and decking themselves with a bunch of shamrock, and repairing to mass, afterwards during the day amuse themselves with song and dance and social intercourse. The little children - the "Gorsoons" had their rosettes of green ribbon, not having any relative in Dublin or Mayo to forward them a box of the national favour. I mixed a little with the people on the day in question and found, as one would expect, kindly feeling prevailing everywhere. I think drunkenness and rowdiness were almost absent, and that is very satisfactory." (<i>The Wyvern</i> , 20 March 1896, Vol. IX, p.351). 3 LOWE's study of the Irish in Lancs suggests "that the Irish (c.1850-70) moved beyond ostentatious demonstrations on Patrick's Days is surely a sign of communal self-confidence and maturity." (p.131-4). This is debateable; priorities would have been different in areas like Leics, with their comparatively much smaller Irish communities. 4 See references to Patrician influences in Ch. on RC growth.			

TABLE 3 OBSERVANCE OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN WHITWICK/HOLY CROSS SCHOOLS c.1864 - 1905	
(i) from (Juniors) Log Book 1863 - 1900	
17.3.1864	"Many of the Irish children away"
17.3.1865	".... consequently a great scarcity of Irish men in attendance" (presumably refers to adult night school)
17.3.1869	"This being St. Patrick's Day some of the Irish children away."
19.3.1886	"in consequence of a little local festivity today the Rev. Manager has given a half-holiday this afternoon. "... had to give half-holiday this afternoon, as this being feast of St. Patrick only about twenty boys presented themselves in the afternoon.
17.3.1890	
17.3.1891	"Gave holiday on Tuesday being St. Patrick's Day."
17.3.1893	"Gave children holiday this afternoon it being St. Patrick's Day."
(ii) from Infants Log Book 1872 - 1917	
18.3.1887	"The school room being required for a Tea-party on Thursday the Festival of St. Patrick, the children were dismissed at 3 o'clock in the afternoon."
18.3.1892	"School not kept on Thursday afternoon St. Patrick's Day."
17.3.1893	School was closed, low attendance due to a snow storm and St. Patrick's Day.
17.3.1896	A half-holiday was given in the afternoon.

in 1902, the Coalville Town Band rendered '*The Shamrock of Ireland*'.⁴⁵

Photographs survive of Patrician observance at Holy Cross (Whitwick) and St. Patrick's (Leicester). The Whitwick school groups, (1905 and 1910), show shamrock being worn by both pupils and staff. The key point is that in Whitwick, St. Patrick's Day came to be clearly identified officially for celebratory purposes. The photograph from St. Patrick's c.1914 is of a troupe of six teenage girls in stylised Irish peasant "cailin" costume. Two wear St. Patrick's Day symbols: a ribbon and a harp badge. Clearly, some considerable effort had been expended. Both scenes suggest a school and its community with a residual pride in its ethno-cultural roots and a willingness to profile this positively.⁴⁶ (See note 5/Table 2).

One might expect that, given the Irish catchment, St. Patrick's Day would be celebrated quite regularly. At Whitwick, observance was irregular and rare; only from c.1890 did it feature regularly as a recognized holiday. The probable reasons are threefold: a personal factor, in the arrival of the politically conscious and proactive Irish parish priest, Fr. O'Reilly, in 1888; the positive effects post-1875 of Bishop Bagshawe's commitment on Irish issues; and the press coverage surrounding Fenianism and Home Rule. In the intervening years, the log books indicate a pattern of illness coinciding with March 17th; the Irish community was making its point for purposes of cultural celebration when the schools failed to formally recognize the feast. The Whitwick pattern was repeated in the city schools (see Table 2). St. Patrick's marked the event regularly, by holding parish tea-parties.⁴⁷ (See Note 2, Table 2 and (d).)

Whilst St Patrick's Day was actively celebrated, it was to some extent tokenistic. Other manifestations of Irishness were much less apparent by the mid-1890's: the succeeding generations knew no Gaelic, anglicised their names, and showed little enthusiasm for traditional music, song and dance.⁴⁸ The priorities of a utilitarian, establishment-ordered curriculum partly explain Barclay's observations; as well as cultural pressure to assimilate, the standard educational package served the processes of incorporation and denationalization. Many Irish males in Leicester across generations

⁴⁵ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), *A Brief History of Whitwick*, p.30, p.12.

⁴⁶Courtesy of Whitwick R.C. School, photos with Log Books, and Leicester photographs courtesy of Ms Barbara Morris, (1993 OHA/ISW Archive). Mary Patterson similarly described the Leeds Irish community. "There were the concerts given by the school children to celebrate the feast of St Patrick when the girls in their white dresses and emerald sashes and ribbons sang the Irish songs and their parents, proud and happy, came along to applaud them." *The Ham Shank*, (1946/93), p.10.

⁴⁷SIMPSON, D. (1992), *Manning, The People's Cardinal*, pp.15-18 and 20-30. KIMBERLIN, *Cath. Educ. in Leic. after Reformation*, Part II, in *H.C.M.* Oct. 1957, No. 5, p.5.

⁴⁸*The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol. VIII, p.149-150, Tom Barclay

served in the British Army.⁴⁹

From c.1895, a reassuring statue of the saint reposed by St Patrick's new main entrance, on a pedestal decorated with interlaced shamrocks, a design suggestive of ethnic and cultural identity. Whilst it was a public declaration of the school's identity, the process and content offered within undermined that identity.⁵⁰

Ethnic identity was bolstered by the leadership of the three Irish-born priest-managers of Sacred Heart from 1886 to 1894, who - in their respective ways - maintained a relatively high Irish profile. Rev. J. O'Reilly (1886-7) became active in local and Irish nationalist politics; Rev. W. McKenna became Diocesan R.E Inspector; and Rev. James O'Haire, a renowned African missionary, wrote a best-selling life of St Patrick and history of Irish Catholicism. Having priests with an ethnic profile and a commitment to the parish, it is not surprising that pupils and teachers at Sacred Heart, with the support of parents, once worked right through a summer holiday in order to save their parish school by preserving its grant.⁵¹

The social significance of processions and first communions is dealt with in the chapter on the development of Catholicism locally.⁵² What is clear from oral history is not just the ceremonial, but the personal involvement factor and the sense of a wider general appreciation of the public face of Catholicism, especially from c.1880 onwards. Catholic educationalists encouraged Catholic societies, for boys and girls of all ages, for both leisure pursuits and missionary endeavour. Mrs de Lisle employed new visual aids as early as 1853;⁵³ lantern slides served to reward attendance, to generate further enthusiasm and to shed a suitable moral light.⁵⁴ Similar effective audio-visual techniques were used in the city at Holy Cross.⁵⁵ Curriculum standards and age levels were linked. (Table 4).⁵⁶ The utilitarian philosophy and practice were reflected in the gender bias in the girls' curriculum. The *Holy Cross Log Book* reflects the 1870-90 agenda of diocesan and Government Inspection, standards maintenance, and examinations - all

⁴⁹ Barclay (1895) noted that virtually every Irish family in Leicester sent sons into the army.

⁵⁰ Sepia souvenir photos c.1910 show the statue in the niche. The 1911 OS Map shows the extension to St. Patrick's c.1895. See DANAHER, N (1997), *St Patrick's School*, p.10.

⁵¹ BURRILL, M.B. (1986), *Sacred Heart School Leicester, 1886-1986: Centenary*. (Burrill was recently head teacher.) pp 2, 3 and 5. O'Haire is in NDA.

⁵² See chapter on growth of R C Church.

⁵³ De L.P.; Lde L. Diary, 24 Jan. 1853.

⁵⁴ *The Wyvern*, No. 252, Vol. X, 21 Aug. 1896; p.275.

⁵⁵ BROMLEY, R. (1974), p.23.

⁵⁶ CES/CPSC, *23rd Annual Report of 1870*.

School	Date	Standards						Total No of Pupils	Good	Excellent	Fair
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI				
St Patrick's Mixed	1899	37	32	48	34	30	30	181	153	28	-
* Holy Cross Boys & Girls (combined)	1898	37	21	22	19	19	19	118	64	31	23
Sacred Heart	1898	25	25	30	36	6	6	122	83	25	14
*Holy Cross Girls	1898	22	14	13	8	3	3	58	32	15	13
Holy Cross Boys	1898	15	7	9	11	16	16	60	32	16	10

NOTES

(1) Source: Notts Diocesan Archives, file E 35.04 - School Reports 1892 - 1900

* (2) Holy Cross figures : combined for purposes of main comparison; original gender-based figures shown in bottom section.

(3) Some long-term comparison is possible, as the *HMI Reports* for 1913 and 1915 are available in the *1912 Log Book of St. Patrick's School* (p.14-15 and 42-44 respectively). In both 1913 and 1915, the Inspectors drew attention to the serious problem caused by the physical fabric of St. Patrick's which was clearly ongoing: "The attainments of the children naturally come short of the standards of thoroughly efficient schools: but the staff is numerically a strong one and fair efficiency is maintained. In Standard IV the efficiency rises above fair. It seems probable that in spite of the great difficulties indicated above there might be more educative discipline, more exercise of the childrens' wits, more thoroughness and finish in their work, if the Teachers had clearer ideas of what excellent teaching is, and strove strenuously to do the very best that can be done under existing conditions." 1915: "Of 165 children on the roll ... only 26 belonged to the combined standards VI and VII which form the top class, while of those who were 13 years of age nearly one half had not reached that class ... Even allowing for the special difficulties ... of its premises and general environment ... the standard of work is far from satisfactory and the classification, as already noted, is a low one ... and there are not many signs of refining influences."

TABLE 4 **ACHIEVEMENT BY REFERENCE TO GOVERNMENT STANDARDS OF PUPILS**
IN LEICESTER'S R C SCHOOLS : STANDARDS I TO VI (1898 - 1899)

central to "payment by results."⁵⁷ Textbook analysis explains the political and cultural curriculum offered. Ironically, many of the texts were Irish. In 1851, 4 of 11 books used at Whitwick were of Irish origin.⁵⁸

Even the redoubtable Unitarian, Joseph Dare, utilised the prolific Irish School texts; one of the set books for his 18+ class was the "4th Book of Lessons for the use of the Irish National Schools."⁵⁹ It is possible that the purchase of 36 sets of Burn's Series for Standards I, II and III by Holy Cross Leicester in 1875 also represented purchase of Irish materials.⁶⁰ Whilst state-aided education developed slowly in England, Irish texts were cheap and, for the time, well produced.⁶¹ In 1852 the Treasury forbade direct Irish imports. As Akenson remarks, "the parents of school children in the British voluntary schools had to scrape more than ever to pay for their childrens' texts."⁶² It is therefore clear that the Irish Catholic community in Britain was disadvantaged not only in curricular but also in financial terms by this development.

The experience of the children of the Irish migrants in Leicester was similar to the pattern elsewhere.⁶³ The curriculum in London schools was in fact more contested than Lees portrayed.⁶⁴ The fare for most pupils was basic, supplemented by religion. For the minority (10 per cent) who studied any history at all "Irish history was excluded." Although Whitwick used *Flanagan's British and Irish History*, the text would have been anglocentric. Even though certain sets of texts were modelled on series produced for the Irish market, Catholic schoolbooks "defended and exalted the status quo The political status quo was accepted too."⁶⁵ Handley details parallel developments in Scotland.⁶⁶

Leicester's Town Clerk raised the religious issue in his report on the 1870 Act. Samuel Stone remarked that "Roman Catholics might object to the authorized English version" being used. He went further, advising that the use of the neutral "*Scripture*

⁵⁷BROMLEY, R. (1974), p22-23. Also, see Table 3.

⁵⁸DeLP; L. De L's Diary, 30 Sept. 1851, end page.

⁵⁹LCRO, 1st RLDMS, 1846, p.19.

⁶⁰BROMLEY, R., (1974) from Log book for 1st Nov. 1875, p.22.

⁶¹AKENSON, D.H., The Irish Textbooks Controversy and the Gospel of Free Trade, in *J of Educ. Admin and Hist.*, Vol. III, No. 1. (Dec. 1970), p.19.

⁶²AKENSON, (1970), p.22.

⁶³DANAHER, N., Irish Studies Across the Diaspora; in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed) (1993), *The Irish World Wide*, Vol. II, pp 226-256, contains some discussion on this point.

⁶⁴LEES, L.H. (1979), *Exiles of Erin* pp.203-5; HICKMAN (1998), p.157-164.

⁶⁵LEES, (1979) p.205.

⁶⁶HANDLEY, J.E., (1947) p.206-7.

Lessons prepared some years since under the direction of the late Archbishop Whately and others for the Irish National Schools, with questions not suggestive of doctrines 'distinctive of any particular denomination,' might be of great value, and be extensively used in rate-supported Schools."⁶⁷ Whately was an anti-Catholic Scottish bishop referred to by Handley (above). The "Scripture Lessons" Stone referred to were that series of "extracts" first marketed in the 1830's as part of the "Irish System". Hickman (1993) identifies the clear Protestant ideology permeating this apparently neutral selection of texts.⁶⁸

Catholic text books were targeted by the Protestant Alliance in the early 1870's. This campaigning body, which had a branch in Leicester, listed offensive traits which it said appeared in *Burn's Standard Reading Books I - V*; these included such basic concerns as "confession, pilgrimages, papal supremacy, relics, prayers for the dead, Protestant pupils in Catholic Schools, carved images, reverends to whom money is paid and Religious Instruction." All these issues were raised again in the Alliance's pamphlet of 1872 on *Roman Catholic School Books*.

The irate authors isolated the Irish factor in their examples of typical Catholic textbook misinformation:

"Christianity was first introduced into Ireland by St. Patrick" and "the people of Ireland have constantly preserved the faith which they learnt from St. Patrick; that in the north, where colonies have been established from Scotland, there are many Protestants, but the great mass of the Irish people remain unshaken in their attachments the Catholic faith."⁶⁹

The comments from the Diocesan Inspectors of Religious Education indicate the paramount importance of this in the curriculum. Lees and Fielding make the point that religious education and instruction were a disproportionately focal, underpinning aspect of Catholic education.⁷⁰ Leicester reflected this trend, especially at St. Patrick's. In 1898, Sacred Heart and Holy Cross (Infants, Boys and Girls) all received positive reports for religious education.⁷¹ The most glowing commendations, however, were reserved

⁶⁷STONE, S. (c.1870), *Report on the Elementary Education Act, 1870*, for Leicester Corporation.

⁶⁸HICKMAN, (1993) p.291.

⁶⁹PRO, ED/9/17, protests of Protestant Alliance against text books used in RC Schools; c1872-75; list of topics from "blue" letter to H M Government; quotes from 4-page pamphlet c.1872; 2nd of which quoted BURNS, Book III, p.162.

⁷⁰LEES (1979), p.204; FIELDING (1993), p.64; Fielding stresses the aspect of socialization into a Catholic environment as being of more underlying importance than the transmission of dogma.

⁷¹File E.35.04, School Reports 1892-1900; Sacred Heart 4.12.1898; Holy Cross 7.11.1898, 7.12.1898 both; St. Patrick's Infants 25.7.1899 and 16.7.1900, Mixed 25.7.1899 and 16.7.1900.

for St. Patrick's. This may have been an indication of ethnic, religious and cultural cross-identity between the Diocesan staff, Frs. McKenna and Ffrench, who were of Irish extraction, and the young pupils whom they observed. Of the Mixed Department in 1899, Fr. Ffrench noted:

This school is excellent - Great credit is due to the Teachers for their care - One can clearly see in this school that Religious Instruction is the first thing thought of and that all the teachers have it at heart. I was much pleased with my visit to the school.

His comments a year later were almost eulogistic:

This is excellent, and keeps its reputation as the best school in the diocese as regards religious knowledge.⁷²

It could be argued that St. Patrick's was, in difficult circumstances, delivering a cultural package which parents consciously sought for their children. It is paradoxical that, whilst diocesan inspectors' reports extolled the religious training offered, an acute observer within the Irish community noted, virtually simultaneously (1895), that the Irish were becoming "quite English, you know."⁷³ The assimilating effects of Catholic education were clear, reflecting the power of the institutional context, notwithstanding Irish clerics, teachers and accents. The Church addressed the issue, belatedly, in 1984.⁷⁴

Catholic Irish pupils were not alone in facing up to the cultural effects of assimilation. Comparatively few Protestant Irish children lived in Leicester; these too were subject to similar pressures. Unlike most Catholic pupils, the identifiably Protestant Irish were middle class boarders; of 12, 6 were from today's Northern Ireland. There may well have been a small number of working class Protestant Irish children, sons and daughters of the regular numbers of Leicestershire regiment soldiers frequently stationed on long-term postings in Ireland. The evidence lies in the Census data for 1851 and 1861.⁷⁵

How did these Protestant Irish youngsters at the Collegiate School fare? Their

⁷²N.D.A; FILE E.35.04; School reports 1892-1900. We know that c.1858, Barclay spoke only of going to Sunday School, not day school, pp. 3 and 37, Kitching (*Part II, 1800-45*) p.5 remarks that religious instruction alone was offered in Sunday Schools.

⁷³BARCLAY, T., *Leicester Slums* in *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149-150.

⁷⁴COSGRAVE, A. (Ed.) (1984), *Learning From Diversity - A Challenge for Catholic Education* - Appendix D: A Minority Experience - The Irish; pp.76-77.

⁷⁵ACD, 1841-91; 1851 (*Reel 25*) and 1861 (*Reel 99*). HICKMAN (1995); p.10; argues that coverage of Irish Protestants is problematic on two grounds: scarcity of evidence, and that they "were not problematized as 'Irish' nor systematically subject to either the racist discourses or the discriminatory practices which Irish Catholic experienced." As this section suggests Irish Protestant pupils may have been adversely affected in different ways.

parents clearly could afford secondary education; Collegiate served the Anglican bourgeoisie. The Earl Howe and Viscount Maynard were Vice-Presidents; the Bishop of Peterborough was Visitor.⁷⁶ Howe (see chapter on popular anti-Catholicism) was prominent publicly in local anti-Catholic campaigns; Irish Protestants would have felt secure in trusting their children to a school associated with such strong views. Even architecturally, the school promoted its ideology: niches in the front wall held statues of two local Protestant martyrs, Latimer and Wycliffe. The nearby Midland Railway (1840) facilitated a commuting Irish clientele.

Whether this educational experience was still regarded by Protestants as useful as time went on is questionable. Many Irish Protestants became involved in Home Rule, and Celtic revivalism and scholarship. An Irish journal analysed the growth of Protestant national consciousness:

Irish schools, however, do not play their part in this work many parents send their children to be educated in England ... and the result is that the Irish boy sent to be educated at an English school is placed in an environment less favourable than that to which he rightfully belongs, and the parents who so treat him are doing him an irreparable wrong.⁷⁷

The factor may well have applied in the Leicester situation.

A small percentage of Irish-born Catholic middle class females was being educated in Leicester. The Dominicanesses ran a private school from 1875; details of pupil intake, however, are unavailable. The *Admissions Register* for the Rosminian private school in Loughborough, however, offers useful insights. Between 1858 and 1915, of 410 enrolments, just 37 (9 per cent) were of Irish birth. Their parents' occupations included a land agent, a builder, a draper, an engineer, a bank manager and a plain "gentleman." These pupils commuted termly from Ireland. In all, 80 (or 19.5 per cent) possessed Irish names, indicating that a significant proportion of female scholars were from relatively well-to-do parents of Irish birth or extraction.

Of pupils from Leicester, 10 appear to be of Irish extraction, with paternal occupations covering jobs such as commercial traveller, web manufacturer, currier, boot manufacturer and leather trader (a reflection of Leicester's expanding shoe industry, and

⁷⁶LCRO, *White's Directory for 1863*; FREEBODY, N.K. et al (1967), *The History of the Collegiate Girls School in Leicester 1867-1967*: pp. 7-24. The boys' school closed in 1866.

⁷⁷CREAGH-KITSON, E, 'Irish Schools - an exhortation,' in *Irish Review*, 3, March 1913 - Feb. 1914, pp. 1-7.

of a small Irish management niche within this). The type of curriculum on offer was typical for the school of its time and place: "besides the usual branches of an English education, French, Italian, Music, Singing, Drawing, Plain and Ornamental Needlework" were offered. As with the Protestant Irish pupils' schools, good rail connections were seen as a selling point. Only a small number of pupils went on to become nuns. There is no evidence that awareness of Irish politics or female suffrage had any impact on this curriculum.⁷⁸

As to leavers from the elementary Schools, what is clear is their early leaving age. The Nationalist MP, T.P. O'Connor, outlined in the 1920's his plan to create post-elementary scholarships for pupils of Irish descent; he lamented their early leaving age of 14, and their entry into "blind alley" occupations. He contrasted the high-profile successes achieved by some of the American Irish.⁷⁹

O'Connor had identified the absolute necessity of secondary education as a stepping-stone. However, "very little headway was made" in Leicester until 1951, for only then did a Catholic secondary sector open up.⁸⁰ Sadly, at St. Patrick's, opportunities to give boys basic skills training were ignored: "It may ... be worth while to point out that the older boys here who are of a type to benefit most by Manual Training are not receiving any, although the Centre is close to the School." Boys entered the jobs market fitted only for general labouring.

Ironically, those numerous male juvenile offenders of Irish descent at the R.C. Boys Reformatory at Mount St Bernards Abbey had enjoyed a more vocational curriculum in the 1860's than did the boys at St Patricks at the turn of the century. They were taught agricultural and craft skills (tailoring and cobbling) and were consequently much desired as workers in and around Whitwick, where some married and settled.⁸¹

Burke, an influential Irish Dominican, also highlighted the relative success of the Irish in America. Predictably, he prioritised the "spreading of the word." In England, great emphasis was laid on creating seminaries and Catholic public schools (such as Ratcliffe). Massive resources went into this effort - commensurately much more

⁷⁸RCAL, *Boarding School Admissions Register*, late 19th century advertisement for the school, detailing curriculum, fees and extras. Interestingly, there were no further Irish entrants after 1915 - a result probably of tension caused by the 1916 rising in Ireland and the attitudinal aftermath on both sides of the water, after the Anglo-Irish War of 1918-21.

⁷⁹FYFE, H. (1934), *T.P. O'Connor*, pp.333-4.

⁸⁰BROMLEY, R. (1974) p.6; KIMBERLIN, A.H, Part II, in *HCM*, Oct. 1957, No. 5, p.6.

⁸¹*St. Patrick's Log Book* (1912), re HMI Report, 1915, p.44; DeLP; memoir by Sammy Haywood, *Loughborough Echo*, 26.5.1939; vast numbers of boys of Irish descent were sent to the colony, for each pair of figures, the first is the Irish-born, and the second is those with Irish surnames; 72/256 in 1861; 198/267 in 1871; 59/87 in 1881, when it closed; source ACD.

for a few than went into creating a system of mass education for the many.⁸²

It is clear that in both the elementary sector for the vast majority of pupils of Irish descent (as well as in the private sector for a tiny minority) the curricular emphases militated against the maintenance or even exploration of any sense of Irish identity. If any sense of cultural consciousness or ethnic identity remained, it did so only because of the efforts of individual pupils, their parents and a few teachers. Most of the children of the Irish migrants were subsumed into the Catholic sector of state maintained provision, and underwent politico-cultural incorporation and denationalization.

(c) The Allocation of Scarce Financial Resources

(i) Patronage and Grants - c.1840- c.1895

The poverty-stricken Irish were generally viewed as a burden by Catholic educational planners. T.W. Allies, CPSC Secretary, in 1859 highlighted the Irish pauper factor as part-explanation of the deficiencies in Catholic education:

The immense majority of poor Catholics in Great Britain is either of Irish birth or Irish extraction Moreover, the Catholic body in England, possessing a very restricted upper class, and scarcely any of that middle class which forms the great mass of contributors to English charities, has had and has still the most extreme difficulty to procure either men or means for the education of this large mass.⁸³

The lack of middle and upper class patronage explains the situation in Leicester. From 1849, the *CPSC Annual Report* spelled out the problem graphically. Their comment, (see title page), stressed the existence of inequalities in resources due to socio-geographical factors: whilst one Catholic community might enjoy a wealthy, willing and well organized congregation, a nearby Irish parish may be made up of working-class families with no job security, on low incomes, and with no middle-class elements to provide ready financial support.⁸⁴ Lees remarks that in London "only 4 per cent of the Irish household heads sampled in 1851 were shopkeepers networks of Irish business, homes and services were not sufficiently compact to constitute distinct geographic

⁸²LACEY, A.C. (1985), *The Second Spring in Charnwood Forest*, p.9, 15, 17, and especially Chapter 3, pp.19-29.

⁸³T.W. Allies to 1861 *Report on Popular Education* p.41 and p.30.

⁸⁴2nd Ann. Rept, 1849, CPSC, p.35.

neighbourhoods."⁸⁵ This seems to have been particularly applicable to St. Patrick's School - which would seem to have depended very much on its own means - in comparison with the Catholic elementary schools elsewhere in the City and County. Catholic gentry such as the De Lisles provided a consistent level of support for the other Catholic schools in Leicestershire, leaving St. Patrick's to decline materially until it was threatened with summary closure by the Education Department in London in the mid-1890's.⁸⁶

The De Lisles were supportive to Whitwick not because of the Irish, but because they enthused about the numerous missionary conversions made by the Rosminians. De Lisle regarded local converts - and the Irish - as a means to the wholesale conversion of England.⁸⁷ The diaries of Laura de Lisle, Ambrose's wife, show at length how the family subsidised and supported their area with direct payments, textbooks and childrens' clubs.⁸⁸ In 1896, whilst St. Patrick's school in Leicester was in serious danger of closure,⁸⁹ Laura de Lisle was preoccupied with the Whitwick Catholic Schools' treat.⁹⁰

Other wealthy patrons serving the county's Catholic infrastructure included the wife of the Duke of Norfolk, patron at Ashby in the 1870's⁹¹; the Worswicks at Holy Cross in Leicester and at St. Alban's Barrow on Soar;⁹² and in Measham the Countess of Loudon who paid £200 for a chapel-cum-school in 1881.⁹³ As early as 1849, the CPSC surveyed needs: "Husbands Bosworth, (nothing wanted). No school at present, but will no doubt be set going and supported by the Turville family."⁹⁴ The Turvilles were one of the long-established Leicestershire gentry Catholic families.

Mathew has rightly remarked that:

"the masses coming from Ireland were perhaps insufficiently considered during the first half of the century the growth of the Irish town population was hardly perceived by the English Catholics on their estates

⁸⁵LEES, L.H. (1979), p.87.

⁸⁶E.3504/1894/NDA; Dept. of Educ. to Notts. diocese; copy 94/85582.

⁸⁷ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), *A Brief History of Holy Cross Whitwick, 1837-1937*, p.6, quoting PURCELL, p.112.

⁸⁸Ldel's Diary, 18 April, 18/4/42, 2/1/43, 13/10/51, 2/11/51, 13/4/48, Oct/Nov '51.

⁸⁹Ldel's Diary, 15 Nov. 1893; see also CRUICKSHANK, A.R.J. (1897) *Laura de Lisle*, p.23; De LP.

⁹⁰Ldel's Diary, 24/1/96, De LP.

⁹¹HILLIER, K. (1984) *Ashby de la Zouch*, p.26.

⁹²EMERY, A. (1939) *St. Albans*, p.71 and *Diocese of Notts. Centenary Book* (1950) p.27.

⁹³GREEN, Mr. & Mrs. (Eds) (1981), *A Short History of St. Charles, Measham*, p.5.

⁹⁴2nd Rep't of CPSC, 1849; Appendix - Statistics of Catholic Schools, p.55.

..... The county and town parishes were very separate.⁹⁵

This crucial observation reflects the urban-rural, the migrant-host, and the class divisions in Leicestershire Catholicism. The contemporary commentator Heinrick, (1872), confirmed the continuing low status of the Irish community in the city.⁹⁶

That St Patrick's was sited in the Belgrave Gate slum area is not surprising. As Samuel remarks: "The Catholic 'Poor Schools', to which the Church devoted so remarkable an effort in the third quarter of the century, were planted in the very midst of the poor, quite without regard to the reputation of the 'low' Irish neighbourhoods."⁹⁷

One of the most telling comments about this poor Irish mission is contained in the 1852 *CPSC Report*, which remarks that "the erection of a new schoolroom in a remote district, containing more than 200 children, almost exclusively Irish, would meet the present deficiency in education; but there is a want of funds."⁹⁸ (See Table 8).

This is a neat summing up of the situation existing in Leicester immediately prior to the formal founding of St. Patrick's School-Chapel in 1854. Clearly, the 1824 initiative was inadequate to meet the needs of the local Irish concentrated in a "remote district." (As the entries refer in detail to county sites, "remote" here has to refer to the fringes of the City). St Patrick's is in fact a mere 10 minutes walk from Holy Cross. Possibly the remoteness was a distance of attitude rather than space.⁹⁹ Kimberlin states that "in 1854, Fr. Nicholds erected a school chapel, dedicated to St. Patrick near Belgrave Gate, at a cost of £1,000. This school chapel was served from Holy Cross Church and a new mission was thus gradually formed. The roof was put on by the offerings of immigrant Irish labourers who commenced to come over with the famine rush of 1845-6-7-8." He noted that by 1854 "St. Patrick's had grown out of all proportion."¹⁰⁰ The Irish community, despite its poverty, was financing its own facilities.

This pattern replicated itself in 1873, when Fr. Cyril Bunce, an Irishman, "went to reside in Archdeacon Lane, and St. Patrick's was then separated from Holy Cross, and became a parish of its own. Fr. Bunce was a zealous worker, and collected money, chiefly in Ireland, spending another £1,000 in erecting the old St. Patrick's Church

⁹⁵MATHEW, D., (1936/55), pp.185-6.

⁹⁶HEINRICK, H. (1872), *The Irish in England* pp.39-40

⁹⁷SAMUEL, R. The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish Poor, in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S. (Eds) (1985), p.273.

⁹⁸5th Report of C P S C, 1852, Educ. Stats Appendix, Leicester., p.90.

⁹⁹DAE, *Province Registrar's Book*, 1834-66; pages re Leicester.

¹⁰⁰KIMBERLIN (1946) p.23; KIMBERLIN, Part I, in *H.C.M.*, Aug 1957, No. 4; p.5.

attached to the schools."¹⁰¹ Here is clear evidence of the importance of Irish self-help.

St. Patrick's received grant aid from the CPSC in 1855. (see Table 9a below). This is evaluated by juxtaposing St. Patrick's grant with other grants made locally; it is also useful to compare the nature of the assistance offered, which could be in cash or kind. It is clear that local Catholic gentry had their priorities, and that Leicester reflected the national pattern, in which the physical needs of the Irish were not at the apex of the recognised priorities.

Government returns for 1875-95 provide data on pupil numbers, average attendance, and grants awarded (see Table 9b). It would appear that, as was the case with CPSC grants, the only schools receiving government aid in the 1870's were those within the de Lisle orbit in the county. St. Patricks (Leicester) emerges by far as the largest school population in both the 1880's and 1890's, (taking average attendance as the pertinent indice rather than number on roll). This is how funding was allocated; see Table 9(b); St. Patrick's received double the amount granted to Holy Cross in 1881/2 and 1894/5 which indicated clearly the relative centre of action in terms of numbers of pupils taught in Catholic schools in the city. Poor schools, which generally included the Irish catchment, struggled in those early days of state support. Relief came only with the legislation of 1902.¹⁰²

(ii) The Role of the Catholic Poor Schools Committee

This Committee, founded 1847, strategically allocated government finance to Catholic schools, whilst simultaneously reflecting Catholic interests. CPSC activities were clearly outlined: support for simple inspection; grants for buildings, fittings and books; staffing (pupil-teachers and trained teachers) and salaries; grants for schools in specific urban, rural or social situations; and school libraries.¹⁰³ The CPSC 1852 *Report* described Leicester's "three schoolrooms," with 159 pupils (83 boys and 76 girls).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Whilst becoming a parish in its own right, it was still in the Dominican orbit; it became a diocesan responsibility later, in 1894; KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.23.

¹⁰² PRO. ED/17/42; ED/17/52; & ED/17/65 respectively.

¹⁰³ 8th Rep. of CPSC, 1855, pp.82-3.

¹⁰⁴ 5th Rep't of CPSC, 1852; Leicester, p.90.

TABLE 5

DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN LEICESTER IN 1851			
	No. Of Schools	No. Of Pupils	Average No. Of Pupils per School
Anglican	12	1766	147
Dissenting	4	1040	260
R.Catholic	3	159	53
	19	2965	153

Source: RIMMINGTON, G.T. (1978), p.91, Census.

The educational position in Leicester was still "far from satisfactory." In 1849 Dare estimated that only one-third of Leicester's juveniles, (5,099), attended a day school.¹⁰⁵ Of these, 110 went to Catholic schools - a figure comparable with the 1851 census figure of 159 quoted in Table 5. The average attendance period of a working class pupil in Leicester at a day-school was just two years.¹⁰⁶ This was comparable with the expected attendance of a Catholic child; (see below).

Kitching noted of the resources situation pre-1847 that:

"Sometimes nobility and gentry acted as leaders, but the welfare of destitute Catholic children in the towns depended on the enterprise and financial support of tradesmen and better-off artisans, the pennies of the poor, and occasionally the contributions of Protestant supporters."

In 1826 the Leicester Civil Defence Society met monthly. The Society was "composed of Protestants of several denominations and Catholics"; several Irish names feature prominently.¹⁰⁷ It could be assumed that such persons would be sympathetic to a struggling education initiative. (See Politics).

Despite De Lisle's patronage, Holy Cross (Leicester), had its financial problems, as Spencer indicated to de Lisle in 1832.¹⁰⁸ At Ascension Day services in Leicester in

¹⁰⁵MARTIN, J.D., *The City of Leicester - Primary and Secondary Education*, in MCKINLEY, R.A. (Ed) (1958) *V.C.H., Leics.*, Vol. IV, p.330.

¹⁰⁶TEMPLE PATTERSON, p.161.

¹⁰⁷KITCHING, Pt. I; 1969, p.5.

¹⁰⁸YOUNG, REV. V., (1933), *Life of Fr. Ignatius Spencer, C.P.*, p.70.

Congregation offerings as General Collections for education specifically

Parishes or Missions		§ 1849			1850			1851			1852			1875*			1876*		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
Leicester (Holy Cross)		2	15	0	5	17	6	3	12	0	3	16	0	4	17	0	6	7	0
Loughborough		1	6	0	1	6	0	1	4	6	0	17	6	Separate figures for Holy Cross and St Patrick's:					
Hinckley		3	16	0	4	3	2	2	10	1	-	--	-						
Shepshed		0	3	3	0	10	0	-	--	-	-	--	-	Holy Cross			1875		
Mnt St Bernards		1	14	4	-	--	-	-	--	-	-	--	-						
Husbands Bosworth		2	16	0	-	--	-	-	--	-	-	--	-	St Patrick's			- -- -		
Total of Leics.		12	10	7	11	16	8	7	6	7	4	13	6						
Birmingham - each figure is a total for all entries in Birmingham		28	5	2	37	0	0							* combined totals for both Holy Cross and St Patrick; see Table inset for separate figures					

NOTES: § The 1st. Ann Report of CPSC, 1848, lists no congregational collections (p.77)

SOURCES: CPSC Monthly Journals:
1849, Vol. 11, Sept. 1849, (p.204)
1850, Vol. 11, No. III Dec. 1850, (p.85)
1851, Vol. 11, No. VIII, Dec. 1851
1852, Vol. 11, No. XI, Oct. 1852

CASH COLLECTIONS FOR EDUCATION IN LEICESTERSHIRE CHURCHES RECORDED BY CPSC,
1849-52 AND 1875-6
TABLE 6

Places or Missions	Sources of income	Deficiency in Accommodation etc	No. of Pupils needing free education	No. of Boys Attending	No. of Girls Attending	Are Boys and Girls taught separately?
Hinckley (Nothing Wanted)	-	-	80	40	20	-
Husbands Bosworth (nothing wanted)	No school at present, but will no doubt be set going and supported by the Turvill family	-	-	-	-	-
Loughborough	None. Schools at Loughborough fully adapted, that at Shepshed not, boys and girls being in the same room. So also at Barrow, where the children are taught in chapel. No regular teachers.		250*	100	120	Separate at Loughborough
Leicester	-	-	200	55	35	YES
Melton Mowbray (nothing wanted)	-	-	20	10	10	NO

Notes:

- 1) * In the original, apart from the 250 entered for Loughborough as needing "gratuitous" education, all the other figures were noted as being : "numbers uncertain."
- 2) The figure of 200 for Leicester probably refers solely to St. Patrick's, as the 5th CPSC Report of 1852 also refers thus: "The erection of a new schoolroom in a remote district, containing more than 200 children, almost exclusively Irish, would meet the present deficiency; but there is a want of funds." (p.90)

TABLE 7 STATISTICS RE: PHYSICAL STATE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN 1849
from Appendix (p.55) of 2nd Report of CPSC of 1849

Location and Minister	R.C. POP.	No of Rooms	Dimensions of Rooms (in feet, L x B x H)	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Pupils	No. of Teachers	Other factors (usually limiting or problematical)
LEICESTER Rev William NICKOLDS	1200	3	(1) 24 X 15 X 12 (2) 24 X 15 X 9 (3) 11 X 11 X 11				3 1 in each school room	The erection of a new schoolroom in a remote district containing more than 200 children, almost exclusively Irish, would meet the present deficiency in education; but there is a want of funds.
BARROW on Soar Fr. Bartholomew Crosbie	40	1	9 X 9				2 1 man and his wife	There is a want of funds.
BOSWORTH HALL Rev. R. RABY	50	-	No School			20		Instructed in catechism on Sundays.
EASTWELL Rev. Joseph BECK	36	1	15 x 12 x 8					No deficiency in means of education.
GRACE DIEU MANOR								NO INFORMATION RECEIVED.
LOUGHBOROUGH St. Mary's Rev. Fr. Andrew EAGAN	300	2	(1) 27 x 23 x 15½ (Bs) (2) 30 x 21 x 12 (Gs)				2 1 male 1 female	Want of means to keep teachers and to supply school with books and apparatus. An application to Poor School Committee will be necessary.
MELTON MOWBRAY Rev. George BENT	120	1	12 x 12 x 8			60	1 male	A room wanted to hold 60 children.
SHEPSHED Rev. John WYSE	104	1	32 x 18 x 15				1 female part-time	Schoolmistress employed only at times, for want of means. School depends almost for its existence on £10 expected from CPSC, which if discontinued the school would cease.
HINKLEY Rev. J.D. ATYWARD	300	1	50 x 20 x 14			Day-56 Night-37 Sun-84	1	There is a want of books, maps and money.
WHITWICK (Rev SID)								NO INFORMATION RECEIVED.

NOTES:

(1) Compiled from CPSC 5th Report of 1852, Appendix - Educational Statistics - pp.90-91.

(2) The nil returns from Grace Dieu and Whitwick probably represent a satisfactory situation in those two places, bearing in mind their enjoyment of De Lisle family benevolence.

TABLE 8 C P S C EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS RE: NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR R C SCHOOLS IN LEICESTERSHIRE IN 1852 *

MISSION REQUESTING AID	YEAR	NATURE OF ALLOCATION AND COMMENT (IF ANY)	SOURCE OF DATA
Loughborough	1849	"Application deferred"	M.J., Jan.. 1849, p.63
Loughborough	1849	No. 46.; £10 for 40 pupils. "Note: should be inspected. Why not get schools here equal to those at Newport? Grant voted.	M.J., Sept. 1849, p.232
Loughborough	1849	A figure of the Madonna	A.R., 1849, p.113
Melton Mowbray	1849	received £7	A.R., 1849, p.110
Melton Mowbray	1850	received £30; 80 places	A.R. 1850, P.25
Shepshed	1850	received £15	A.R., 1850, p.25
Shepshed	1850	received £15	A.R., 1852, p.79
Leicester	1850	£20 for building purposes	M.J., Sept 1851
Shepshed	1851	£10 for building purposes	M.J., Sept 1851
Shepshed	1852	received £10	A.R., 1852, p.79
Melton Mowbray	1852	Grant of £30 to assist parochial Clergy	M.J., Aug 1852
Loughborough	1852	grant promised and paid of £10, as well as a statue of Our Lady for the Convent	A.R., 1853, Appendix B
Leicester, St. Patrick's	1855	Building grant of £50	M.J., 20 June 1855, p.198
Hinckley	1855	received £20, for support	M.J., 20 June 1855, p.198
Shepshed	1856	received £15	M.J., 1856, p.261
Loughborough	1856	received £15	A.R., 1856, p.46, App.B
Loughborough	1859	£5 grant support promised	A.R., 1859
Barrow	1871	£7 support	see *
Hinckley	1871	£10 support	see *
Loughborough	1872	£9 support	see *
Hinckley	1874	£7 support	* A.R., 1874, p.48
Loughborough	1875	£5 support	§ A.R., 1875, p.54
Barrow	1875	£5 support	see §
Market Harborough	1875	£5 support	see §

NOTES: 1 TOTAL AMOUNTS RECEIVED 1849-75: Loughborough - £54 Shepshed - £65 Leicester - £70
Hinckley - £37 M.Mowbray - £67 Barrow - £12

2 M.J for Monthly Journal, and A.R for Annual Report

TABLE 9(a)

CPSC GRANTS TO LEICESTERSHIRE : 1849 - 1875

Location and Name of school	1874-75				1881-82				1894-95			
	No. On Roll	Average Attendance	Grant Awarded £ s. d.	No. On Roll	Average Attendance	Grant Awarded £ s. d.	No. On Roll	Average Attendance	Grant Awarded £ s. d.	No. On Roll	Average Attendance	Grant Awarded £ s. d.
Leicester, St. Patrick's	-	-	- - -	325	229	193 8 0	328	333	294 17 6			
Leicester, Holy Cross	-	-	- - -	277	132	73 19 0	462	172	146 5 0			
Hinckley, St. Peters	-	-	- - -	---	---	- - -	162	139	126 17 6			
Loughborough, St. Mary (Boys)	-	26	15 0 0	170	61	56 9 0	* See below; figures probably combined					
Market Harborough (St. Josephs)	-	-	- - -	110	35	23 16 0	85	13	- - -			
Shepshed	-	103	56 5 0	164	124	93 14 0	189	136	119 0 0			
Whitwick (St. Winifred's)	-	-	- - -	61	64	43 6 0	141	77	71 4 6			
Grace Dieu	-	117	67 8 0	-	-	- - -	-	-	- - -			
Loughborough (Girls)	-	113	- - -	282	172	141 16 0	*400	169	148 2 0			

NOTES: (1)
(2)
(3)
(4)

Source = P.R.O; ED/17/42; ED/17/52; and ED/17/65 respectively

Clearly, in the mid-1870's, only those schools in the orbit of De Lisle influence were grant-aided

St. Patrick's emerges by far as the largest school population re-average attendance, beating Holy Cross in this respect.

The government grant in 1874 covered only 42.4 per cent of total costs. RCAL; *The Nottingham Catholic Magazine*, Vol. 1; No.6, October 1874.

TABLE 9(b)

STATISTICS FOR R.C. SCHOOLS IN LEICESTERSHIRE

Re: No. Of pupils, Average Attendance and Government Grants, 1875-95

with the Chapel, but we are sorry to say that, although the attendance was numerous and respectable, the receipts were barely sufficient to defray the expenses."¹⁰⁹ This suggests a niggardly attitude towards education for all the poor, Irish included.

The CPSC raised funds through special collections amongst parish congregations. For Leicestershire data for 1849-52 and 1875-6 see Table 6. Bearing in mind the post-"Famine" influx from Ireland to Leicestershire, it is not surprising to see 1850 as a peak year for donations. Thereafter, local contributions apparently tail off, with only Leicester and Loughborough holding collections in 1852. Contributions data re-appears c.1875; this indicates that in 1875/6 the bulk of Leicester's offerings came from Holy Cross parish, whilst St. Patrick's contributed little or nothing. St. Patrick's appears to have been in a constant state of impoverishment. The funding crisis of the 1890's related to the condemnation of all City Catholic Schools, virtually simultaneously, by the national Department of Education.

In 1900, a local journal still described St. Patrick's in depressing socio-economic terms:

"In the heart of Leicester slumdom you will find St. Patrick's Church. Like the neighbourhood in which it stands, it is a seedy-looking place"¹¹⁰

Was CPSC munificence spread widely and evenly, or was it concentrated in particular parts of Leicestershire? The ongoing pattern of need and shortages is clear from an examination of the CPSC data for 1849-75, as laid out in Tables 7, 8 and 9 a/b below.¹¹¹ Leicester, with the largest number of Catholics, received only an amount similar to the total sums received by the much smaller county towns. Whilst the building grant of £50 to St. Patrick's in 1855 is the largest single allocation, there are no top-up grants for maintenance and development. The CPSC needs analysis for 1852 (Table 8) and the details of CPSC support for 1849-75 (Table 9a) show certain common features. Whitwick appears in neither tabulation, which strongly suggests that the De Lisle patronage there excluded any need for CPSC involvement. De Lisle became a committee member of the CPSC;¹¹² the probability was that he would have been inclined to support bids from the traditional English Catholic rump in the county.

¹⁰⁹B.D.A., *The Catholic Magazine*, 1835; p.ccxvi, Intelligence section.

¹¹⁰*The Wyvern*, 26 May 1900.

¹¹¹CES/CPSC, *Monthly Journal*, No. IX, May 1852.

¹¹²For clarity and ease of comparison, Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12 are grouped together towards the conclusion of this section.

De Lisle networked with English gentry Catholics via his wife, Laura Clifford, and the Nevill and Digby families.¹¹³ The 1852 data demonstrates a geographical link between Catholic out-stations and Catholic county gentry. For example, Bosworth Hall School was organised by the wealthy Raby family, who had financially assisted Holy Cross in 1819.¹¹⁴ Husbands Bosworth had links with the Turvilles.¹¹⁵ Norman (1984) remarked on de Lisle's distaste for Irish migrant Catholic nationalism.¹¹⁶ This was reflected in the allocation of CPSC monies and resources from c.1850 - a period when the Irish of Leicester retained a low economic status and supported Fenianism. Marshall, State Inspector of Catholic schools, insisted in 1852 that being a good citizen was of far more importance than being in a state of knowledge.¹¹⁷ This outlook helps to explain both the paucity and the selected targeting of resources in Catholic education.

In 1852, the CPSC needs analysis prioritised Loughborough elementary, (See Table 8), a mere year after its opening. It was in May 1852 that de Lisle became one of the three diocesan representatives on the national CPSC;¹¹⁸ he was well placed to service and assist Loughborough, which enjoyed ongoing success between 1849 and 1875; (see Table 9a). Melton Mowbray, a backwater, received £67 in comparison with Loughborough's £54. Leicester, with what was by far the largest single total of Catholics - and of Irish Catholics also - received only £70 across this period. The industrial town of Hinckley, which also had a significant number of Irish Catholics, received only £37, a contrast with the £65 allocated to the much smaller Shepshed, another de Lisle purlieu. The Loughborough schools also received two donations of statues of the Madonna - indications of the nun's priorities.

The funding question then, from c.1840 to c.1875 was one of ongoing concern and manoeuvring to obtain, and to eke out, whatever resources were available. The CPSC's aid to Leicester, to St. Patrick's school in particular, was clearly essential; yet, in contrast with a more regular "drip feed" of finance to smaller county schools, St. Patrick's obtained just a one-off, pump-priming grant. In terms of self-help amongst the

¹¹³BENCE-JONES, m. (1992), *The Catholic Families*, p.148; JONES, G. (Ed) (1989) *The Descent of Dissent - A Guide to Non-conformist Records at the LCRO*, p.55-6

¹¹⁴KIMBERLIN, (1946), P.18.

¹¹⁵JONES, G. (1989) *Descent of Dissent*, p.55.

¹¹⁶NORMAN, E. (1984), p.218.

¹¹⁷LEES, L. (1979), p.198, quoting 'Gen. Rep. for 1852 on R.C. Schools in Britain for 1852-53, 80:715-716.

¹¹⁸CES, *CPSC Monthly Journal*, No. IX. May 1852.

Irish locally - and from collections held in Ireland - St Patrick's illustrates only too clearly Gilley's comment that "collecting in Ireland was popular with slum priests of all nationalities."¹¹⁹ CPSC aid apart, St. Patrick's was in effect dependent on its own efforts. Kitching notes that pre-1835, "Catholic philanthropists made a significant contribution to the spread of poor schools, especially in the days before the Irish famine immigration."¹²⁰ The emphasis implies a cessation of assistance subsequent to the Irish influx - as the Leicester evidence demonstrates.

In 1850, the Leicester schools did not enjoy the professional and systematic fund-raising of the CPSC of Birmingham, whose *Annual Reports* (1849-51) show a level of organisation and planning absent from the Leicester situation. They list approximately 300 subscribers, many of whom were Irish - a clear case of advantage in numbers.¹²¹

A discussion of internal fund-raising for education follows; the external input via the new School Board grant system is discussed in the chapter on politics. Leicester's financial efforts were to flower later in the period, in a series of initiatives and activities dealt with in Section (d) of this chapter, ranging from such varied efforts as organising bazaars and tea parties, to systematic, planned begging.

(d) Funding and Buildings: bazaars, begging and tea parties

The physical situation mid-century is well documented in the 1852 *CPSC Report*; (refer Table 8). The limiting factors itemised centred on the shortage of resources. Dual use was therefore made of schools as chapels: St Patrick's (1854-75),¹²² Sacred Heart (1882) and Measham (1881)¹²³ are all examples.

The 1824 mission school in Belgrave Gate must have become over-crowded and ill-equipped,¹²⁴ reflecting a national problem.¹²⁵ Leicester showed a shortfall of 110 places out of 200 for children listed as "requiring gratuitous education."¹²⁶ (See Table

¹¹⁹GILLEY, S. The RC Mission to the Irish in London, 1840-60; in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1969; p.127.

¹²⁰KITCHING, R.J., Part II; Schools - Development and Distribution, in *JEAH*, Vol. II, 1, Dec 1969, p.7.

¹²¹BDA, File B.2154 *1st and 2nd Reports of Birmingham CPSC*.

¹²²NDA; handwritten archivists bibliog. re-parish histories - in prep; the mission of St. Patrick's became independent two years earlier, in 1873.

¹²³GREEN (1981), *St. Charles, Measham*, p.5.

¹²⁴KIMBERLIN, (1946), pp.14-16.

¹²⁵eg see FINNEGAN (1982) on York p.124; Lees (1979) on London, p. 175; SAMUEL in SWIFT & GILLEY (1985) on London, p.273-4.

¹²⁶CPSC, *2nd Report of 1849*, p.55; see TABLE 10 in preceding section of this chapter.

1). The mid-century then was a period of relative stagnation in terms of expansion; it is only after the commencement of Bishop Bagshawe's episcopate, in 1874, that growth once again accelerated.

The reluctance of Catholic authorities to engage with state parameters vis-à-vis grant-funding and building regulations limited growth.¹²⁷ This may partly explain why St. Patrick's managers submitted no bids at all after 1855. Significantly, such views influenced Mother M. Hallahan, foundress of those Dominicanesses who commenced teaching in Leicester in 1875. This would explain her failure pre-1875 to successfully establish a convent and school base in Leicester.¹²⁸

The Dominicanesses found that limited resources restrained expansion. From 1843 to 1857, the Dominicanesses considered Leicester on five occasions. Building and finance issues blocked development, as well as "little prospect of more vocations."¹²⁹ In February 1860, the sisters believed that their night school might succeed. A final effort was made to settle in November.¹³⁰ In 1861, the community again withdrew.¹³¹ Mother Hallahan commented sadly: "It is souls we want, not money I am sorry for the people of Leicester."¹³² The losers were the young adults and children of Leicester, many of whom were Irish or of Irish descent.

The situation in the main City Catholic schools was less than satisfactory, and in the case of St. Patrick's was acute in the extreme. Sacred Heart's temporary parish Church was built in 1882; a temporary school opened in 1884.¹³³ It catered for significant numbers of pupils of Irish background. In 1886 a one-roomed school opened; eventually 180 pupils were accommodated in two rooms.¹³⁴ The Inspectors in 1894 noted that Sacred Heart needed a new infants base, and that toilets needed re-locating.¹³⁵

Of St. Patrick's, the educational base for most pupils of Irish descent, the Inspector's report was uniformly damning; closure was scheduled for October 1895,

¹²⁷ULLATHORNE, (1857), pp. 13 and 14; in NDA.

¹²⁸See GUMBLEY, W. (1938), *Mother Margaret Hallahan*, p.73: in 1846, M M Hallahan foresook Leicester for the West Midlands "in order not to lose the benefit of Doctor Ullathorne's guidance." [tel. call with Sr. M. Hugh, archivist at Stone Convent on 4.6.94, re-Nuns' wariness of Government.]

¹²⁹GUMBLEY, (1938), p.73; BROMLEY, (1974), p.5 & 6; DRANE, F.R. Sr. (1869/1934), *Life of Mother Margaret Hallahan*, p.452; DCAS, T 865 (1860) pp 2 and 3; record book kept by Mothers Drane and Hallahan; entry for 13 Feb. 1860, and p.4, 11.

¹³⁰DCAS, T865 (1860), p.4 and p.11.

¹³¹DCAS, typed note file with T865.

¹³²DCAS, T1038 (1861), p.8, letter of MMH of Sept. 26th; 2(ii).

¹³³V.C.H. Leicester, Vol. IV, p.390; Ch. on Roman Catholicism.

¹³⁴BURRILL, M.B., *Sacred Heart Centenary*, in NDYB, (1987), p.152.

¹³⁵NDA, E3. SO4, 94/85603; Department of Education; 10 May 1894.

overcrowding was serious (attendance averaged at 350); the Upper Mixed and Lower Infant areas were condemned, as was the steep main stairway and the restricted playground space:

The school is built in a low quarter of the town This appears to be the most serious question amongst the schools of the Diocese, but I should say in the interest of the children, the school has not been condemned a day too soon.¹³⁶

Oral accounts noted that coffins always went through the school because of the limited access to the church!¹³⁷

Fund-raising efforts via the holding of bazaars, many with Celtic themes, had in fact started c.1880, which indicates the longevity of impoverishment:

At the end of February 1890, a very successful bazaar called the 'Irish Fair' was held in the Floral Hall, Belgrave Gate, in order to obtain funds for the reduction of the debt on the schools. The bazaar was opened by the Marquis of Ripon and patronized by the most influential people of the town. By this effort £800 was realized.¹³⁸

This was aimed at helping Holy Cross School alone, which was completely rebuilt in 1886 (see below). The wider financial problem had not been successfully addressed, and another, more ambitious, bazaar had to be organized, only four years later, to save the neglected twin institution, St. Patrick's, which, by 1894, was on the verge of forcible closure.

There was sympathetic coverage for the resulting St. Patrick's bazaar in 1895:

We have pleasure in drawing the attention of our readers to a Bazaar which will be held in the Floral Hall next week. The objective is to completely remodel the existing schools of St. Patrick's, Royal East-Street, according to the request of the Education Department. An earnest appeal is made to the public for assistance. Thirty years of useful work, in the poorest neighbourhood of Leicester, has been carried on in these schools. The bazaar will take the character of "Niagara in Winter," and will no doubt receive the support of the community.¹³⁹

The account depicted an ambitious, week-long spectacle, with free entertainment. One

¹³⁶NDA, E3.S04, 94/85582; Department of Education; 10 May 1894.

¹³⁷ISW/OHA, Ms Barbara Morris, on 25/7/1993; File 3, p.3.

¹³⁸KIMBERLIN, (1957), HCM No. 5, p.5.

¹³⁹*The Wyvern*, 6/9/1895, p.310.

of the 15 stalls, 9 of which depicted national tableaux, represented Ireland. The week ended with "a concert of Sacred music," designed to appeal to the middle class supporter.

The Bazaar, as we announced last week, is in aid of the schools of St. Patrick's Mission. No schools in the town are more needed than these, and unfortunately they have fallen under the condemnation of the Education Department, on account of deficiencies, etc., in the matter of air space for the children. This is such a poverty-stricken district that it cannot be expected to help itself. Father Hawkins and Father Hays, who are doing such good work in the neighbourhood, have therefore pluckily appealed to the general public for support, through the agency of a Bazaar. They have obtained most influential patronage each day, and the proceedings have been opened by some well-known lady or gentleman some excellent tableaux vivants are executed in the "theatre."¹⁴⁰

Bazaars then had a crucial impact on successful fund-raising as Handley noted.¹⁴¹ 'Niagara in Winter' had a major impact on Catholic educational fund-raising in Leicester. 1889 saw a "grand fancy fair" in aid of the new school-chapel at Sacred Heart, with an "extraordinary intermingling of gaunt grey Irish castles with gorgeous oriental palaces and Hindoo pagodas"¹⁴² For an impoverished audience even the promise of the exotic was alluring.

The positive press coverage signals the gradual change in attitude to Catholics in a still predominantly Protestant cultural milieu.¹⁴³ The diocesan bishop, Bagshawe, despite his support for Home Rule, had his stinging attack on the workhouse system reported without critical comment. In part, this would have been a result of Bagshawe's public gratitude to local Protestants for their support. The presence of the Borough Police Band, and County Councillors, gave a formal imprimatur to the proceedings.

Priority status was again accorded by the Dominicans to Holy Cross School - despite the greater numbers at St. Patrick's.¹⁴⁴ The new Holy Cross school of 1886 was superbly built and equipped.¹⁴⁵ Despite benefiting from the 1890 bazaar, Holy Cross enjoyed the proceeds of another three-day Bazaar in 1902.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ *The Wyvern*, 13/9/1895, p.327; and 20/9/1895, p.343.

¹⁴¹ HANDLEY, (1947), p.223.

¹⁴² LC, 16/11/1889.

¹⁴³ See Chapter on popular anti-Catholicism.

¹⁴⁴ NDA files, Relations, for 1880's

¹⁴⁵ From the *Leicester Daily Post* of 2.8.1886; quoted in BROMLEY, p.5, 6 and 8; KIMBERLIN, A.H, Part 1 in HCM, August 1957, No. 4.

¹⁴⁶ KIMBERLIN, (1957), HCM, No.5, p.6.

Next to bazaars, the most important fund-raising social event in parish life was the tea party:

The annual tea-party (was) held in each of the schools. The St Patrick's School party was held on St Patrick's Day The ladies of the parish used to give what were called 'trays' (i.e. they provided all the food for at least twelve people) and sold twelve tickets to their friends and others. In this way, and by donations towards expenses, the running of the school was possible. These tea-parties continued until the 1914 War, and I well remember them and what joyous times they were. They were truly parochial, and all members of the parish, whatever their station, were present.¹⁴⁷

Barclay recalled: we "had no amusement or recreation of any kind but a school tea-party"¹⁴⁸ Another Irish family, the Rochfords, told how:

St Patrick's was indeed the church of the poor. "A poor mother told me, that once, going to a party in the lower school, she fed her baby, wrapped it up, and placed it on a bench upstairs in the chapel whilst she had her tea!"¹⁴⁹

Bazaars and tea parties underlined the symbiotic status of the school as a focus both for education and for parish community life.

Bazaars provided leadership and management opportunities for Irish female parishioners; they also utilised positively the manual skills of male parishioners. At the 1895 event, the Ireland stall was staffed by women including "Miss Mikew, Miss O'Brien and Miss Welsh;" the Misses Fitzgerald, Noon, Rabbitt, Rochford, Downs, Brennan, Farrell, Simmons, Rooney, Connolly, Flood, Flynn and Brophy also assisted.¹⁵⁰ These elaborate social gatherings, taken together with a slowly awakening political consciousness, reflect the post-1880 emerging self-confidence of the Irish in Britain.

The traditional mode of fund-raising was, quite simply, begging, and numerous examples feature in the archives of St Catherine's Dominican Convent. Such funds were raised towards normal expenses, including education. Begging occurred locally and further afield, in Ireland and even the USA. The international dimension suggests planning and preparation of a reasonably high order. These operations are significant

¹⁴⁷KIMBERLIN, (1957), *HCM* No. 5, pp 5 - 6.

¹⁴⁸BARCLAY, T., (1934), p.26.

¹⁴⁹KIMBERLIN, (1946), p.21. As with ritualised services, tea parties served to add some spice to the predictable grind of the daily pattern of life for many.

¹⁵⁰*The Wyvern*, No. 203, 13/9/1895, p.327.

indicators of self-help from Ireland and Irish America.

In 1877, within only two years of its foundation, the Dominicanesses looked to Ireland. The skills of an internationally renowned preacher were enlisted:

"On November 25 [1877] Fr. Burke preached at St. Saviour's Dublin, in aid of the charities under the superintendence of the Dominican Sisters in Leicester." They had incurred a heavy load of debt, and in their difficulty turned to the everflowing fount of Irish charity.¹⁵¹

The Convent unanimously agreed to give a special donation of £5.00 in 1893.¹⁵²

1890 saw a typical Irish begging expedition: "Mother Rose sent from Ireland, from March to April, £6.00"¹⁵³ Sr Rose was to remain in Ireland, gathering funds, until September, provided that she submitted accounts!¹⁵⁴ The decision was taken that "Sr. Dominic should be taken out of school and sent to take Mother Rose's place in Ireland."¹⁵⁵ There were begging expeditions from the mid-1890's to Coalville, Nottingham and indeed the USA.¹⁵⁶ Holy Cross used a novel method of fund-raising: audio-visual technology; 1901 saw a "Lime light lecture on Switzerland in the evening in aid of the schools."¹⁵⁷ Pupil enthusiasm encouraged parental attendance, and contributions.

Fund-raising for Catholic education than from c.1850 saw much initiative expended on imaginative and co-ordinated methodologies. Furthermore, there was a distinct Irish dimension to this in Leicester, in themes and personnel. Ironically, Irish families were in fact supporting a system that intrinsically excluded their ethnicity; they were underlining in effect their "otherness." The Catholic gentry and bourgeoisie on the whole directed their endeavours towards more rural locations and the more salubrious, and less ethnically Irish, suburbs of Leicester.¹⁵⁸

Questioned regarding Dominican favouritism toward Holy Cross, Bromley recorded the "feeling amongst many secular clergy and some Catholics in Leicester that the Dominicans had concentrated their efforts on those people in the southern (ie. the

¹⁵¹FITZPATRICK, W.J. (1885), *The Life of Thomas N. Burke, OP*, Vol. II, p.261 (in DCAL). In 1844, Gentili preached in Leicester "on behalf of the schools for poor Catholic children." PAGANI (1851, *Life of Gentili*, p.204, NDA.

¹⁵²DCAL, L16A(i), Council Records, 1888-1893, 15/10/93, p.102.

¹⁵³DCAL, Council Records, L16-A(i), 12/4/90; p.34

¹⁵⁴DCAL, L16-A(i), 5/7/90; p.36.

¹⁵⁵DCAL, L16-A(i), 14/9/90; p.39, and 16/10/90; p.40

¹⁵⁶DCAL, Convent Annals 1892-1927; L18-A; 16.9.1895; 10.10.1895; 27.7.1896; 1900, various entries

¹⁵⁷BROMLEY, R. (1974), p.23, citing Log Books.; HICKMAN, M. (1998) p.144, citing Cohen, 1988.

¹⁵⁸The nuns themselves used the term "begging".

more well-off) section of the town."¹⁵⁹ The Irish in St Patrick's then, in the northern part of the town, looked of necessity to self-help.

What did St. Patrick's bequeath to the Irish Catholic community? Sadly, the legacy was limited, as government reports indicated:

The conditions under which the work is carried on are as in previous years. Most of the children come from poor homes; the accommodation is such that thoroughly good teaching is extremely difficult, and the teachers, as a rule, have little experience of work under favourable conditions. (1913)

Inevitably, noted the *Report*, this problem adversely affected the standard of education offered. Teacher morale clearly affected both teachers' and pupils' performance. That this problem was endemic at St. Patrick's is clear:

Even allowing for the special difficulties under which the school labours in respect of its premises and general environment the standard of work is far from satisfactory, and the classification, as already noted, is a low one.¹⁶⁰ (1915)

(e) The Role of Irish Nuns as Teachers

One can construct a revealing picture of the contribution of Irish sisters from 1875. The Dominicaness's *Annals*, *Council Minutes* and *Necrologies*, taken together, cast a fascinating light over issues concerning their ethnic origins, their sources of financial support, their professional needs and development, and conflict with male authority figures in the Catholic Church, whose jaundiced view does a disservice to the female religious. The nuns' contributions need to be re-evaluated. In Leicestershire, where much local history emphasises the "Englishness" of the "Second Spring",¹⁶¹ the Irish female dimension was crucial.

How many teaching nuns were Irish, or of Irish extraction, at St. Patrick, Holy Cross and Sacred Heart? *Necrologies* data is informative.¹⁶² Of the sisters who served in Leicester in all capacities, and who were born before 1885,

¹⁵⁹Telephone interview N. Danaher/R Bromley, 8 April 1994; and OHA of 13 April 1994.

¹⁶⁰*St. Patrick's Log-Book*, 1912; see p.14 & 15 for 1913 Government Report; see p.42-3 for 1915 Report.

¹⁶¹eg KIMBERLIN, (1946), and LACEY, A.C, (1985) *The Second Spring in Chamwood Forest*, p.58.

¹⁶²DCAL; *Necrology* L9(N), 1927-67; *Necrology* L9(N) - 4(i), 1935-41; *Necrology* L9(N) - 6(i), 1947-53.

YEAR OF DEATH	NAMES	DATE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF BIRTH	Comments re Educational posts and experience (See Note 3)
1868	Mother Margaret HALLAHAN	23.01.1802	London; Irish parents	Foundress; at Leicester in 1843, '46, and 1860-61.
1923	Rose Francis CORBETT	c.1840	?	Mother Superior at Kentish Town 1866; invited by Bishop Bagshawe and Fr. C. Bunce to Leicester 1875; worked at SP, HC and SH.
1885	Stanislaus McELHATTON	No date	Newcastle on Tyne	In London with Sr. M R Corbett; Vicarress and Ass't Teacher at H.
1886	Catherine GALVIN	1853	London	Taught at SP, later H.
1897	Ignatius RUSSELL	1877	Ireland	Professed 1894, "a splendid Teacher;" died aged 20.
1947	Mother Lucy HICKEY	1878	Ireland; Tipperary	Professed Leic. 1895; taught in the Leics. Schools, "much loved."
1939	Columba MURPHY	1851	Ireland, Co. Dublin, Tallaght	Professed Leic. 1880 "her whole religious life was spent teaching in Elementary Schools"; mainly outside Leic; noted as being good with boys.
1939	Cecilia COLLINS	No date	London	Professed Leic. 1879; Certificate Teacher, worked at HC.
1939	Stanislaus FITZGERALD	No date	London	Professed Leic 1894; taught at private school and at HC Infants; brother a Dominican priest.
1939	Catherine O'NEILL	15.08.1870	Ireland, Co. Dublin Tallaght	To Leic, 1892; taught at Fosse Road private RCS.
1939	Ignatius HICKEY	No date	Ireland, Co. Tipperary	Professed Leic. 1903; taught before professing as nun - "so she was going to be useful in our schools" - Headmistress for some years at SH
1939	Joanna BRACKEN	--.10.1878	Ireland, Co. Leix	Professed Leic. 1903; taught at HC and SH.
1939	Margaret McIVER	c.1886	Edinburgh	Entered Leic. 1901; studied for Certificate as Qualified Teacher; worked at HC.
1939	Dominic BYRNE	No date	Ireland, Co. Leix	Entered Leic, 1905; taught at SH.
1939	Rose MUNROE	1877	Ireland, Co. Mayo Swinford	Entered Leicester 1901; at HC - "she seemed very specially adapted for Infant teaching and got the best out of them by her childlike manner."

NOTES: (1) These entries are based on direct references only.
(2) Sr. M. Clare Ostler (b. 16.5.1854), commenced at St. Patrick's on 4.10.1875, aged 21. She had 11 months experience, obtained at Haverstock Hill (London) where she gained her Certification (3rd Class); data in PRO, ED/7/69, Co. Borough Council of Leic., List of Public Elementary Schools; St. Patrick's, 14 Sept. 1876. Also taught at HC and SH.
(3) SP = St. Patrick's; HC = Holy Cross; SH = Sacred Heart; H = Hindkley.

TABLE 10 | IRISH TEACHING SISTERS OF THE DOMINICANESSES AT LEICESTER - ANALYSIS OF NECROLOGY EVIDENCE from DCAL Necrologies L9 (N), 1927-67; L9 (N) - 4 (I), NEC 1935-41; and L9 (N) - 6 (I), NEC 1947-53

17 out of a total of 39 were Irish-born (ie. 44 per cent); of these 39 a further 8 were second generation Irish; if these latter are included in the Irish group, that group has to be regarded as contributing 64 per cent - virtually two-thirds - of the total personnel.

If one identifies just those Irish sisters who were involved in teaching, of the 16 listed in Table 10 (excluding the foundress herself), 8 were of Irish birth, indicating that 50 per cent of the teaching nuns were Irish. That figure increases to 81 per cent if we include the 5 second generation (on surname evidence). Surprisingly perhaps, St Patricks was not targeted with Irish nuns (see below).

The foundress, Mother Hallahan, was in many respects herself a typical second generation Irish child.¹⁶³ What of her recruits? Those who came from Ireland may have been influenced by practice there. Between 1880 and 1900, some Dominican convents became active in the campaign for womens' access to university education.¹⁶⁴ This late-century, liberated viewpoint contrasts strongly with the reputation of some senior nuns, such as Mother Hallahan, as being reluctant to educate children above their station in life. (see (a) iii above). This unwillingness to push poorer children, even able ones, helps to account for the apparent failure of many second generation Irish children in Leicester to improve their socio-economic status. The nuns became gradually aware of the crucial need for professionalism and training.

The convent archives articulate these concerns from the arrival of the Dominicanesses in Leicester in 1875. Two sisters who stayed in London had to relinquish school work in 1871 because they were unable to fulfil the requirements of the 1870 Education Act.¹⁶⁵ Presumably the four arrivals in Leicester were appropriately equipped, for they took charge of Holy Cross and St. Patrick's at once, and in 1876 commenced work at St. Peter's school in Hinckley. There is no further mention of fulfilling legal requirements to teach for at least another decade.

On 24 August 1890, there is a hint of dissatisfaction amongst the sisters vis-à-vis their salaries as teachers: "Salaries at Sacred Heart School talked over, but nothing definitely settled." Three weeks later, with all members present - a sign of the seriousness with which the issue was coming to be regarded, *the Council Minutes* record:

¹⁶³Biographical details on Mother M M Hallahan from GUMBLEY, W. (1938), pp. 38-39 and pp. 73-74; and DRANE, F.R. (1869/1934), *Life of Mother Margaret Hallahan*, pp.452-3.

¹⁶⁴CLEAR, C. (1987), p.109.

¹⁶⁵DCAL, files L 1-4 and L 1-5(i), on Early Days in Leicester.

School salaries again discussed - It was agreed that as Fr. McKenna refused to raise the salaries that Sr. M. Dominic should be taken out of school and sent to take Mary Rose's place in Ireland and that Sister Celia should remain provided her salary was fixed at £50.¹⁶⁶

There was clearly a problem over long-term funding, quite apart from salaries. On 26 October that year it was agreed that "a larger house be taken so as to be able to open a private school after Christmas."¹⁶⁷ In November 1892 they advertised a "High Class Day School for Girls - Preparatory School for Boys" and a "Boarding School for Girls wishing to become Pupil Teachers".¹⁶⁸ It is clear that some women at least regarded a "high class day school" as appropriate initial training for aspiring pupil-teachers. There is an echo here of Irish Dominican ideology, which may have influenced the English private school model. In the Dominican private school at Wicklow, the nuns, when planning their curriculum, spared no effort "to keep their studies in line with the requirements of the day, and while thus securing a solid education, the necessary accomplishments are given due prominence."¹⁶⁹ The Leicester Dominicans were, consciously or unconsciously, reflecting the long-term historical trend in relation to the education of middle-class women. McCurtain remarks that Dominican nuns were amongst the pioneers of education for middle-class women in Ireland.¹⁷⁰

In the early 1890's a preoccupation with teacher qualifications emerges as a strong theme in the Leicester convent. Various expedients, even involving reduced dowries from qualified teachers, or temporary secular qualified appointments, were tried.¹⁷¹ These concerns, involving balancing the need for certificated staff with sacrifices in income, were ongoing. The Leicester situation was reflecting a major concern of Catholic education nationally.

There is evidence of a pro-active approach to what is today termed in-service training and staff development. In the late Spring of 1893, the *Annals* record that the Mother Prioress and Sister Clare (who taught at St Patrick's) journeyed to Liverpool "to see the working of some of the best infant schools." In 1902, a similar event was

¹⁶⁶DCAL, file L16A (i) *Council Minutes Book 1888-1893* entries on 24.8.1890 and 14.9.1890.

¹⁶⁷DCAL, file L16 A (i), 7 November 1892.

¹⁶⁸DCAL, L16 A (i), January 1893.

¹⁶⁹CLEAR, C. (1987), p.121, quoting from an advertisement of 1900.

¹⁷⁰McCURTAIN, M.T. *The Historical Image*, p.47 in NI CHUILLEANAIN, E (Ed.) (1985), *Irish Women : Image and Achievement*, pp.37-50.

¹⁷¹DCAL, *Council Minutes* 16-A (i), January 1893; (i), November 1893, pp 103-4; (ii), 21/4/1895; (i), September 1891 p.51.; (i), 22/10/1891, p.52; (i), 10/5/92, p.70; (i) 10/7/92, p.76; *Necrology*, L9(N), Sr. Margaret McIver, died 12.10.1954.

recorded; the Prioress and Sister Cecilia Collins went, again to Liverpool, "to gain knowledge and information regarding Schools and the new code of education."¹⁷² This was an initiative probably related to the impact of Balfour's Education Act of the same year.

As well as promoting external professional liaison, there is evidence of the continuation of in-house staff development. In 1902 again, the Irish-born Sister Ignatius Russell is recorded as having passed her Scholarship; this may well have been the coveted Queens Scholarship much sought after by trainee teachers.¹⁷³

The experiences of the Leicester Dominicanesses in developing their professionalism as teachers was not unique; the same pattern was evident amongst the Rosminians at Loughborough. In July 1865, Sisters Philomena Doyle and Bernard Egan were sent from Leicester to Newport (Monmouthshire) "to show Sr. Philomena the working of the Girls' School." According to necrology evidence, 41 per cent of Rosminian Sisters who died pre-1900 had Irish names - the presumption must be of a significant input of Irish personnel, both first and second generation.¹⁷⁴

In Leicester the issue of salaries became a discomfiting one. Notwithstanding the sisters' endeavours at professional development, the school managers, invariably parish priests, were unwilling to adjust pay fairly for reasons of parsimony, church politics, low levels of certification, and possibly sex discrimination. The guarded references in the nuns' record suggest a very real sensitivity over this issue. As early as 1891, the first hints of trouble arose in Hinckley, when the convent Council voted unanimously to withdraw the sisters,¹⁷⁵ finally doing so in 1894.¹⁷⁶

The crisis peaked in May 1895 at St Patrick's school, where the Manager was the Irish priest Fr. Hawkins, who was blunt, methodical, and relentless, as his dealings as a School Board member indicate (see politics chapter). The nuns were to prove unequal as contestants. The cause of the dispute is not touched on directly in the convent evidence. The nuns sought Bishop Bagshawe's help, to no avail.¹⁷⁷ On 23rd May, the

¹⁷²DCAL, *Annals*, L18 A, 1892-1927; 19/5/93, 10/5/02.

¹⁷³DCAL, L18A, *Annals*, 1892-1927; 8/3/02, RC.

¹⁷⁴RCAL; *Diary of 5.1.1862 - 3.12.1869*: entries for 13/12/1862 and 15/12/1862; entry for 26/7/1865; *Diary of 16.6.1875 - 19.2.1880*, entry for 4/12/1876; *Diary of 5.1.1862 - 3.12.1869*, entries for 19/11/1862 and 12/6/1863. Calculation of 41% based on data in Necrologies (green folders) in Loughborough convent records; birth places not recorded; data compiled from all houses in England.

¹⁷⁵DCAL, L16-A(i), 24/10/1891, p.53.

¹⁷⁶HARRISON, M. (1958), *H*, p.42

¹⁷⁷DCAL, L16-A(ii), *Council Records 1894-1917*; 12/5/1895, p.19; 19/5/1895.

Annals recorded: "Feast of the Ascension. Today Fr Hawkins dismissed Sister Paul from the post of Headmistress of St Patrick's Mixed School without either notice or payment in lieu of notice."¹⁷⁸ Sister Paul, in her lay existence a Ms. C. Doyle, left the convent to return to a secular life.¹⁷⁹ By early June, the convent archive noted: "Fr. Hawkins is dismissing Sister Paul from St Patrick's - asked if there is any other Sister that could take her place as Headmistress." There was not, and the Council therefore responded in the negative. "With regard to Sr. Paul's salary, it was decided that if the three months salary in lieu of notice was not paid to apply to the Bishop."¹⁸⁰

It must be presumed that the Dominican sisters did not receive satisfactory treatment. Attitudes in both quarters hardened. The Council minutes declared:

Since the treatment received by the Sisters at St Patrick's from Fr Hawkins is of such a nature, that it is quite impossible to continue working under it, - it was decided to give in the notice to leave the School at the end of three months ie. 30 January 1896. The other Councillors were of the same opinion that it was better to give up the school than allow any member of the community to work under such difficulties.¹⁸¹

The Bishop was informed. On the same day, 30 October, "Sister M. Clare and Sister M. Gertrude sent in their notice to give up the charge of St. Patrick's Infant School at the end of January 1896 as the treatment received from Fr. Hawkins being unbearable."¹⁸² So ended twenty years of the nuns' work in St Patricks. Fr Hawkins may have wished to reflect the newly-found independence of St. Patrick's as an independent parish from 1894, out of the Dominican orbit, by removing the last vestige of Dominican influence - the nuns. Holy Cross was still served by Dominican fathers, brothers and sisters, as was Sacred Heart School. The salary issue, which brought matters to a head in 1895, was probably the occasion, rather than the cause, of the dismissals.

An important and demanding contribution of the nuns was as Head Teachers. Both at Holy Cross (1875-1901) and Sacred Heart (1886-1920) around 50 per cent of

¹⁷⁸DCAL, L18-A, *Annals* 1892-1927; 23 May 1895.

¹⁷⁹DCAL, L18-A, 25/6/1895, Sister Paul was, apparently, a novice, which suggests she may have been lacking in experience and may have been rather too young to handle the post of head teacher. (Possibly however, there may have been two Sister Pauls!)

¹⁸⁰DCAL, L16-A (ii), *Convent Records* 1894-1917, 9/6/1895.

¹⁸¹DCAL, L16-A (ii), 30 October 1895, p.25. Whatever the reason for the nuns' dismissal from St. Patrick's, concern over certification persisted early in the new century. eg. St. Ignatius Hickey was a teacher before entering, and therefore experienced, and, as source L9(N) notes, "So she was going to be useful in our schools." She taught at Sacred Heart School "for a good number of years," becoming Headmistress 1912-20.

¹⁸²DCAL, L18-A, *Annals*, 1892-1927, 30 Oct. 1895.

the heads who were nuns were of Irish descent. Even when not a Head Teacher, a nun might find her school role competing with her convent responsibilities. A typical entry for 1890 reads: "An assistant should be applied for to take Mother Prioress's place in school so as to enable her to remain at home when necessary."¹⁸³

St Catherine's convent archives present a picture of St Patrick's staffing spanning three decades. From 1867-95, 15 named nuns worked at St Patricks, only 4 of whom had Irish backgrounds. Only a minority of teaching sisters can be unequivocally identified as being certificated; there must have been a sizeable proportion who trained *in situ*. The involvement of male Dominicans in education would, in most cases, have been limited to matters of religious instruction, pupil discipline, and management. In the 1870-1890 period, of 14 priests and brothers who worked at St Patrick's School, 3 were of Irish origin, and 3 of Irish extraction. There is no evidence that this was an issue of staffing policy, or that their Irish backgrounds in any way contributed directly to any sense of active ethnicity in the mission school. The same is true of the nuns. Possibly, teachers with Irish backgrounds were, indirectly, supportive to pupils of Irish background.

Nuns represented unpaid and compliant labour. Irish male teachers were resented financially by the Church (if they had a family to care for) and politically, as suspect democrats or radicals.¹⁸⁴ In 1873, Laura de Lisle opined that the Irish masters were not popular, even amongst children.¹⁸⁵ Teaching was one of the few avenues for upward social mobility available to the Irish.¹⁸⁶ However, pupil-teaching schemes were rudimentary, with a stringent emphasis on keeping the aspirants very firmly in their social place.¹⁸⁷ Available evidence suggests very limited and uneven advancement by this route. From 1861-4, for example, John Cassaday, son of an Irish miner in Whitwick, tried - unsuccessfully - to meet the academic demands of being a pupil-teacher at Holy Cross; he too became a miner. The staff lists of Sacred Heart 1886-1904 are littered with short-term appointments of pupil-teachers and monitresses of Irish descent.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸³DCAL, L16A (i), *Council Minutes* 1888-93; 18 January 1890, p.30

¹⁸⁴2nd Rep. On Elem. Educ. Act, p.407 and 397 re wage demands and suspect politics.

¹⁸⁵PAWLEY (1993), p.360; and *Rep't on Pop Educ* 1861-2, p.176, which referred to Irish-born teachers as "incompetent and unsatisfactory."

¹⁸⁶See DENVIR (1894), p. 399; GLYNN in BECK (1950) p. 284; and JACKSON (1963), p.131.

¹⁸⁷ULLATHORNE (1857) P. 34-6; ALLIES (1861) *Rep't on Pop Educ.*, p. 32-3.

¹⁸⁸*Holy Cross (Whitwick) Log book*, 17/11/63, 1/9/64, 11/11/64; see BURRILL (1986). p2, 3 + 5.

By 1891 the teaching nuns were coming under several pressures. Government standards regarding infrastructure and personnel, local parish and diocesan politics, and inimical male attitudes (in part a reaction to the women's movement of the period) all contributed to the changes taking place. The nuns performed a socially useful task, for Leicester failed to attract young, trained Catholic teachers: in 1875, only 5/365 (1.3 per cent) of Hammersmith trainees came to Leicestershire; in 1896, the figure was 5/750 (0.7 per cent).¹⁸⁹

A final view of the nuns should come from themselves and their closest observers, the pupils. One pupil recalled her headmistress, Sr. Clare, being "very strict."¹⁹⁰ Ms Kathleen McDonagh explained: "My mother went to St. Patrick's School, and hated it, as did my sister - they found the nuns harsh."¹⁹¹ Opinions were mixed.

The nuns, for their part, were more positive in their recall, which is perhaps to be expected.¹⁹² Sr. M Rose Munroe (1877-1952) of County Mayo, "seemed very specially adapted for teaching infants and got the best out of them by her childlike manner." Of Sr. Anna-Marie (Columba) Murphy of County Dublin (1851-1939), the obituary records "her whole religious life was spent teaching in Elementary Schools." Sr. Ignatius Russell, born in Ireland in 1877, and dead by the age of twenty, was recorded as "a splendid teacher." Mother M Lucy Hickey, born in County Tipperary in 1878, was "much loved" in Leicester Schools; she died in 1947. Given the nature of the teaching commitment, and the discipline of the convent, then perhaps '*Requiescat in pace*' seems the appropriate final comment for these teachers.

Subsequent developments suggest that, despite their shortcomings, the nuns, including their important Irish representation, had done a reasonably good job in the classroom. The lay successors to the nuns were not, apparently, able to do the job any better for the *HMI Reports* on St Patrick's for both 1913 and 1915 seriously criticised the quality of teaching offered.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹CES/CPSC, 8th Ann. Rep't 1855, p.79; 11th, 1858 App. G. p. liv; the figs. refer to Hammersmith RC Training College. Only 3 of the 9 taught in Leicester.

¹⁹⁰BROMLEY, R. (1974), p.10.

¹⁹¹OHA/ISW interviews with Kathleen McDonagh, Catherine Richards, Barbara Morris and Bridget Toseland.

¹⁹²DCAL, *Necrology* 1927-67, L9 (N) - 6(i), and *Necrology* 1947-53; DAVIS, G. (1991), *The Irish in Britain, 1815-1914*; on p.141 he refers, rather unfairly, to a tendency for Catholic and other non-Anglican primary sources to be self-exculpatory; this is hardly any one group's monopoly; all sources are potentially suspect, and should be treated as such.

¹⁹³*St Patrick's School Log Book*, 1912; p.14-15 and 42-4; also see Note 3, Table 4, for details.

(f) Conclusion

In most respects, the development of the Catholic education service in Leicester, in its involvement with the Irish community as both consumers and providers, probably mirrors the wider national experience. Catholic poor schools pre-1845 had to promote and maintain Catholicism amongst the urban poor; social relief and education were integral, and based on self-help.

Protestant pressure came from two directions: the establishment of rival schools, often better equipped, and the attempts to provide a "balanced" doctrinal input into the curriculum. Internal pressures limited achievement also: minimal attendance, often on just a once-weekly, evening or half-time basis, combined with absurdly early school leaving ages, seriously hampered individual achievement.

There were clearly some positive factors at work, in the sense that community and personal initiative, assisted by committed work from both male and female, lay and religious, represented a high level of mobilisation amongst the Catholics of Leicester. Irish pupils, and teachers, were prominent in these considerations. Recent commentators, such as Lowe (1989) and Fielding (1993) address similar aspects of the picture in Lancashire.

Fielding remarks that "despite their important place, within immigrant culture, conditions inside Catholic schools were often very unpleasant."¹⁹⁴ This reference to physical conditions, to buildings and equipment, certainly applied, as has been seen, to Leicester. Parsimony in provision - for the Irish clientele - can be laid in part at the door of their more well-off fellow English Catholics; it is clear that St. Patrick's was created from self-help amongst the Irish both in the city and in Ireland, and from one single CPSC grant. After 1875, the Dominican nuns still sought alms for their work from Ireland as well as in Leicester and the surrounding county.

On the question of parental interest in, and support for, denominational schooling, Lowe identifies three main ingredients attracting Irish Catholic families: a basic formal education, social orientation, and the religious instruction required to be good Catholics and sound citizens. Lowe fails to address the simultaneous attempt to denationalize ethnically and to reinforce Catholic identity. Again, one is reminded of the

¹⁹⁴ FIELDING, S. (1993) and LOWE (1989), p.123-5 and 209; BROMLEY (1974) on Holy Cross School offers a similar analysis of parental priorities.

thrust of the Earl of Denbigh's Speech at Holy Cross in the mid-1880's, when he entreated social conformity and the eschewing of political non-conformity. Just as many Irish-born parents would have been products of the post-1831 experiment in national educational provision, which identified schooling with advancement, so too their English-born children were being inculcated with similar values, which accentuated "civilised" behaviour via both the process and content of Catholic education. Denominational schooling in theory should have hindered, or even prevented, cultural assimilation; however, the variable attendance rate, the ever-increasing impact of popular mass culture, the predictably unadventurous curriculum, rooted in middle-class prescription, and the political outlook of the Catholic hierarchy all ensured an assimilative conditioning.

As Lowe argues in the case of Lancashire, whilst Irish migrant identity, with its recognisable religious and political overtones, would logically be assumed to be a hindrance to assimilation, the Church's close commitments to social conformity and political legitimacy ensured that Irish Catholics were drawn into, rather than left outside, the structural norms of British society. Barclay's observations on adolescent attitudes to authority linked priest, teacher and constable as oppositional elements; also tellingly described by Barclay were patterns of teenage social behaviour and promiscuity, patterns observed by virtually all young people of both sexes in the Belgrave Gate area, the location of St. Patrick's parish and school.¹⁹⁵ Popular peer culture threatened ethnicity as much as it did faith.

In attempting to define the conditioning effect of Catholic socialisation on Irish ethnic group identity, it is helpful to make reference to similar experiences in the North American context. Lowe argues that Catholicism was crucial to both immigrant identity and to Irish Community formation, whilst simultaneously it acted as a focus for "No-Popery" and anti-Irish sentiments in Britain, and for nativist attacks in America. Lowe further argues that the Catholic Church in England promulgated an English interpretation and idealisation of Catholic culture which represented the inculcation of safe, predictable and essentially conservative values.¹⁹⁶ Fielding takes the analysis further, arguing that as well as reinforcing ties of class, gender, faith and nationality, Catholic education in Britain, as in the United States, directed Catholic and Protestant

¹⁹⁵BARCLAY, T (1934), p.16.

¹⁹⁶LOWE, W.J. (1989), p.209.

pupils into reactions ranging from sporting rivalry to outright hostility. These aspects of popular cultural behaviour are investigated further in the section of the next chapter on the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism.¹⁹⁷ As Hickman cogently puts it: "Education was the crucial national arena in which the issue of the relationship between the nation state and religion was aired. What emerged was an education system which segregated and differentiated sections of the working class by religious domination and thus, by ethnicity."¹⁹⁸ British Catholic education became the means of incorporating and denationalizing the Irish Catholic migrant community.

From the problems faced by a struggling Irish Catholic community, isolated from wealth, power and influence, as described in the CPSC Report of 1849 (see title page) education provision for the Irish in Leicester moved into the framework of debate and development on the lines described by Bagshawe in his 1885 message concerning the issues of mercy and justice for the poor (see title page). Provision slowly improved after c.1902; all, however, was at a cost in social and psychological aspects of ethnic group identity.¹⁹⁹ Whilst the daily process of Catholic schooling ignored ethnicity, the irony is that the Catholic authorities regularly permitted St Patrick's to be used for political meetings in support of Home Rule and the Land League, for St Patrick's celebrations, and later for classes in the Irish language. We shall never know how consciously such contradictory decisions were made.

¹⁹⁷FIELDING, S, (1993), *1880-1939*, p.64.

¹⁹⁸HICKMAN, M., (1995), pp.156-7, and (1998), p.165-71.

¹⁹⁹See section on Catholicism and popular culture in Religion chapter; BAGSHAWE, Bishop E.G. (1885), *Mercy and Justice to the Poor - The True Political Economy*, p.16.

CHAPTER 7

RACIALIZING THE IRISH THROUGH THE MOBILISATION OF POPULAR ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN LEICESTER.

Ireland and the Roman Catholics - Every papist believes that his salvation is secure. He belongs to the holy Roman Catholic Church. Small sins are no great matter; getting drunk, or swearing, or fighting, are mere pardonable frolics. All his wild passions are unreclaimed - they lie dormant within him, only awaiting an occasion of their being called into action - he is like a barrel of gunpowder - like a vessel charged with electric fluid - he is taught to hate all heretics. The demagogue comes - he spouts treason - he kindles his hearers into a rage - there are no consequences to be feared - heretics are the objects of their vengeance - their fury is raised to an ungovernable pitch - away they go! breathing blood, and wounds, fire, slaughter, and death, to all their opponents - while the crown of glory is the imaginary reward of any unlucky casualty. This is the true theory of Irish disturbances. Irish papists cannot live together in peace. If they are not fighting with protestants, they are fighting with one another, under the name of white feet or black feet, or some other equally absurd and ridiculous denomination - How can manufacturers thrive in a country where the constant tendency of the operative is to slay one another? How can men of property help desiring to live abroad, when their tenants at home are under the influence of an incessant appetite to shoot at them?

The Leicester Conservative Standard, Vol. II (1836-7), p.10

Well in 1847 came a failure of the potato crop in Ireland, and it being their principal food, they died like rotten sheep, and were driven to the four corners of the world. (You must excuse my peculiar figures of speech, for this is an Irish article) I have often heard them blamed for their seeming inability to get on, for living in slums, for not dressing well, for having no regular trade; but suppose you are an agricultural labourer, overtaken by such a calamity as a famine, and you are forced to flee to a strange country where labourers are already plentiful, and the ways of that country are not your ways, and you do not understand its language, and know nothing of its trades and callings. Suppose, further, that there is a prejudice against you as an intruder, a prejudice against your awkwardness, your religion; and a little unreasoning race hatred, none the better for being pretty mutual, - wouldn't it, think you, take all your English pluck and enterprise to surmount all these difficulties?

Tom Barclay in *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149

Whenever an English man or woman did anything disreputable, my mother was wont to remark "Ah well, sure, what better could one expect from the breed of King Harry?" The Sassenach was regarded by us with a mixture of contempt and hatred. God had made him it is true and Jesus Christ had died to save him, but we clean forgot that, and only saw him embodied in Calvin and Cranmer, the lustful King Henry VIII, Queen Bess the Persecutor, the Orangeman's idol, William of Orange, and "the bloody Cromwell." There were though a few good Englishmen no doubt, like Alfred the Great, Sir Thomas More, and William Cobbett who wrote the history of the Protestant Reformation.

BARCLAY, T. (1934), *Memoirs and Medleys*, p.6 & 7.

On the re-establishment of the hierarchy, however in 1850, bigotry became rampant in the town, and an angry mob, after burning an effigy of Cardinal Wiseman, in the market place, proclaimed their intention of pulling down the Catholic Church Fr. Egan had the church and sacristy full of people praying. He placed no trust in any other weapons. One old man, however, from 'The Rushes,' an Irishman, whose name I forget, got a huge chopper, and standing on the house steps declared aloud that he would cleave through the first man that set foot there. Father Egan heard the man shouting, and, opening the door, bade him cease and come into the house. 'Let me alone, Father,' said he, 'I'll keep them off.' 'Come in at once,' said Fr. Egan, and he made him kneel and say his prayers.....

HIRST, J. (c.1898), *Life of the Rev. Andrew Egan*, p.84-5, PP of Loughborough.

CHAPTER 7

RACIALIZING THE IRISH THROUGH THE MOBILISATION OF POPULAR ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN LEICESTER.

PAGE	CONTENTS
280	(a) Introduction.
285	(i) Irish Catholics: "Aliens in blood, language and religion" (ii) an introductory local chronology
286	(b) The Inheritance of Anti-Catholicism in Leicester's Protestant Tradition.
289	(c) Orangeism and its Leicestershire Supporters.
293	(d) The Petitioning and Memorialising Campaigns.
297	(e) Racializing the Irish via Popular Anti-Catholicism :
297	(i) the local contributions of national anti-Catholic agitators - Stowell, Gavazzi, and the Kensits.
302	(ii) Local and National Anti-Catholic Organisations in Leicestershire, and their Local Leadership.
324	(iii) The intersection of anti-Irish prejudice and Anti-Catholicism in Leicestershire c.1840-50, and its legacy.
328	(f) Conclusion.

LIST OF TABLES, MAPS AND DOCUMENTS

Page No.	Table No.	Title
296	1	Organised Anti-Catholic Protest in the East Midlands : Memorialists and Petitioners per thousand people, with rank by county, 1850 and 1851.
304	2	Mid 19th Century Protestant Societies in Leicestershire; both nationally and locally organised.
310	3	Anti-Catholic Action : Protestant pressure groups in Leicestershire, 1835-60 - a tabulation of individuals' cross-membership of multiple organisations.
312	4	Comparisons of Leicestershire anti-Catholic organisation membership with National anti-Catholic organisation membership, c.1835 to c.1855.
Page No.	Other Item:	Title
307	Map 1	Geographic Distribution of LAPTS Membership in 1835, and activity locations of the Reformation Society and of the Protestant Association in Leicestershire c.1825-c.1860.
331	Doc. 1	Cartoon from <i>Punch</i> (1850) relating No-Popery issue to Celtic simianized stereotype.

(a) Introduction

(i) Irish Catholics: "Aliens in blood, language and religion"

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the origins of anti-Irish racism and anti-Catholicism in Leicester. This is attempted by examining the effects on Irish Catholics of the efforts of those Protestants in Leicester who indulged in the major forms of anti-Roman Catholic action, be these violent acts, anti-Catholic petitioning, creating anti-Catholic organisations or promoting anti-Catholic literature. Hickman (1998) observes that anti-Irish racism and anti-Catholicism have been central to the formation of the British national identity, are essential elements of British culture, and have moulded government and institutional practices regarding the Irish in Britain.¹

That Catholicity generally represented a separateness, an alien force, is stressed by Swift, who contextualised the Protestant perception of difference against four considerations: the deeply Protestant British tradition; the impressive force of the Evangelical revival; the upsurge in forthright "no-popery" feeling in Anglicanism; and the advent of Orangeism in Britain as well as Ireland.² All of these factors were pertinent in Leicestershire in the matters of opinion formation and attitude maintenance towards the Irish as Catholics. Bishop Ullathorne noted in 1857 that "poor Irish Catholics are but too often regarded with the secret feeling of being aliens and intruders. 'Aliens,' as Lord Lyndhurst expressed so pithily the popular feeling, 'in blood, language and religion'."³

The evidence from Leicestershire will show that Victorian anti-Catholicism incorporated the articulation of anti-Irish feeling. Those voluntary groups involved, in the main middle-class, used public meetings, petition drives, cheap tracts, the popular press and public lecturing in an inter-related approach to anti-Catholic action. In Leicestershire, there is significant evidence of aristocratic and gentry involvement. The popular element of seeking entertainment arose in heated public meetings and occasions of serious disorder, which sometimes drew forth a reaction from Irish Catholics in Leicester.

An understanding of the religious ideological milieu awaiting Irish Catholic

¹See HICKMAN, M. Education for 'Minorities': Irish Catholics in Britain, parts 3 & 4, Racializing and Problematisation of the Irish in Britain, in LEWIS, G. (1998) (Ed) *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare* p.143-152.

²SWIFT, R. The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: Problems and Perspectives, in *Irish Historical Studies*, XXXV, No. 99, May 1987, pp. 264-276.

³BDA; ULLATHORNE (1857), *Notes on the Education Question*, p.9.

migrants in Leicester in the nineteenth century is a basic requirement for an evaluation of both host and migrant reciprocal attitudes. Paz (1992) remarks that:

Anti-Catholicism, in one form or another, has been an English characteristic since the Reformation and was especially marked in the nineteenth century. It rests upon three fundamental ideas: that of the Protestant Constitution, that of the Norman Yoke, and that of providentialism.⁴

Anti-Catholicism formed part of the processes of isolating and racializing the Irish in British society, and of depicting the Irish as "other".

Given the low rate of Irish in-migration, the Leicester experience⁵ was perhaps unique. How far anti-Catholic prejudice was based on actual anti-Catholic conviction, and how far this related to anti-Irish prejudice, could amount to the same thing for most Irish, as the great majority were Catholics.⁶ Evidence will show an Irish dimension to popular anti-Catholicism in Leicester. The post-1829 political agenda, and the statistically modest Irish Catholic in-migration both contributed to the resurgence of anti-Catholicism and the racialization of the Irish in Victorian Leicester.

Protestant mass movements locally were of significance in racializing the Irish for four reasons: the relatively large numbers involved; their social status; the numerous visits carried out by their agents (such as Joseph Dare of the Unitarian Leicester Domestic Mission); and the vast amount of literature promoted. The Protestant Societies, until recently largely neglected, merit analytical investigation in regards to the intersection between the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism and anti-Irish racism in Leicester.

O'Tuathaigh noted of anti-Catholicism "that this antagonism was an odd compound of religious, social and political elements." He remarked on "a strong anti-Catholic prejudice present in many levels of British Society for most of the nineteenth century." Even if overt violence was not endemic, the numerous peaks of anti-Catholic agitation in the century "represent a continuous enduring and deep-seated popular British suspicion of Rome, its influence and intentions." O'Tuathaigh's contentions are borne

⁴PAZ, D.G. (1992), p.2. *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*. The "Norman yoke" concept is heavily ironic in this context, given the Irish experience of English colonialism.

⁵The Protestant Irish migrants, and the style of Irish migrant Catholicism, are dealt with Education, Catholic growth and Politics.

⁶See, for example, O'TUATHAIGH, G., *The Irish in 19th C. Britain: Problems and Perspectives*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1985). As early as 1894, John Denvir called the English Irish relationship "The war of class and creeds;" p.150.

out fully in the discussion following in relation to Leicestershire.

Like Paz, Wolffe (1991), reached the firm conclusion that:

One cannot divorce negative anti-Catholicism from the positive development and influence of Protestant forms of Christianity, with their roots deep in nineteenth century British life and forming an essential part in national consciousness.⁷

Wolffe isolates three stimuli in particular: the spectacular advances of Romanism in the 1820-40 period - especially noticeable in Leicestershire; the implications for British society of the mass influx of Irish, who were criticised regularly and graphically in the Rev. Joseph Dare's annual local reports; and the increasing influence of Ultramontaniam in the Catholic Church under Wiseman's leadership,⁸ a factor also relevant to Leicester. Wolffe notes that "Irish immigration transformed the social profile of British Catholicism, and the Protestant arrivals played a significant part in 'No-Popery' campaigns."⁹ The slow but steady stream of Irish entering Britain increased to a flood in the years from 1815 to 1860. Leicester shared in these developments pre-c.1860; it also welcomed Protestant Irish. Wolffe stresses that "the Catholic Irish were separated from the majority of their British co-religionists by ethnic origin as well as by social status."¹⁰ The statistics of Irish immigration to Britain indicate, as Paz noted, that:

..... it is true that the Roman Catholics whom English Protestants met in daily life were most likely to be Irish, even in the 1860's and '70's, when Irish immigration slowed down.¹¹

Paz's basic point holds good, despite the under-representation of the Irish in extant histories of the Catholic revival in Leicester.¹²

The question then arises: was anti-Irish feeling merely a matter of emotion, or was it part of a more structured, pronounced, and scientifically-based, racism? Anti-Irish racism was based on a construct of hierarchical racial typologies, amalgamated with a

⁷O'TUATHAIGH, (1985), p.26-7. WOLFFE, (1991), p.143-4. *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860*.

⁸WOLFFE, (1991), chapter 5.

⁹WOLFFE, (1991), p.18.

¹⁰WOLFFE, (1991), p.19, citing BOSSY, J. (1975), pp. 307-10; ROBERTS, D. (Ed) (1979) *Modern Scottish Catholicism 1878-1978*, p.23.

¹¹PAZ, (1992), p.51.

¹²See chapter on RC Church growth and development.

national and Protestant myth centred around the idea of the "free born Englishman."¹³

Paz however, argues that the issue is of culture rather than race, and that the debate is more about concern over the Irish as a threat to British people's jobs, houses, language and culture:

With respect to the reception of the Irish in the period from 1830 to 1870, the attitudes of the various sub-groups of the host society to religion was the determining factor.¹⁴

Gilley remarks that the Evangelical phenomenon, together with the resurgent political fear of Ireland occasioned by O'Connell's Irish Catholic radicalism, directly contributed to the resurgence of No-Popery.¹⁵ He argues that the evidence suggests that English No-Popery was less concerned with the Irish in Britain, than with Catholicism in Ireland, the iniquities of international Catholicism, and the threat to the Anglican constitutional settlement c.1850. The Leicester media reflects Gilley's analysis, ie that most Victorian anti-Catholicism was theological and historical. It should nonetheless be stressed that, via a process of "guilt by association", the acerbic asperities heaped up on all Catholics had to reflect negatively on the Irish community, as most of that community was Catholic, practising or otherwise. The Irish were already held in contempt by many contemporary observers; as the works of L.P. Curtis and others demonstrate, the Catholic factor simply edged them further into a situation of almost being beneath contempt. In the light of Leicestershire evidence, Gilley is not totally convincing when he states of the Irish: "They were ignored rather than scorned, and scorned rather than feared."¹⁶ For Irish Catholics to settle happily in Leicester, where historic links with Protestantism were being still recalled and celebrated, was not an easy task. Repeated and public expressions of religious prejudice must have discouraged many migrants from staying on. Paz (1992) stressed that statistical evidence indicates that the type of Catholic an English person was most likely to come into contact with, even in the 1860's and 1870's when Irish immigration decreased somewhat, was still an

¹³See section on media treatment of Irish in politics chapter.

¹⁴PAZ, (1992), p.79.

¹⁵GILLEY S., Protestant London, No-Popery and the Irish Poor 1830-60 (Part I, 1830-50) in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan 1970, p.211-13.

¹⁶For a useful discussion of historical stereotyping see L.P. Curtis, *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: a study in anti-Catholic prejudice*, Conference of British Studies, Bridgeport, Conn., 1978; *Apes and Angels: the Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, 1971.

Irish one.¹⁷ Gilley perhaps lays insufficient stress on the association between anti-Irish feeling and anti-Catholicism. The dominance of anti-Catholicism as an active ideology in Leicestershire is confirmed in two ways: through the identification of the widespread patterns of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish feeling, and the high number of prominent people who were consistently prepared to support such politico-religious agendas.

Nominating religion, at the expense of race or ethnicity, as the most disabling factor misses the discursive link with the developing national ideology. Hickman (1998) argues of anti-Irish racism and of anti-Catholicism that

Both phenomena contributed to a complex categorizing of Irish migrants in nineteenth century Britain. (They) have been integral to the formation of British national identity, are consistent elements of British culture, and have shaped government and institutional practices regarding the Irish in Britain.

Those who found themselves outside the category of being a freeborn and racially superior English (or British) Protestant were "other," which implied that they were uncultured, uncivilized and subhuman. A code of breeding reflected itself in the rigidities of the British class system, whilst the respectable middle class lifestyle was seen as the norm for all; on both counts the working class, including most of the Irish, were not in the picture.

The constructing of a British national myth had little room for bestial, demoralized Celts from Ireland, especially as these outsiders were also white, and therefore needed clearly differentiating from English whites. The emancipation of 1829 threatened Britishness by weakening Protestant power and by apparently elevating the position of Catholics, and therefore the position of most of the Irish:

The popular discourse of the Protestant nation intersected with anti-Irish racism and defined where the danger to the nation lay. These fears were embodied in the shape of Irish immigrants, who were perceived as threatening the union of Church and state, and therefore 'the English people'.¹⁸

This chapter now examines the widespread and effective articulation of anti-Catholicism

¹⁷GILLEY, S, Protestant London, No Popery, and the Irish Poor, in *Recusant History*, Vol.. 10, No. 4 Jan 1970, p.211. Given the hostility of many English Catholics to the incoming Irish, it is hardly surprising that English Protestants, with added motives, would feel similarly ill-disposed.

¹⁸HICKMAN, M., in LEWIS, G. (ED)(1998), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*, p.147.

and anti-Irish propaganda in Leicester, and its role in the problematization of the Irish in Britain.

(ii) An introductory local chronology

Emancipation for Catholics in 1829 represented a key episode for Protestants also. The Evangelical renewal, the new self-confidence amongst English Catholics, and the increasing effects of the Irish on wider English society all acted as spurs to the Government enquiry of 1836 into the Irish migrant poor. Leicester made a return, even though the city did not have a particularly high profile in either Catholic or Irish senses.¹⁹

An overview of the chronology of anti-Catholicism in Leicestershire provides a context for discussion. Between 1837 and 1850, the tempo of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic disputes increased markedly in number and in acrimony. All Protestant groups opposed the Maynooth grant.²⁰ A serious church rate dispute strengthened links between some Non-Conformists and Catholics in their joint anti-Anglican endeavour; O'Connell made a celebrated speech on the case in Leicester. The influential Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society (LAPTS) began its operations in 1835.²¹

By the 1860's the Maynooth issue was superseded by the movement for disestablishment and by populist issues concerning convents, which provided the excuse for a deluge of prurient "news" coverage. In the 1870's, however, anti-Romanism became less public and popular, being increasingly confined to the political and intellectual spheres, only to break out anew c.1895-1905 in anti-ritualism agitation.

The terms of the debates altered somewhat by the 1860's; Darwinism challenged Protestant polemicists; Irish internal affairs and Irish in-migration both seemed to have reached a plateau; and Puseyism provided a rather more obvious target. The anti-ritualist campaigns of c.1890-1910 in Merseyside, Cumbria and elsewhere were reflected in Leicester. Suprisingly, Leicester did not host William Martin Murphy. By c.1891, it appeared that moderate brands of Protestantism were triumphing over such inflammatory ideas as Orangeism, which survived locally in the Primrose League (see Politics).

Leicester's Protestant infrastructure was wide-ranging and extensive. A plethora

¹⁹S. C. *Report on State of the Irish Poor in GB* (1835), Appendix G, report by Rev. H. L. Oxley of Holy Cross Church.

²⁰PAZ, (1992), pp. 5 and 193; this was an annual state subsidy to an Irish RC seminary.

²¹For the case of Edward Baines, see Politics. By 1850 this style of active co-operation had disappeared in Leicester.

of 34 foundations, seating 28,000 persons, was faced in 1846 by just one main Catholic Church:

Religious institutions, for the propagation of the Gospel both at home and abroad, are liberally supported in Leicester, both by members of the Established Church and the various congregations of Dissenters.²²

To zealous, crusading Protestants of Leicestershire, this propagation included missionary amongst the benighted Catholic Irish of the west of Ireland. Part of the Protestant agenda from c.1830 was a fundamental concern with the problems of the social and political condition of Ireland, and of the Irish.²³ These same Protestants must surely have looked askance at Irish papists who made their way like a contagion into Leicestershire. Contemporary anti-Catholic and anti-Irish critics such as Kay nationally and Dare locally habitually used the term "contagious" to describe the in-migrants as a threat.²⁴ Resources, organisation and planning were pivotal to this Protestant awakening; for example, the Leicester Auxiliary Bible Society, (1810), had a Leicester depository and county branches; it remitted to its London headquarters £1,200 yearly. This sophistication was to be typical of both the LPTS and the several branches of the various national Protestant activist organisations which were represented so well locally.²⁵ It is no surprise to find that a local history in 1958 remarked succinctly that "Leicester has been a flourishing centre of non-conformity since the seventeenth century."²⁶

(b) The Inheritance of Anti-Catholicism in Leicester's Protestant Tradition

In his recent study of the "Protestant crusade" c.1830-60, Wolffe notes its Reformation roots, and the continuity and similarity of its manifestations in time.²⁷ This section summarises the local inheritance of anti-Catholic tradition which gave Leicester

²²LCRO, *White's Directory*, 1846.

²³PAZ, (1992), p.107.

²⁴See HICKMAN, M., in LEWIS, G. (Ed)(1998), p.150-1, and Chapter 4 here on Dare.

²⁵Gilley indicated the importance of the popular Protestant bodies in their "continuing witness to the same fixed hatred of the Church of Rome," in the context of the Irish migrants; see GILLEY S., *Papists, Protestants and the Irish in London, 1835-70*, in *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 8; 1972; p.266.

²⁶See McKINLEY, R.A. & MARTIN, J.D, *Protestant Non-conformity*, in McKINLEY, R.A. (Ed)(1958) *V.C.H. Leics. Vol. IV*, p.390; at least 10 brands of Protestantism were identified in 1958. O'TUATHAIGH, G., *The Irish in 19th C. Britain: Problems of Integration*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1985), pp.26-27.

²⁷WOLFFE, (1991), 1829-60 p.8-9.

c.1900 the deserved title of "the metropolis of dissent."²⁸

Pressure groups promoting Protestant anti-Catholic interests were a central feature of religious life in nineteenth century Leicester. Their propaganda was prolonged and pervasive, and demonstrably effective in terms of arousing anti-Catholic and anti-Irish feelings. The agenda concerned both the Catholic restoration locally and the Irish arrivals. It remained the case that, whilst hostility to Catholicism preceded the Irish influx, the Irish nonetheless featured on the agenda of paranoia in their capacity as Catholics.

Leicestershire Protestants were understandably proud of their historical experience, which actually preceded the Reformation. Anti-Catholicism in Leicester had impressively early roots in John Wycliffe's local Lollard movement and the martyrdom of Hugh Latimer.

During the 1850 "Papal Aggression," (restoration of the Catholic hierarchy), at the great local County Meeting, the heroes of the Protestant tradition were recounted:

they would recollect that it was from the County of Leicester that the ashes of Wickliffe were thrown into the river (hear, hear,) and they would also recollect that in the torturing fires of Oxford the candle of the Reformation was lighted on the body of a native of Leicestershire.²⁹

Wycliffe's contribution was recalled in 1835, when the LAPTS published a *Life of Wycliffe*.³⁰ In the 1860's, Lutterworth Church was hailed as the "Birthplace of the Reformation" because of its associations with Wycliffe; his Lollards were portrayed as heroes of English nationalism. Latimer too enjoyed a revered place in the martyrology of English Protestantism,³¹ meriting inclusion in a LAPTS publication in the 1840's.³² As the Irish settled, both Wycliffe and Latimer c.1860 were honoured, rather paradoxically, by having statues dedicated to them placed outside the Protestant Collegiate College.³³ In the 1890's Wycliffe was invoked by those organised agitators, the Wycliffe Preachers. Led by the Kensit family of Merseyside, where Protestantism was unashamedly aggressive and sectarian, the Kensit campaigners descended on Leicester in 1898 and

²⁸ *The Wyvern*, 30 September 1898. p.383.

²⁹ LC, 30 Nov. 1850, p.1.

³⁰ LCRO, LAPTS, 1835 Report, p.18; and pp.19-22.

³¹ CHESTER, A.G. (1954/1978), *Hugh Latimer Apostle to the English*, preface, p.vii, pp.10, 29 and 84. Lollardy was an early influence on Latimer.

³² LCRO; LAPTS Reports, 1835, p.18; 1850, p.25.

³³ FREEBODY, N.K. (1967), *the History of the Collegiate Girls' School, Leicester, 1867-1967*, p.22. It is ironic that such Protestant iconoclasts are thus commemorated.

1904. (See (e) i).

Anti-Romanist culture was feted in other ways. In 1861, a Leicester paper featured the infamous St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in France of 1562.³⁴ Even street dedications celebrated Protestantism: the 1891 Census listed Ridley Street, Latimer Street, Tyndale Street and Luther Street.³⁵ A century ago, the names of Protestant heroes and what they implied in historical, cultural and religious terms, was still a germane factor in Leicester's popular collective consciousness.

The local Protestant tradition was also reflected in Puritan traditions of John Howe and George Fox.³⁶ Their works and lives were still being celebrated, just as Irish Catholics were arriving. Leicester hosted resident and peripatetic Irish Protestant clergymen; the issues facing Protestantism in England and Ireland were aired repeatedly in Leicester's media. Catholic growth in Leicester c.1840-60 was accompanied by vigorous reaction from militant Protestants. Catholics therefore until c.1875 tended to maintain a low profile. This explains Kimberlin's account (1946), of the Catholic *entrée* as a purely English Catholic phenomenon and the cultural isolation of St. Patrick's School-Chapel in the slums.

The Irish contribution to institutional Catholic growth had two effects. Firstly, it drew negative attention to the Irish involved; also, the resulting hostile reaction in local Protestantism possibly served to influence Irish Catholic migrants either to avoid Leicester or not to stay permanently. Certainly, at all censuses from 1851 to 1891, the element of Irish-born always hovers around the 1,000 mark, showing no proportional increase in line with Leicester's own overall dramatic population growth. With other socio-economic factors, the problems of historic religious prejudice played a significant part as a disincentive to Irish Catholics. Inglis has suggested that an "active hatred of Popery" in British society, together with internal Catholic weaknesses, meant that the Catholic Church was ill-equipped to deal with the pressures of English society.

The level and intensity of anti-Catholic prejudice in Leicester was evident in the residual impact of the remaining Penal Laws: local Catholicism was secretive, guarded and semi-hidden.³⁷ A close relative of the Catholic Turvilles of Husbands Bosworth

³⁴LC, 31 Aug. 1861; p.6. There is also a Wycliffe Secondary School, a Blind home and a voting ward.

³⁵In 1883, a special lecture marked the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth; see *The Diary of Ada Jackson*, p.116, (1993).

³⁶RAFTERY, M. (1984), *The Writers of Leicestershire*, p. 42-3. Fox's fame was celebrated only recently, LM of 26.5.95.

³⁷The standard but dated work on the Catholic revival in Leicester is KIMBERLIN, A. H. (1946). Also, see INGLIS, K.S. (1963), *The Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*, p.128.

wrote from Dublin to give early warning to his family in Leicestershire of the 1798 Rebellion and the arrest of the United Irish leaders. There is, then, ample evidence of a Catholic sense of caution and wariness.³⁸

The Irish Catholic dimension locally is explored in Barclay's autobiography, (see title page), where religion and prejudice are conjoined in a historical context.³⁹ Barclay shows how the generality of Irish migrants shared a historic perception of English religious intolerance and misrule.

(c) Orangeism and its Leicestershire Supporters

The impact of Orangeism has been described thus:

The first and most problematical of the anti-Catholic organisations was the Orange Order, brought to Lancashire by militia and soldiers who had helped suppress the United Irish revolt of 1798.⁴⁰

Leicester's Orange organisations feature in the 1835 *Report* on Orange infiltration,⁴¹ and this at a time when an Irish Catholic presence also was building up. Two cells met monthly in Leicester: Lodge No. 107 met at The Generous Briton inn on Wharf Street; the other Lodge, No. 188, at The Sailor's Return in Bridge Street. Also listed, as Lodge No. 260, was the 17th Leicestershire Regiment,⁴² which recruited locally.

The low socio-economic status of the membership was typical of British lodges, and effectively explained the lack of appeal to middle class elements; however, Joseph Brookes, listed as a Deputy Grand Master in Leicester in 1832, appears to have been a respectable stationer and bookseller, in Belgrave Gate,⁴³ an area already being settled by Irish newcomers. John Stockdale Hardy, registrar of Leicester's Archdeaconry Court, was a supporter of Orange principles. (See below). Open support for Orangeism outside the working class seems to have been limited to a few committed individuals. The only

³⁸KIMBERLIN, (1946), pp. 7, 8, 10, 15 and 16. LCRO, Turville letters, DG 39/2013; letter from Frederick French to Mr Turville, 17.3.1798.

³⁹BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.6 & 7. WOLFFE, J. (1991), comments on the significance of Cobbett's work for Catholics p.15.

⁴⁰PAZ, (1992), p.33. See SENIOR, H. (1966), *Orangeism in Ireland and Britain 1796-1836*, especially Ch. VII on the British Orange Lodges, 1795-1822, pp. 151-176. The English connection is fully explained in NEAL, F. Manchester Origins of the English Orange Order, in *Manchester Region History Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1990-91 - 1 - pp.12-24.

⁴¹*Orange Institution of Great Britain, 1835, Civil Disturbance, Vols. 1, 5 + 6, Select Cmtee Report.*

⁴²*Select Cmtee Rpt. Orangeism 1835* Vol. 1 in Appendix 19, p.142-3 and p.164. Lodge No. 107 is also recorded as submitting £0. 9. Od. for "dues" for the 12 months to April 1833; compared with the returns for other lodges, Leicester's figure seems a little low, comparing membership numbers with sum submitted. It could imply that Leicester members tended to be from less well-off sectors of the community. (Vol. I, p.83).

⁴³*White's Directory, Leics* (1846), p. 127 & 172.

extensive data concerns the Leicestershire 17th Regiment of Foot, posted to New South Wales, in 1833-34.⁴⁴

The town of Leicester itself hosted 4 lodges in August 1835. Nearby towns, such as Derby, Nottingham, Northampton and Coventry, hosted none; Leicester then enjoyed a unique Orange status in the east midlands. The only west midlands towns listed are Birmingham and Kidderminster. Most locations cited were in northern England and in Scotland. Of 47 towns listed, Leicester appears typical of the 28 towns which claimed 6 or less lodges.⁴⁵ Who were the supporters of Orangeism in Leicester?

The answer is probably to be found in the military connection between Leicester and Ireland. Specifically, it is the involvement of Leicestershire units, both Militia and Fencibles, in the savage repression of the 1798 Rebellion and its aftermath, that is significant. Senior, like Paz, commented:

The exchange of Irish and English militia units in 1798 and the founding of Orange Lodges in British regiments serving in Ireland provided the means by which Orangeism took root in Britain.⁴⁶

Other supporting evidence revolves around two personalities: John Stockdale Hardy, the prominent and articulate Anglican leader, and George Finch M.P. of Burley on the Hill (in Rutland).

Hardy (1793-1849) a prominent Anglican, was a successful anti-Catholic pamphleteer and national petitions organiser. He opined that Wellington would surely not risk prejudicing the liberties won by the immortal Orange chief in 1688; it was the duty of Protestants, declared Hardy, to adopt as their watchword that of the "Prentice Boys of Derry, shout No Surrender!" It is significant that in an English midlands town such strong support for the Protestants of Ulster existed. Hardy's petition was seconded by the Earl Howe, another name synonymous locally with serious anti-Catholic agitation.⁴⁷

Hardy was also in communication with the prominent London Orangeman

⁴⁴S.C. Rept, *Orangeism*, 1835, Vol. I, App. No. 21, p.157.

⁴⁵S.C. Rept on *Orangeism*, 1835, Vol. I. App. 20, p.145.

⁴⁶SENIOR, H. (1966), p.151. One eye-witness account, that of the United Irishman Miles Byrne, remarks: "No doubt the propaganda of the orange lodges was encouraged in every militia regiment both by the colonels and by the government," BYRNE, M., (1863/1972), *Memoirs* Vol. I., p.305.

⁴⁷See NICHOLS, J. G. (Ed)(1852), *The Literary Remains of John Stockdale Hardy*, pp. 200-201 & p xv, Earl Howe is also dealt with in the section on anti-Catholic ideology. Whilst being a most effective anti-Romanist propagandist, Hardy was cautious about any public political affiliation.

Lord Kenyon,⁴⁸ who had expressed his admiration for the anti-Catholic activists of Leicester: "I am glad to hear that the County of Leicester is inclined to stir in support of the Protestant Cause. In Earl Howe I have perfect reliance; but I hope the thing will depone in a high style in that county."⁴⁹ Kenyon clearly valued Hardy's local agitation and organisation skills.

That there was sympathy in the conservative Leicester media for Orangeism is quite clear, especially after 1829.⁵⁰ A scan of the *Journal* file for 1829 showed anti-Catholic, anti-Irish, pro-Protestant and Orange-oriented spreads virtually on a weekly basis throughout the year.⁵¹ The constant reiteration of such views materially conditioned the level of awareness of the Leicester readership in a distinctly anti-Catholic and anti-Irish direction. Irish in-migrants c.1835 were moving into a hostile host situation on both the religious and ethnic counts, (see Barclay's two comments on title page). Barclay persuasively itemises the criteria for alienation, concluding with "a prejudice against your religion; and a little unreasoning race hatred." Notably, he states of the Irish that "I have often heard them blamed" for a catalogue of shortcomings. In other words he suggests a pattern of repetition (often reciprocated). The evidence which follows strengthens his contention. This together with economic disincentives, helps to explain Leicester's limited absorption of Irish migrants, and the flowering of the Primrose League locally later in the century.

If Orangeism can be associated locally with one prominent individual, it would be George Finch, (1791-1858), of the Finch-Hattons, Earls of Winchelsea and Nottingham; he occupies a central place in the mobilisation of anti-Catholic feeling in Leicestershire. Finch lived at Burley-on-the-Hill in Rutland, on Leicestershire's border.⁵²

The Finches shared a radical protestant outlook, one that was extreme even for that time. G. W. Finch-Hatton, (1794-1818) the Finch who succeeded to the main titles and estates in 1826, served as Deputy-Lieutenant for Kent. A religious activist, he was particularly noted as being almost the only English aristocrat willing to identify himself with Orangeism in Ireland, and he regularly denounced in frantic terms Daniel

⁴⁸Report of SC on Orange Lodge, Vol. I, App. 2, pp.11, 29 and 30; also see App. 19, p.141.

⁴⁹NICHOLS, J.G. (Ed)(1852), pp. xiii and xiv. Hardy was to be totally unsympathetic on the Famine issue.

⁵⁰LJ, 31 July 1829, p.3.

⁵¹These articles were never short, ranging from at least two columns to a ½ a full page in length. Most editions were also heavily larded with anti-Irish humorous stories; see chapter on media and politics.

⁵²Biographical details from GOTCH, J.A. on Alstoe Hundred (Burley) in PAGE, W. (Ed)(1935), *VCH of Rutland*, Col. 2 p.116, and *White's Directory*, 1846, p.607.

O'Connell and Maynooth. Occasionally he chaired meetings at Exeter Hall, but his intemperate language exempted him from becoming a leader in evangelical politics. He vehemently opposed Emancipation.⁵³ At Pennenden Heath in Kent he chaired an anti-Catholic mass meeting in 1828.⁵⁴ Winchelsea's publicly declared willingness to identify himself openly and closely with Orange interests in Ireland and England was significant in that it was passed on in the wider family. The Burley property passed to the George Finch of this study, whose Orange connections were, if anything the most subversive and influential in the east midlands. Finch was an MP, a local J.P., and Deputy Lieutenant for Rutland.⁵⁵

These political liaisons were complemented by Finch's rigorous Protestant profile. He was "a strong supporter of the Evangelical Church."⁵⁶ His activities were on a national scale: in 1831 he chaired an anti-Maynooth grant meeting in London.⁵⁷ What has remained undisclosed is George Finch's secret and subversive role in representing Orange interests whilst he was a serving member of the parliamentary committee enquiring into Orange abuses in the early 1830's.

A scroll entitled "Orangemen's Testimonial" lies in LCRO. Dated 1835, it was addressed "To George Finch, Esq., M.P. late one of the Parliamentary Committee on the Orange Institution" and it was "signed and Sealed on behalf of the Brethren" by 31 Lodge officers of 17 different numbered Orange Lodges of the Glenawly district of county Fermanagh.⁵⁸

This telling document belongs to the period of the 'Orange Conspiracy 1831-6'.⁵⁹ In 1835, a Commons Select Committee had probed Orangeism. Of its 27 members, 8 were Orangemen, one of these being Finch. The final *Report* indicated that the Orange lodges were politically and constitutionally a danger, and confirmed Orange infiltration; both the 17th Leics. Regiment and the town of Leicester were cited. The testimonial from the Glenawly Orangemen is evidence of overt pressure exerted in the Orange interest:

⁵³D.N.B., Vol. XIX (1889), p.21. Exeter Hall was the London H.Q. of the Protestant national pressure group, the Reformation Society.

⁵⁴LC, 1. Nov 1828.

⁵⁵FINCH, P. (1901), *History of Burley-on-the-Hill, Rutland*, Vol. I, p.339. (In LCRO).

⁵⁶FINCH, P. (1901) *History of Burley*, Vol. I, p.339.

⁵⁷*The Catholic Magazine* 1831-2 (April), p.188 (in BDA).

⁵⁸LCRO, DG7, Box 4970/Gen.6, Orangemen's Testimonial to G. Finch of Burley on the Hill, c.Sept. 1835. Rectangular, 3¼ x 1½ feet approx; script upper half; 17 wax seals of Orange Lodges on lower half.

⁵⁹SENIOR, H. (1966), pp. 254-273.

We, the Masters and Officers of the Orangemen of the Glenawly district feel that we are bound by every tie of gratitude and respect, to follow the example of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, in returning you "our warmest and most heartfelt thanks" for your able and unwearied exertion on behalf of our Institution before the Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into its nature and character, an enquiry which our enemies fondly hoped would prove its ruin but you, by your prudent and sagacious examination of the witnesses produced before the Committee, both elicited the truth, and convinced the British Public, that the charges brought against us by our enemies were as false as they were futile.⁶⁰

Clearly, the Glenawly Lodges believed that George Finch had confounded their critics and preserved their reputation nationally. The fact remains that at this sensitive period, an influential local Protestant leader was overtly involved in defending and furthering Orange interests at a national level. It would have encouraged Orange supporters in Leicestershire to know that such a powerful figure shared their sympathies. Orange activity in the county served therefore as a harbinger for militant Protestant action, which continued in the forms of press attacks of startling virulence, of invitations sent to radical anti-Catholic preachers to address meetings, of encouragement offered to local and national anti-Catholic organisation, and of organised series of anti-Catholic public meetings.

In terms of a direct impact on Leicestershire's mobilisation of anti-Catholicism, the attempts by Tory Ultras to revive Orangeism were somewhat limited in effect. It is nonetheless, probably true to say that it was a useful foundation for future anti-Catholic and anti-Irish action. Rather more initiatives were to result from the activities of the varied Protestant pressure groups operating from the 1840's to the 1860's,⁶¹ The last open manifestation of Orangeism came in the 1880's, when Bishop Bagshawe delivered a ferocious public attack on the mushrooming Conservative pressure group, the Primrose League (see Politics chapter).

(d) The Petitioning and Memorialising Campaigns

Leicester was well represented early on in expertly organised anti-Catholic petitioning, an activity which appealed to "poorer, more marginal and less literate people

⁶⁰LCRO, DG7, Box 4970, Gen. 6; Orange Testimonial to Finch, c.Sept. 1835.

⁶¹After World War II, when demographic evidence points to Protestant Orange settlement in the Coventry area, Leicester hosted the Leicester Ulster Society (founded 1951); its card portrayed the Red Hand symbol, and its guest speaker at its 2nd Annual Dinner Dance in April 1952 was Admiral Sir Wilfred Patterson, KCB, CVO, CBE, President of the Society. It is now defunct.

who were dependent on "that traditional, largely oral culture in which Protestant intolerance was so deeply imbedded."⁶² It was contemporaneous with the start of Irish Catholic in-migration to the town. In the 1850-51 campaigns, of 42 counties, Leicester ranked seventh amongst memorialists and twelfth amongst petitioners; a pretty high rating on both counts.⁶³ The origins of this campaign indicate the Orange dimension at work before the 1840's Irish influx.

In 1825 Hardy, leading Anglican and secret Orange sympathiser, organised a petition at St. Mary's Vestry. He shrewdly suggested the formation of a committee to work as a "still, small voice" rather than as a body designed to promote "illegitimate popular excitement."⁶⁴ Simultaneously, Irish-born Catholics in Leicester were beginning to campaign jointly with Non-Conformists, in the body known as the Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty (see below). Local battle-lines were being drawn.

In 1828, Hardy organised a second speech and petition against Romanist claims, for the Leicestershire Pitt Club, at the Three Crowns Inn.⁶⁵ He introduced an Irish edge, viewing "with great alarm" the Roman Catholic Association and its work "in the sister country."⁶⁶ Hardy's successful campaign was seconded by three influential local figures: Earl Howe, the Duke of Rutland and Mr Legh Keck. All formed part of the developing anti-Catholic and anti-Irish caucus.

This early campaign in Leicester is also important the large-scale response of 36,788 anti-Catholic signatories. Petitioning was especially significant for the large numbers of working class female signatories it attracted; all supporters were expressing their national identity via anti-Catholic action. Wolffe points to the national anti-Maynooth petitions of the Protestant Association; Leicester's campaign of 1847 (see below) fits into this pattern, and again involved Hardy.

The most spectacular petitioning drives were those associated with the "Papal aggression" of 1850-51,⁶⁷ (see Table 1), a time of heavy Irish in-migration to Leicester. The protest signatures are as useful a measure of public opinion as are newspapers. Almost 70 per cent (69.18) of Leicester's population supported the Memorial, putting

⁶²HICKMAN, M. In LEWIS, G (Ed) 1998). p.146, citing Colley, 1992.

⁶³PAZ., pp.40-43. A full discussion of these modes of anti-Catholic action can be found in this work.

⁶⁴NICHOLS, (1852), p.189.

⁶⁵NICHOLS, (1852), p.200. The same Inn hosted the 1836 meeting in aid of distressed Protestant clergy in Ireland, again organised by J. S. Hardy.

⁶⁶NICHOLS, (1852); pp 200-1.

⁶⁷WOLFFE, (1991), p.100.

the town high (seventh place) in the national listings. Almost 20 per cent (19.75) signed the petition, placing the town twelfth in national ratings. (see Table 1)⁶⁸ The great "County Meeting" 27 November 1850, where these protests were formulated, is discussed below.

Convened by the High Sheriff at the Castle, it was mainly an Anglican affair. The non-Anglicans gathered the next day at Trinity Non-Conformist Church. Massive press coverage included tributes to those twin local icons, Wycliffe and Latimer. The Town Council which also met contained important Anglicans as well as Dissenters.⁶⁹ One speaker persisted in raising the issue of political unrest in Ireland, an example of the problematization of the Irish by linking them with disloyalty and disorder.⁷⁰

An important meeting was held in Leicester in April 1845 to discuss the Maynooth College grant. One speaker moved resolutions for the Lower House. At this, a "Mr. Day, of the 'Daniel O'Connell' public house (a Catholic)" intervened. Day was almost certainly an Irishman. Quoting the *Tuam Herald*, he reiterated O'Connell's argument that acceptance of grant support did not undermine the principle of voluntarism: "We want to have a portion of the immense revenues now plundered from the Irish people for the support of the Protestant parsons allocated for the support and education of the Clergy of the Irish people."⁷¹ Day threw out a challenge: if they were opposed to Catholicism, "why did they not put it down in England first, and then go over to Ireland and do the same?" Day proposed universal voluntarism, concluding that all should show reciprocal respect. He won general applause. Day was clearly self-confident; the name of his public house evidently reflected his politics and his probable identity.

He is probably the Day mentioned in Catholic journals which referred to "Leicester Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty," an organisation of Catholics and Dissenters known formally as the Civil Defence Society of Leicester. This body publicly supported Catholic emancipation and the Catholic Rent. Meeting monthly at the White Bear Inn on Redcross Street, several Irish surnames featured: Day, Hennan, Flinn, Lynch

⁶⁸See PAZ, (1992), pp. 42-47 for a full discussion of these patterns.

⁶⁹The LC, 7 Dec. 1850, p.1. The moderate voice supporting freedom for the Catholic position was that of John Biggs; the opposer of the amendment was Mr Macaulay. A strong anti-Catholic tradition existed in the Macaulay family.

⁷⁰LC, 7 Dec. 1850, p.1.

⁷¹LC, 12 April 1845.

TABLE 1

ORGANIZED ANTI-CATHOLIC PROTEST IN THE EAST MIDLANDS: Memorialists and Petitioners per Thousand People, ranked by County, 1850 and 1851.				
COUNTY	MEMORIALISTS		PETITIONERS	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
Derby	54.94	15	46.23	2
Leicester	69.18	7	19.75	12
Lincoln	39.15	23	20.79	10
Northampton	120.35	1	6.96	35
Nottingham	39.16	22	52.61	1
Rutland	6.26	42	0.00	42
Notes:				
(1) Adapted from: PAZ, D.G(1992), p.43. <i>Source: 1851, LIX (84), 649-739; Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Public Petitions (Session 1851); "Census of Great Britain, 1851: Population Tables, I, "PP, 1852-3, LXXXV [1631], 106.</i>				

and Finigan. Prominent Dissenters included Messrs. Seal, Podd, Wright and Knight.⁷² This was at a time when comparatively few Irish lived in Leicester, and were only just beginning to be perceived as a numerical and cultural threat.⁷³

The outraged reaction to the "Papal Aggression" was encouraged by the explosive treatment accorded to the issue by Leicester's local media. Speaking of the impact made both in London and the provinces in late October 1850, Paz remarks that:

"the provincial press published the text a day or so later, and it is wrong to think that the subsequent furore was the creation of the metropolitan press, or of the *Times* alone."⁷⁴

Catholics in Leicester, whether Irish or otherwise, would have been under no delusions as to the near-hysterical and hostile Protestant reactions of 1850. Any advance for Catholicism undermined the emerging national ideology. Leicester's newspapers had

⁷²DAE; *The Truthteller* (Ed. W.E. Andrews), 14 October 1826, p.67; 16 December 1826, p.394-5; the Leicestershire elections of 1826 focussed in a bitter dispute on the Catholic issue, whilst the Catholic propagandists were campaigning generally on the issue of emancipation.

⁷³Although Day does not feature in the 1846 Directory or the 1841/51 censuses, he appears to be well settled. HICKEY (1967) makes this point about early 19th century Irish migrants in Cardiff; see *Urban Catholics*, p.65-6.

⁷⁴PAZ (1991), p.9.

earned this oblique accolade. Their exhaustive reporting in the 1840's and 1850's complemented their peculiarly Protestant profile and reinforced anti-Catholic and anti-Irish feelings. As in the Day case, they could excite Irish Catholic defensive interests.

(e) Racializing the Irish via Popular Anti-Catholicism:

**(i) the Local Contributions of National Anti-Catholic agitators:
Stowell, Gavazzi, and the Kensits**

A key method of mobilising anti-Catholic feeling was to hold public meetings addressed by nationally and internationally renowned figures. Leicester protestants invited some of the most effective speakers and leaders of both anti-Catholic action and anti-Irish invective to share their expertises.

In January 1853, Leicester hosted a "Great Protestant meeting" provocatively close to Holy Cross; it comprised local nobility, gentry, and Protestant clergymen. Charles Frewen, of the deeply committed Non-conformist county family, attacked Maynooth, being seconded in "a long and able" speech by George Finch, M.P, erstwhile confidante of the Fermanagh Orangemen.⁷⁵ Finch thundered "the Romish priests of Ireland were notoriously tyrannical and despotic, and that they grew worse instead of better Thus, for the last half century, had the Irish nation been the despair of the British Government ." The link between Irishness and Catholicism was made explicit.⁷⁶ The "guest speaker" was "warmly received." He was the Rev. Hugh Stowell, a veteran of anti-Romanist and anti-Irish action.

As early as 1839, a midlands Catholic journal had issued a warning about Parson Stowell's invective.⁷⁷ Kirk, in an analysis of negative responses to Irish immigration 1850-70, describes Stowell's role thus:

Hugh Stowell, a leading figure in Manchester and Salford Protestantism, warned that the Catholic Church intended 'to get England under her power to persecute and prosecute every Protestant to set up the inquisition on our land and to make Queen Victoria a Papist.'⁷⁸

⁷⁵The Frewen family's fierce brand of Non-conformity and virulent anti-Papism is explored elsewhere in this chapter; Charles Frewen was MP for East Sussex, as well as being domiciled in Leicestershire.

⁷⁶LC, 29 Jan. 1853, p.1; all quotations on this meeting which follow are from this source, which was a massive report of 1½ sides A5 size sheet.

⁷⁷B.D.A., *The Penny Catholic Magazine*, 23 Nov. 1839, No. 11 Vol. I., pp.91-92; open letter of M. P. Haynes.

⁷⁸KIRK, N., *Ethnicity, Class and Popular Toryism, 1850-70*, pp. 73-4; in LUNN, K., (Ed), (1980), *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities: Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society 1870-1914*; quoting the *Manchester Guardian* of 6 + 16 Nov, and 7 Dec. 1850.

Stowell's role in Leicester in 1853 was a central one. He elaborated on threats to Britain's political integrity, externally from the Papacy and internally from Catholic dupes. His style was not subtle. He declared that "The watch-cry in Ireland with the Romish priests had long been 'a Roman Catholic representation for Roman Catholics in Ireland.' Should not, then, the counter-cry be 'a Protestant representation for Protestant England?'" He then digressed into a prurient account of life in female convents. Stowell rallied his audience thus: "he doubted not there were men in Leicester, able and willing to meet those perverts in fair and candid discussion."

Stowell's impact was undoubtedly effective, for the evening session was "densely crowded." An Irish Catholic reaction ensued:

The audience was quite a mixed one, consisting of Churchmen, Dissenters, Romanists and men of no faith at all. There appeared to be several Irish of the lower class at the bottom end of the hall, and one or two of them occasionally evinced a supreme contempt for the lecturer, denouncing his remarks in language very emphatic but certainly not very polite.⁷⁹

Some of Leicester's Irish were confident enough to venture into the enemy camp. Their denunciations were perhaps to be expected, for the evening speaker, Rev. Hugh Bardsley, another regular member of the anti-Catholic, anti-Irish preaching circuit, commented that: "The mind of a Romish priest is the repository of all the crimes, filth, and pollution of the parish."⁸⁰ Bardsley analysed superficially criminal statistics purporting to show that Irish Catholics were inherently more criminal than protestants, a common practice by such critics. He concluded by reminding his audience to "more earnestly support the Protestant Alliance, whose meetings would be held next week." This is a good example of the networking and organisational skills involved in the process of problematizing the Irish.

This networking linked Stowell with Alessandro Gavazzi, the internationally known ex-priest and anti-Papist polemicist. In 1854, the *Manchester Guardian* reported a meeting addressed jointly by these two.⁸¹ Gavazzi (1809-89) wrote extensively and

⁷⁹LC, 29 Jan. 1853.

⁸⁰Today (1997) a more open discussion of the failings of RC clergy, in Ireland and elsewhere, is virtually commonplace. KIRK (1980) includes Bardsley, with Stowell as one of the "prominent figures in the Manchester area," p.101. The deliberate misuse of criminal statistics to blacken Irish Catholics is dealt with in the chapter on crime: see NEAL, F. (1991), *A Criminal Profile of the Liverpool Irish*.

⁸¹HALL, B. Alessandro Gavazzi: a Barnabite Friar and the Risorgimento, in BAKER, D. (1975), (Ed), *Church, Society and Politics*, Vol. 12 in Church History Series, p.349.

spoke powerfully in Britain, the USA and Canada. Sylvain (1960) rightly gave particular attention to Gavazzi's north American visits, setting them against the American 'know-nothing' anti-Catholic movement, and the serious anti-Catholic riots in Quebec and Montreal which resulted from Gavazzi's visits.

Handley describes Gavazzi as a harbinger of religious and racial discord directed against Irish Catholics, calling him "the most spectacular of these charlatans." In 1851 Gavazzi spoke in 21 Scottish towns. Handley credits Gavazzi, rather than the Orange Order, as the instigator of "rabble-rousers" in Scotland in the 1850's.⁸² Gavazzi was active in Wolverhampton in 1851-2, and Leicester in 1854, where he was extensively and sympathetically reported:

The appearance of the lecturer naturally enough excited notice and interest, as he retains his ecclesiastical costume; while his dramatic action and animated gestures, the accompaniments of the fervid oratory of the south, enhanced the effect produced on the minds of the spectators his mimicry of the hypocritical Romish priest in the pulpit must be seen to be appreciated."⁸³

Swift's conclusion that this "popular Protestantism was not accompanied by violence," underplays perhaps Gavazzi's catalytic role. Whilst Gavazzi was no William Murphy, it could be argued that preachers like Gavazzi were more successful in that they succeeded in being actually listened to, received relatively positive press coverage, appeared in numerous towns and cities over a long period of time, and were therefore more effective and less easily discounted than disorderly trouble-makers and mob orators. Norman remarks that "Alessandro Gavazzi and William Murphy . . . were the ones whose addresses most frequently inspired disturbances."⁸⁴ Gavazzi's impact on Leicester was so extensive that the report was printed over a fortnight's editions of the *Chronicle*.

Gavazzi was specifically anti-Irish. Hall suggests that Gavazzi's repudiation of Wiseman was based in part on Wiseman's part-Irish parentage. Also, in c.1870 Gavazzi spoke at Birkenhead, the entry fee being fixed at 1 shilling in the hall and 6 pence in the gallery; Hall remarks that "These prices suggest that by comparatively expensive tickets

⁸²HANDLEY, J. (1947), p.97-9.

⁸³SWIFT, R., *Another Stafford Street Row*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1985), p.189, quoting *Wolverhampton Chronicle* of 4 Feb. 1851. LC, April 15/22, 1854.

⁸⁴NORMAN, G. (1985), *Roman Catholicism in England*, p.71.

Irish labourers might be kept out.” Hall also poses the essential “question of where, and with what consequences and how often, Gavazzi was attacked in towns where a large Irish population existed”?⁸⁵ Leicester, whilst it does not qualify as a town with an especially large Irish segment, nonetheless had a significant proportion of Irish immigrants. To many Irish Catholics, Gavazzi’s anti-Catholicism alone would have been sufficient cause for offence.⁸⁶

Gavazzi’s Leicester discourse was the occasion for his clear denunciation of the menace that the Irish represented to the English:

The Inquisition was now, in England, covertly and secretly at work. All Irish feelings were at the priests commands. When Protestants had Roman Catholic servants in their houses, they had the Inquisition. When he was asked out to dinner in Canada, they prayed him not to speak so loudly, because the servants were Roman Catholics. Beautiful. That was the Inquisition.⁸⁷

Gavazzi was directly inciting Protestant employers to be wary of Irish Catholic employees. He warned his Leicester audience that English Protestants may have just cause to fear Catholics, as did their religious brethren in North America. Punning clumsily on the double meaning of “Peter” and “rock”, Gavazzi commented:

“They called the rock St. Peter; therefore, the Irish coming to kill him in Canada, came with their pockets filled with St. Peter.” (Laughter).⁸⁸

What the Irish of Leicester thought of Gavazzi once these denunciations of their *confrères* had been published is not on record.

In 1850-51, Loughborough hosted a female anti-Catholic speaker, one Edith O’Gorman. There is no other record of this apparently Irish lady preacher. Loughborough then contained a significant leavening of Irish Catholics, and the parish priest, Fr. John Egan, an Irishman, served there for 39 years (1850-89). O’Gorman’s visit in fact took place against a more extended background of anti-Catholic action and hostility (see below).⁸⁹

Whilst anti-Catholic campaigning by several organisations continued with

⁸⁵HALL, B. *Alessandro Gavazzi*, in BAKER, D. (Ed) (1975) p.347-9.

⁸⁶HALL, B., *Alessandro Gavazzi* p.343-4.

⁸⁷LC, 22 April 1854.

⁸⁸LC, 22 April 1854.

⁸⁹R.A.L; HIRST, Rev. J. (N.d. c.1890), *Life of the Rev. Andrew Egan*, p.9.

regularity, major individuals re-appeared on the Leicester scene only towards the turn of the century. The two John Kensits, father and son, active Merseyside anti-Romanists, feature prominently in studies of sectarianism in Liverpool by Waller (1981) and by Neal (1988). Kensit senior was invited to Leicester in 1898, and his son (also John) followed in 1904. Paz has described the Kensits' organisation as "the last great Victorian no-popery society." Neal has summarised their basic appeal as anti-ritualistic extremism.⁹⁰ Neal's interpretation holds true for Leicester, where active support for the Kensits existed.⁹¹ John Kensit senior (1853-1902) founded the Protestant Truth Society in 1889 and the activists corps called the Wycliffe Preachers. In 1898, his national campaign attacked ritualism's roots in Romanism. Prominent Anglican bishops denounced Kensit as unchristian, and to some extent this view emerged amongst the milder protestant elements of Leicester.

In September 1898, Kensit Senior visited Leicester. Press reports were supportive if analytically critical. They likened him to his source of inspiration, Wycliffe, a link with Leicester's glorious Protestant past.⁹² His remarks in Leicester also brought criticism: "his long and moody meditations on Rome and things Roman has undermined the judgement he once might have possessed." It continued:

So Mr. Kensit came to Leicester, in his assumed role of flickering firebrand, to disturb the religious harmony of the town, and to stir up that worst of all passions 'religious animosity.' A more unwholesome part for a man, for a body of men, or for the Women's Protestant Union to play, than that of arousing the bitterness of religious contention cannot possibly be conceived There was no reason why Mr. Kensit should come to Leicester Does not Leicester bear the reputation of being the metropolis of dissent?⁹³

The ongoing ideological role ascribed to Leicester as a national bastion of low church Protestantism, with all that this claim implied for relations with, and attitudes to, Irish Catholics, was being underlined; Leicester did not need Kensit to remind it of its historic role.⁹⁴

⁹⁰PAZ, (1992), p.151 and NEAL, F. (1988), *Sectarian Violence, the Liverpool Experience, 1819-1914*, p.199.

⁹¹Kensit senior was John; Kensit junior was John A. The following biographical details are from: NEALE, F. (1988), pp.206-215; and from: WALLER, P.J. (1981), *Democracy and Sectarianism in Liverpool*, pp.191-3, 260 & 497.

⁹²*The Wyvern*, 30 Sept. 1898, No. 361, Vol. XIV, p.384, 2nd. Article, by Thos. W. Allen, *Mr John Kensit-A Character Sketch*.

⁹³*The Wyvern*, 30 Sept. 1898, p.383; piece by C. Kirk. It would be less than honest to ignore the reference in the article to the "religious harmony of the town", but the fact remains that only places harbouring bigotry were prepared to provide a platform for Kensit.

⁹⁴The famous Anglican, Canon Donaldson, a committed Christian Socialist, did speak out against Kensit.

Kensit senior's death in a Merseyside fracas led directly to Kensit junior's visit to Leicester in 1904. MacRaid (1998) has shown that Kensit's Wycliffites were, at this time, a serious threat to the social order in Cumbria, which had significant numbers of settled Irish. Kensit junior now inaugurated "the battle of the Second Reformation," based in the old London headquarters of the anti-Catholic Reformation Society.⁹⁵ A report in April 1904 proclaimed "Mr. J.A. Kensit in Leicester - Much sympathy at the Temperance Hall the audience was enthusiastically with the speaker through his long oration (95 minutes). There was not a single dissentient voice". Kensit attacked both Ireland and Catholicism, claiming that "In Ireland, again, there was a great protestant revival." This was followed by a reminder to the Leicester audience to be aware of the Celtic priestly menace; to safeguard Britain's future :

..... he would like to see a redistribution of parliamentary seats in Ireland. Ireland was scandalously over-represented in the House of Commons, and the result was that both political parties were at the mercy of the priest vote.

Whatever confidence local Catholics felt about becoming increasingly accepted the old prejudices still remained. Leicester's protestant radicalism may appear dormant, only to rise when occasion demands. The roots of Leicester's intolerance towards the Irish and Catholicism were implanted deeply in the local consciousness.⁹⁶.

(e) (ii) Local and National Anti-Catholic Organisations in Leicestershire, and their local leadership.

Leicester hosted all the main national anti-Catholic bodies, thereby further alienating many Irish Catholic migrants. As Chartism declined and Irish arrivals increased, the various small and largely middle-class Protestant organisations tried to incite an anti-Catholic outlook amongst operatives. Kirk identifies these bodies as the Orange Lodges, the Protestant Reformation Society, and the Operative Protestant

⁹⁵WALLER, (1981), pp.192.-3.

⁹⁶*The Wyvern*, No. 653, Vol. XXVI, 30 April 1904, p.7. MacRAILD (1998) has explored "the violence and communal disaffection which surrounded the visit of John Kensit's Wycliffe Preachers to Barrow in 1903;" this coincided with part of their impact on Leicester. In 1903 alone there were 30 Preachers who held 2,561 meetings in 441 places, distributing 200,000 pamphlets. The importance of the Wycliffites lay in their ability to unify Protestants of different socio-economic classes and confessions. p.171 and 190-6. In 1969, Melbourne Hall, a strongly evangelical free church in the city, invited Ulster's Rev. Ian Paisley to address a Leicester audience.

Association.⁹⁷ It is abundantly clear that Leicester was reflecting the national pattern of militant Protestant activism in terms of anti-Irishness and anti-Catholicism, and thereby contributing to the racializing of the Irish.

Central to developments, in Leicester and nationally, were the British Reformation Society, founded 1827, and the Protestant Association, set up in 1835. Whilst the former was very much geared towards proselytism in Ireland (and was so extreme that it embarrassed moderate Irish Protestants), the latter body was more purely political. Two key events were the foci for further organisational growth. The first was the debate in 1845 surrounding the Maynooth grant, which led to the foundation of two new bodies, one of which was the National Club. The second was the "Papal Aggression" of 1850 which spawned three similar bodies, one of which was the Protestant Alliance of 1851. All four of the organisations identified played a significant anti-Catholic role in Leicester, displaying an unambiguous hostility to Ireland and the Irish, and therefore by extension to Irish migrants in the locality. As there were several Protestant societies, some of whose activities overlapped in terms of time, space and supporters, Table 2 has been included to provide a simplified overview.⁹⁸

The aims and objectives of the anti-Catholic societies involved the mobilising of protestants' thoughts and actions. (See introduction) All such activities were the province of the Leicestershire anti-Catholic organisations, and the Irish in Leicester, per se, were therefore problematized in term of a range of social, religious and associated political factors. Barclay remarked that it was no wonder that youngsters of Irish-descent and English children engaged in inter-communal strife "while grown-ups, backed and abetted by college professors and ministers of Jesus Christ" also fought with just as little sense.⁹⁹ His comments on anti-Catholic prejudice as "race hatred" have already been noted.¹⁰⁰ The Irish locally then, were self-perceived to be powerless in the face of the twin phobias of anti-Catholicism and anti-Irishness. The impetus for these attitudes came from Leicester's anti-Catholic Protestant pressure groups.

⁹⁷KIRK, N. in LUNN, K. (1980) p.101.

⁹⁸In Table 2, the Leicestershire data has been added to Wolfe's original framework.

⁹⁹BARCLAY, (1934), p.5.

¹⁰⁰BARCLAY, T. 'Leicester Slums', in *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149. See *The Barville Diaries, Journals of a Norfolk Gamekeeper 1822-44* (1986, VIRGOE, N. Ed); the Eds. remark of Wexford Catholic Larry Barville that "his nationality, religion and job all combined to make it virtually impossible for him to be fully accepted in that community," p.218.

TABLE 2 MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY PROTESTANT SOCIETIES IN LEICESTER: BOTH NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY ORGANISED									
Major Societies	Formed	AT NATIONAL LEVEL				AT LOCAL LEVEL			
		Composition	Objectives	Leading supporters	Active in Leics	Leading Local Supporters in Leics and prominent activists who liaised with them			
Loyal Orange Institution	1795	Interdenominational in theory, largely Anglican and Presbyterian in practice	Defence of Irish Protestants, revival of Toryism, mutual support for members	Col. W.B. Fairman Duke of Cumberland 2nd Lord Kenyon	c.1835	John Stockdale Hardy; George Finch-Hatton, Early of Winchilsea. George Finch M.P. of Burley on the Hill. The 17th (Leics) Regiment of Foot (2 warrants, 2 Orange Lodges in Leicester)			
British (Protestant) Reformation Society	1827	Interdenominational in theory, but predominantly Anglican and Church of Scotland in practice	Religious Protestantism, including education, proselytism, and publication	J.E. Gordon J. Cumming R.P. Blakeney J. Hope	1833-54	George Finch, M.P., Rutland-based. The Frewen family. J.E. Gordon liaised with John Finch M.P. J. Cumming was invited to speak.			
Protestant Association	1835/6	Interdenominational in theory, but almost exclusively Anglican and Church of Scotland in practice	Maintenance of the Protestant character of the State	J.E. Gordon H. McNeile R.J. M'Ghee	1855	Dr. Noble.			
National Club	1845	Anglican	Focus for Protestant efforts in Parliament	J.C. Colquhoun Sir D. Mackworth 6th Duke of Manchester	1847	C.H. Frewen, Peelite Conservative MP for E.Sussex Earl of Winchelsea			
Evangelical Alliance	1845/6	Interdenominational, but principally moderate Nonconformity	Evangelical harmony; anti-Catholicism as part of a broader spiritual and moral crusade	E. Bickersteth* Sir C. Eardley T. Chalmers	—	No evidence to date of any operations in Leics, but as John Bickersteth a relation to Edward,* was rural Dean of Sapcote, there was some possibility of influence. (See Note 4)			
Scottish Reformation Society	1850	Interdenominational, but dominated by Free Church	Raising of Scottish Protestant consciousness; political pressure group	J. Begg J.A. Wylie R.S. Candlish	1854	The scurrilous <i>The Bulwark</i> edited by Begg, was circulated in Leicester by the Reformation Society.			
Protestant Alliance	1851	Interdenominational	Political pressure group; Protestant freedom abroad	J. MacGregor 7th Earl of Shaftesbury	1851-60	George Finch, MP; The Frewen family; Rev. W. Hill; Rev. J. Nugent			
Notes: (1) Source for National level data: WOLFFE (1991) p.318-9. (2) Dates for Societies being "Active in Leicestershire" are based on news report references, and are therefore accurate only in that sense.							1835-50	Loughborough & Ashby Protestant Tract Society: Duke of Rutland; Editor of <i>Leicester Journal</i> ; Earl Howe; The Frewen family	
							c.1867	Leicester Anti-Romanist Association	

Wolffe rightly states that the Protestant Societies “merit careful investigation.”¹⁰¹ Gilley too remarked on the singular importance of analysing the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism by the Protestant pressure groups.¹⁰² The fact that Gilley raised the issue in a debate concerning the Irish migrants shows just how significant these bodies were in problematizing the Irish Catholic arrivés.

The Reformation Society was centralised with a nationwide structure. By 1839, it had divided England into four zones of operation. The Protestant Association, on the other hand, had 50 branches operating between 1834 and 1844, but many were only short-lived, being overly dependent on visiting speakers. As a result, it received much publicity, but became increasingly concentrated in specific localities. As to regional power bases, chance factors, such as powerful personalities, were uppermost.¹⁰³

By 1846, Leicestershire hosted branches of the Reformation Society at Loughborough, Ashby, Melton Mowbray and Leicester; these were contemporaneous with the local Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society.¹⁰⁴ Clearly, there was felt to be no duplication. The *modus operandi* of all the Protestant pressure groups was similar, and in place in time for the great Irish influx:

In November 1839 the *Protestant Magazine* published advice on the formation of local Protestant Associations, recommending an initial private meeting to establish basic principles and circulate tracts in preparation for a public meeting. Potential subscribers should be quickly enlisted before their enthusiasm waned the ‘poor’ were welcome at a reduced subscription. The duties of local associations were to be the diffusion of information by means of public meetings, sermons, and publications, petitioning, and the collection of funds.¹⁰⁵

The year 1835 in Leicestershire witnessed three separate but important manifestations of anti-Catholic mobilisation. A government report highlighted the four Orange Lodges linked with Leicester;¹⁰⁶ the *Leicester Conservative Standard* commenced publication, a journal noteworthy for its ruthless and undigressing pursuit of all ramifications of Romanism; and the Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract

¹⁰¹WOLFFE, J. (1991), p.7.

¹⁰²GILLEY, S. (1972), *Papists, Protestants and the Irish in London, 1835-70*; in *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 8, 1972, pp.259-266.

¹⁰³WOLFFE, J. (1991), p.154; the preceding paragraph is distilled from WOLFFE (1991), Chapter 5, pp.145-157.

¹⁰⁴GILLEY, S. *Protestant London, No-Popery and the Irish Poor, 1830-60, Part I (1830-50)* in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan 1970, p.221; App.1.

¹⁰⁵WOLFFE, J (1991), p.150.

¹⁰⁶See (c) above.

Society was successfully launched, a consistent, efficient and effective body in the anti-Catholic cause, whose membership embraced Leicestershire's social and political elite. Both its functions, and the tone and ideology of its annual *Reports*, receive attention here.¹⁰⁷ The influence of this polemical body was rather wider in the county than its name would suggest. It operated with regularity up until 1850.

Two aspects of the Society's structure deserve close attention: its membership list, and its 'List of Tracts' for purchase and distribution. These indicate the high level of organisational skill and the powers of dissemination enjoyed by the Society; indeed, its anti-Catholicism was frequently accompanied by hostile references to Ireland and the Irish.

A small selection of comments illustrates the extreme line sometimes taken. In 1848 the Society's *Report* deliberately conjoined local "Romish out-of-door preachings" with "Chartist processions,"¹⁰⁸ a local reflection of Irish involvement in Chartist radicalism. O'Connor's visit to Leicester in 1842 had been denounced.¹⁰⁹ Attacks on Chartism and Romanism continued to appear regularly.¹¹⁰ This "twinning" of Popery and Chartism was a local reflection of the wider national trend, analysed by Saville (1987), who suggests that in 1848 both middle class and proletarian English opinions about the Irish were influenced adversely by anti-Irish prejudice.¹¹¹ Aggrieved resentment at new local Catholic foundations appeared as lengthy items in 1838, 1844, 1846 and 1847. The message of disapproval was unmistakable for all Leicestershire Catholics, whatever their place of origin. The reports also dwelt with concern on the new Catholic schools and nunneries,¹¹² most of which had Irish personnel or clients. This almost paranoid concern with Romish growth was reflected in the wide spread of the Society's membership, not so much in geographical terms as in numerical and social class terms. The Society in fact percolated throughout the north-western part of the county, (see membership location Map 1), and had influential adherents in Leicester itself.

¹⁰⁷LCRO, *LAPTS Reports: 1835-50*; as no other documentation has been found outside these dates, it has been assumed that this 15 year period represents the lifespan of the Society.

¹⁰⁸*LAPTS, 1848 Report*, p.14; discussed further in chapter on politics.

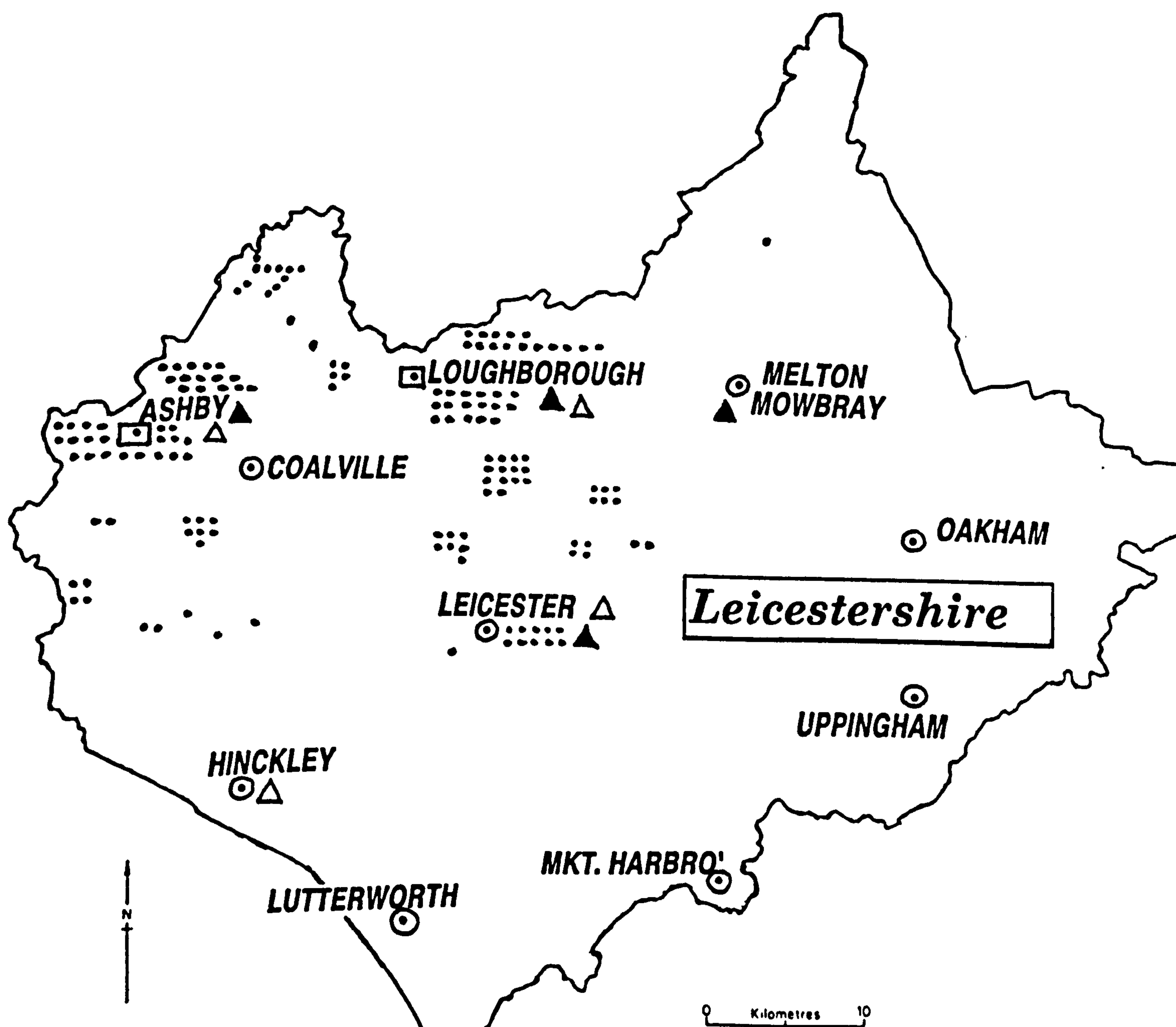
¹⁰⁹*LAPTS, 1842 Report*, p.6.

¹¹⁰*LAPTS, 1838 Report*, pp.15 & 16; *1846 Report*, p. 5 & 6; *1846 Report*, pp. 6 & 7; *1847 Report*, pp. 7 & 8.

¹¹¹SAVILLE, J. (1987); *1848, The British State and the Chartist Movement*, p.74.

¹¹²*LAPTS, 1847 Report*, pp. 7 and 8.

MAP 1 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOUGHBOROUGH AND ASHBY PROTESTANT TRACT SOCIETY IN 1835, and activity locations of the Reformation Society and the Protestant Association in Leicestershire. 1825-1860



KEY

- = member(s) of the Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society, 1835.
- ▲ = branches of the Reformation Society which existed in Leicestershire in 1846; there were 4: Ashby de la Zouch, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray and Leicester. Leicester hosted the Reformation Society from 1827 to 1860.
- △ = branch or public meeting locations of the Protestant Association in Leicestershire between 1836 and 1845.

The list of the Society's subscribers in 1835 totalled 193 individuals; of these, 31 per cent (61) were clerics. This impressive representation of the professional religious was complemented by the high number of lay persons, many of whom were important in local élites. The aristocratic element totalled 7, including three MPs, the Earl Howe, a noted promoter of protestant interests, and the Duke of Rutland, the premier local aristocrat. Such individuals conferred respectability and access to power and influence.¹¹³ Not surprising, given the Society's editorial line, was the set of joint subscriptions from the proprietors of the vehemently anti-Papist local paper *The Leicester Journal*.

The LAPTS also enjoyed support and influence through a wide cross-section of the local gentry. Approximately 25 subscribers enjoyed landed gentry status; these included three of the Frewen family of Cold Overton Hall, and two of the Frewen-Turners.¹¹⁴ Other important gentry elements included the Herricks of Beaumanor Hall, and Clement Winstanley of Braunstone Hall. Winstanley's father was erstwhile Commander of the Leicester Fencibles who had fought against the French invaders and Irish rebels in the West of Ireland in 1798. Here was a pillar of Leicester society who had experienced Irish rebelliousness at family level. There were so many other "Esquires," it is clear that the LAPTS included numerous elements of the élite of county society.

This powerful county and city lobby seems to have been the crucial focus for anti-Catholicism pre-1850 in Leicestershire. It was a localised response to post-1829 Catholic expansion, and it kept the flag of crusading Protestantism flying until the great anti-Papal campaigns of 1850-51. Its life span, 1835-50, would suggest that at this period the well-springs of anti-Catholic lobbying were in the county rather than the county town itself;¹¹⁵ in 1844, for example, the Duke of Rutland was responsible for part-funding the 5th November bonfire celebration in Leicester. Paz however, suggests that "organized anti-Catholicism was primarily an urban activity."¹¹⁶ Certainly at this time the urban Irish were locatable and recognizable targets (see Crime chapter). After 1850, with the apparent demise of the LAPTS, the focus of activity swings towards Leicester. Yet, there were local branches of the larger national Protestant associations in several of the county's smaller towns as well as in Leicester itself.

¹¹³Refer Table 4, re: the LAPTS' importance vis-à-vis other more well-known national anti-Catholic organisations.

¹¹⁴LAPTS, 1837 Report, pp.19-23, List of Subscribers. This category utilises addresses with: Hall, House or Park. (LCRO).

¹¹⁵It has had to be assumed that the LAPTS ceased existence in 1850, as its records do not appear in LCRO for any of the subsequent years.

¹¹⁶PAZ, D.G. (1992), p.280. In 1841 in Leicester, the shrine of Our Lady on the West Bridge was removed; which presumably gladdened the hearts of low church Protestants, see KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), p.8.

How far did the healthy membership level of the LAPTS survive in the sixteen years of the Society's existence? By 1850, membership had roughly halved, to 108 persons, 47 of whom were Protestant clerics. One name, that of the Venerable Archdeacon Bonney of Leicester, topped the list both in 1837 and in 1850.¹¹⁷

Bonney was of stout Protestant mien. In 1847 he successfully campaigned against any financial support for Catholic institutions in Ireland or Britain.¹¹⁸ 45 other clerics of city and county signed; many also subscribers to the LAPTS (for example, Revs. Burnaby, Merewether, Gwatkin, Babington and Phillipps); almost all of the names figure prominently in Table 3. There was a close professional connection between Bonney and John Stockdale Hardy; it is conceivable that they would have discussed strategies and priorities in their campaign.

In 1836 for example, a meeting supported by Rutland, Howe, Bonney and Hardy was held in the Three Crowns Hotel "for the purpose of opening a subscription to relieve the present distress of the Irish Protestant clergy." This clearly illustrates yet again Leicester protestant proactive campaigning on Irish affairs. Of those involved, 14 feature prominently on the table of Protestant activists (Table 3). The list of subscribers exceeded 60 in number, and included Rutland, Howe, Winstanley, and Hardy.¹¹⁹ The sums raised totalled an impressive £770. Many contributors were LAPTS members, who also attended the great anti-Catholic meetings of the early 1850s. The mobilisation of clerical LAPTS members in January 1847 included the Revs. Babington, Merewether, Hoare and Morgan.¹²⁰ (See Table 3). The 1850 LAPTS membership list still contained a high proportion of clerics (43.5 per cent) and of gentry (24.1 per cent) as well as MPs and aristocrats. Included still was the owner of the *Leicester Journal*, the solidly anti-Catholic local paper. Rutland, and especially Howe, were both prominent in the anti-Papal meetings of the early 1850's. How far did the LAPTS reflect national trends vis-à-vis the numbers and types of supporters attracted to the mainstream Protestant pressure groups? It is possible, combining Wolffe's 1991 research and LAPTS local membership lists, to conduct a comparison. (Refer Table 4).

In terms of peers, other titled laymen, and MPs, there are no great differences in

¹¹⁷LAPTS, 1850 Report pp.32-35. List of Subscribers. Presumably the Society became part of the larger scene of Protestant reaction to the "Papal aggression" of the 1850's.

¹¹⁸LC, 5 & 23 February 1847.

¹¹⁹LC, 30 Jan. 1836.

¹²⁰LC 20 Jan 1847. Rev Hoare was probably an ex-Irish incumbent; see Note (9) to Table 4.

**PAGE
NUMBERS
CUT OFF
IN
ORIGINAL**

TABLE 3: ANTI-CATHOLIC ACTION: PROTESTANT PRESSURE GROUPS IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 1835-1855: A TABULATION

OF INDIVIDUALS' CROSS MEMBERSHIP OF MULTIPLE ORGANISATIONS

Refer also to Notes for this Table which follow.		LOUGHBOROUGH AND ASHBY PROTESTANT TRACT SOCIETY		Meeting at Leicester Hotel re-distress of Irish Protestant Clergy	Anti-Maynooth Grant, re Archdeacon of Leicester	"The County Meeting" "Papal Aggression"	Town Council on Papal Aggression	The Protestant Alliance	The British Reformation Society	Great Protestant Meeting	Protestant Reformation Society	The Protestant Alliance	County Magistrates (from <i>White's Directory</i> for 1846 p.40-41)
		1835	1850	30 Jan 1836	13 Jan 1836	30 Nov 1850	7 Dec 1850	31 Jan 1852	18 Sept 1852	29 Jan 1853	23 Dec 1854	31 Mar 1855	
Mr.	ADAMS, John, Loughborough	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Revs.	BABINGTON (X2) Cossington and Thringstone	✓(2)	✓(2)		✓	✓				✓		✓	
Rev.	T. BURNABY, Quorn	✓			✓	✓							
Rev.	J. DIXON							✓	✓	✓		✓	
John	FINCH, Burley on the Hill						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sir.	F.G. FOWKE, Bart, Lowesby					✓	✓						
	FREWEN (-TURNERS) s, Cold Overton Hall	✓(3)	✓(2)	✓(3)				✓	✓	✓			✓CH.F T.F (2)
	GREEN (x2)Edward & Robert, Kings Newton	✓(4)	✓(4)			✓				✓	✓		
Rev. W.	GREENWAY, Newbold Verdon	✓	✓				✓					✓	
R.G.	GRESSWELL, Esq. Ravenstone	✓		✓		✓		✓					
Rev. R.G.	WATKIN, Barrow on Soar	✓	✓			✓		✓					
Sir A.G.	HAZLERIGG, Noseley Hall					✓			✓				✓
William	HERRICK, Esq. Beaumanor Park	✓	✓	✓(3)		✓			✓				✓
Rev. W.HILL							✓	✓			✓		
Rev. E.	HOARE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Rev. R. MARTIN,	Ansley Lodge	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					✓
Rev F.	MIDSWINTER, Colston	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							

TABLE 4

COMPARISONS OF LEICESTERSHIRE ANTI-CATHOLIC ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP WITH
NATIONAL ANTI-CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP, c.1835 TO c.1855

	Reformation Society Subscribers 1828-1829		Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society Members, 1835		Protestant Association Subscribers, 1839		Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society Members, 1850		Reformation Society Subscribers, 1850		Protestant Alliance Subscribers, 1853	
	(Source: WOLFFE, J. (1991), page 52, Table 1)		(Source: LCRO; bound Annual Reports)		(Source: WOLFFE., J. (1991), page 164, Table 4)		(Source: LCRO bound Annual Reports)		(Source: WOLFFE, J., (1991), page 164, Table 5)		(Source: WOLFFE, J., (1991), page 253, Table 8)	
	National		Local		National		Local		National		National	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
PEERS	15*	2.8	4	2.0	10	1.9	4	3.7	1	0.1	7	0.8
OTHER TITLED LAYMEN	5	0.9	3	1.6	9	1.7	1	0.9	7	0.9	11	1.3
MPs	16	3.0	4	2.0	9	1.7	3	2.8	3	0.4	16	1.9
CLERGY	119	22.3	61	31.6	110	20.6	47	43.5	171	20.9	316	37.9
LAYMEN STYLED "ESQ"	183§	34.3	65	33.8	213	39.8	26	24.1	277	33.9	382	45.8
LAYMEN STYLED "MR"	36	6.7	38	19.7	61	11.4	23	21.3	91	11.1	21	2.5
WOMEN	134	25.1	18	9.3	123	23.0	4	3.7	267	32.7	57	6.8
TOTAL	534		193				108		817		834*	*

* Peers includes 2
bishops
§ includes naval and
military officers

*includes 24
Anonymous

*
includes
2.8
Anonym
ous

numbers supporting local and national bodies in both the 1830's and 1850's. In respect of clerical support, however, the LAPTS enjoyed approximately 50 per cent more in 1835, and around 100 per cent more in 1850, in proportion than did either the Reformation Society or the Protestant Alliance. This suggests that Leicestershire Protestant clerics in the period c.1835-c.1850 had a very high degree of commitment to the anti-Catholic cause, compared with the national clerical representation. In respect of the category of "laymen styled Esquire," the county figures show a significant drop in c.1850 when compared with the national organisations.

However, the group labelled "laymen styled Mister" enjoyed a stronger showing, indicating a substantial and ongoing level of middle class support, for it held as steady in the 1850's as it had been in the 1830's. The number of women supporters dropped by two-thirds, whilst support from senior aristocrats maintained itself. Both of these categories tended, in any case, to be marginal. It would seem that in terms of total numbers of supporters, whilst the Reformation Society nationally increased its membership by approximately 50 per cent, the local LAPTS saw a decrease in total membership in approximately the same proportion. Whilst the local membership therefore declined, nonetheless an important element of Protestant clergy and of those "laymen entitled Mister" provided the backbone of what was still a relatively well-supported local Protestant pressure group.

One influential family, the Frewens (Frewen-Turners) of Cold Overton Hall, featured as LAPTS members: 5 in 1837 and 2 of these in 1850. There was a significant Irish perspective to the Frewens' anti-Catholicism. They had influential contacts nationally as well as locally, and were related by marriage to a Miss Mary Clark Möhl (1793-1883).¹²¹ John Frewen Turner, MP, (1755-1829) was married to Mary Möhl's sister Eleanor (1786-1879). Their eldest child, Selina (born 1809) married the Anglican Rev. Mr. Martin of Anstey, near Leicester, who hunted in Ireland and corresponded in detail about Irish affairs.¹²² These are significant for indicating not only the links which existed between Protestants in Ireland and in Leicestershire, but also because those links were with the most powerful, reactionary and anti-Catholic elements in Cork.¹²³ They

¹²¹ LESSER, M., (1984), *Clarkey - A Portrait in Letters of Mary Clarke Möhl (1793-1883)*. Thomas Frewen was one of the largest landowners in England, a cattle rancher in USA, and was an MP, as was Charles.

¹²² LCRO, Martin Mss., DG.6/D/- series.

¹²³ See D'ALTON, I, (1980), *Protestant Society and Politics in Cork, 1812-1844* pp.23-24, 132, 134 on the Warren family who were associated with the Martins of Leics. and are discussed in the section on proselytism.

also indicate the "colonial playground" status of Ireland in the eyes of the British well-to-do, in the context of hunting estates and lodges, and great house parties.

In Leicestershire circles, the Frewens were typical of an upwardly mobile mercantile middle class who were challenging the established family power blocs in the county. The *V.C.H* remarks of the Frewens that "this new class looked to liberalism and radicalism, to free trade and Free Church, to solve the problems of the dangerous social ferment of the early 19th century."¹²⁴ The Irish, whether *in situ* or as migrants to Britain, were viewed as part of this burgeoning threat, and accordingly problematized.

Mary Möhl was bourgeois, partly Irish, and politically a Whig sympathiser. Each Summer, she vacationed in Leicestershire, with Eleanor.¹²⁵ Eleanor had married into an ideological milieu aptly described as "perhaps the most conservative section of a society which was in general inclined to insular complacency."¹²⁶

Mary, a religious neutral, had to make due allowance for her relatives' negative Protestant attitudes:

.... The one departure from convention at Cold Overton was in a disagreeable direction: Eleanor (.... and her whole circle) became strongly Evangelical in their views and practices. Like Evangelicals in general, they did a great deal of good but about all things non-Evangelical they seemed to Mary maddeningly narrow-minded. "I find," she said, after many fierce battles, "that the only way of living in peace is to let the poor Catholics be called all the names in the dictionary What is it to me! - I am no Catholic! My politics are of the blandest"¹²⁷

Thus was the scene set for the bitter disputes of the 1830's to 1850's in an influential and typical Leicestershire Protestant family. The general atmosphere for Catholics, be they English converts or Irish *arrivés*, was both unfriendly and uninviting and it is therefore of little surprise that Irish Catholic movement into Leicester remained low, and consistently low, relative to Irish migration into other towns, and relative to the rapid growth of Leicester's own population in the nineteenth century. Ideological factors could be an active disincentive, as much as economic ones might attract migrants. However poor one was, there were presumably limits to what some migrants would put

¹²⁴ PLUMB, J.H., Political History 1530-1885 in HOSKINS, W.G. (ED) (1954) *V.C.H. Leics Vol. II* p.125.

¹²⁵ All biographical details from LESSER, M. (1984), "Clarkey", pp.10, 11 and 12.

¹²⁶ LESSER, M. (1984), "Clarkey", p.12. Wolfe notes that Frewen voted with Conservatives on 9 May 1851 on RC hierarchy, p.262..

¹²⁷ LESSER, M., (1984), p.16 & 17.

up with, in terms of constant criticism and vilification, and the concomitant factors of unpleasant employment situations, or even refusal to employ.¹²⁸

Barclay, born in Leicester in 1852, experienced anti-Irishness and anti-Catholicism at first hand; he recalled as a child being “hounded and harassed ... we were battered, threatened, elbowed, pressed back to the door of our kennel amid boos and jeers and showers of small missiles.” Occupational opportunity was minimal; “stick-selling, mat-making, rag and bone dealing and farm-labouring; no possibility of learning a handicraft ...”¹²⁹ Bearing in mind Barclay’s objectivity, these descriptions are hardly the stuff of encouragement to settle in Leicester. He had earlier, in 1895, reached similar conclusions; (see title page quotation).¹³⁰

Heinrick described the Irish in Leicester in 1872 as being still “with few exceptions literally the hewers of wood and the drawers of water.”¹³¹ An environment so hostile was unlikely to promote the desire to settle; if Mary Möhl’s description of the Frewens was typical, then the Irish, being in the main Catholic, stood little chance of escaping the processes of racialization and problematization which set them apart. The Frewens had close links with dissent in Leicester itself. Trinity Church, (1883), still evangelical today, was paid for by the Frewen Turners.¹³²

Three individuals in particular compel attention as local leaders of anti-Catholicism: the Duke of Rutland, The Earl Howe, and John Finch, MP. Rutland’s father had played an important role in suppressing the 1798 Rising, being commander of the Leicestershire militia.¹³³ He was associated with political pressure to preserve English political influence in Ireland. It is perhaps not surprising then that the son was a member of the LPTS in both 1837 and 1850;¹³⁴ chaired the 1836 meeting for

¹²⁸There are ample modern accounts of Irish persons being refused accommodation and/or employment in a 20th century context; see JACKSON, J.A., (1963), *The Irish in Britain*, p.102: outside the traditionally Irish heavy industries c.1940, “there was a good deal of initial suspicion and distrust of Irish workers by employers,” and “Accommodation provided some of the greatest difficulties, as lodgings were very hard to find in any case and local prejudice made it harder to find them for Irish workers.” If suspicion and resentment of the Irish was occasioned by Irish neutrality in 1939, the prolonged and repetitive pattern of Irish revolts, many of which involved Leicestershire troop postings, in the 150 years preceding, would have had similar effects.

¹²⁹BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp. 5 & 11.

¹³⁰BARCLAY, T., *Leicester Slums: Abbey Street and Green Street*; in *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol.. VIII, p.149; 28 June 1895, Barclay used the nom-de-plume of “Armer Teufel” for this series; see Editor’s Epilogue in *Memoirs and Medleys* (1934) p.123 for verification of this.

¹³¹HEINRICK, H., (1872/1990), p.39.

¹³²*White’s Directory of Leics*, (1846), pp.40-41, Trinity Church is at the junction of Regent St. and King St., about 2 mins from Holy Cross.

¹³³His father had accepted the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in February 1784. He accepted the necessity of legislative union between Britain and Ireland. *DNB*; Vol.. XXXVI, pp 46-7, citing *Correspondence*, (1890), pp.18-19, and p.47.

¹³⁴LPTS. *1837 Report*, p.22; *1850 Report*, p.35; in LCRO.

relieving the distress of the Irish Protestant clergy; lent his name (1842-5) to the anti-Catholic Loughborough Protestant societies;¹³⁵ and backed "The County Meeting" in November 1850,¹³⁶ In 1846, he served as Lord Lieutenant and as a commander of both the Militia, and the Yeomanry. His brother, Charles Manners, was a local MP.¹³⁷ At a populist level, Rutland had supplied the band for the Guy Fawkes celebration at Leicester in 1844, the Anglican Collegiate School supplying the bonfire and fireworks. This provides a clear example of the respectable face of anti-Catholic activity in action in Leicester.¹³⁸

Earl Howe (Richard Penn) was also a LAPTS member from 1837 to 1850.¹³⁹ A major donor to the 1836 campaign,¹⁴⁰ his position as Deputy Lieutenant of the county burnished his image as a figure of local power and respectability.¹⁴¹ Like Rutland, Howe made his supportive position absolutely plain in November 1850.¹⁴² In 1835-6, he was Patron of the Leicester Conservative Society.¹⁴³ With Rutland, he was involved in the Protestant counter-attack following the numerous Catholic conversions and Irish immigration around Whitwick in the 1840's. Howe was recognised in 1846 as being "highly distinguished for his liberality and indefatigable exertions in the promotion of religious instruction."¹⁴⁴

More outspoken and more active than either Rutland or Howe was George Finch, (1794-1870). Finch's politics consisted of rabid anti-Catholicism, and a close liaison with Orangeism. In the agitation of the 1850's, he emerged as the key mover in local terms, and as a man omnipresent in anti-Catholic campaigns, often with an Irish cutting edge. Finch, MP for Rutland, was "a strong supporter of the Evangelical church."¹⁴⁵ In 1831, he chaired a London meeting opposing grants to Maynooth; an Irish rector, from Power's Court, an Anglo-Irish Ascendancy demesne, was also present - an indication of Finch's early propensity for direct collaboration with Protestant elements in Ireland.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁵ Ambrose de Lisle wrote to Lord Shrewsbury in 1842 that "It was a silly thing of the Duke of Rutland putting himself at the head of the Loughborough Protestant Association; I should think he regrets it now" p.150, letter of 22 Dec 1842; in PURCELL'S *De Lisle*, Vol. I. P.109.

¹³⁶ LC 30 Nov 1850, page 1.

¹³⁷ *White's Directory Leics* (1846); section on local government.

¹³⁸ See the *LJ* of 8 Nov. 1844, cited in PAZ (1992) p.244.

¹³⁹ LAPTS: 1837 Report, p.21; 1850 Report, p.33.

¹⁴⁰ LC 30 Jan. 1836.

¹⁴¹ *White's Directory*, 1846, local government gazetteer. The other Deputy Lieutenant in 1846 was Clement Winstanley's son.

¹⁴² LC, 30 Nov. 1850, page 1.

¹⁴³ *Leicester Conservative Standard*, Vol. I. (1835-6) p.60.

¹⁴⁴ *White's Directory of Leics*, 1846, p.549.

¹⁴⁵ FINCH, P., (1901) *History of Burley-on-the-Hill, Rutland*, p.339.

¹⁴⁶ BDA; *The Catholic Magazine*, 1831-2 (April), p.188; report reprinted from the *Irishman*.

It is not surprising that Finch features in Wolffe's recent study of the "Protestant Crusade". On Finch's national role in the Reformation Society Wolffe remarked that he was one of its "two most important lieutenants." The Society's Publications list included a work by Finch, who made two Irish tours of duty for the Society, clear evidence of his commitment to the anti-Catholic cause in specifically Irish terms.

Finch continued his key role, particularly in his involvement in cementing the interests of Anglo-Irish Protestantism and Conservatism in the 1829-44 period. A Church of Ireland rector, Mortimer O'Sullivan, and the Rev. Charles Boyton of the Dublin Conservative Society, commenced a speaking tour of England their itinerary included Leicester. O'Sullivan "spent sometime staying with George Finch of Burley-on-the-Hill in Rutland, assisting him with his election campaign at Stamford."¹⁴⁷ This was the period which coincided with an ultra attempt to revive the Orange Order in England and Finch's liaison with Fermanagh Orangeism.

In 1852, the *Chronicle* devoted its entire front page to 'The Protestant Alliance - Important Meeting in Leicester.' The first names mentioned were C.H. Frewen and George Finch. The meeting was packed with local Protestant churchmen.¹⁴⁸ A Scottish Free Church minister, a Mr. Traill, charged Catholics with responsibility for the rising of 1798, and the subversive political activities of Daniel O'Connell, John Mitchell and William Smith O'Brien.¹⁴⁹ Here was that intersection of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish demonisation, and the resulting problematization of the Irish.

Finch was also present at the great Protestant backlash, the meeting of the British Reformation Society on 14 September 1852.¹⁵⁰ The *Chronicle* noted the "large and respectable audience"; which included C.J. Frewen:

During the first year a large number of tracts, Protestant catechisms, and pamphlets, were gratuitously distributed; amongst them were the admirable letters of Geo. Finch Esq. (a free gift from himself to the Society).

Another praised the success of Protestant missions in Ireland. At the packed evening session a Rev. Mr. Stockdale (of the Stockdale Hardys) was present, as was Mrs. Frewen Turner. George Finch was in the Chair, "and opened the proceedings of the

¹⁴⁷WOLFFE, J., (1991), p.37, 38, 81.

¹⁴⁸See LC of 31 January 1852, p.1., unless otherwise stated.

¹⁴⁹An Irish Protestant cleric, in the person of the Rev. W. King of Dublin, added authenticity

¹⁵⁰See LC of 18 Sept. 1852. The Reformation Society started in Leicester on 15 March 1851.

evening in an able manner."

In 1853, at another anti-Maynooth mass meeting, notables present included the Berners, Noel, and Frewen families, George Finch, Hugh Stowell, and Bardsley. Finch "in a long and able speech," attacked Maynooth, convents, and auricular confession. He celebrated the British Empire, comparing a peaceful and progressive British mother state to a priest-ridden and chaotic Ireland, thereby invoking the construction myth of the British nation.¹⁵¹

It is the case then that anti-Catholic, pan-Protestant mass meetings in Leicester were very widely supported in the late 1840's and early 1850's. Furthermore, leadership was available from prominent Protestant clerical, aristocratic and gentry representatives. Frequent negative references were made to Ireland and Catholicism, which portrayed Irish priests and people as prone to superstition, ignorance, and criminal behaviour. Such references would hardly inspire confidence or trust in Irish migrants arriving in Leicester, especially as they were published fully, frequently and prominently.

The Protestant crusade of 1850 was ably assisted by the City Council. In December, the Councillors, citing the threats of the Spanish Armada, Cardinal Richelieu and the Inquisition (unusual preoccupations for a rather quiet midlands town), declared that: "the inhabitants of the county and town of Leicester were determined to have nothing to do with Popery."¹⁵² The Irish link was simultaneously established: Daniel O'Connell, who "was in the confidence of the hierarchy," had said "let us only once get rid of the Church of England, and we will make short work with the Dissenters." Catholic emancipation had not quietened Ireland said another, so why accept the Romanist hierarchy?

This process of mobilising anti-Catholic and *per se* anti-Irish sentiment was strengthened by the external support of the London-based Reformation Society, whose impact on Leicester branches can be proven to have been greater than on any other area of the country. It had 37 branches by 1837. In London, it appointed four Scripture Readers specially to proselytise and evangelise amongst the Irish of St. Giles.¹⁵³

James Gordon, one of the Society's first and most important leaders, "was

¹⁵¹ LC, 29 Jan 1853. See HICKMAN, M. in LEWIS, G. (1998), citing Cohen (1988) and Colley (1992) CH Frewen, MP, declared that he spoke from personal experience, "he being well acquainted with every part of Ireland," having visited the country annually.

¹⁵² LC, 7 December, 1850. These references are, of course, to Puseyism, to Tractarianism, to the Oxford Movement, and to the high Church Anglo-Catholic tendencies of the Rev. Anderson, who eventually apostasised to Romanism.

¹⁵³ All details on the Reformation Society nationally are from GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No- Popery and the Irish Poor, 1830-60; Part I, 1830-1850, in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan. 1970, pp 210-230.

sufficiently perceptive to appreciate that (Irish) political nationalism was inextricably bound up with loyalty to the Irish Roman Catholic Church." Furthermore, he was a close and active ally of the Society's main local aristocratic supporter, George Finch.¹⁵⁴ The Society's efforts spread to Leicester quite early on, in 1833.¹⁵⁵

A Catholic journal reported the 1833 visit. The speaker was one Rev. Maurice Farrell, probably an Irishman, one of a chain of peripatetic Church of Ireland ministers in Britain. Perhaps the Irish preacher was designed to undermine the faith of any Irish Catholics in the audience? Given that English Protestant preachers were prepared to learn Irish before departing for the wilds of the Galway and Mayo mission fields, this is quite plausible.¹⁵⁶ When Farrell had concluded, a provocative question was posed: did the Catholic Church prohibit scripture reading by lay persons "to keep the people in the dark"? A Catholic attending shouted "we are allowed to read them," but was then monitored by a policeman.¹⁵⁷ The Society's Secretary replied that "the bishops of Ireland had concurred" in the papal condemnation of scripture usage. One wonders, given the Irish references in this reply, if the questioner was one of Leicester's newly arrived Irish Catholics?¹⁵⁸

Gilley notes the use of Irish Catholics as targets in "systematic house-to-house visitations."¹⁵⁹ The same system, involving regular door-to-door visiting, specially trained Scripture Readers, and regular monitoring was utilised in Leicester by the Unitarian Joseph Dare of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society. Writing in 1852, Dare described how:

The Scripture Reader, whose special business it is to visit the Catholic Irish, informed me that as many as twenty grown-up persons may be often found herding together in these private houses.¹⁶⁰

There could not be a clearer indication that Dare's mission was making special efforts vis-à-vis targeting the Irish newcomers.

¹⁵⁴WOLFFE, J. (1991), p.18.

¹⁵⁵BDA, *The Catholic Magazine*, October 1833, pp.183-9. Wolffe (1992, p.60) describes this meeting as being one "which was very poorly attended."

¹⁵⁶Leicester's involvement with such proselytism is in chapter on RC growth. WOLFFE (1991) p. 18, makes the point that, in the context of Irish immigration, "the Protestant arrivals played a significant part in 'No Popery' campaigns." This is true of a large number of Church of Ireland visitors to Leicester.

¹⁵⁷BDA, *The Catholic Magazine*, Oct. 1833, p.187-8.

¹⁵⁸Gilley (1970) suggests that these lay workers paralleled the Operative Auxiliaries who were the "para-militaries" of the Protestant Association, another similar major pressure group.

¹⁵⁹GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No-Popery and the Irish Poor, 1830-60, in *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan. 1970, p.218. The 1855 Prot. Alliance AGM in Leicester noted similar visitations carried out by Rev. J. Nugent; see Section (vii).

¹⁶⁰DARE, J., (1852) *RLDMS 7th Report*: p. The use of the word "herding" seems to be deliberate.

By 1846, Reformation Society representation in Leicestershire was, revealingly, well above the average for the regions. No less than 4 branches, or 13.5 per cent of the total regional figure, were located in the county, at Ashby, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray and Leicester. Thus powerful and militant Protestant activism operated in Leicestershire. Loughborough was termed an "Operatives" branch, being an area which attracted a high level of voluntary activity.¹⁶¹ Wolffe points to Hugh McNeile (1795-1879), an Ulster Protestant and founder of the Reformation Society, as the man behind the setting up of the Protestant Operative Association (on the Conservative model) nationally. These bodies enjoyed the benefits of lecture programmes, specialised library facilities, in-house publications and similar support structures.¹⁶² Strict control was in fact exercised by those middle class elements who were in control of both the Reformation Society and the Protestant Alliance. Given the active role of the Protestant Tract Society operating in the Loughborough-Ashby area from 1835, it comes as no surprise that these two towns hosted branches of the Reformation Society

The Reformation Society made its mark in Melton Mowbray, where Irish migrants had also settled. Its early efforts there, in 1838 and 1844, coincided with the Irish migrant build-up. In 1844, Catholics noted its "most virulent spirit of hostility" and "the evil workings of bigotry." As well as some of the laity, two of the priests in this otherwise quiet rural market-town were Irish, Fr. A. Mc Dermott (1844-5) and Rev. Andrew Eagan (1850).¹⁶³ The Irish physical presence excited a Protestant response. The Reformation Society therefore successfully maintained its vigour in city and county from c.1845-65, the period in which Irish in-migration to Leicestershire was most apparent.

The Protestant Alliance too made progress during the 1850's. It was another national body, also with important representation in Leicester. In 1854, the *Chronicle* reported on its national AGM in London.¹⁶⁴ The *Chronicle* in 1855 covered the Leicestershire Alliance's AGM. Many were present who had participated in the County Meeting of 1850; the Alliance's work and successes in the Loughborough-Ashby areas

¹⁶¹GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No-Popery and the Irish Poor 1830-60, (Part I 1830-50) in *Recusant History* Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan. 1970, p.221, Appendix 1.

¹⁶²WOLFFE, J., (1991), p.171-2. The Ref. Soc's Nottingham meeting of 29.8.1844 was part of a weekly programme organised jointly with the Protestant Operative Association, CUMMINS (1977), p.19.

¹⁶³NDA, *Catholic Register*, 1838, p.38; NDA *Catholic Register*, 1844, p.43; NDA, *Catholic Register for 1844* (p.42); 1845 (see Central District); 1850, (p.43).

¹⁶⁴LC, 4 Feb 1854. This report was followed immediately by an "Irish joke" item; it is hard to believe that the proximity of these items was merely accidental.

were celebrated.¹⁶⁵

Another nationwide Protestant pressure group, the National Club, also made its impact in Leicester c.1841-50, a period Wolffe aptly describes as the “high-water mark of Protestant activity in the nineteenth century.” The National Club’s core issue was concern over government expediency regarding the Irish political situation generally. Membership included two familiar individuals, the Earl of Winchelsea, and C.H. Frewen.¹⁶⁶ Winchelsea (George Finch-Hatton) is dealt with above; as is Frewen. Other Club seniors who were also involved in Leicester were John Bickersteth, John Cumming and Mortimer O’Sullivan (a friend of George Finch). The Club appealed twice to “Protestants of the Empire” in Leicester; this terminology reflects the intersection of Protestantism with British nationalism in the developing national ideology.¹⁶⁷

A Club letter of 1847 suggested limiting the rights of all Roman Catholics, especially priests. These arguments labelled virtually all Irish Catholics as traitors, even though 80 per cent of the 51 Irishmen then in the Leicestershire Regiment Light Company were Catholics.¹⁶⁸ As this series of letters was published in the Leicester media, the effects of such repeated propaganda were not negligible, serving to agitate Protestant opinion further, and alienating Catholics generally, and Irish Catholics in particular. An added bonus for extremists was the fact that this angle of analysis drove the wedge deeper in between English and Irish Catholics and migrants in Britain. In Leicester, this is reflected in the physical “otherness” of St. Patrick’s in its Irish proletarian setting, away from the mainstream life and activity of the Dominicans’ main site at Holy Cross, amidst English bourgeois respectability and gentility.¹⁶⁹

In the cross-fertilisation of individuals and organisations in England and Ireland involved in anti-Catholic propaganda in Leicester, one family in particular, the Bickersteths, was prominent. John Bickersteth, Rural Dean and Rector of Sapcote, had supported the 1847 clerical mass meeting. This local connection with an anti-Catholic family of national repute provided an important link in the chain of national anti-Catholic mobilisation.¹⁷⁰ Gilley describes the well organised world of the Protestant missionary

¹⁶⁵LC, 21 March 1855. The Prot. Alliance went on nationally to orchestrate in the early 1870’s a campaign against RC Indoctrination in education, in textbooks especially; see education.

¹⁶⁶WOLFFE, J., (1991), p.213, Table 6.

¹⁶⁷LJ, 12 Nov. 1847.

¹⁶⁸LJ, 26 Nov. 1847; and JENKINS, R. on Leics. Regt. c.1851 in *For the Record/LCRO*, 1991, No. 15.

¹⁶⁹See: The Development of New Walk (BBC Radio Leicester talk by G.R. WATTS), in BROWN, A.E. (Ed), (1970), *The Growth of Leicester*, p.53-61, for details of this early example of “gentrification”.

¹⁷⁰*Leicester Chronicle*, 23 January 1847.

and anti-Catholic associations in London at this period, and remarks that "notable among them were the Bickersteths, whose ties with Ireland were especially close."¹⁷¹ The family focus was the Evangelical Edward Bickersteth (1786-1850), who in 1847-8 led the 'Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics.' This aimed at "converting starving Catholics while feeding them." Gilley refers to the Society's "morally dubious beginnings in the Great Hunger;" this Society by 1850 had 500 permanent staff, an annual income of £30,000 and an agenda for the straightforward subversion of Irish Catholicism.¹⁷² With the Leicester Bickersteth connection, there was the opportunity for the views espoused by the London Society to be imported into Leicestershire. Whether this Bickersteth was such a conduit cannot be conclusively proved; available evidence, however, does point to much active Leicestershire support for, and involvement in, such Irish missions.¹⁷³

In 1854 the Reformation Society announced a lecture by the Rev. Dr. Cunningham of Edinburgh, editor of the well-known periodical *The Bulwark (Reformation Journal)*, published in Scotland from 1851. Its guiding spirit was the Rev James Begg, author of the scurrilous *Handbook of Popery*,¹⁷⁴ "a vitriolic opponent of Catholicism all his life."¹⁷⁵ Again, here is evidence of Leicester's undiminished taste for repetitive anti-Catholic material. Serving as the house journal of the extremist Scottish Reformation Society, the *Bulwark* "was of considerable importance as a stimulus to anti-Catholic feeling in England as well as Scotland."¹⁷⁶

The 1854 AGM of the Reformation Society in Leicester was opened by the indefatigable George Finch; the branch was thriving, publishing its lecture series, and planning future action.¹⁷⁷ By 1867, an apparently new Protestant "umbrella group", the Leicester Anti-Romanist Association, had mounted a series of lectures. New names replaced those of the 1840's and '50's; a new generation. As their agenda was primarily

¹⁷¹GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No-Popery and the Irish Poor. Part II (1850-1860) in *Recusant History*, Vol. II, 1971-72, pp.22-3.

¹⁷²Wolffe (1991) also underlines Edward Bickersteth's central importance in the growth of anti-Catholic ideology and action; he points out that Bickersteth, together with George Finch, was at the core of the Reformation Society. Wolffe also described Edward Bickersteth as "a major exponent of the historicist pre-millennialist application of biblical prophecy," (p.113).

¹⁷³This is discussed fully in section on proselytism. There was much Leics. interest in, and support for, such mission to RCs in Ireland. Ironically, a current Bickersteth cleric has joined the RC Church, and through contact with his son, a family history enthusiast, some facts about John have come to light. Born in 1781, he was "Evangelical, but not low church," and had numerous relatives in positions of power in mid-19th C. Anglicanism. John came to Sapcote in 1837, and died there in 1855. In 1850 he was a member of the LPTS. (Tel. Calls & letters from Justin Bickersteth of Hove, Sussex, Sept.1996). Also, see Note 3 to Table 3.

¹⁷⁴HANDLEY, J., (1947), pp.99-101.

¹⁷⁵HANDLEY, J. (1947), quoting D. Carswell's book *Brother Scots*, pp.71-72.

¹⁷⁶See WOLFFE, J., (1991); p.161, quoting *The Bulwark*, Vol. I. (1851-2), 1-2.

¹⁷⁷How long the Reformation Society actually lasted in Leicester has not been determined because of the disproportionate amount of time that would be needed to check successive AGMs in news files available only on micro-film.

scurrilous and prurient, it is more likely that this body was of the fringe of anti-Catholic action, rather than the mainstream.¹⁷⁸ The active and virulent strains of anti-Catholicism seem to have become dormant by the end of the 1860's. Probably closer to the main current of Protestant action was the apparently still extant Protestant Alliance. The 9th annual meeting in 1860 contained some familiar names (such as the Revs. Wing and Hill).¹⁷⁹

Irish perspectives, in terms of personnel and agenda, were clearly prominent in those organisations co-ordinating the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism in Leicester in the 1835-60 period. These factors conditioned negatively the attitudes of the wider, predominantly Protestant community in Leicester towards those Irish Catholic migrants who were arriving in Leicester, and would have thereby made the town a relatively unwelcoming prospect.

Protestant Association branches operated in Leicester, Loughborough, Ashby and Hinckley between 1836 and 1845; the Reformation Society operated for a much longer period, 1827 to 1860, with branches in Leicester, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray, Ashby and Stamford (in Rutland).¹⁸⁰ The Reformation Society therefore enjoyed much greater longevity, probably had a wider appeal, and was better organised. At the Protestant Alliance AGM in 1855, its proselytising activities were highlighted; these involved the Revs. Hill and Nugent,¹⁸¹ two clerical activists. (see Table 3) Therefore both Leicester and the county acted as twin foci for the mobilisation of anti-Catholic action, virtually equalling Lancashire and Yorkshire for commitment. As these northern areas absorbed far more Irish than Leicester ever did, the vehemence of Leicester's antipathy is almost startling.

Whilst it could be argued that given Leicestershire's relatively small absorption rate for Irish migrants 1841-91, anti-Catholic activity must therefore be explained in generally Catholic rather than specifically Irish Catholic terms, it can be equally well argued that the inherent strength and vehemence of such anti-Catholic activity would act as a double disincentive to the Irish to settle. Confirmatory evidence lies in Barclay's conclusions, written with a sense of perspective in 1895 and 1924 (see above). They

¹⁷⁸ LJ 22 November 1867. Paz (1992), remarks that "there can be no doubt that some male anti-Catholics found in this a godly, uplifting and acceptable way of consuming pornography," p.275.

¹⁷⁹ LC 28 April 1860, p.1; see Ch. On R C development.

¹⁸⁰ All data in this section on Leics. Branches of Protestant anti-Catholic campaigning bodies is from WOLFFE, J. (1991), pp.150-154.

¹⁸¹ LC, 31 March 1855.

lend weight to the argument that anti-Irish and anti-Catholic prejudice intersected in Leicester and thereby contributed to the racializing and problematization of Irish migrant families in the town.

(iii) The intersection of Anti-Irish prejudice and Anti-Catholicism in Leicestershire c.1845-50

The origins of this local religious conflict, in the mid-1830's, had an Irish dimension.¹⁸² The first priest in Loughborough resided at the public house of an Irishman named McElroy.¹⁸³ Ambrose de Lisle used an old Irish woman and an Irish paviour as contacts for his conversion, an act deeply upsetting to local protestants. In Loughborough in April 1836 Daniel O'Connell delivered a powerful speech attacking the Union.¹⁸⁴ Simultaneously, local papists invited the renowned Birmingham-based Rev. Thomas McDonnell to rout the Reformation Society in Ashby.¹⁸⁵ McDonnell had close links with O'Connell's campaign for Catholic Emancipation. Leicestershire Catholicism therefore had an early hibernian edge. The Reformation Society branches in Leicestershire therefore were created between 1833 and 1846 to counter the Irish and Catholic expansion locally.

The flag-ship of Leicestershire popery, Mount St Bernards, with its Irish monks and numerous Irish refugees, attracted wrathful protestant attention, a propagandist pamphlet being printed by Hextalls of Ashby in 1845. The Hextalls were also LAPTS subscribers from 1837 to 1850.¹⁸⁶ The Monastery was denounced publicly in January 1849. This story broke in Whitwick - with its lawless mining town atmosphere - where Protestant workers threatened to burn down the Catholic School and blow up the Monastery.¹⁸⁷ By 1851 there were 120 Irish-born persons in Whitwick, including farm and colliery labourers.¹⁸⁸ The press had already highlighted crime and disease amongst the Whitwick Irish, a typical example of the problematization of the Irish in Britain as a contagion.

The pressure burst, dangerously, over the "Papal Aggression" of 1850. Much of

¹⁸²The first known contacts between Loughborough people and RC priests occurred in 1824, and are discussed in the chapter on the growth of Catholicism.

¹⁸³NDA; CUMMINS, Rev. J.D. (1949), *Catholic Reference Book*, 'The Church in Loughborough' (no. Page no.; 1st side).

¹⁸⁴LC, 9 April 1836.

¹⁸⁵B.D.A., *The Catholic Magazine*, 1836-7, p. Cxci.

¹⁸⁶L.A.P.T.S., 1837 Report, p.21; 1850 Report, p.34; in LCRO. LACEY, A.C. (1985), *Second Spring*, on p.27, 34, and ACD.

¹⁸⁷LACEY, A.C. (1985) *The Second Spring in Charnwood Forest*, pp 36-7; full details of the case are provided herein.

¹⁸⁸ACD; 1851, Whitwick 4/6a, 2084.

this centred on the persons of Fr. Egan, an Irish-born priest in Loughborough, and an Irish parishioner who wielded an axe in defence of his chapel.¹⁸⁹ (See title page quotation.)

Fr. Egan came to Loughborough in 1850. Keeping a low profile was his tactic for survival. During the No-Popery agitation of 1850-51, a group of men burned the Pope in effigy, fruitlessly menacing Egan for money. In his diary for 5th November 1852, Egan recorded that "the effigy of the Pope was burnt in the market-place, several thousand people being present."¹⁹⁰ Earlier, in the 1840's, the Irish Rosminian Moses Furlong had provocatively preached a premature version of "liberation theology", berating the depredations of laissez-faire capitalism.¹⁹¹

The revised parish history of St Mary's in Loughborough mentions other incidents of effigy burning and hostile demonstrations throughout 1850-52, which are reminiscent of the accounts of Irish Catholic community self-defence during the Stockport Riots of 1852, and other similar events.¹⁹² Leicestershire then provides evidence of Saville's contentions, that, c.1848, working-class communities targeted the Irish, and that Irish revolutionary politics impacted on the British domestic agenda.¹⁹³

The factors attributed as causes of the Stockport riots help to explain the north-west Leicestershire outbreaks. Whilst economic factors, especially job competition and decreasing wages, were laid at the door of Irish migrants, mention was also made of the underlying importance of religious differences. Millward suggests that Stockport "can also be connected with the activities of the political and religious groupings outside the working class."¹⁹⁴ Both Stockport and Loughborough involved the acquiescence and support given by normally responsible leadership elements to agitators. The Stockport Protestant Association had close links with the local press and Conservatives; so too links existed between the LAPTS, the *Leicester Journal* and local Tories. In Leicester also then, local government, press and Protestant leadership joined in the popular

¹⁸⁹HIRST, J. (No date, c. 1898), *Life of the Rev. Andrew Egan*, pp. 84-85; in RCAL. NDA, the two oldest Irishmen living in The Rushes at this time were Peter Dunn, a 60 year old unmarried labourer and James O'Brien, a married hawker of 56 years of age; possibly one of these two was the stalwart axeman.

¹⁹⁰HIRST, J. (c.1890), p.86,87 & 88.

¹⁹¹LACEY, A.C. (1985), pp. 41-42. HIRST, J. (nd. c.1890), p.67.

¹⁹²DENIR, J. (1894), *The Irish in Britain*, pp.261-2; SWIFT, R., "Another Stafford Street Row": Law, Order and the Irish presence in Mid-Victorian Wolverhampton, pp.188-95; MILLWARD, P., *The Stockport Riots of 1852. A study of Anti-Catholic and Anti-Irish Sentiment*, pp. 207-224; both chapters are in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds), (1985).

¹⁹³SAVILLE, J. (1987), *1848, The British State and the Chartist Movement*, p.223.

¹⁹⁴MILLWARD, P., in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S., (1985), p.217, 207-8.

protest against the Catholics and the Irish.¹⁹⁵ The LAPTS, with its middle-class, gentry and aristocratic membership, and the local branches of the British Reformation Society, both contributed to the politico-religious ferments. There was also the interaction between county Protestant clergy with the more mainstream protests organized in Leicester (see Table 3).

Specific similarities between Stockport and Loughborough included the destruction of priestly effigies, parades, and threats against Catholic property and persons. Millward cites a procession as the occasion for the Stockport outbreak. In Loughborough, self-assertive Catholic practice was noted,¹⁹⁶ and in June 1843, the children's procession especially offended the LAPTS.¹⁹⁷ In 1838 and 1842, increasing concern was expressed by the LAPTS:

..... the lofty pretensions of Romanism have in this immediate locality, as well as at Leicester and Derby, degenerated into a union with Chartism the Chartists meet in their own hired barn, and thence march, in procession, to the Romish place of worship¹⁹⁸

Here, the problematization of the Irish as a joint political-religious contagion is made manifest.

The link with the Irish was given expression forcefully in the LAPTS's 1844 *Report*, which underscored the important role played by Irish newcomers in the local Catholic revival:

Though the villages near the Monastery on Charnwood Forest have been constantly visited by the Priests, very little has occurred in them worthy of notice; the main attack having been made on Loughborough in which about thirty families of Irish Roman Catholics are now located. The priests have taken due advantage of these their natural allies, aided in no small degree two or three zealous persons of a high order, lately settled in the place.¹⁹⁹

Catholic proselytism locally was too successful for its own good.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵MILLWARD, P., (1985), p.219.

¹⁹⁶HIRST, J. (N.D. c.1890), p. 69-70.

¹⁹⁷The LAPTS attacked 'the Confraternity of the Living Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary' in a lengthy analysis in its *Report* of 1843, p.10.

¹⁹⁸LAPTS, 1842 *Report*, p.6-7. The "village first referred to" is in fact Whitwick; the footnote to p.6. of the *Report* stresses the Chartist liaison factor. "At Derby, the Chartist Petition to the Queen was confided for presentation to the Roman Catholic Priest. - The Times, Jan. 2, 1842. The LAPTS 1848 *Report*, p.14, strongly re-emphasised the Catholic-Chartist axis.

¹⁹⁹LAPTS, 1844 *Report*, p. 5& 6.

²⁰⁰HIRST, J. (c.1890), p.87-8.

Not surprisingly, the LAPTS's *Report* for 1848 went to great lengths to link Chartism and Catholicism in their readers' minds. There was an attempt to drive a wedge between those English converts of "respectable" background, such as the local man de Lisle, and disreputable and ignorant Irish proletarian elements.²⁰¹ Anti-Irish expression and anti-Catholicism intersected in the *LAPTS Reports* of 1844-48.²⁰²

Interestingly, 1835, when the Protestant Association re-emerged in Stockport, was also the year when the LAPTS and the *Leicester Conservative Standard* commenced their activities. Given the local Orange connections, it is clear that the mid-1830's represents a most important staging point in Leicestershire development regarding both anti-Catholic and anti-Irish action. Catholic-Irish interests could be seen as being provocative:

The poor are tempted with worldly advantages - money, food, clothing, employment, or gratuitous education for their children. Others are solicited to read the Romish books which are everywhere obtruded, such as "Cobbett's History of the Reformation."²⁰³

Cobbett's work was popular with local Catholics, for Barclay noted his parents' admission that "There were a few good Englishmen, no doubt, like William Cobbett who wrote the history of the Protestant Reformation."²⁰⁴

Local Protestants who might have complained of Irish intrusion could only have been accused of carrying out their research efficiently. If the small numbers of Catholic Irish in the county ruffled Protestant feathers, then the relatively larger numbers of Irish Catholics in Leicester itself can only have produced similar reactions amongst concerned and militant Protestants.

Anti-Catholic feeling and activity was not confined just to the poor and the ignorant. An historian of religion has indicated the impressive longevity of anti-Catholicism in British culture.²⁰⁵ Leicester was no exception. Oral history furnishes ample further evidence. Catherine Richardson, of Irish parents, at St. Patrick's elementary school in 1918, recalled "an element of cruelty; Roman Catholics were still called Papists, and Pope-lovers." Kathleen McDonagh, born 1911, stated that her

²⁰¹LAPTS, 1848 Report, p.14.

²⁰²LAPTS; 1848 Report, p.14; 1844 Report, p.576.

²⁰³LAPTS, 1847 Report, p.8.

²⁰⁴BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.7. WOLFFE (1991) remarks that Cobbett's work "suggested the redefinition of the patriotic radical tradition itself in a manner which rehabilitated Catholicism. It had a wide influence," p.15.

²⁰⁵HASTINGS, A., (1986), *A History of English Christianity, 1920-1985*, p.131

mother, a second generation Irish child, had told her that "The kids had shouted 'Proddy Dog' and 'Cat-Licks' at each other" in her mother's childhood in Leicester during the 1880's and 1890's. Another local family, with Irish roots in the 1850's, mentioned incidents in the 1930's when Holy Cross pupils did battle with Anglican pupils after school hours.²⁰⁶ Memoirs of Coalville Catholics in the 1900-1915 period, where there was an overt Irish presence, also mention incidents of minor violence, such as stone-throwing.²⁰⁷ These patterns show that Barclay's type of negative childhood experience persisted as a problem of prejudice into the new century.²⁰⁸

That religious strife was frequently the root cause of internecine stress was quite clear to Barclay, who argued that youthful religious prejudice was not surprising when it was "backed and abetted by college professors and ministers of Jesus Christ." Barclay indicated how a pious and committed Catholic upbringing could lead to an intolerance of its own.²⁰⁹ Is this evidence of Catholic prejudice and intolerance, or is it evidence of a Catholic lack of self-confidence and a *laager* mentality? Addressing the question of why the Irish in England were blamed for a variety of social, economic, religious and political ills, in effect problematized, Barclay suggested the answer:

"Suppose ... that there is a prejudice against you as an intruder (and) your religion, and a little unreasoning race hatred, none the better for being pretty mutual, - wouldn't it, think you, take all your English pluck and enterprise to surmount all these difficulties?"²¹⁰

(f) Conclusion

Leicester and the county in the period c.1835-50 reflected the national pattern, where anti-Catholicism intersected with anti-Irish prejudice in the process of the racialization and problematization of the Irish. Anti-Catholicism by its intrinsic nature involved an anti-Irish perspective. This is particularly clear in the various interviews Mayhew conducted with first and subsequent generation Irish individuals in the 1860's

²⁰⁶ ISW/OHA, interviews with Mrs. C. Richardson and Ms. K. McDonagh. WILLBOND, B. (1991), *A Home of Our Own - 70 Years of Council House Memories in Leicester*, section entitled "Interlude - 1932" (no page ref).

²⁰⁷ ELLISON, R. (1915) *A Short Hist of Coalville RC Mission*; Ch. V, 'Passion, Prejudice and Peace'.

²⁰⁸ BARCLAY, T., (1934), pp 6, 7, and *The Wyvern*, No. 192, 28.6.1895.

²⁰⁹ BARCLAY, T., (1934),, p.19 and 27.

²¹⁰ *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.150.

in London.²¹¹

Paz's contention that: "With respect to the reception of the Irish in the period from 1830-1870, the attitudes of the various sub-groups of the host society to religion was the determining factor"²¹² is overly limited. As the nineteenth century developed, argues Paz, the English became increasingly secular, and therefore stopped disliking the Irish because of religion, but continued to find them unprepossessing because of their Irishness. This is a suspect interpretation, for the reason that despite increasing secularism amongst English Protestants, not to mention lapsation amongst Catholics, the traditional religious labels still stuck. It is a disingenuous approach for two reasons; first, it artificially separates religion from the Irish cultural experience; second, it ignores the rich evidence of British racist attitudes to the many creeds, colours and cultures that became entwined in the British Empire. (Ironically, some Irish, both Catholics and Protestant, were part of this imperial construct, engaging with the majority culture and power-bases)²¹³

The unifying factors in terms of anti-Irishness are continuity and longevity in the context of media treatment. The very prevalence of anti-Irish sentiment in its manifold manifestations was an omnipresent consideration. In discussing the problems of integrating the Irish in nineteenth century Britain, O'Tuathaigh emphasised "the long list of public agitations" accompanying the "a strong anti-Catholic prejudice present in many levels of British society." Even the secularist Barclay noted specifically the religious prejudice that the Irish migrants in Leicester endured.²¹⁴

From 1830-70 in fact, anti-Irishness crystallised around both religion and politics, a pattern reflected in Leicester. Whilst anti-Catholicism could exist without an overt anti-Irish element, for those who were both Irish and Catholic, an attack on one facet was hard to separate from the dualism of identity felt by the majority of migrants. It is worth reiterating that those Roman Catholics whom English Protestants met in daily life

²¹¹See, for example, MAYHEW, H (1849/50), *The Irish in London* (Penguin, Ed. V. Neuberg, 1985), p.261-3; and espec. p. 137-45 re maintenance of RC faith and practice, and p.57-60. The point is continually made in other contemporary works by Irish authors: see HEINRICK, H. (1872), (Ed: O'DAY, 1990), DENVIR, J. (1894).

²¹²PAZ (1992), p.79.

²¹³Well known examples include John Mitchell of 1848 fame, who held anti-Black opinions on slavery in USA; Darcy Magee, who became a senior component of British Colonialism in Canada; and the average member of the RIC at any time in that force's history, as well as these Dublin based officials termed "Castle Catholics."

²¹⁴OTUATHAIGH, G; *The Irish in 19th C. Britain: Problems of Integration* in SWIFT, R. AND GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1985),. V.27, and *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, article by Tom Barclay on Irish slum around Green Street. O'Tuathaigh also noted that "anti-Irish attitudes were not simple varieties of anti-Catholicism, though religious prejudice undoubtedly entered into it," p.27.

were most likely to be Irish."²¹⁵

Saville highlights the links made between the Irish Catholics in England and Chartism, a pattern reflected in Leicester. He emphasises the increasing exposure given to Irish affairs, especially in terms of political and criminal violence, and in terms of socio-economic problems originating in Ireland and spreading to Britain, in the wake of Irish migrants, like a contagion. The Irish were increasingly seen as uncivilized and different physically and psychologically, so that anti-Irish sentiment achieved a "specifically racist component."²¹⁶

Leicester's record in terms of its Protestant ideological inheritance, its penchant for hosting both local and national Protestant organisations, and its predilection for inviting in purveyors of outspoken anti-Catholic invective, puts it in a position of not only regional but national significance. A recent modern history of Leicester dismissed internecine sectarianism as "trivial,"²¹⁷ and continued "there is little to be heard in Leicester of the extremes of belief that unsettled so many more volatile communities,"²¹⁸ There is no recognition here of the institutional framework, the organisational skills, and the propaganda expertise that regularly punctuated the mid-century decades as manifestations of popular anti-Catholicism, and the implications of this for Irish Catholic incomers. Nor is there any cognizance of later reactions, such as Kensitism, or the ideological residue in the public and popular mind.

Anti-Irishness was an integral part of anti-Catholicism. *Punch* in 1850 depicted a complacent Pontiff fitting a cardinal's mitred hat on to a recumbent and dormant John Bull. At the Pope's side was a priest whose features are unmistakably of the simianized Celt type. Thus "Papal Aggression" and the Irish were linked (see cartoon). Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby, directly associated Ambrose de Lisle's active promotion of Catholicism with the "barbarian" Irish:

Lord Shrewsbury and other wealthy Catholics are devoting their whole incomes to the cause, while the tremendous influx of Irish labourers is tainting the whole population with a more than barbarian element.²¹⁹

²¹⁵PAZ, (1992), p.51.

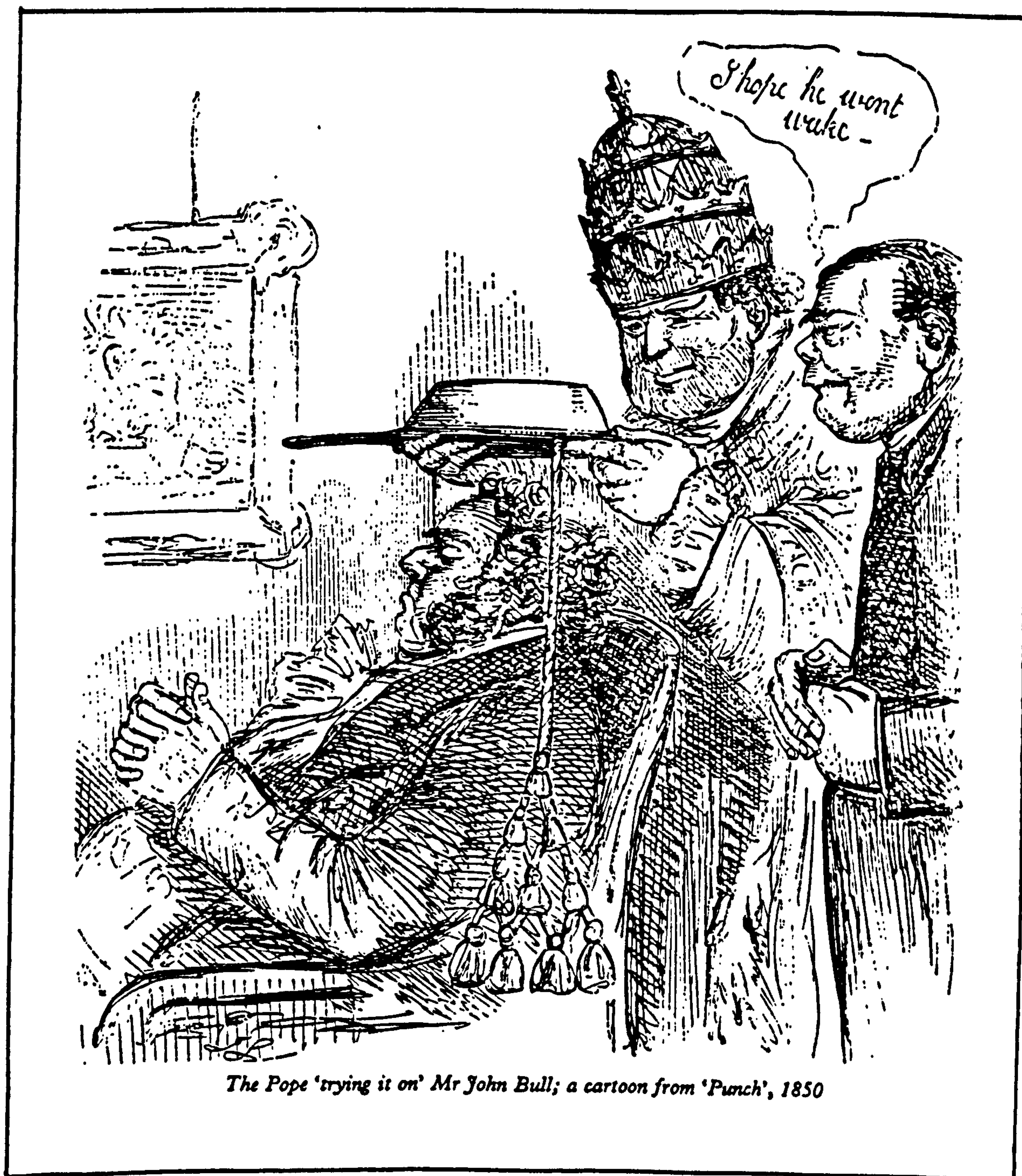
²¹⁶SAVILLE, J (1987); 1848, p.38.

²¹⁷SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present*, Vol. One, p.169.

²¹⁸SIMMONS, J. (1974), Vol. Two, p.34. Many of the issues thrown up in this examination of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish prejudice in Leicester were also identified in Finnegan's study of the Irish in York.

²¹⁹USHERWOOD, S, in *History Today*, XIII, 4 April '73, p.273-5. Whilst the reference to the Irish was specific to Lancs and W. Scotland, it has a wider application; letter to Baron Bunsen. The *Punch* cartoon appeared here.

Document 1: Cartoon from *Punch* (1850) relating No-Popery issue to Celtic simianized stereotype.



The Pope 'trying it on' Mr John Bull; a cartoon from 'Punch', 1850

Source; *Punch*, 1850, (refer footnote 219)

Catholic expansion locally is openly coupled here with the threatening influx of Irish *untermenschen*. Anti-Irishness was at all levels of society inextricably intermingled with anti-Catholicism.

The plethora of anti-Catholic institutions, and the survival long-term of anti-Catholic prejudice in Leicester, indicates the depth of penetration into the local Protestant consciousness. The clear association the county's Protestant leadership with anti-Catholicism was manifest. On occasion, local Irish Catholics reacted. This rarely made the columns of the local press, but fact that some incidents are on record indicates that Irish Catholics in Leicester saw an attack on their religion as an onslaught on their community identity and presence.

Anti-Irish prejudice existed amongst English Catholics.

"It may be that there was little anti-Irish prejudice as such But there was opposition, and the immigrant no doubt found it of little interest whether he met it wearing one hat or another."²²⁰

If this was true of attitudes within the Roman fold, how much more true must it have been vis-à-vis the attitudes of crusading Protestant *revanchistes*. Whilst the Leicester Dominicans pointedly celebrated the participation of local protestants at Catholic social events, the Irish mission of St. Patrick's remained culturally, socially and financially isolated from its core parish. An ex-Dominican historian has commented on the similarities to Newcastle-on-Tyne, where another core Dominican parish had an isolated Irish off-shoot, also called St. Patrick's. He noted that:

The clergy were still able to regard the growth of Catholicism in England as due to the decline in prejudice against it - a curious reflection for the Irish - and to see (in 1889) the day of the return of the ancient faith as certain, if delayed.²²¹

Archer is right to question the existence of a decline in the Irish dimension of anti-Catholic prejudice, and the Dominicans' eagerness to be accepted as part of the established order served only to underline the prejudice exhibited internally as well as externally towards those Catholics who were Irish in Leicester. The evidence from Leicester reinforces the theory that the process of constructing the nation in nineteenth

²²⁰DOYLE, P., Bishop Gosse of Liverpool (1865-72) and the importance of being English, in MEWS, S. (Ed)(1982), *Religion and National Identity* (Vol. 18), p.445.

²²¹See ARCHER, A. (1986), *The Two Catholic Churches : A Study in oppression*, p.89, citing *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* of 21 March 1887.

century Britain involved the racialization of the Irish via their cultural and general Catholic identity, and their problematization as threats to the social and political order.

CHAPTER 8

CRIME AS CONTAGION: THE PROBLEMATIZATION OF THE THE IRISH OF LEICESTER

"Should not the Irish generally be referred to their own priest? They are a great calamity to our large towns. Wherever they locate they introduce crime, disease and wretchedness. There is scarcely an Irish case deserving of relief. The police should have orders to clear the public walks and race-courses of all such objects"

The Rev. Joseph Dare, Unitarian mission organiser, in his *Report of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society, 1854*, page 11

"... but for the one vice of drunkenness - almost the only vice which degrades and disgraces our people all through England - the social condition of the Irish in Leicester would rapidly improve. That they are eminently free from the taint of ordinary crime is attested by the fact - for which I have the authority of one of the Dominican Fathers, an Englishman, who is chaplain of the jail - that on the criminal calendar for the whole of Leicestershire there is not a single Irish name, and within the borough jurisdiction but three or four, for offences which are the merest trifles - cases of petty larceny or offences arising out of drunken brawls."

A Survey of the Irish in England (1872) pages 39-40; Hugh Heinrich commenting on Irish migrants in mid-Victorian Leicester.

Two or three Irish children were observed by a benevolent lady on the race course the Sunday before last: these children were in such a "ragged filthy condition as to be a disgrace to a Christian country. Could anything be done for them?" I made inquiries of a respectable neighbour whom I have known for twenty years, and who has known these same Irish families four or five years. The mother of two of the said children lives in that respectable locality "Pork-shop Yard." She has offspring by several men - is enceinte and perpetually drunk. She sends out her children in this condition on purpose to excite commiseration; if the children were dressed up tidy today, the clothes would all be stripped off, sold for drink and the children driven forth half-naked to play the same game tomorrow. The other Irish case is that of a man, a widower, who shortened his wife's existence by ill-treatment. He lives, himself, by gathering rags and bones and begging. He takes no care whatever of his children. They are sent at large in rags and dirt to obtain subsistence in any manner they are able. A better garment or a pair of shoes would be immediately taken from them for drink: the boy seen on the race-course was recently in prison for theft. Should not the Irish generally be referred to their own priest? They are a great calamity to our large towns. Wherever they locate they introduce crime, disease, and wretchedness. There is scarcely an Irish case deserving of relief. The police should have orders to clear the public walks and race-courses, especially on a Sunday, of all such objects as referred to above. They are sent there for the express purpose of preying on the unwary.

Rev. Joseph Dare, *9th Report of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, (1854) page 10-11.

CHAPTER 8

CRIME AS CONTAGION: THE PROBLEMATIZATION OF THE IRISH OF LEICESTER

PAGE	CONTENTS
336	(a) Introduction: crime and the problematization of the Irish
339	(b) The new Police: the Irish experience reflected.
343	(c) The policing of the Irish and their lodging houses.
348	(d) The Irish and the vagrancy problem
353	(e) Analysing the Patterns of Crime:
353	(i) Crimes dealt with under both summary jurisdiction and quarter sessions procedures (including juvenile crime)
362	(ii) First and second generation Irish, and non-Irish, Catholics: an analysis of Roman Catholic representation
367	(f) Public Disorder and the location of Irish settlement amidst social deprivation:
367	(i) the fear of public disorder
370	(ii) the context of social deprivation
372	(g) Womens' roles in the pattern of Irish crime locally
376	(h) Media conceptions of Irish criminality:
376	(i) early problematization
378	(ii) the effects of the the Boys' Reformatory on the image of Irish Catholics locally
383	(i) The Question of Riots and the Irish in Leicester
389	(j) Conclusion

TABLES/MAPS

341	1	Numbers of Irish-born and their Families from 1841 census related to Beat Areas of new Borough Constabulary, 1836
352	2	Vagrant Act - Numbers of Persons Charged 1844-48
355	3	Irish-born Prisoners in Leicester's Jails, decennially, 1841-91
357	4	Prisoners with Irish names in Borough Q.S Court Order Book 1847-59
359	5	Prisoner data for Walton Jail, Liverpool, in 1865
360	6	Prisoner data for Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, 1882-83
363	7	Combined City and County Prisoner Data, Leicester 1876-77
364	8	Prisoners Admitted to City Jail Leicester, 1876-77
365	9	Prisoners admitted to County Jail, Leicester, 1876-77
379	10	Mount St Bernard's Abbey - Penal Colony and Reformatory for juvenile delinquents - Admissions 1856-81
379	11	Numbers of Boys in the Penal Colony and their origins, c.1863
384	12	Different types of Riots involving the Irish in Leicester, 1840-90

MAPS	Police Beat Patrols in Irish areas of Leicester in 1836
-------------	---

(a) Introduction: crime and the problematization of the Irish

The objectives here are to evaluate the primary evidence available, and to establish the proportional involvement of the Irish in local crime. That they were publicly identified as a crime problem there can be no doubt; (see Dare's comments of 1854, title page). Swift (1985, 1987, 1989 and 1992)¹ and Neale (1991) stress the need for tentative conclusions, and for more, and varied, detailed regional studies. Their work provides an agenda and a research framework. This chapter attempts to link current national analyses with the picture which emerges of the Irish community in Leicester c.1841-91 in relation to policing, criminality and issues of justice. Analysis of local statistics confirms already established trends; it also throws light onto the extent of the involvement of the Protestant Irish, Irish women, and second generation Irish in terms of types of offences committed and the rate of prosecutions. The problematization of the Irish as a threat to the socio-political order, an outlook resulting from Kay's polemic of 1832 on the dangers of the "moral and physical" traits of the working class, created a certain inevitability regarding Irish migrant culpability for industrial Britain's social problems, especially in relation to crime, disease and poverty.²

The whole area of statistical evidence about crime is problematic, as Neale (1991) reminds us. Factors contributing to an inaccurate final picture are the facts that not all crime is discovered; and that actual law, and police practices and interpretations, vary in time and place. Pre-1856 figures in particular are variable because of the differing rates of constabulary creation from 1835. The Police Act of 1856 led to the first comprehensive Judicial Statistics being published.

Certain problems of interpretation affect any discussion of the Irish dimension e.g. police national returns for "tramps and beggars" were samples for 1863, but were not for 1865; thus these figures are useful only if it is borne in mind that vagrants would have sought casual work in rural surroundings in Spring and Summer, but would probably seek poor relief in a context of urban anonymity during the Autumn and Winter period. There are also

¹SWIFT, R., "Another Stafford Street Row" - Law, Order and the Irish Presence in Mid Victorian Wolverhampton, in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S. (1985); SWIFT, R., The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: Problems and perspectives in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. XXV, No. 99, May 1987; SWIFT, R., Crime and the Irish in nineteenth century Britain in SWIFT, R and GILLEY, S., (1989), and SWIFT, R., The Historiography of the Irish in 19th Century Britain in O'SULLIVAN (.Ed) (1992), and NEALE, F., A Criminal Profile of the Liverpool Irish, in *Trans of Hist. Soc of Lancs and Cheshire*, Vol. 140, Dec. 1991

²See HICKMAN, M, Education for Minorities: Irish Catholics in Britain, in LEWIS, G. (1998), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*, p. 150-6.

problems in defining the seriousness of different types of assault.³

For Leicestershire, the only surviving set of sufficiently detailed data is jail admission records for October 1876 through to April 1877, (and the colder part of the year at that.) This provides a comprehensive picture across both City and County, enabling sophisticated analysis of the total of 1,260 persons. The four criteria used here are: birth place, occupation, religion and offence. The patterns identified enable tentative comparisons to be made with Walton Jail in Liverpool (1865), and Barlinnie Prison Glasgow (1882-83). Caution is necessary as Leicester does not share the same numerical significance as the other two in terms of Irish migration. Other useful sources include newspaper files, local and national government records and census data. The latter is limited because of its decennial nature; newspaper files do not to present all cases, and are frequently partial; local authority reports rarely mention the Irish directly. However, sampling linked with surname analysis gives some useful pointers.

The question of defining crime is problematic. The State, the legislators, administrators, powerful social interests and public attitudes all were determinants of official crime statistics, of news reports and of perceived "crime waves."⁴ Evidence is in effect compiled from middle and upper class sources. The Leicester media continuously contributed to the stereotypes of the "low" Irish, emphasising their inherent criminality; (see main Introduction).

The perceived lawlessness of the Irish had various origins. Both Protestant pressure groups and anti-Catholic commentators attempted to influence public opinion in Leicester in relation to the Irish and Catholics. Irish lawlessness in Leicester was in part a product of external pressures from policing policy and practice, religious and ethnic prejudice, and unequal opportunities. The long-term association with petty crime was damaging internally as well as externally.

Leicester requires analysis tailored to the details and trends of local historical developments. Whilst the Irish share the problems of wider national and local economic variations, their contribution to crime must be measured against their place in the socio-

³SINDALL, R. (1990), *Street Violence in the 19th Century: Media Panic or Real Danger?* see Ch.2 (pp.16-28).

⁴SINDALL (1990) p5.

economic structure of the host community. They were part of the *population at risk* - especially the working-class community to which most of them continued to belong throughout the period, as both census evidence and contemporary observation confirm.

The question of what types of crime were the Irish most associated with is important. The Leicester Irish conform to the general national picture, where most Irish-related crime was in the petty and less-serious categories, and involved alcohol abuse, assault, theft and vagrancy. Despite the same factors affecting the behaviour of the host community, Swift (1989) notes that the Irish seem to have endured three times the prosecution rate and five times the imprisonment rate of notional national averages. The Leicester data reflects these patterns.

With regard to the stereotyped "Irish rows" and riots, more definition is needed, and on three aspects: do they result from internal factionalism, external pressures, or a mixture of both; in the case of riots, are they classifiable into the two typologies as described by Phillips (1974); and, in the case of Leicester, does either type predominate?

Second generation Irish youths enter the Leicester picture in two respects: as children of families in residence, and as juveniles from surrounding Roman Catholic dioceses sentenced to terms in the Catholic boys' reformatory at Mount St Bernard's Abbey. Youth offenders can be suspect: "It was often advantageous to lie about one's age and identity. A juvenile offender may have given an older age in order to be sent to prison for a short period of time rather than to a reformatory for at least two years."⁵

These issues will be examined in the broad contexts of: statistical representation of the Irish; the evidence regarding women; non-Catholic as well as Catholic Irish; the second generation; policing and the quality of justice; explanations and causes of Irish crime; the influence of contemporary negative stereotypes; and finally, the conclusions that can be drawn from local and national debates about the Irish contribution. The evidence is examined in relation to vagrancy and lodging houses; crime patterns in religious, gender and generational terms; the issue of alcohol; media portrayals, and the types of riot situations which occurred.

⁵SINDALL (1990) p.19

(b) The new Police: the Irish experience reflected

The Leicester Borough Police was created in 1836.⁶ Mr Frederick Goodyer was recommended for the post of Chief Constable by Col. Charles Rowan, commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police.⁷ This Rowan had himself been recommended to Sir Robert Peel by senior British army generals in Ireland, and was the son of a distressed Ulster landowner cum clergyman of Scottish descent from County Antrim.⁸ At this early, seminal stage in his long police career, therefore, Goodyer was being supported by a Protestant Irishman unlikely to feel any sympathy for the Catholic Irish. Goodyer from 1831 had been serving in London as Inspector of 'A' Division Metropolitan Police. The London force was influenced in both policy and personnel by earlier experiments with the Irish Constabulary. Some Irish in-migrants would have brought with them critical recollections of the policing practices, political attitudes and militaristic methods of the Irish Constabularies. Some Irish migrants were therefore pre-conditioned into attitudes of hostility towards Victorian policing before even setting foot in England.⁹ Leicester was to the fore in modernising its police service, being the sixth area nationally to take advantage of the enabling legislation of 1835. In August 1836, Goodyer set about monitoring crime in the localities. Detailed beats and patrol areas were allocated, marking the systematic policing of the working-class area of the town generally, and the main streets of Irish settlement in particular.¹⁰ Of 23 beats laid down, one quarter were concentrated in a relatively small area (see Map 1). These patrol areas can be related to the Irish-born and their families residing in core settlement locations.

Using 1841 Census data, the beat patrols listed in *Table 1* cover a total of 353 out of the 621 persons in the Irish community, or 56.4 per cent; more than half of the Leicester Irish were concentrated in 25 per cent of the beats. This reflects concentrations of the Irish

⁶PATTERSON, A.T. (1954) *Radical Leicester - A History of Leicester 1780-1850* p.223

⁷PALMERS, S. (1988) *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780-1850*, p.294

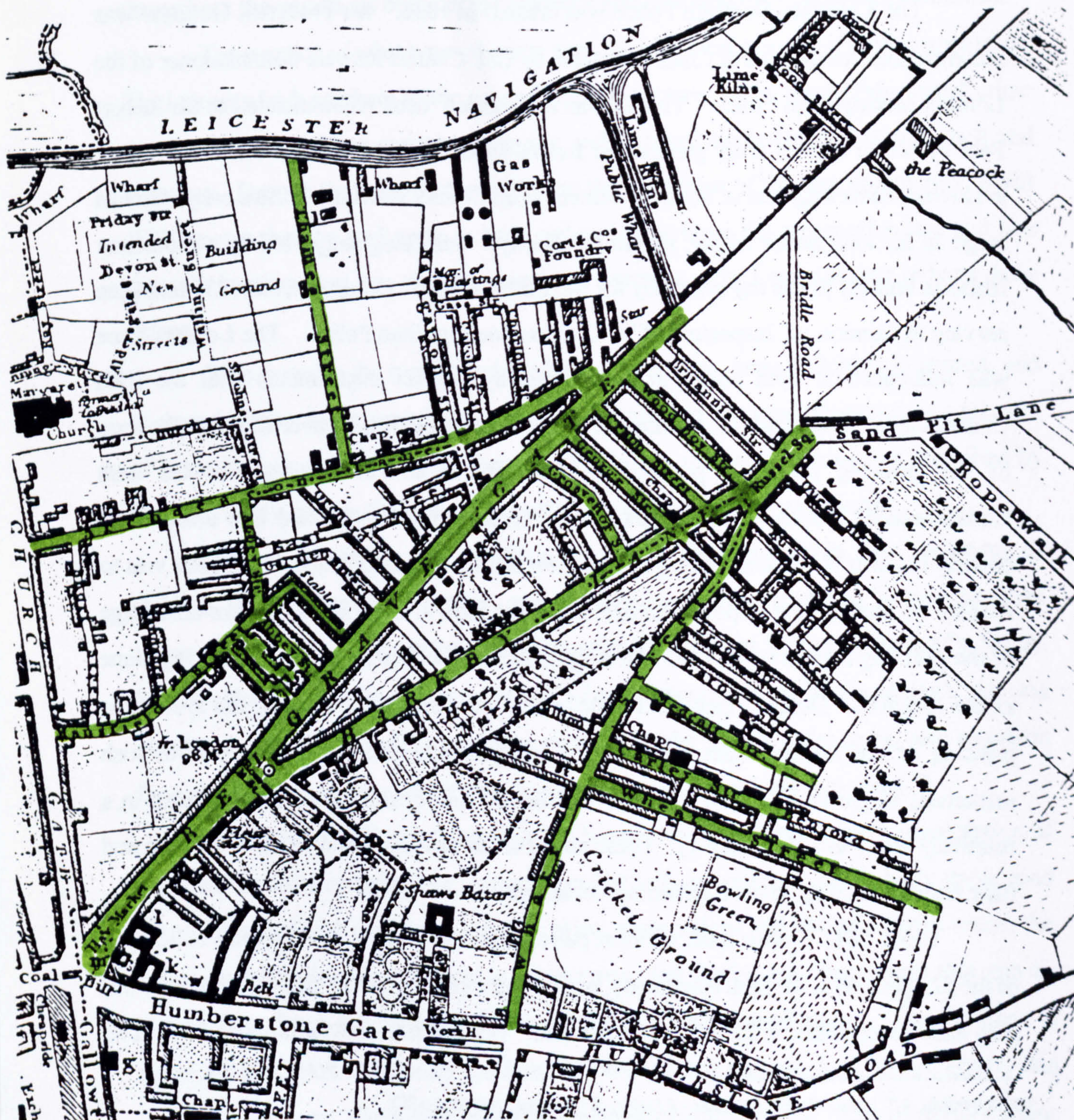
⁸PALMERS, S. (1988) p.295. HICKMAN, M. in LEWIS, G (1998) notes that many police were ex-soldiers with Irish service who therefore had preconceptions about the Irish and crimes, p.152.

⁹ELLIOTT, B. (1989) *Leicestershire Constabulary 1839-1989*; p.6. Elliott has written extensively on Catholic affairs in Leicester. See GRIFFIN, B. 'Such Varmint': The Dublin Police and the Public, 1838-1913, in *Irish Studies Review*, No. 13, 1995/6, pp. 21-25.

¹⁰STANLEY, S.R., A Centenary Tribute to Frederick Goodyer, Leicester's First Chief Constable, 1836-76; in *TLHAS*. Vol., LI 1975-76 p.16; and LRCO Watch Committee Min. CM 42/1, Jan. 1836 - Dec 1839. See also STANLEY, C.R., The Birth and Early History of Leics. Constabulary in *The Leicestershire Historian*, Vol. 2, No. 2 1971/72.

POLICE BEAT PATROLS IN THE IRISH AREAS OF LEICESTER IN 1836

(see also Table 1, which details routes of each beat and numbers of Irish residents per street.)



KEY: ■ Delineation of beat patrol areas covering core Irish Streets

NOTE: This map depicts Leicester in 1828; this N.E. area was substantially the same in 1857 (see Spencer's Map) but with in-filling up to the line of the "Navigation" (Canal).

in streets of recent growth, with a developing reputation for poverty and poor housing. Corporation records for 1836-9 offer some evidence of the monitoring by the new regime of Leicester's Irish community:

"27th August, 1839. The Inspector reports that a disturbance took place last Saturday between the English and the Irish and that windows in Abbey Street and Green Street were broken to the amount of 22 shillings."¹¹

The Watch Committee ordered "that the damage be made good and the amount charged by Mr. Goodyer in his next bill for sundries." Presumably responsibility for the damage did not lay with the Irish, as their streets were under attack.

An earlier similar case, in 1836, is more informative as regards perpetrators, victims and motive. What amounted to a local anti-Irish riot erupted around James Skerry¹² "a 'dacent' Irishman" - and his wife. On Saturday night, between 12 and 1 o'clock, Skerry "sat up late - keeping his wife company, while she was 'doing up' some mob caps for the neighbours."

NUMBERS OF IRISH-BORN AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM 1841 CENSUS RE- BEAT AREAS OF NEW BOROUGH CONSTABULARY - 1836		
TABLE 1		
BEAT NO.	STREETS PATROLLED (No. in brackets = No. of Irish-born and their immediate families)	NO. OF IRISH PER BEAT
No.8	1st part of Wharf St; Humberstone Gate (10); Russell Sq (10); § Bedford St (80)	100
No. 9	2nd part of Wharf St; Wheat St (11); Carley Street (10); Metcalf St (8)	29
No.10	3rd part of Wharf St (20*); Denman St (4); Belgrave Gate (24)	48
No.11	1st part of Belgrave Gt; Grosvenor St (5); George St (2) Crab St (5); Woodboy St (4); Foundry Square (2)	7 11
No.12	2nd part of Belgrave Gt; Green St (25); Abbey St (81); Mansfield St (12); Goddards Place (11)	129
No.14	Archdeacon Lane (15); Margaret St (7); Thames St (7)	29
Notes: § Around this time Barkby Lane was renamed Bedford Street * The 20 cover all 3 parts of Wharf St beat		353

¹¹LCRO, CM 42/1, Watch Committee Mins, Jan. 1836 - Dec. 1839.

¹²All quotes from LC report of 13.2.1836. The speech marks around the adjective are the local crime reporter's.

James, a labourer, had his wife, a lodger and no family.¹³ In Court, James stated "that he kept an orderly house, and had not the least idea" why the attack occurred. Although four persons had been arrested, only Glover, a "young countryman," was tried. In the end, the matter was settled by and between the complainant and the defendant: Mr Skerry accepted £4.00 in settlement: £2.00 for the damage and £2.00 compensation for injuries. The report unfortunately leaves some questions in the air: did Glover the "countryman" resent competition from Irish labour, or the Irish as strangers? As Skerry initiated the eventual settlement, the presumption must be that justice was done. James Skerry of 23 Green Street is cited in the Reports of the local Office of Health on 9th June 1854 for keeping swine "injurious to the health of the neighbourhood." Perhaps this practice annoyed his neighbours.¹⁴

The 1839 Watch Committee report hints that disturbances "between the English and the Irish" were to be expected. The evidence cited elsewhere in respect of Leicester's strong Protestant tradition, and its record of media hostility to both Catholics and Irish, would explain why the Irish *per se* were expected to cause trouble. Given the developing concentration of Irish in Leicester, the two incidents suggest that organised policing was not just to control Irish disorder, but possible anti-Irish disturbances as well.

The need to police the Irish strictly was evinced in the local press, and especially so in Conservative outlets. Local papers regularly carried syndicated copy; Irish cases frequently featured. Davis (1991) has remarked that "the practice of reprinting news from other provincial newspapers did link the Irish with violence." Leicester would appear to provide a clear example of this practice.¹⁵

There is a contrast in the primary and secondary source material regarding the importance of the Irish in Leicester at the time of the foundation of the Borough Constabulary. A respected local historian, Temple Patterson, quoted the *Leicester Journal* of 22 January 1836 as calling the new police "a threat to the liberty of the subject":

¹³ACD, 1841, p.16

¹⁴A similar case in St Helens, in 1874, concerned five 20 year old males in a vicious and motiveless assault on a 74 year old Irishman and his wife involving the use of quick-lime to blind the couple; cited in SINDALL (1990), p.62, from *The Times* of 14 Dec. 1874. It would be interesting to know the extent and frequency of such attacks on Irish persons in that period and whether or not patterns of harassment are evident. LCRO 200 72-55, Health Committee Minutes, 1854.

¹⁵DAVIS, G, (1991), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1914*, p.71.

For different reasons, a similar view prevailed among the turbulent and criminal elements of the population; and the lot of the policeman whose beat lay among the Irish of Abbey Street or the unexplored recesses of Wharf Street was usually not a happy one. Scuffles were frequent and injury not uncommon.¹⁶

The original source in fact reads:

Considerable pains have been taken with the new inspector to initiate him in the mysteries of Belgrave Gate and the unexplored recesses of Wharf Street, which, we have no doubt he will readily avail himself of.¹⁷

As there is no mention of the Irish, (even though Belgrave Gate was already developing as a core area of Irish settlement), Patterson's remark may be an example of street folklore being passed down. Finnegan's (1982) study notes the tendency of Irish recidivism to be buoyant in the collective local "folk memory" in relation to certain streets and locations. A reputation for violence, once gained, was not easily lost. Mary Booth, a relative of the pioneer social scientist, wrote to Beatrice Webb about the declining iron and coal community near Whitwick c.1900: "We have a fearfully poverty-stricken population, left behind in the race ... a violent Irish element, disorderly."¹⁸

(c) The policing of the Irish and their Lodging Houses

The City Constabulary proved so successful that in 1839 Leicestershire established its own stipendiary force. Within a few years, police stations had been built in Loughborough and Hinckley, both of which had sizeable Irish proportions to their populations.¹⁹ Large numbers of these Irish, particularly around Whitwick and later at Coalville, were attracted to jobs in coal mines and ironworks; ongoing problems of law and order were to be associated with such communities throughout the period.

In the City, working-class St Margarets, by far the largest parish, contained most of

¹⁶PATTERSON, (1954), p.223. Even the standard RC history of 1946 repeats this line: the Dominicans up to 1895 were credited with "having a wonderful effect on the people living in the neighbourhood, they being able to penetrate into the dark courts and alleys where no policeman dare show himself; "KIMBERLIN,(1946), p.23.

¹⁷LC 28 Dec. 1839

¹⁸JACKSON, J A (1963), p.87

¹⁹ELLIOTT, B (1989), p.7

the Irish population.²⁰ (See Settlement). Certain key indicators were applied in the mid - Victorian period to the urban workers and poor. They were regarded by most of the "thinking" and ruling section of society as a great potential danger - a sort of human volcano - of crime, immorality and disorder, that might at any moment burst forth to disrupt the internal domestic tranquillity of mid-Victorian Britain.²¹ The Irish were frequently perceived as the core of this threat, in both internal and external terms. The continued need to police the Irish and proletarian areas of Leicester can be traced further in various local primary sources.

There was a perhaps understandable reluctance on the police's part to patrol certain areas of the town, areas that in many instances included Irish families:

The lot of these very early policemen must have been hard, especially amongst the Irish inhabitants in Abbey Street or in the unexplored areas of Wharf Street.²² Assaults upon them were so commonplace that in the period from the formation of the Force in February 1836 to the end of that year, records show that 116 charges were preferred of assaulting the police and 15 of rescuing or attempting to rescue persons being taken or, in fact, taken into custody.²³

These same figures are also quoted by Temple Patterson (1956) and by Elliott (1989). This raises the interesting question of frequency and type of riot situations in Leicester and, in particular, Irish-related riots. (See (i) below)

The *Watch Committee Minutes* for the late 1860's indicate that two of the most heavily populated Irish streets in the town were still drawing attention to themselves. On 12 February 1867 is recorded: "Abbey Street : Complaint as to noisy games and obscene language";²⁴ this may relate to English-Irish hostility between children and adolescents, as Barclay described.²⁵ The following year, the Minutes reveal that: "Complaint is made as to the insufficiency of the Police in the Belgrave Gate beat (from Haymarket to Navigation Street)."²⁶

²⁰See Chapter on Settlement

²¹DAVIS, G (1991), Ch.2, pp 51-82

²²An echo of the quote queried above; see footnote 10

²³STANLEY, C.R (1975-6); p16

²⁴LCRO, CM 42/9, p.241

²⁵See BARCLAY (1934), p.8.

²⁶LCRO, CM 42/9, p.315

The continued need for policing certain areas is clear from the notes of Mr. Joseph Howe, a Leicester policeman from 1872. New uniforms were introduced: "The helmets were strongly made with a 'pistol' top, as was indeed necessary, for the Belgrave Gate-Wharf Street area contained a very rough element, and in October 1873 Mr. Howe was brutally assaulted in Russell Square, when attempting to disperse a crowd."²⁷ The streets mentioned are in the core Irish area.

This same source provides useful data about the foundation of new police stations - at Sanvey Gate in 1878 and at Woodboy Street in 1880. Both were areas of working class housing; and both, especially the latter,²⁸ contained significant Irish elements. Barclay lived in and around Woodboy Street throughout his childhood. He makes clear the attitude of a male working class teenager to authority: "Schoolmasters, priests, police, parents are all in a conspiracy to withhold us from the joys of life ... police are molesting trespassers."²⁹

In 1845, local J.Ps had recommended that police sub-stations be set up around Belgrave Gate because of its reputation as a disorderly district. This was not carried through due to financial restraints, even though the suggestion was made twice subsequently (in 1874 and again in 1877).³⁰ That it was difficult for police to operate there is indicated by a note (4 January 1859) recording that "The Superintendent reports the presentation of 10 guineas to PC Langham by the inhabitants of Belgrave Gate for his regular satisfactory performance."³¹ The constable earned his bonus by operating efficiently in a tough area.

Some light is shed on the policing level in the same Irish area in the mid-1870's in the *Duty Diary* of Sergeant Preston.³² On Wednesday, 9th December 1874, Thomas Conner of 34 Abbey Street had had his shirt stolen; it had been sold to a lady in nearby Bedford Street for 4d. - in a wet state! Thomas's father, an Irish labourer and widower, and Thomas himself aged 14 had lived in 1871 at Lower Green Street;³³ for the poor, a shirt was an expensive item to replace. Sgt. Preston made enquiries via pawnbrokers and second-hand

²⁷LCRO, MISC; Police, 189

²⁸BARCLAY, (1934); p.12 and p.4

²⁹BARCLAY, (1934) p.16; alienated youth is nothing new.

³⁰LCRO; MISC 189, Police; 1st July 1845; Swift notes that in Wolverhampton in 1854, the police sited a new station in Stafford Street in order "to maintain an unceasing vigil over the Irish Community"; see SWIFT, R. 'Another Stafford Street Row'; Law, Order and the Irish Presence in Wolverhampton, in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S., (1985), p.186

³¹LCRO, MISC, 189, Police

³²LCRO Box 19, D54/4

³³ACD, 1871 (Reel 77), p.18

clothes dealers, a group identified by Mayhew as being on the fringe of organised crime.³⁴

On Tuesday, 9 June 1874, the *Duty Diary* reads: "Duty 6-10 p.m., with Inspector Wilkinson. Re: 2 books left at O'Leary's Public House, Belgrave Gate, property of Mr Marshall, Book Seller." O'Leary, almost certainly an Irishman, had told Mr Marshall that he (O'Leary) had lent money on the books to a Frank Richards, - but O'Leary subsequently denied this to the police.³⁵

The Metropolitan Police set the precedent for the close and regular monitoring of working-class areas. A superintendent's order of 1862 stated "Public houses to be visited by Police in plain clothes ... between the hours of 11 at night and 2 a.m.;" persons "likely to commit street robberies ... are to be kept under observation;" their movements were to be logged in detail.³⁶ The *Duty Diary* is heavily punctuated with regular and repeated visits to Lodging Houses and Public Houses - presumably in a similar trawling, patrolling or even harassing capacity. There were one or two visits per week to establishments "frequented by strangers". This exhibits the continuing concern, two decades after Dare's oft-repeated condemnations of the inhabitants of "the ready-furnished pest-hole, or the common lodging house."³⁷ There is ample evidence of Irish involvement with these in Leicester, both as customers and managers (see Chapter on settlement and housing).

In 1845, one of Leicester's Irish lodging house keepers, "Blind Jack" or John Corbett, was involved in a drink-related incident with another Irishman, Bill Jennings. Both used violence; despite his apparent disability, Jack came off best.³⁸ Corbett in 1841 was a labourer; he presumably saved a little, for by 1851 he was married, held the job of manager/keeper, had one "servant" and three young agricultural labourers as lodgers - all Irish, except his wife.³⁹ The Corbett's were clearly well settled; both appear in Abbey Street as lodging house keepers in 1861; by 1871 only his wife Ann remained.

The 1845 incident as presented portrayed multiple stereotypes of the Irish. Jennings'

³⁴MAYHEW (1862)(Quennell 1960): *London's Underworld*, Vol. IV., pp.305 and 307.

³⁵LCRO, 19D, 59/3

³⁶Cited SINDALL (1990) p.110; Metropolitan Police orders, 16 July 1862, Pro.M/POL/7/14; Swift points to close police monitoring of lodging houses frequented by the Irish in Wolverhampton, particularly following the Lodging Houses Act of 1851; see SWIFT in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S (1985), p.186

³⁷RLDMS, 1854, p.10

³⁸L C 23 August 1845

³⁹ACD 1841/51/61/71.

was described thus:

"The complainant (whose hat was as battered, coat as seedy, and walking-stick as odd-shaped as ever had any Milesian) presented a most pitiable and shocking appearance ... nearly his whole right cheek was a mass of contusion and clotted blood - he seemed to think his wounds were themselves honourable marks of distinction; for he had exhibited them very graciously to everybody in court long before the business commenced ..."⁴⁰

The keeper called a witness, identified in the news report as "a rare specimen of the Irish tramp." The article opened up the question of sexual morality: "In the room where Jennings was to have slept one woman was lying by him, and one or two on the floor and near the door; besides the usual complement of men!" The piece combined violence, humour and a whiff of prurience.

Similar hints at Irish immorality appear elsewhere at this time. Handley quoted from the Police's reply to the Poor Law Enquiry of 1843. In the section dealing with "Queries regarding Lodging Houses for the Poor ... II Lower Class," was posed the question: "Are Lodgers of all ages and of both sexes promiscuously assembled together in one room without respect to character?" It listed the answer as a blunt "Yes"⁴¹. The reporting of the local murder case involving Irishman Edward Lally, in 1857, permitted itself a gratuitous hint of incest.⁴²

There was clearly the potential, even if only partly exploited, for sexual innuendo at the expense of the Irish - an innuendo even more damaging if the subject happened to be Catholic as well as Irish. As will be seen in relation to reporting on other Irish offenders - and on orders of nuns - this latter element seems to have been an early and well-tried formula which predated the more well-known sensationalism of the press in the later nineteenth century.

⁴⁰LC 23 August 1845. The reference to Milesians is subtly racist, for they invaded Ireland, not from Europe, but from Scythia, via Egypt and Spain; see COLUM, P. (1954). *A Treasury of Irish Folklore*, p.43-4. The Scythians were rather ruthless "barbarians" from the eastern Europe/Asia frontier area.

⁴¹HANDLEY, J. (1943), 1798-1845, p.245

⁴²See section (V)(a) of this chapter, and footnote 75 re LC report of 7.2.1857.

(d) The Irish and the vagrancy problem

The alarmist and sensationalised crime reports carried in the Leicester press sometimes reflected the series of *Annual Reports of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society, (1846-77)*, compiled and edited by the Unitarian Joseph Dare.

The quotation from his 1854 Report, (see title page) establishes his essentially negative viewpoint of the Irish. Dare's commentaries analysed local and national government reports on social problems. His concerns about the Irish were uniformly negative, critical and uncaring. The 1836 *Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain* divided Irish workers in Britain into three main categories: seasonal labourers; drovers; and beggars and vagrants. Dare was pre-occupied with the latter category, especially the Irish sector within it.⁴³

The 1836 *Report* saw beggars and vagrants as nomadic migrants between Britain and Ireland who hawked for a living and sheltered for the winter in the poorest quarters of Britain's cities. In Dare's mind, and that of his many readers, beggary and vagrancy were associated less with poverty than with criminality. In 1854, he pronounced:

"I have no doubt that much of the undetected crime is committed by the wandering inmates of the common lodging houses there are about 50,000 vagrants passing every year through this county, the majority of whom are obtaining their subsistence by very questionable means."

Dare continued: "The greater number of those who frequent the common lodging houses obtain their subsistence by preying on the public. Scarcely one of them pursues any honest means of living"⁴⁴

The theme of the symbiotic relationship between the criminal classes and their residential accommodation was a major long-term concern. In 1854 Dare referred to poor relief applicants from the common lodging house and the ready furnished room:

"... they pass from place to place, taking up their temporary abode ... an important moral and sanitary improvement might be effected if all these sort of "lodgings for travellers" could be consolidated in one public building, and

⁴³DARE, J; *RLDMS* (1855) p.10. In fact, Leicester witnessed Irish of all three groups.

⁴⁴DARE, J, *RLDMS* (1854) p.10

placed under regular inspection ... the two worst cases were amongst the Irish."⁴⁵

One case involved disreputable Irish parents who used their children for dishonest begging at the local race course on the sabbath; the other involved an Irish widower who had ill-treated his wife, and not cared for his children.⁴⁶ (See title page).

Dare's prejudiced comments on whether and how the Irish should be treated clearly indicate the contemporary process of problematizing the migrants. Dare's stature as a positive force for change, argued for persuasively in a recent local appreciation, is challenged by his attitude to the Irish. (See Introduction, and discussion on poverty)..

The *Chronicle* remarked:

"Every home occupied by a poor family ought to be lime-washed, particularly in such places as Abbey Street and its vicinity, where vagrants from all parts of the Kingdom nightly take up their abodes, and are huddled together, sometimes half a dozen or perhaps more in one apartment, a circumstance of itself sufficient to generate infectious disease."⁴⁷

The key reference here is to vagrants from all over the Kingdom. By 1855, Dare could quote Supt. Goodyer on the dimensions of the problem: "There are in Leicester 38 common lodging houses registered; these are registered to accommodate: nightly 587 persons; weekly 4,109 persons; yearly 213,688 persons. The above includes the families of the keepers of the lodging houses."⁴⁸ Census data throws some light on the Irish contribution to this sector of the population; the Irish component is relatively small, as Leicester was rapidly absorbing rural families from its own and the surrounding counties. (See chapter on Settlement and Housing).

Contemporaries associated vagrancy, lodging houses and crime with the poor generally, and the Irish especially, as a moral contagion. The attitude locally to vagrancy evolved gradually. Public flogging ceased c.1818; local magistrates now made a systematic attempt to cope by setting up a Vagrant Office. Private relief was discouraged; instead,

⁴⁵Report on the Irish Poor, (1836) p.469.

⁴⁶DARE, RLDMS (1854) p.10-11.

⁴⁷LC 12 Nov. 1831. The recent work cited is HAYNES, B. (1991), *Working Class Life in Victorian Leicester, the Joseph Dare Reports*.

⁴⁸DARE, RLDMS 1855, p.10

beggars were to be given tickets and referred to this office. The Poor rates financed the new system. Impostors would be charged under the Vagrants Acts; genuine cases would be relieved; and this system pertained up until the Poor Law was amended in 1834. "It failed, however, to justify the expectation of some of its promoters that it would greatly reduce the number of disease-ridden lodging houses, mostly in Abbey Street and its vicinity,"⁴⁹ the very core of Irish settlement in the 1840's and 1850's.

News references to vagrants give some idea of the human face behind the often grim statistics. In 1833 the *Chronicle*, quoting the *Glasgow Argus* (reinforcing the point about syndicated news of Irish offenders), reported an Irish vagrant cum confidence trickster; under his rags he had over a week's supply of food collected, as well as a set of serviceable clothes; he was returned "to his own dear native land."⁵⁰ The latter phrase was the Leicester reporter's.

A similar item entitled *A Vagrant - James Fitzgerald, a tramp, from Glasgow* dealt with an incident in 1854 in Birstall, two miles from Leicester. Fitzgerald was begging in the village and on an impulse entered a house "wrenching off all the brass knobs, handles and ornaments he could find." He was caught by a servant, and received three months hard labour as a rogue and vagabond. As the offence occurred on 23rd December, Fitzgerald was perhaps desperate for something to exchange for ready cash in order to get lodgings for Christmas.⁵¹

The items stolen, metal for scrap, supports patterns Mayhew described in the London underworld, where there was a dubious entrepreneurial scene in which second-hand dealing co-existed with the fencing of stolen goods of any kind. One type of dealer, operating in what were termed "Marine-Store" shops, dealt in "old Copper, Brass, Pewter, Lead, Iron, Zinc, Steel, etc." as well as rags, bones and other items for resale or recycling.⁵² In 1851, Catherine Dempsey, an unmarried Irish lady aged 80, a marine-store dealer, was an inmate of the Borough Jail.⁵³ Dealers in metal had a ready market in sales to "iron founders,

⁴⁹PATTERSON, A.T., (1954) p.120-1; LC 12 Nov 1831.

⁵⁰LC 28 Sept. 1833

⁵¹LC 23 Dec. 1854; Fr. V. McNabb, Dominican chaplain at Leicester Prison 1908-14, noted: "Another prisoner, constantly in and out of gaol, used to break a window when he wanted to get inside out of the cold;" see VALENTINE, F. (1955), *Father Vincent McNabb*, the prisoner quoted preferred the prison, where he "enjoyed" his own room, to the alternative of the Workhouse, p.229. FINNEGAN (1982) found similar examples re - Irish in York, p.146

⁵²MAYHEW (1851) p.277 *Mayhew's London* (Quennell Edtn. 1969), p.277.

⁵³1851 ACD, p.40.

coppersmiths, brass-founders and plumbers. There were, in fact a number of Leicester Irish who operated as marine-store dealers from the 1840s to the 1880's; (see Occupations). Mayhew remarked that "the *rag and bottle* and the *marine-store shops* are in many instances but different names for the same description of business," - with one difference: the former rather than the latter are concerned with "the purchase of dripping, as well as of every kind of refuse in the way of fat or grease."

At Hinckley Petty sessions in 1867, again in late December, a Patrick Killigan was charged with the theft of 5lbs of grease; in value, 1s.3d. He soon sold it on to a tallow-chandler for 10d. The candle-maker ruined Killigan's alibi, who claimed he was after only rags and bones. The P.C. "knew the prisoner; he had resided in a lodging house in the town kept by James Crosby." Crosby, an Irishman, was operating in 1861 and '71; this episode neatly ties offence, vagrant and lodging house together.⁵⁴ Killigan received 14 days hard labour. There is a clear hint here of the same sort of heavy policing of lodging-houses that was carried out in Leicester.

Dare's 1855 strictures against vagrants, especially the Irish, were reflected in a case presented before Leicester Petty Sessions in June 1866:

Monday - Before the Mayor. Joseph Johnston, a wretched looking creature, who stated that he came from the county of Cork, was charged by P.C. Robinson with being a vagrant. He was discharged on promising to leave the town."⁵⁵

Over the 50 year period there can be detected contrasting forms of official reaction to the issue of vagrancy, ranging from Fitzgerald's sentence of hard labour in 1854 to Johnston's discharge in 1866 on promising to leave the town. It would appear that if vagrancy was aggravated by serious theft, the sentence imposed would be correspondingly severe. The Town Clerk's reports⁵⁶ for 1844-48 offer this picture:

⁵⁴LC 28 Dec. 1867; ACD 1861/71.

⁵⁵LJ of 8 June 1866

⁵⁶STONE, S., (1848) *Statistics of Crime in the Borough of Leicester, 1844-8* (L352, LCRO).

TABLE 2	VAGRANT ACT - BEGGARS: NO. OF PERSONS CHARGED				
Period 1844-48	1845	1846	1847	1848	TOTAL IN 4 YEARS
Vagrancy Offences	71	76	34	111	292
Total of all Offences	1638	1533	1713	1825	6709
Vagrancy as a % age	4.3	4.9	1.9	6.0	4.3

There is a surge in 1848 - clearly coinciding with the Famine in Ireland as Britain met the "knock-on" effect. In this period, when it might have been reasonably expected that sympathy would be extended to Irish vagrants, the local media exhibited the tendency to problematize the Irish, reporting local concern and efforts to repatriate,⁵⁷ whilst simultaneously berating the Irish as the authors of their own ill-fortune. The *Chronicle* in November 1847 carried three lengthy reports about "further outrages" and an "atrocious murder" in counties Limerick, Tipperary and Fermanagh (all three incidents had clear political-economic motivation, involving attacks on landlords), whilst at the same time carrying a piece entitled 'Irish Mendicants' taken from the *Morning Advertiser* of London:

... many of the Irish mendicants who are now sent over daily by ship-load, consist of persons who were formerly passed back to their own country, and that many others, immediately on landing, betake themselves to robbery by force.

In one edition, the *Chronicle* succeeded in embracing Irish terrorism, mendicancy and migrant criminality. Vagrants in general would find it difficult to get fair treatment in either the press or in prison, and in the politics of the period the Irish are successfully portrayed as both a social as well as a political threat.

Whilst the Irish were over-represented as vagrants, the Town Clerk's reports cited above do not specifically mention them or single them out for any category of crime, which seems surprising. A sample from the *Register of Convictions for Idle and Disorderly persons, and Rogues and Vagabonds*, comprising summary jurisdiction data,⁵⁸ gives a statistical frequency for Irish names ranging from 12.6 per cent to 23.5 per cent under any

⁵⁷LC 23 January and 5 February 1847

⁵⁸LCRO QS 85/2/1 2 p.590 and QS 85/2

one letter listed.⁵⁹ The true figure must be nearer the 12.6 per cent, and even this figure is much larger than the proportion of Irish in Leicestershire at any time in the 1841-91 period. According to Stone's paper, the city vagrancy figures for 1848 were 3.8 per cent of all crimes charged; if this average is accepted, it serves to suggest that the Irish were over-represented to say the least.⁶⁰

For the detailed analysis of all crimes - including vagrancy - the best complete set of records are those for the City and County Jails for the period October 1876 - April 1877. In respect of vagrancy, 124 of the 1,260 listed in these were Irish; of these 124 Irish - which includes both first and second generation, 24 were listed either as being tramps, or of no fixed abode, which is approximately 20 per cent of all Irish offenders. Of these rootless 24, only 5 were arrested for begging, almost all the others being jailed for drunkenness.⁶¹ By the late 1880's, of a sample of 18 traceable Irish charged with offences, 2 were for vagrancy (i.e. 11 per cent) which still suggests evidence of over-representation in this category.⁶²

(e) Analysing the patterns of crime:

(i) Crimes dealt with under both summary jurisdiction and Quarter Sessions procedures

Writing of Leicester in 1872, Heinrick analysed the criminal record of the Irish in the town; (see title page). He stressed the central problem of drunkenness, and the generally petty nature of most Irish crime.⁶³ Heinrick's analysis is fairly objective, not being unduly coloured by his political and social sympathies. Most modern commentators agree that Irish crime was in general poverty driven and directed more against property than persons (Swift, 1989). The Leicester evidence bears this out.

In the Town Clerk's crime analysis for 1844-48 there is no direct mention of the Irish, which suggests that they were not perceived as a major problem by this corporation

⁵⁹LCRO, QS, 85/2/1, p.590 and QS 85/2. The samples were taken from names starting with "O" and "Mac/Mc" in order to obtain sufficient Irish names: 23.5% of the 'O' listings for 1842-1911 were Irish; 12.6% of "Mc/Mac" listings for 1842-80 were Irish. It is probable however, that the picture is slanted because of the preponderance of Irish names prefixed by O, Mc/Mac, and because several generations must be on the files

⁶⁰STONE (1848), LCRO, L352

⁶¹LCRO Prison, DE3370, DE3492/1

⁶²LCRO, 31 D.71/66 QS papers Michaelmas 1889 and Easter 1886

⁶³HEINRICK, H (1872) *A Survey of the Irish in Britain*, pp. 39-40

corporation officer, in either summary proceedings, or in the more serious cases of felonies and misdemeanours. Drunkenness accounted for 23 per cent of crimes, assault for 21 per cent and larceny for 13 per cent "The average annual charges appear to have been 3.6 per cent of the population";⁶⁴ (i.e.. of a total population of around 54,000, with the 1851 figure for the Irish-born being 877 (1.4 per cent) and the figure for the wider Irish population being 1,320 in 1851.⁶⁵) If Stone's 3.6 per cent average is accepted, then the following tabulations suggest that the Irish, though over-represented, were not at this time drastically more "criminal" than the host population.

The *Court Order Book* for 1847-59 details offences brought before the Quarter Sessions of the Borough of Leicester; it is therefore a record *not* of summary jurisdiction, but of more serious crime (i.e. beyond the level of competence of the JPs). An analysis by name, covering the whole of the alphabet, gives a reading of 37 Irish names out of a total of 836; this represents 4.4 per cent of the total listed. A crude measure is to contrast this with the figures obtained from the numbers of Irish-born in Jail in the City at each census. *Table 3*, which indicates these numbers of Irish-born prisoners at census points between 1841 and 1891 is in broad agreement with the figure from the Court Order Book cited, giving 4 per cent for both 1841 and 1851, and 6 per cent for 1861.

A sample of 19 (approximately half) of the 37 with Irish names in the 1847-59 Q.S records (see *Table 4*) shows clearly that every offence was either theft or theft-related; of these, only 4 involved large amounts of goods or cash; almost all are thefts of food or clothes, thefts of necessities that were unlikely to realise much if sold on for cash. The heaviest sentences clearly went to that minority whose offences involved the greatest degree of theft, and who in some cases had a previous record of wrongdoing. Interestingly, 7 of the 19 offences were by women.⁶⁶ (See section g).

A local editorial on crime in early 1856 listed 60 offences, 3 involving the Irish. Their offences comprised 5 per cent of the total - a figure again close to those above from the Census data and the Borough Quarter Sessions records. In one case Denis Galigher

⁶⁴STONES, S, (1848), (L352), LCRO, p17, 18.

⁶⁵ACD, 1841-91.

⁶⁶LCRO, 31 D.71/1; FINNEGAN (1982), re-York, noted that as well as disorderly behaviour "The other offence most frequently committed by the immigrants, theft, was usually of a trivial kind, often, even in the later part of the period, reflecting the continued poverty of the newly arrived amongst them," p.152. See KENEALLY, T, (1998), *The Great Shame*, p.114, re similar transportation offence patterns.

TABLE 3

IRISH-BORN PRISONERS IN LEICESTER'S JAILS AT CENSUSES OF 1841 TO 1891										
YEAR	TOTAL NO OF PRISONERS	NO OF IRISH PRISONERS	IRISH AS A % OF THE CITY'S POPULATION	IRISH-BORN AS A % OF PRISONERS	GENDER		COUNTY OF BIRTH OF IRISH-BORN PRISONERS	OCCUPATIONS OF IRISH - BORN PRISONERS	TOTAL OF ALL IRISH-BORN	WIDER IRISH COMMUNITY
					M	F				
*1841	248	10	1.0	4	7	2	No details in Census	Labourers(3), Textiles(3), Paupers(2), Servant(1), Shoe(1).	477	621
§1851	—	9	1.4	4	4	5	Dublin(2), Galway(2) Sligo, Monaghan Down, Meath	Labourers(2), Textiles(2), Marine Store Dealer(1), Blacksmith(1), Servants(2)	877	1,320
§1861	—	18	1.2	6	16	2	Roscommon(3), Longford(2), Dublin(2), Mayo(2), Tipperary	Labourers(5), Shoe(3), Tailors(3), Colliers(2), Potter, Optician, Washerwoman (all x 1)	855	1,311
*1871	270	9	0.9	3	7	2	Cork(3), Dublin(2), Clare(1), Roscommon(1), King's Co.(1)	Labourers(4), Elastic Web Weaver, porter, shoe, seamstress, laundress (all x 1)	876	1,695
*1881	214	10	0.8	5	7	3	No details in Census	Labourers(2), painters(2), Tailor, Blacksmith, Cooper, brickmaker, dressmaker, laundress	948	1,468
*1891	150	3	0.5	2	1	2	Waterford(1)	Bricklayer, charwoman, hosiery	792	1,428

Notes: (1)

* Institutions included are: the Borough and County Jails, the Borough and County Houses of Correction, and the Newark Home/Asylum for Penitent Females.

(2)

§ % age figures based on totals from main penal institutions only: ie in 1851, 3/71 prisoners in the City Prison (Highcross Street) were Irish - the remaining Irish were in the County Prison (Welford Road) - also located near to the City, and the Home for Penitent Females (at the Newark). In 1861, 5 Irish prisoners were in the City Jail; 13 of the total of 220 prisoners in the County Jail were Irish-born.

(3)

The last column is of all Irish in the City: ie Irish-born; their spouses, whether Irish or not, and their children, at each decennial census.

and Edmund Joyce received a stolen pair of trousers; Galigher was the actual thief.⁶⁷ In 1851, a Dennis Galliker (aged 50) was living at 30 Abbey Street, with his wife Hannah (40) and his two daughters (aged 10 and 8); as Dennis's occupation was Clothier's labourer, it seems likely that Dennis stole the trousers from his employer.⁶⁸

The Irish were occasionally involved in more serious crimes, such as murder and riot. (see Section (i) re-riots). Whilst violence accompanied riot, very few examples of straightforward violence have been discovered. The only known incidence of murder by an Irish person occurred in Whitwick, the mining village 15 miles from Leicester. Victorian mining towns had something of a "wild west" frontier atmosphere, attracting tough and hardy types; the Irish in Middlesborough, for example, gave that iron centre a similar "frontier town" image.⁶⁹

Edward Lalley, a young Irishman of Whitwick, aged 23, was remanded in early 1857 for the murder of 75 year old William Fullalove, who was knocked down in the street around 11 p.m., and died 50 days later of a serious headwound. Lalley "left 4 of his companions to seize the poor old man while they all ran off":

"It will scarcely be credited that when Lalley ... was apprehended by P.C. Pool and ... the Parish Constable ... he was found in a low lodging house, in bed with his own mother, who is a native of the West of Ireland, and cannot speak a word of English. Surely, the laws of the country are strong enough to put an end to these disgusting abominations."⁷⁰

This account succeeded in encapsulating a "low lodging house", a hint of incest and a non-assimilating parent - as well as covering the original tragic story.

An equally serious but differently resolved situation occurred in June 1867, reported as *Manslaughter at Shepshed*. It was a tragic case; the innocent victim, James Cullen, being an Irishman of Whitwick. A group of miners, including the eyewitness, Philip O'Mara (from another Whitwick Irish family), were drinking at a wayside beerhouse when the local

⁶⁷LC 8 March 1856

⁶⁸ACD, 1851 Reel 26

⁶⁹See CHASE, M, *The Teesside Irish in the 19th Century*, (1992), *The Irish in British Labour History*, p.47-48, for details of Irish "macho" male culture in the iron industry.

⁷⁰LC, 7 February 1857.

TABLE 4

IRISH PRISONERS IN LEICESTER BOROUGH QUARTER SESSIONS RECORDS - A SAMPLE				
No.	NAME	OFFENCE (Theft in all cases)	YEAR	SENTENCE
166	BRENNAN, Denis	A hat @ 2/-	1851	2 m HL
164	BUTLER, Thomas*	70 lbs hay @ 3/-	1851	2 m HL
211	BURNS, James	{Glass Tumbler @ 1/-} x 2 {13 cigars @ 2/- }previous	1858	3 yrs PS
190	CASEY, Bridget (f)	1 lb butter @ 1/-	1852	14 ds HL
236	DOWD, Matthew	Coat @ 10/- (previous)	1854	4 yrs PS
182	GALLAGHER, Bridget (f)	1 Book @ 1/-	1852	2 m HL
359	HEARN, Joseph	1140 pairs of gloves @ £5	1857	6 yrs PS
50/59	KILPATRICK, James	{Coat @ 10/6 {items ? @ 30/- (previous)	1849	7 yrs PS
3	KELLY, James	Coat @ 10/-	1847C	2 m HL
153	McKENNIS, May (f)	? @ 3/-	1851	3 m HL
183	McLOUGHLIN, Peter	{waistcoat, handkerchief {trousers & shirt @ 4/6d	1852	NOT GUILTY
308	McNICHOLLS, William	3 counts { 30 lbs tobacco { 30 lbs tobacco { 30 lbs tobacco	1855	4 yrs PS
153	CARROLL, Susan (f)	{purse @ 10/- {pick pocket @ 2/-	1851	9 m HL
169	O'DONOUGH, Charles	1 loaf bread @ 6d	1852	6 wksHL
271	RILEY, Mary (f)	{£18 cash and purse + {blankets @ 15/- from	1854C	9 m HL
104	ROURKE, Bridget (f)	mistress	1850	1 m HL
230	ROURKE, Bridget (f)	Candlestick @ 1/-	1852	7 yrs HL
270	VEASEY, Joseph	Theft & receiving (previous)	1854	2 m HL
177	WELCH, Joseph	pair of overalls @ 2/- {purse, £15 {+ shawl @ £1	1852	12 m HL

NOTES:

KEY

C
HL
PS
(f)
Previous
Sentences

- Prisoner listed in Census of 1851
- Hard Labour
- Penal Servitude
- Female
- Previous convictions
- m = month; yrs = years; ds = days; wks = weeks

(1) re-Irish Names: Surnames that may be Irish, but which cannot easily be proven to be, have not been listed eg Smith, Brown, White.

(2) Source: LCRO, *Court Order Book*, 1847-59; (not summary jurisdiction cases).

"Shepshed men became very quarrelsome, and after several vain attempts to raise a fight one of them named Hillyer commenced an attack upon an unoffending man named James Cullen." Cullen fell, and struck his head fatally. "Deceased had nothing in his hand but he cried for peace till the last moment before he was struck." A verdict of manslaughter was returned against Hillyer, who was committed to the Assizes for trial.⁷¹ This case provides an interesting contrast with Lalley's; when an Irish offender was charged with murder, and an apparently equally guilty English defendant was charged just with manslaughter, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the law was stretched in the case of the native offender. A recent study of nineteenth century street violence reveals no direct concern with the Irish in relation to the issue of street violence. Apart from a predictable reference to Orange-Green factionalism in Liverpool, the analysis does not mention any national press concern over an Irish contribution to the problem of street violence.⁷²

Complete and informative records survive for the six months October 1876 - April 1877. These two volumes list in total 1,260 occasions when prisoners were committed to jails: 784 and 476 to the City and County respectively.⁷³ Multiple committals for some offenders are included as in original data, as their repetitive convictions would have in any case registered in the public's perception and in the minds of officialdom. In fact 63 out of the 91 Irish-born in the City Jail in this 1876/7 sample were Leicester residents (i.e. 69 per cent); even in the County Jail at this time, 19 of the 33 Irish-born, or 54 per cent, were residents of the county. These cases would have had local media impact in terms of the ongoing reporting involved.

The thoroughness of these records enables some comparison to be made with data from Liverpool's Walton Jail for 1865 (*Table 5*) and Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison, for 1882-3 (*Table 6*). Although the dates of collection vary, the analysis pursued is similar. (See *Table 7* for combined City and County Totals; *Table 8* for City only; *Table 9* for County only). Most of the analysis here is of the combined totals.⁷⁴

⁷¹LJ. 14 June 1867; ACD 1861. The Fenian alarms of 1867 may have affected the quality of justice.

⁷²SINDALL, R. (1990).

⁷³DE 3370, City; DE 3492/1 county, LCRO. Each individual record is highly detailed.

⁷⁴Liverpool data from BURKE, T. (1910) *Catholic History of Liverpool*, pp.168-171 and Barlinnie data from FITZPATRICK, D., *A Curious Middle Place: The Irish in Britain, 1871-1921* in SWIFT & GILLEY (1989) pp.27-29. The fields for Leicester and Barlinnie are almost exactly the same, the only difference being that a small number of Leicester offences that did not easily fit into any of the three given categories were subsumed into breaches of the peace. In the case of Walton Jail, Fr. Nugent concentrated on similar categories, which he described as Felony, Vagrancy and Assault; the main difference here being vagrancy as opposed to breaches of the peace.

TABLE 5	PRISONER DATA FOR WALTON JAIL, LIVERPOOL, 1865
----------------	---

From: BURKE, T., (1910), *Catholic History of Liverpool*

(a) Number totals			
	CATHOLIC MALES		PROTESTANT MALES
Felony	336		433
Assaults	708		470
Vagrancy	869		898
Drunkenness	<u>825</u>		<u>479</u>
	2,738		2,280
	CATHOLIC FEMALES		PROTESTANT FEMALES
Felony	248		215
Assaults	431		246
Vagrancy and Prostitution	1,520		772
Drunkenness	<u>884</u>		<u>579</u>
	3,083		1,812
(b) Percentage breakdown			
	CATHOLIC MALES		PROTESTANT MALES
Felony	12.3		19
Drunkenness	13.1		20.6
Assaults	25.9		21
Vagrancy	<u>31.7</u>		<u>39.4</u>
	100		100
	CATHOLIC FEMALES		PROTESTANT FEMALES
Felony	8		11.9
Drunkenness	28.7		31.9
Assaults	14		13.6
Vagrancy and Prostitution	<u>49.3</u>		<u>42.6</u>
	100		100
(c) Distribution by province			
IRISH-BORN FEMALES			
Leinster	Connaught	Ulster	Munster
936	571	412	274
IRISH-BORN MALES			
Leinster	Connaught	Ulster	Munster
649	566	337	205

Notes:

Father Nugent was careful to define clearly the meaning of the terms he employed.

Felony - All offences against property; against the Criminal Justices' Act, Juvenile Offenders for Reformatory, Juvenile Offenders Act; whether summarily dealt with or convicted at Sessions.

Vagrancy - All persons tried and convicted at the Sessions.; those remanded for further enquiries and afterwards discharged at the Police Courts; misdemeanours; not accounting for; and all offences against the Merchant Shipping Act.

Assault - All offences against the person, wounding, grievous bodily harm and threatening

TABLE 6		PRISONERS ADMITTED TO BARLINNIE PRISON, GLASGOW, 1882-3								
Offence	No. Irish		Other			% Irish		Other		
Total	RC	Other	RC	Other	Total	RC	Other	RC	Other	Total
Breach of peace	12	2	19	24	57	19	9	15	10	12
Assault	33	11	40	81	165	52	48	31	33	36
Theft	19	10	71	142	242	30	43	55	57	52
Total of above	64	23	130	247	464					
General Labourers										
Breach of peace	7	--	11	10	28	26	--	21	18	20
Assault	11	2	20	9	42	41	50	38	16	30
Theft	9	2	22	36	69	33	50	42	65	50
Total of above	27	4	53	55	139					
Other occupations										
Breach of peace	5	2	8	14	29	14	11	10	7	9
Assault	22	9	20	72	123	59	47	26	38	38
Theft	10	8	49	106	173	27	42	64	55	53
Total of above	37	19	77	192	325					

Note: The table classifies convicted criminal prisoners by birthplace (Irish or other), religion (Roman Catholic or other), occupation (general labourer or other) and broad category of offence. Prisoners analysed are those admitted between 15 August 1882 and 13 March 1883, excluding 72 convicted of offences not falling within the three stated categories.

Source: Glasgow (Barlinnie) Prison, *Register of Criminal Prisoners* (1882-85), Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, HH.21.70/1)

From: FITZPATRICK, D., *A Curious Middle Place : The Irish In Britain, 1871-1921* in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (ED) (1989) p.28.

Just under 7 per cent of the total of these Leicester crimes were by the Irish-born; of this total, 5 per cent were by Roman Catholics, with 2 per cent being by Protestants i.e. 38 per cent of the crimes of the Irish-born were by non-Catholics, which seems rather high, being more than 1 in 3. The contrast is not so stark when compared with Burke's citing of Fr. Nugent's research for Liverpool in 1865 (see *Table 5*) where 41 per cent of the total Irish cases on prison files were committed by Protestants. In Barlinnie, the non-Catholic Irish accounted for just 26 per cent of the total of Irish crime. Handley advised that "The evidence of an Irish name as a clue to the religion of the prisoner is untrustworthy. Hostile commentators might be led to modify their views if they took the trouble to scan at random the school registers and learn thereby the proportion of Protestant Ryans and Regans and Catholic Robertsons and Ritchies."⁷⁵ Leicester was a powerfully Protestant city and may, therefore, have been a "magnet" for Irish Protestants. There is certainly evidence of interest in, support for, and communication between Leicester-based and Irish Protestants (see chapter on anti-Catholicism).

Whereas in Barlinnie, around 25 per cent of the Irish-born prisoners were Protestant (with three-quarters being from Ulster),⁷⁶ 23 of the 116 Leicester Irish-born were Protestant (with 9, or 39 per cent, being from Ulster). In other words, of Leicester's Irish-born criminals, 20 per cent were Protestant - a figure approximate to, though slightly less, than Barlinnie's. Given that 38 per cent of the crimes of Irish-born persons were by Protestants, it would seem that the Protestant Irish criminal profile in Leicester was higher than the Catholic Irish criminal profile (i.e. 38 per cent of crimes were committed by 20 per cent of the total Irish-born). This is an interesting finding given the anti-Irish/Catholic propaganda that was prevalent throughout the century. It is a possible indication of a greater degree of social and emotional stress amongst Irish Protestants who were trying to come to terms with their lives in Britain; presumably their sense of dislocation was heightened by non-acceptance in a society that they presumably believed would preferentially welcome them. (See discussion on identity).

All of the Irish were literally unsettled to some extent; only 13 per cent of the 116 individuals listed appear in either the 1871 or 1881 Censuses, which suggests

⁷⁵HANDLEY, J, (1947) *The Irish in Modern Scotland* p.325

⁷⁶FITZPATRICK (1989) p.28

that the rootless were most prone to offend. In terms of Irish criminals' provincial backgrounds in Ireland, the Leicester figures are of some interest: 39 per cent originated in the south and west of Ireland, whilst only 27 per cent originated from northern and eastern provinces. The main counties represented are, in order of precedence: Limerick, Galway, Dublin, Antrim, Mayo and Cork. Bearing in mind the large towns and cities in the leading counties, the 63 per cent they represent (42/67) is not really surprising.

(e) (ii) First and second generation Irish, and non-Irish, Catholics: an analysis of Roman Catholic representation.

Of the total of all committals (1260) in the main sample, 11 per cent were of Catholics. Of these 5, per cent were Irish born (60 persons) and 6 per cent were non-Irish born (75 persons)(see *Table 7*). Therefore almost half of all Catholic crimes were committed by Irish Catholics (i.e. 60/135, or 44%). Of the 6 per cent non-Irish, that is, the 75 Catholics born outside Ireland, 35 were clearly committals of second generation Irish, going by names, street of residence and other evidence in the census and prison files cited. A few examples depict the human face of this second generation.

James McDermott, (20), No. 390, is also enumerated in 1871. His parents, Patrick and Mary, were, respectively, a bricklayer's labourer and a factory hand. James was the oldest of six children. The family lived in the cramped, terraced housing in Garden Street (Court B, in 1881); James, sentenced for assault, was a Borough Labourer in 1881. The tendency to remain in an Irish area was also shown by the Garritty family. Martin (No. 213) was a 17 year old shoe rivetter. His father, Patrick, was an agricultural labourer, and his mother a rag sorter. In 1871 the Garritty's lived in the core Irish area of Abbey Street. The Prendergast family can be traced across three censuses. John, No. 484, was described as a 20 year old shoe finisher, living in Abbey Street, jailed for illegal pawning. His family too stayed within the confines of a relatively small area. In 1861, '71 and '81 they lived in Green Street; John's father, Thomas, was an agricultural labourer and his mother Mary a hosiery seamstress.

Two conclusions emerge: firstly, 47 per cent (35/75), or almost half, of crimes committed by non-Irish born Catholics were almost certainly carried out by the second generation Irish in Leicester and the County. Most of the offenders were born in the

COMBINED PRISONER TOTAL: PRISONERS ADMITTED TO CITY AND COUNTY JAILS, LEICESTER (OCTOBER 1876 - APRIL 1877) L.C.R.O. DE: 3370 - City; 3492/1 - County.											
TABLE 7	OFFENCE	No. Of Irish		No. Other		Total	% Irish		% Other		Total
		R.C.	OTHER	R.C.	OTHER		R.C.	OTHER			
TOTAL	Breach of Peace Assault Theft	47	18	45	493	603	8	3	7	82	48
		4	3	14	192	213	2	1	7	90	17
		9	2	16	417	444	2	0	4	94	35
	Total of above	60	23	75	1,102	1,260	5	2	6	87	100

363

GENERAL LABOURERS									
Breach of Peace	23	8	16	180	227	10	4	7	58
Assault	2	2	6	55	65	3	3	9	17
Theft	4	1	3	92	100	4	1	3	25
Total of above	29	11	25	327	392	7	3	6	100

OTHER OCCUPATIONS									
Breach of Peace	24	10	29	313	376	6	3	8	43
Assault	2	1	8	137	148	1	1	5	17
Theft	5	1	13	325	344	1	0	4	40
Total of above	31	12	50	775	868	4	1	6	100

NOTES

- (1) The pattern followed is that for Barfinnie, the only difference being that 105 offences of indeterminate classification have been included, ie 13 poaching (as Thefts); the following as Breaches of the Peace: prostitution (10), suicide (2), Poor Law regulations (5), family neglect (28), military desertion (23), obscenity (12), trespass (2) and bigamy/arson /concealed birth (5); sex offences (5), as assaults.
- (2) Total number of sample = 1,260 (ie. 784 from City and 476 from County).

TABLE 8	CITY JAIL SUMMARY SHEET: PRISONERS ADMITTED TO CITY JAIL, LEICESTER (OCTOBER 1876 - APRIL 1877) (L.C.R.O. DE: 3370) (Total = 784)										
	OFFENCE	No. Of Irish		No. Other		Total	% Irish		% Other		Total
TOTAL		R.C.	OTHER	R.C.	OTHER		R.C.	OTHER	R.C.	OTHER	
Breach of Peace	32	17	27	255	331	10	5	77	8	43	
Assault	4	2	13	148	167	2	1	89	8	21	
Theft	6	1	5	274	286	2	0	96	2	36	
Total of above	42	20	45	677	784	5	3	86	6	100	

GENERAL LABOURERS										
Breach of Peace	13	7	10	58	88	15	8	11	66	52
Assault	2	1	5	38	46	4	2	11	83	27
Theft	2	-	1	34	37	5	-	3	92	22
Total of above	17	8	16	130	171	10	5	9	76	100

OTHER OCCUPATIONS										
Breach of Peace	19	10	17	197	243	8	4	7	81	40
Assault	2	1	8	110	121	2	1	7	91	20
Theft	4	*1	4	240	249	2	0	2	96	40
Total of above	25	12	29	547	613	4	2	5	89	100

* = 1/2 of 1%

COUNTY JAIL SUMMARY SHEET: PRISONERS ADMITTED TO CITY JAIL, LEICESTER (OCTOBER 1876 - APRIL 1877) (L.C.R.O. DE: 3592/1) (Total = 476)											
TABLE 9	OFFENCE	No. Of Irish		No. Other		Total	% Irish		% Other		Total
		R.C.	OTHER	R.C.	OTHER		R.C.	OTHER			
	Breach of Peace	15	1	18	238	272	5	0	7	87	57
	Assault	-	1	1	44	46	0	1	1	97	10
	Theft	3	1	11	143	158	2	0	7	91	33
	Total of above	18	3	30	425	476	4	1	6	89	100

GENERAL LABOURERS										
Breach of Peace Assault Theft	13	7	10	58	88	15	8	11	66	52
	2	1	5	38	46	4	2	11	83	27
	2	-	1	34	37	5	-	3	92	22
Total of above	17	8	16	130	171	10	5	9	76	100

OTHER OCCUPATIONS										
Breach of Peace	19	10	17	197	243	8	4	7	81	40
Assault	2	1	8	110	121	2	1	7	91	20
Theft	4	*1	4	240	249	2	0	2	96	40
Total of above	25	12	29	547	613	4	2	5	89	100

* = 1/2 of 1%

City or County, or in the East Midlands area, with the residue coming from as far away as Liverpool or Glasgow. Secondly, if crime data for the Irish born Roman Catholics (60) is taken together with the crime data for second generation Roman Catholic Irish (35), then 95/135 Catholic crimes, or 70 per cent, were committed by the Irish or those of Irish descent. In London, Mayhew had frequently noted the existence of second (and third) generation Irish in his crime commentaries. He frequently mentioned "Irish cockneys" (i.e. second generation) in relation to felons, thieves, burglars, urchins and pick-pockets.⁷⁷

Certain patterns emerge when the occupational pattern of Catholics is examined more closely in relation to the crime pattern. Of the 60 Irish Catholic offences, 29 were committed by general labourers, and 31 by those in other occupations. Of the 75 non-Irish Catholic offences, only 25 were committed by general labourers, whereas 50 were the work of those in other occupations.

Therefore, whilst virtually half of the committals of the Irish-born Catholics were of men in the general labourer category, only one-third of the "English" Catholic committals were representative of that specific group. However, of these 35 "English" Catholic offences which were almost certainly in fact by second generation Irish, 15 were by labourers i.e. 15/35, or 43 per cent, of second generation offences were by labourers. It is noteworthy that this 43 per cent figure in regard to second generation labourers represents almost the same ratio as was the case with the *first* generation Irish prisoners. This would seem to indicate that Leicester reflected the wider national picture, with a virtual absence of any element of upwards social mobility amongst the second generation. Admittedly the generations being compared are those with prison records; yet the occupation patterns also show a limited range of social mobility. The number of offences by non-Irish Catholic labourers was 25. Therefore, of *all* Irish Catholic offences, which were committed by both first and second generation (i.e. 29 plus 15 respectively), 33 per cent (44/135) were committed by labourers.

As well as offenders indigenous to Leicestershire, Mount St Bernard's Reformatory was also home to numerous Catholic juvenile delinquents - some of whom were Irish born, most of whom were of Irish descent. The data in *Table 10* shows

⁷⁷MAYHEW, H. (1862) *London's Underworld* (Vol. IV) Quennell edn; (1969) pp. 269, 229, 188, 197, 278-80

clearly that in both 1861 and 1871, fully three-quarters of the young offenders were of Irish descent. This group, and their impact locally, merit attention; see section (h) (ii) of this chapter. Some further conclusions about the Irish contribution to Leicestershire crime can be drawn from the 1876/7 records. A comparison of the city/county data is of interest.

The percentage of total offences by non-Irish Catholics was the same for both City and county (i.e. 6 per cent). However, in the case of Irish Catholics specifically, they contributed 5 per cent of the city's crime figures but only 4 per cent of the county total. These proportions are reversed in the case of Irish Protestants, who account for only 1 per cent of county crimes, whereas in the city context they account for 3 per cent. This would seem to suggest that Irish Protestant migrants were more likely than their Catholic counterparts to target the cities for their places of residence; they would seem to have hailed initially from the more urbanised areas of Ireland (i.e. from Limerick, Cork, Galway, Dublin and the Ulster region) according to the prison data. Presumably they felt drawn to the urban rather than the rural environment.

Both Irish and non-Irish Catholics were over-represented in the general labouring category regarding the occupations of offenders sentenced in Leicester i.e. 10 per cent and 9 per cent respectively, compared with 5 per cent and 4 per cent in regard to offenders committed in the county. As regards other occupations (i.e. not general labourers), non-Irish Catholics were more prevalent in county statistics; but, as we have seen, most of these were second generation Irish in any case. (The juvenile offenders of the county RC Reformatory, being a demographic implant, would distort local statistical analysis and have therefore been examined separately in section (h) ii.)

(f) Public Disorder and the location of Irish settlement amidst social deprivation

(i) The fear of public disorder

One "cause" of Irish responsibility for riots and other crimes was alcohol abuse. In fact, this reflected conscious policing priorities specifically aimed at working class targets; as Hickman remarks, "Irish areas in official discourse became increasingly synonymous with disorderly conduct."⁷⁸ Leicester did not experience the violent anti-Catholic Murphyite

⁷⁸HICKMAN, M., in LEWIS, G (Ed)(1998), p. 150-1.

riots. Those inter-communal riots that the city did undergo tended to occur in the middle decades of the century (c. 1835-1860). It is clear that in Leicester the causes were varied, and certainly could not be laid solely at the door of the Irish community.

The 1876-77 data exhibited the problems of alcohol-induced crime. Extrapolating from the three broad categories outlined, of the total of 124 Irish offences, 81 were breaches of the peace (65 per cent), 22 were assaults (18 per cent), and 21 were thefts (17 per cent). The assault figures were greater for "English" Catholics, suggesting that a problem lay with the second generation's attitudes. The 65 per cent rate of jail convictions for breaches of the peace is associated with drunkenness (i.e. 43.6 per cent or 54/124 cases). It is also the case that many of the assault cases were drink-related (18 per cent).

The drink-related pattern started to show in the 1830's - shortly after the introduction of the police - an indication of the priorities of the early constabularies. Regular detailed news items helped develop a low status image: "John Branning, an Irishman, charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting John Cole on Sunday morning in Belgrave Gate." He had had 13 previous arrests for disorderly conduct; 5/- fine or 14 days was the sentence; he was not enumerated in 1841. Thomas Regan, Hugh Conroy, Patrick McMahon and Hugh Molloy were identified as four Irishmen, drunk and disorderly, who assaulted a beer-shop keeper. The first two admitted being completely intoxicated, and received 5/- fines or 2 weeks gaol; the other two got 2/6 fine or 7 days.⁷⁹ Only Hugh Conroy features in the 1841 census. They were probably itinerant harvest workers, slaking their thirsts too thoroughly. Many of the drink-related offences occur in the harvest period; and many also are at weekends, when men had their wages to spend. Some incidents border on the ludicrous: Henry Lowe, an Irish cattle drover, in a state of intoxication and immobility in a druggists, was taken in by two constables, his pockets full of several yards of lace-edging. On pleading to the judge that he had no funds, and if let off would immediately depart for his brother's place at Hull, the judge agreed, and waived the 5s fine.⁸⁰

The relationship between alcohol and crime was summarised in this reply by the Leicester authorities to a government questionnaire in 1852:

⁷⁹LJ, 21 August and 8 Sept 1837, *Police Reports*.

⁸⁰LC 13 Feb. 1836

Rev. William Fox, Chaplain County Gaol: is enabled to say from seven years experience, that the operation of public houses and beer houses, in the production of crime, is beyond any other instrumentality.⁸¹

Fox, an Irish-born Protestant, had settled with his family in Leicester.⁸² His background may partly explain his vehemence about the evils of drink. Fox's evidence was supported by the police:

*"Mr Frederick Goodyer, Chief Constable: Beerhouse keepers of an inferior class to the licensed victuallers, and magistrates having no power in granting their licences; generally low-rented, and kept by persons in low neighbourhoods."*⁸³

Given that the Irish resided in the oldest, most run down part of the town, with most of the beer-houses, their experience is encapsulated in the 1852-3 Report. St Patrick's school-chapel existed cheek-by-jowl with The Shamrock Inn, the Woolcomber's Arms, and The George, all in Royal East Street; this was not untypical. Barclay noted that:

Public houses were allowed to open far into the night, and all night, at this period (i.e. c1860) and children of any age were allowed to go in and out of them: often have I gone to the Woodboy public house for a farthing's worth of small beerWhen father came home boozed there was a row in the house; singing and shouting and abuse: we were all frightened and upset.

Barclay himself "had the ordinary Irish penchant for a drop of whisky;"⁸⁴ he made clear the dominant influence of alcohol in popular culture throughout this period, affecting male and female alike.⁸⁵ He described his mother's shocked surprise at finding him the worse for drink, whereas she had come to expect it of his brother and their lodger; she had thought he would "never get into the hands of the police", unlike the other two.⁸⁶ Clearly, the police and steady imbibers were expected to make frequent contact.

Contemporaries of Barclay conceded the problem. O'Donovan Rossa, a Fenian prisoner in Millbank prison in London from 1865-71, commented: "almost half of those men were of Irish parentage, and their crimes were substantially traceable to poverty or

⁸¹ *Rep of Select Committee of Public Houses (1852-3)* xxvii-i; p.45

⁸² 1851 Census Reel 28

⁸³ See footnote 81.

⁸⁴ Barclay (1934), p.12, 14, 81; 1881 OS Map.

⁸⁵ Dealt with in 2 articles HAYNES (1989), and HAYNES (1990); see Bibliography

⁸⁶ BARCLAY, (1934), p.51

whiskey."⁸⁷ In 1894, John Denvir, underlined the analysis:

"When he (Fr.Nugent) became jail chaplain he saw that the main cause of almost all the crime among our people was drink, and that, without it, they would be as free from crime as in the most virtuous parts of Ireland."⁸⁸

Whilst the latter point probably romanticises somewhat, the statement in general supports the specific comments made about Irish crime in Leicester by Hugh Heinrick in 1872. (See title page).

(f) (ii) The Context of social deprivation

The root causes of Irish crime lay in two sets of migrant experiences: the rural-urban transition, and the cultural identity question affecting the second generation. An attempt at defining the roots of such crime was made in 1855 by the Abbot in charge of the Catholic boys Reformatory. His analysis obviously made an impact, because it was reprinted for wider distribution.⁸⁹

The Abbot remarked on "seven principal causes of the present great degeneracy of morals amongst the children of the poor, whether English or Irish, whether Catholic or Protestant. These causes were:

1. Ignorance
2. Bad example
3. The want of self-restraint and self-rule, and of contentedness with poverty
4. The want of family regularity, order and personal cleanliness and neatness
5. Idleness
6. The force of long and confined habits of vice
7. The constant presence of dangerous occasions."

Whilst reflecting common Victorian and Catholic notions of morality, it shows some perception based on critical observation. It is necessary to draw a distinction between first and subsequent generations of Irish in this context. For the migrants, the transition to an urban and alien culture was problematical, and the failure to cope led at times to criminal behaviour. Items (2) and (4) may be laid at the door of the parents; and

⁸⁷O'DONOVAN ROSSA, J (1882), *Irish Rebels in English Prisons*. p.159

⁸⁸DENVIR, J., (1894), pp.250-251

⁸⁹MSBA, B3527; *The Catholic Standard*, 4.11.1855; also in BDA, 3rd Report, Series B, Part I, 1830-70

even then only with due sympathetic allowance. If parental neglect there was, it in part came about because of the necessity to earn in order to survive. (See discussion on poverty).

There is a tone of reflective resignation and realism in Barclay's autobiography that counters the moralistic assumptions inherent in the Abbot's thesis.⁹⁰ The same point was made by Mayhew in 1862:

The Irish constitute the poorest portion of our people, and the children, therefore, are virtually orphans in this country, left to gambol in the streets and courts, without parental control, from their very earliest years; the mothers, as well as the fathers, being engaged throughout the day in some of the ruder forms of labour or street trade. The consequence is that the child grows up not only unacquainted with any industrial occupation, but untrained to habits of daily work, and long before he has learned to control the desire to appropriate the articles which he either wants or likes, by a sense of the rights of property in others, he has acquired furtive propensities from association with the young thieves located in the neighbourhood.⁹¹

Heinrick's observations independently confirm part of Mayhew's analysis:

"... the condition of the Irish people in England, and particularly in the large cities, is such that it cannot be contemplated in all its relations, and leave a doubt that dreadful ruin to faith and morals must result from the associations surrounding them. They come here poor. They have to herd as a consequence among the poorest and most degraded of the English masses. Their immediate neighbours are of the "criminal" classes. The language of vice is the vernacular of their neighbourhood, the crimes they abhorred at home are incidents in the every day life of those among whom they are forced to live."⁹²

In the case of Leicester, it has been established that the Irish, from their earliest days in the town, resided mainly in the newly policed areas. These were the poorest, most crowded sectors of the city, already hosting numerous indigenous in-migrants. The censuses of 1841-81 indicate that the Irish tended to remain located in St Margaret's parish.

Barclay, born and reared in Leicester's Irish "rookeries," noted in 1895:

In Lower Green-street a couple of houses are to let, owing to a late

⁹⁰BARCLAY (1934) pp.8-9

⁹¹MAYHEW, H AND BINNEY, W (1862), *The Criminal Prisons of London* p.403, quoted in JACKSON (1963) p.171.

⁹²HEINRICK (1872) p.29

family quarrel The chief aggressor was a woman too (save the mark)
..... they are awful people for drinking and rowing. The quieter
neighbours are heartily sick of them. Most Irish have such an excess of
energy that, apparently, they must fight now and then ... All this is
changed both in Ireland and England. The Green-street fights are past
.....⁹³

Of the 124 "Irish" offences in the 1876-7 sample (above), including 47 per cent second generation, 58 can be traced to that impoverished Irish sector of St Margaret's parish described above. Barclay's autobiography conceded the effects of material and parental deprivation.⁹⁴ Parental deprivation, particularly maternal, was especially criticised by the Abbot, by Heinrick, and by Ullathorne. The part played by Irish women in the criminal milieu is examined in the following section.⁹⁵

(g) Women's roles in the pattern of Irish crime locally

In his 1872 review of the Irish in Britain, Heinrick referred to women's roles in the pattern of Irish crime, relating the problem to drunkenness: "the vice is nearly as common with the women as with the men."⁹⁶ Does the available evidence for Irish women in Leicester bear out Heinrick's contention?

There is a range of anecdotal and statistical evidence supporting this picture. Once the new police were introduced, there was - not surprisingly - a steady and increasing stream of reports concerning the drunken Irish. Although most examples involved men, women too were represented. For example, in 1837 Catherine Moore, alias "Irish Kit", and her mother, were brought before the Bench by P.C.27 for being drunk and disorderly: "The wretched old woman, who was the mother of 7 children, was discharged, and her daughter, who is a notoriously bad character, was sent to the House of Correction for a fortnight."⁹⁷

Two of the three Irish persons in the Borough Jail in 1851 were female: Bridget Aynesborough, a married tailoress of 57, and Catherine Dempsey, a marine-store dealer

⁹³BARCLAY, T., *The Wyvern* No.192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149

⁹⁴LCRO Prison records, DE3370 and DE3492/1; BARCLAY, (1934), p.3-12.

⁹⁵MSBA: B3527; HEINRICK (1872), p.50; & ULLATHORNE (1857), p.53-4, in BDA.

⁹⁶HEINRICK, p.39, 40,50. See also WHITE, B, 'The Refuse of their own Nation': Criminal Confessions of 18th C. Irish Women, in *Irish Studies Review* No. 14, Spring 1998, pp 12-16, she records a contemporary suggestion that Irish female criminals in London behaved unlawfully "as a consequence of a breakdown in filial, paternal and marital relations." Poor education and poor judgement of male partners, as well as male dominance, also played a part.

⁹⁷LJ, 18 Aug. 1837

of 80!⁹⁸ Dare made an acerbic comment in 1853 about a promiscuous Irish woman who was pregnant and “perpetually drunk”; (see title page).⁹⁹ Of the representative sample of 20 Irish taken from the Court Order Books of 1847-69, 7/20 were women, or 35 per cent of the total Irish representation of 4.4 per cent. Of these 7, 5 were for theft of either food, or for small items such as candlesticks; only 2 were for more serious offences, such as receiving and pick-pocketing.

In respect of the detailed combined sample of 1876-7, some more substantial conclusions can be drawn about female representation in the crime pattern. Of the Irish-born, of all religions, of all entries (including multiples for repeated offences within the period covered by the log): 29 per cent (36/124) of all offences were committed by women; of these, 33 per cent (12/36) were by Protestant females; the other 67 per cent by Catholics. With regard to the total register of both city and county in 1876/7 (not just the Irish born): the total number of female offences in the City file (DE 3370) was 75 out of 784 (about 10 per cent); the total number of womens' offences on the County file (DE 3492/1) was 25 out of 476 (about 5 per cent).

Therefore when combined, there are 100/1260 offences committed by women, or 8 per cent of all convictions. This general rate is lower than that for the Irish-born, female rate, which is 29 per cent. The causes for this are to be found in Irish womens' particular vulnerability to their environment due to the socio-economic factors associated with deprivation. (see conclusion).

Of the 36 convictions of Irish-born females, the crimes involved, and their frequency, were as follows: drunkenness (26), assault (4), theft (3), prostitution (1), wilful damage (1) and illegal pawning (1). Clearly, drunkenness was the most common Irish female offence. In terms of occupations they were mainly charwomen, stitchers, hawkers or machinists, with odd examples of laundresses, tailoresses, shoe operatives and even a labourer! A glance at the detailed prison records reveals the person behind the data.

Hannah Green was a 43 year old Limerick born Catholic widow, working as a laundress. She was 5 feet in height, and 7½ stone in weight. Of "decent" appearance, "erect" carriage and "proportionate" figure, she had three grown up family (ages 13, 27 and 22). With her parents and her spouse dead, she presumably fell on hard times, for

⁹⁸ACD, 1851.

⁹⁹DARE J, RLDMS, 1854, p.10

she had no previous convictions; her offence was "illegally pawning a sheet and a shirt ... to the value of 15/-" This earned her 4 calendar months hard labour.¹⁰⁰

Mrs Green compares favourably with the 37 year old Londonderry Protestant Ann Edwards, a charwoman and laundress, married to a drayman, with four offspring (aged 17, 14, 9 and 3). Between December 1872 and August 1878 she had committed 14 offences; 9 were for drunkenness; one, for a breach of the peace, earned her 3 months hard labour; three others were for the theft of bed-linen and illegal pawning; her tour de force was her sentence of 3 months in 1878 for "threatening her husband." At 5 feet in height and around 9 stone in weight, she was described as having a "sallow" complexion and as having a visage which was "oval (Irish)".¹⁰¹ Ann Edwards appeared regularly in both city and county jail registers. Perhaps alcohol was the soporific which helped her through what must have been a hard life for all of her status, place and background.

The only female listed in the sample of summary convictions 1886-91 was an Ellen Joyce (probably Irish) for being drunk. In 1881 and 1891 only two Irish women are listed on each occasion as prisoners, their occupations fitting into the pattern described above.¹⁰² (In 1891, Martha Mullaney, one of the two jailed, had her 5 month old son Michael with her; an example, possibly, of confinement in more than one sense).

Virtually all commentators remark that Irish women were either absent from or only very marginally involved in prostitution;¹⁰³ (with the exception of Liverpool, mainly because it was a seaport). The only Leicester reference relates to one Ann Gallagher (29), born Glasgow, presumably of Irish descent, a hawker of no fixed abode; she was Anglican, married, with two previous offences. The Irish link here is rather tenuous. A vague reference by Barclay in the 1890's referred to the Irish areas of the town (Abbey St and Green St). He remarked, somewhat ambiguously:

"In Green Street a couple of furnished rooms have been let to people who, though belonging to the weaker sex, are no worse than the stronger sex which supports them in their strange calling, and meanwhile escapes blame. But inspectors know more about these things than I, and they have been turning certain lodging houses in Abbey Street upside-

¹⁰⁰LCRO, DE33 70

¹⁰¹LCRO, DE3370 and DE3492/2

¹⁰²1881 Census Reel 128, 1891 Census fiche 2542

¹⁰³SWIFT (1989), p175-8

down"¹⁰⁴

Barclay does not mention actual Irish involvement. Given his usual forthrightness, it is probably safe to assume that the Leicester situation imitated that of York - namely, although residing "cheek by jowl" with prostitutes, Irish females generally managed to avoid involvement in the practice.¹⁰⁵ Mayhew, a ready critic of the Irish, stressed the self-respect of Irish women who had, because of circumstance, to lodge in "the filth, dishonesty and immorality of low lodging-houses." Describing the criminal, concupiscent atmosphere of these shelters, Mayhew noted that - despite the desperation of their situation - "almost the only women who ever hid their faces or manifested dislike of the proceedings ... were poor Irish women, generally those who live by begging."¹⁰⁶ The exclusion of Irish males from these caveats suggest that they tended to conform to the mores existing in their surroundings.

The Leicester police offenders' photographs file¹⁰⁷ throws some light on persistent female offenders who, on surname evidence, were of Irish descent.¹⁰⁸ The intriguing factor is their relative mobility regionally. Mary McVoy, aged 28 in 1872, a "travelling" pick-pocket from Nottingham had convictions at Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, and Leicester. Mary Anne Groggins, alias Callen, (aged 26 in 1872), had "no fixed home, stays at low Public Houses, a Prostitute" received 9 months hard labour at Leicester in 1873 for "robbing a man in the street".

In terms of a human casualty, consider Louisa McDermot, sentenced to 7 years penal servitude at Leicester in March 1874 for shop door robbery. Aged 16 in 1862, she had been arrested, destitute, in April and was given 4 years at Reformatory in May. She absconded mid-sentence, and was separately sentenced 5 times between 1870 and 1874 for offences as varied as shop door robbery, obscene language, theft of clothing and assault. The prima donna in the "mug shot" album was one Annie Maria McClewes (alias Hannah McHugh or McCue). Aged 60, born in Coventry, she had 13 convictions across the midlands; 3 were for "frequenting", the other 10 for picking pockets;" her final

¹⁰⁴BARCLAY, *The Wyvern* No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.149. Ambrose de Lisle, a man not inclined to be over-generous to his Irish fellow-Catholics, noted "I often hear Anglican clergymen who have made tours of Ireland say how chaste the young women and men of Ireland are compared with those of their own country parishes here in England, where alas! vice is now nearly as general as if the people were heathens."; DeLP; letter to Fr. Ignatius Spencer 25 February 1860, cited in PURCELL (Vol. I)(1900), p.186

¹⁰⁵FINNEGAN (1982), pp.13-4

¹⁰⁶MAYHEW, (1861) *Mayhew's London*, Quennell edition. p.152 + 155

¹⁰⁷LCRO, 19 D54; Photo Album + Key Book, c.1873-7, prisoners.

¹⁰⁸Names checked against McLYSAGHT (1964/85) *The Surnames of Ireland*, 6th edition

theft offence earned her a sentence of 5 years in 1884.

(h) Media conceptions of Irish criminality: (i) early problematization

The themes covered in the reporting in Britain of crime perpetrated in Ireland as well as crimes committed in Britain are predictably familiar. An item headed *A Native of the Green Isle* involved a ludicrous story about a London Irishman; the courtroom dialogue provided numerous examples of stage-Irish, "humorous" stereotyping.¹⁰⁹

Another London sample,¹¹⁰ *Disturbing a Religious Congregation*, concerned one J. Driscoll and 50 compatriots who "tumultuously assembled" to disrupt the service of a Rev. Dr. Rippon. Rippon stated that "a number of low Irish issued from a gin shop and commenced a fight". He went to quieten the crowd, only to be struck by the prisoner. Police, equipped with swords and pistols, were called. As the prisoner showed remorse, Rippon asked the court for mercy; a 1 month gaol sentence ensued.

This is the earliest mention (1818) discovered in the Leicester media of the use of the term "the low Irish"; this type of report prepared the attitudinal ground well in advance of the actual arrival in numbers of the Irish to Leicester. In addition to regular syndicated court reports, three other types of coverage dealt with the Irish: a regular weekly joke column; frequent extended articles of "folksy" Irish humour; and regular and often graphic accounts of serious crime in Ireland, much of which was in fact a reaction by an unenfranchised peasantry to political, social and economic subjection. (See Introduction re the Leicester media).

The most negative and sustained coverage of Irish crime ran in the *Leicester Conservative Standard*, in monthly numbers, over the two years 1835-7. It dealt thoroughly with what it regarded as the propensity of all the Irish for immorality and crime. Whilst presuming the accuracy of its statistics relating to crime in Ireland (borrowed from biased Government sources), it effectively ignored the political, economic and social causes and motivation of much of that crime. It editorialised on the general negative tendencies of the Irish: "In morals the Irish are far below the common standard of humanity ..."; therefore their crimes result from "the depth of depravity into which they have sunk." The commentary noted that a "reckless indifference to every moral feeling" was "strongly branded on the Irish name." The Irish Catholic priesthood

¹⁰⁹LC, 8 Aug. 1835

¹¹⁰LC, 13 June 1818 p.2. Col.1

was held to be responsible. The connection then was clearly made between Irishmen and Catholicism in regard to criminality.

The following year, the *Standard* returned to the same topic for further in-depth analysis. Commenting on the "crime and barbarities which are a melancholy characteristic of this unhappy people", the writer was "unprepared (to) associate them with the casualties of hunger and poverty." He continued: "Heavy as the catalogue of Irish crime will be shown to be, and overwhelmed as the calendar assuredly is by the enormities of the most hideous character," the cause was not "the cravings of individual necessity and deprivation," but rather is the result of "the influence and instigation of some cunning vis-a-tergo", and "the dictates of deliberation, calm-thinking villainy" and the "machinations" of "those who are possessed of judgement and intelligence to guide their malice." Thus conspiracy theory was added to a natural criminal tendency.¹¹¹ Considering that this journal was professionally produced and distributed, and was the official organ of the ruling Conservative party in local government (until 1st January 1836), it would have had a significant number of influential readers. It must therefore have been of considerable importance in propagating an apparently reasoned, statistically-proven analysis of the inherent criminality of the Catholic Irish - a criminality which was currently being imported into Britain generally and Leicester in particular. The analysis went on to defend the position of the land-owning "Protestant farmer," a victim of manic Irish Catholic arsonists. This is relevant because a significant number of Leicestershire gentry families held extensive estates in various parts of Ireland at that time.¹¹² For example, Thomas Noel, second Viscount Wentworth, of Kirkby Mallory in Leicestershire, wrote to his sister thus:

"I have more than half a mind to go Ireland ... These Teagues tho' are such a turbulent race of mortals that I am almost afraid to venture my peaceable carcase amongst them."¹¹³

A balanced view came from a European traveller in Ireland in 1836; Von Raumer filed a column entitled 'Ireland Sketched by a Foreigner' for readers of the *Leicester Chronicle*. Von Raumer objectively described the poverty and desperation he

¹¹¹LCS Vol. II, 1836-7; pp 672-673

¹¹²LCS Vol. II 1836-7, p675; see estate papers in LCRO, filed for ref. in BROUGHTON, H (1991), *Family and Estate Records*; e.g., OTWAY-CAVE est, 23 D 57, in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary and here; FINCH estates, p.12; HARTOPP est, 1804-71, p.16; BOYLE ests in Limerick, Cork and Kerry, p.33

¹¹³ELWIN, M; (1967), p.241, *The Noels and the Milbankes, Their letters for 25 years, 1767-1792*, p.241, letter of 25.6.1784. (Ironically, a later generation of Noels was to convert to Romanism!)

saw around him, remarking:

"When I recollect the well-fed rogues and thieves in the English prisons, I admire (notwithstanding the very natural increase of Irish criminals) the power of morality - I wonder that the whole nation does not go over and steal, in order to enjoy a new and happier existence."¹¹⁴

Unfortunately for the Irish, Von Raumer's perspective was very much a minority one; the media stereotype of the Irish criminal preceded his arrival in Britain and continued to be portrayed throughout the mid and late Victorian period.¹¹⁵

(h) (ii) The Effects of the Boys' Reformatory on the Image of Irish Catholics in Leicester.

The great extent of Irish and second/third generation Irish crime led to concern both inside and outside the Catholic community. Mention of the Reformatory to the monks still provokes a response disassociating the monastery proper from the penal part of the foundation.¹¹⁶ This embarrassment is not surprising given the publicity germinated by incidents at the colony - incidents thoroughly reported in Leicestershire papers at the time which gave a negative image to the whole initiative. The names of the re-offenders were almost always Irish. (See Tables 10 and 11).

The Reformatory (St Mary's Agricultural Colony) was established in old buildings in the monastic demesne in 1856 to provide training and elementary education for Catholic juvenile delinquent boys. In line with the Youthful Offenders Act of 1854, it provided for males in the 7-16 age bracket, the aims being to avoid contact with adult convicts and to reform character through demanding labour.¹¹⁷

By 1857, the Reformatory had become the largest in the country, with an average population of 250 boys, (compared with an average of 70 elsewhere.¹¹⁸). In 1863, the government insisted, for reasons that will become clear, that the Cistercians relinquish control to the diocese of Salford, which set up a controlling body.¹¹⁹ The constant problems facing the managers led to Home Office misgivings. It was estimated

¹¹⁴LC, 17 September 1836

¹¹⁵See LC of 17.9.1836 and both of the volumes: CURTIS, L.P. (1978) *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: A Study in Anti-Catholic Prejudice*, and CURTIS, L.P., (1971) *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*.

¹¹⁶Conversation with Brother Jonathan, Monastery archivist, June 1990.

¹¹⁷SMITH, S (1984) *Hist of Whitwick* p.36

¹¹⁸SMITH, S (1984) p.36

¹¹⁹ELLIOTT, B. (1980), from BDA File. Elliott is an authority on RC reformatories.

TABLE 10	MOUNT ST BERNARD ABBEY - PENAL COLONY AND REFORMATORY FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENTS (1856-81): ADMISSIONS (from Census Data) (ACD)
-----------------	--

DATE	JUVENILE PRISONERS			
	Total Nos.	No. Of Irish-born	No. Of 2nd Generation Irish	% age of 2nd Generation Irish
1851	198 (in 1857)	Mainly from London, Liverpool and Manchester (10-18 years old) (from <i>Leicester Chronicle</i> of 13 November 1857)		
1861	219	53	166	76%
1871	267	69	198	74%
1881	87	59	28	32%
	* Reformatory closed in this year			
1891				

Notes: all data from ACD.

TABLE 11	NUMBER OF BOYS IN THE COLONY c.1863, AND THEIR ORIGINS BY R.C. DIOCESE	
DIOCESE	NO. OF BOYS	NOTES
Liverpool	93	<p>* FROM: <i>Mount St. Bernard's Reformatory - Statement of the Pecuniary Relations Between the Mnt. St. Bernard's Reformatory and the Diocese of Liverpool (1868) (M.S.B.A.)</i></p> <p>From the start, in 1856, until 1863, 602 boys had passed through the institution; 330 of these were from the Liverpool diocese.</p> <p>This internal figure of 186 juveniles from 1863 is slightly lower than the 1861 census return of 219. See Text for details re - high percentage of Irish background.</p>
Salford	52	
Birmingham	13	
Shrewsbury	11	
Westminster	8	
Plymouth	3	
Southwark	2	
Menevia & Newport	2	
Beverley	1	
Nottingham	1	
TOTAL	186	

in 1862 that 50 per cent of the boys who finished their sentences became recidivists.¹²⁰

Despite a successful start,¹²¹ when the staff were described as "zealous, self-denying and devoted," disturbing incidents were thoroughly reported, causing reactions ranging from disquiet to public consternation. The suicide of Henry Kelly, aged 15, was reported in 1858;¹²² Patrick Lawlor (16) was found guilty of the manslaughter of a fellow inmate, Francis McEwan (12) in 1870.¹²³ Interspersed with these one-off incidents was a series of mutinies and revolts reported sensationally and graphically in the county media.

In 1856 a visiting local cleric, Fr. James Luke of Shepshed, who had worked in a boys' reformatory in Van Diemen's land, expressed concern about the boys' interactions with the community of monks; their interactions with the outside community were about to commence.¹²⁴

A brief "rebellion in the Colony" broke out in May, 1862.¹²⁵ In 1863, the *Journal's* "special reporter" filed a Reformatory report titled "Conspiracy and Mutiny;" 40 boys, gathered in one dormitory, illegally lit up pipes, broke up the bedsteads for iron bars, and struck a PC Challoner seriously on the head, necessitating the calling of police reinforcements from Whitwick and Coalville. Eight constables had to be stationed at the Reformatory for two weeks.¹²⁶ Five 15-17 year olds appeared before the Ashby magistrates.¹²⁷

They were described as "youthful Roman Catholic criminals, or those of parents of that belief." This serious outbreak, *The Riot at Mount St Bernards*, was covered in the summer assizes column of 1863; questions were raised in the House of Commons.¹²⁸

The five defendants were punished: John Glennan (15) and John MacNamara (15) received three years penal servitude; Thomas Hughes (15) got nine months hard labour; and Joseph Shiel (15) and Joseph Green (15) each received six months hard labour. It was not really necessary for the article to use the word Irish; the names alone made the

¹²⁰SMITH S, (1984) p.37

¹²¹LC 1 Nov. 1857, p.53

¹²²LC 6 August 1858, p.5

¹²³LM 16 July 1870

¹²⁴letter of 21 Aug, 1856, MSBA

¹²⁵Guest Book, 1858-66; MSBA

¹²⁶SMITH, S (1984) p.36

¹²⁷LJ 17 April, 1863, p.8

¹²⁸SMITH, S. (1984) p.36

boys' background sufficiently clear.¹²⁹

The impact of these events on Leicestershire public opinion was compounded in June 1864 with *Another Revolt at Mount St Bernard Reformatory* being announced. The *Journal* described those responsible as "evil-doers" and "desperadoes"; "so serious was the attitude of the delinquents that it was deemed desirable to invoke the aid of the constabulary." The outbreak spanned a fortnight; Inspector Ward and five constables from Ashby had to be reinforced by seven more police from Leicester; at one stage 22 of the recalcitrant offenders were publicly flogged to dissuade their peer group from continuing the action. This news item rounded off a long list of abscondings, offences and punishments with this pronouncement: "We think it desirable again to invite the attention of the Government to the Reformatory System at Mount St Bernard Abbey."¹³⁰ In November 1875 the local police had to be called in yet again when over 50 inmates tried to abscond, some getting as far as Market Harborough.¹³¹

A brief period of relative calm descended, only to break again with a vengeance in the summer of 1878. The *Journal* reported an "extensive mutiny", in the course of which "The boys got complete mastery over the establishment ... such excitement was never before known in Loughborough on a Sunday. This is the third outbreak that has occurred within a short period, and no doubt a strict enquiry will be made into the cause of it."¹³²

The *Loughborough Advertiser* bluntly described the delinquents as "convicts" who approached the police "in military style, armed with sticks, stones, knives and other weapons." Of 60 boys who fled, only 2 reached Manchester; 8 boys were never recaptured. Michael Hanlon, a ringleader, resisted the police viciously, making several attempts to stab the apprehending officer before being overpowered. In Elliott's words: "... news of the battle had been spread abroad and since nothing like it had happened in Loughborough for generations, intense excitement was generated. According to the *Loughborough Advertiser*, thousands of people flocked to the scene and as the captured delinquents reached the police station they were cheered heartily."¹³³ The ensuing Home Office enquiry gave two reasons for the outbreak: the punishment system was too

¹²⁹LJ 17 July, 1863, p.8

¹³⁰LJ 3 June, 1864, p.8

¹³¹ELLIOTT, B (1989) p.14

¹³²LJ 2 Aug, 1878, p.7

¹³³ELLIOTT, B (1989) p.15

excessive, and the premises were too insecure for the type of institution.¹³⁴ Serious and habitual offenders could be punished severely: solitary confinement; public display of names; deprivation of games, recreation, posts of trust, family letters and visits, and of part of food rations, were all "means of correction" in the "section on Discipline and Disgrace."¹³⁵ The weekday timetable, covering work, recreation and prayer, was 15 hours daily (5 am to 8 pm). The regime and work were certainly not soft. Some local opinion is more positive. Many of the youths benefited from vocational training, and settled and married locally. Local employers were often keen to take them on.¹³⁶ (See Education chapter). Eventually, the buildings needed renewing.

The cost of a complete renovation was prohibitive; the Reformatory had its certification withdrawn, and it officially closed on 30 June 1881. 96 boys were still resident; because of the institution's bad reputation, however, no other Reformatory would take the boys and they were, quite simply, discharged.¹³⁷ There was a brief re-opening in 1884-5 to house offenders from Liverpool, who had burnt and sunk an ex-Admiralty hulk used as their home; in 1889 the Liverpool inmates sunk a second ex-warship, but the Whitwick premises were too dilapidated to serve a final time. If the Liverpool inmates represented the average, it is perhaps no wonder that St Mary's Colony had had such travails over its 25 year history. A parliamentary Report of 1897 described the "vast majority" of the boys as "coming from the lowest orders of the Catholics of Liverpool, who are frequently of foreign extraction or descent"; in other words, they were Irish.¹³⁸

The reformatory schools were the centres of debates which have echoes today. Protagonists have been divided by one researcher (Stack, 1982) into either "humanitarians" or "realists": ideological concerns centred on whether institutions should be private, such as St Mary's, or run by central government. The outcome on the ground depended on the interplay of three pivotal groups: the owners (in this case, the Roman Catholic authorities), the central government, and the magistrates and police. As early as 1857, in a generally positive report, a local paper suggested that the monks were overpaid and profit-motivated.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ SMITH, S (1984) p.37

¹³⁵ MSBA, *Rules and Statutes* p.13

¹³⁶ *The Loughborough Echo* of 26.5.1939 in De LP, memoir of Sammy Haywood.

¹³⁷ SMITH, S (1984) p.37

¹³⁸ *Reports on Reformatory and Industrial Schools 1897*, p.857 evidence of Capt. Yonge.

¹³⁹ LC, 13 Nov, 1857, p.5

This criticism is echoed in the context of the exploitation of cheap labour, in 1884. A witness to the Commission on Reformatory Schools, noted the "Strong interest in the managers to keep the children too long, they naturally like to have their school full;" he also added that "the industrial labour of the elder children is of course much more remunerative." From c.1811, Irish-born Michael McCarthy was Head Master, employing "semi-military discipline." He succeeded in getting external work placements for his charges; their popularity may have been due to the cheap labour factor.¹⁴⁰

The foregoing episodes give some flavour of the recidivist vivacity of the boys and the resulting reportage that ensued. Even though the descriptive terms "Irish" or "Catholics" were not widely used in press accounts, the existing knowledge and the instances of surnames were probably sufficient to maintain a negative level of public consciousness about the miscreants and their northern and midlands Irish community backgrounds.

(i) The question of riots and the Irish in Leicester

The nineteenth century saw the consolidation of the Irish image in terms of "riots", "rows", "rebellions" and "randies". Leicester featured in this process; how, and to what extent, are the questions now addressed. Table 12 has been constructed to help contextualise and catalogue Leicester's contribution to the Irish "riot" debate, which centres on the issue of the type of riot and the degree of seriousness and disorder it encapsulated. The most useful typology is that offered by Philips (1974).¹⁴¹ He divided riots into two broad categories: type A and type B; the criteria for both are listed in *Table 12*. Type A was the more serious, with a political dimension, and involving a military presence; type B was less serious, involving attacks on police.

The two disturbances in the late 1830's (see (b) above) can be described as relatively minor inter-communal clashes between English and Irish residents, as can the event of August 1848. This latter affair, referred to in the *Leicester Chronicle* as "An Irish Rebellion on a small scale", which in itself has interesting political overtones, even

¹⁴⁰*Rep. on Reformatories and Industrial School Commission Evidence*, PP (1884) XLV, 5; quoted in STACK, J A., *Interests and Ideas in 19th Century Social Policy: the mid-Victorian Reformatory School*, in *J of Educ. Admin & Hist.*, Vol. XIV, No. 1 Jan 1982, p.4. See unidentified news cutting dated 31.8.62 in MSBA re McCarthy, MSBA.

¹⁴¹PHILIPS, D., *Riots and Public Order in the Black Country, 1835-60*, in QUINAULT, R and STEVENSON, S. (eds); (1974), *Popular Protest and Public Order - Six Studies in British History 1790-1920*.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE
13 February 1836	Attack by drunken mob on James Skerry's house	Belgrave Gate & Green Street, Leicester	B
27 August 1839	Disturbance between the English and the Irish; windows broken	Abbey Street & Green Street, Leicester	B
19 August 1842	• Chartist riots and "battle" of Mowacre Hill	Humberstone Gate & Belgrave Area, Leicester	A
mid-May 1848	Poor Law riots - spread over several days	Belgrave Gate, Russell Square, Wharf Street, Orchard Street, Carley Street, Coal Hill, Archdeacon Lane, Royal East Street; all in Leicester	A/B
18 August 1848	"An Irish Rebellion on a Small Scale" (ie an English-Irish riot)	Belgrave Gate and Abbey Street; Goddards Buildings, Leicester	B
1849	Protestant workers threaten to burn the RC school and to blow up the Monastery	Whitwick colliery town	B
1850	Effigy-burning and anti-Catholic threats by mob.	Loughborough, market place.	A/B
Spring 1857	Sequence of riots in mining village between English and Irish	Whitwick	B
1 August 1858	"An Irish Riot at Sheepy Magna" (ie - exaggerated drinking incident)	A S.W. Leicestershire village near Atherstone	B
9 April 1863	"The Riot at Mount St Bernards" - "Conspiracy and Mutiny"	Leics., RC boys reformatory, near Whitwick	B
3 June 1864	"Another Revolt at Mount St. Bernard's Reformatory"	As above	B
27 July 1878	"Mutiny at Mount St Bernard's Reformatory"	As above	B

Notes: (1) The riot typology employed is taken from PHILIPS, D (1974) Riots and Public Order in the Black Country, in QUINAULT, R. + STEVENSON, S. (Eds), (1974), *Popular*

Protest and Public Order, 1790-1920; p.147 + 165.

(2) TYPE 'A' RIOTS: were more serious than Type B. Type A riot situations are those in which the J.Ps fulfilled these conditions -

- (1) they informed the Home Secretary and/or the Lord Lieutenant of the county
- (2) they arranged for the swearing-in of Special Constables
- (3) they called up the Yeomanry unit, and/or the enrolled military Pensioners, and/or regular troops
- (4) they accorded the riot a political or semi-political profile, possibly involving industrial violence.

(3) TYPE 'B' RIOTS: were, by comparison, less serious. They would generally involve:

- (1) assault on police constable(s) by more than 1 person
- (2) attempts to rescue arrested persons from custody
- (3) crowd disturbances or brawls

TABLE 12 DIFFERENT TYPES OF RIOTS INVOLVING IRISH IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 1835-1880

reached the pages of the *Nottingham Journal*.¹⁴²

The reporting of this incident was a model of its type. Basically, a quarrel over the cost of a shoe-repair job on a quiet Sunday morning escalated into a major inter-communal affray, where the Irish used sticks, stones, sickles and forks; the natives replied with stones, and the police intervened. All the streets mentioned were core areas of Irish settlement; the Irish were described as "madmen" who "brandished in a terrific manner" their assorted weapons and who "ran into the lodging houses" to escape. A number of shillelaghs were found on the ground near the Fleur de Lis public house. Despite the active anti-Irish response, from ordinary English residents as well as the police, when some of the battered Irish appeared in court the *Chronicle* commented that the wounds were "the proofs of affection which the combatants had dispensed to each other with true Hibernian impartiality."¹⁴³ To be fair, the Irish had exacted a human cost at the constabulary's expense:

The English forces became the stronger, for the whole of the Irish were driven back again and had to take refuge in their lodging houses. Blows were dealt freely and brickbats flying on each side....

The police were called and ...

... had to use their staves freely upon the insurgents, and to make a large number of prisoners, with the assistance of the people the police were enabled to do. This was not effected without several police being bruised, Sergeant Fossit's leg being cut to the bone with a sickle, and Sergeant Tarrat's head being laid open with a brickbat.

The *Chronicle* revealed that one of those apprehended had tried to effect the rescue of another prisoner, a typical symptom of a B-type riot.

Of the 36 Irish persons arrested (including two females), 17 were discharged, although all were implicated "more or less in the disturbances, or in opposing the entrance of the police to the lodging-house;" 11 were bound over for various periods and only 3 were given a month's hard labour, with the option of a fine. Just 9 of the 36 were enumerated in 1851; therefore 75 per cent of the group had left Leicester within three years - an indication of the high rate of temporary, transient labour opportunities available. Given the timing of this and similar incidents and the abundance of sickles, the

¹⁴²LC 2 Sept, 1848, p.1 and the *Nottingham Journal*, 1 Sept 1848

¹⁴³unless stated otherwise, all quotes following are from LC article referred to in footnote 142.

situation reflected the presence of a migrant group of seasonal harvest labourers, with some resident, full-time agricultural labourers.¹⁴⁴ Of the 8 enumerated in 1851, only one was named as an agricultural labourer; there was one husband and wife - the husband being a lodging house keeper of Abbey Street, and both no doubt had a degree of self-interest in protecting their dwelling. The legal resolution of the "rebellion" was a balanced decision. The defending lawyer asserted that:

his clients had turned out to repel the mischief offered to them when the police came up, (and) after they had been assailed by the lower portions of the towns people, who had jeered them and broken their windows ... the English people too often took occasion to trample upon and among the poor Irish, against whom they had conceived a groundless prejudice. In the affray the Irish had manifested a disposition to discontinue the disturbance, but were provoked to continue it by a number of idle and mischievous young men.

The sentences and dismissals would seem to reflect this summing up.

There were two riot situations in particular which are not easy to catalogue vis-a-vis their exact Irish connections: those of August 1842 and May 1848. The Chartist-inspired riots of August 1842, celebrated in local folk memory as "the battle of Mowmacre Hill", are included because they were serious incidents involving the mobilisation of military power. Although local historians have ruled out any Irish involvement, this judgement is inaccurate (see Politics and Occupations chapters).

The 1841 and 1851 censuses show an Irish connection with Leicester's staple framework knitting trade; a significant number of Irish-born women married into textile trade families in Leicester, and that there was a marked strength of support for Chartism amongst framework knitters, especially female activists. This important Irish support for Chartism in Leicester may have manifested itself in riot participation.

The second riot situation needing clarification, that of mid-May 1848, received major treatment in the press at the time¹⁴⁵ (and was blamed, unfairly, on O'Connor and the local Chartists).¹⁴⁶ This outburst, over several days, was a deeply felt local response to the harsh situation created by the Poor Law. Not one Irish name is mentioned, but - almost every street in the list of a dozen or so named had a high proportion of Irish residents. It is difficult to imagine them lying back as neutrals, especially when they

¹⁴⁴FINNEGAN (1988) describes permanently resident Irish agricultural labourers in York.

¹⁴⁵LC 20 May, 1848.

¹⁴⁶FIELDING-JOHNSON, T (1906) *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester* p.422 (2nd Edtn).

gained so little from the Poor Law themselves locally (see Chapter on poverty). To quell the serious unrest, a mixed patrol of 300 men, comprising police constables, military pensioners and troops (with fixed bayonets) cleared the streets: clearly a Type A riot situation.

As with crime generally, the Irish are not formally linked with riots in the Town Clerk's report of 1849.¹⁴⁷ Apart from the unique and specialised situation at the penal colony/reformatory, this judgement seems to reflect Swift's contention that the "dangerous classes" were, by the 1880's, beginning to be less of a perceived menace due to their increased commitment to and involvement in their own and other new structures (eg trade unions and the expanding franchise).¹⁴⁸ Apart from the Mount St Bernards outbreaks, there were to be few riots, of either type, in the period post-1860.

The riot near Atherstone of 1st August 1858, though real, was in part a humorous canard, a journalist's creation. Billed locally as *An Irish Riot At Sheepy Magna*, it is as notable for the court reporter's vocabulary as for its intrinsic importance to the riot debate:

"Sheepy Magna had occasion last Saturday to call out for the ghost of Father Mathew. Seven sons of Erin ... holding intercourse rather too long with Sir John Barleycorn, the hot blood of Ireland boiled over For once the Shamrock took the colour from the rose, and the sight of English blood flowing from the constables maddened them with victory. The yell and the brandishing of sickles filled the village with terror ..."¹⁴⁹

The event consisted of an altercation and several brawls occasioned by the inebriated reapers, (presumably seasonal work migrants), refusing to pay part of their account. Despite the florid humour, the emigrés were also described as "blood-thirsty rioters ... instilling the terror of the neighbourhood." Some of the seven attempted to release one who had been arrested; the episode qualifies for riot Type B status not only for this reason, but also because it involved a serious assault on the parish constable and led to

¹⁴⁷STONE, S. 1849 pp.4 & 5

¹⁴⁸SWIFT (1992) p.66; and SWIFT, (1985), p.199

¹⁴⁹*L. Journal* 6 August 1858. This is typical of such incidents nationally; eg. see evid. of Rev. J. Barton, on 4/8/1851, re - a clash between Irish and English harvesters in Kent: the Englishmen waited outside a public house to attack Irish labourers working nearby, and drove them away; PRO/HO 45/3472, QS-ft 27/8/9

an extended series of violent occurrences. It is difficult to take it too seriously, given the "humourous" treatment initially accorded it in the news report.

One series of incidents accorded rather more serious treatment in the Leicestershire press occurred in the mining village of Whitwick. A recent parish history notes, of the 1840's, a "continuing flow of Irish Catholics into the area for work."¹⁵⁰ (See chapter 2 & 3). In 1849, matters came to a head over the perceived inroads being made into the county's Protestant tradition by the monks of Mount St. Bernards. Protestant workers at Whitwick, already facing Irish competition for jobs, threatened to raze the Catholic school and to blow up the monastery. (See chapter 7). This merits a Type 'B' riot classification. Owen (1984) suggests that Irish migrants in Whitwick continued to react with elements of the local residential work force; the resulting rioting led to injury and great damage. He cites as the underlying causes two factors: general overcrowding in the village, and the pressures created by outbreaks of smallpox and typhoid in the later part of 1857. The Irish were regarded as carriers of contagion into the community, sustaining it in their overcrowded dwellings. In 1851, 184/248 (74 per cent) of heads of families in Whitwick were in mining; of these 184, 113 (61 per cent) were outsiders.¹⁵¹ This 61 per cent included Irish, Cornish and other workers. Census analysis indicates 37 Irish coal miners and colliery labourers, of whom 5 were heads of families.

Owen's cited references (see earlier sections), however, refer mainly to the murder carried out by Irishman Edward Lally. There is a suggestion of smouldering hostility in one of the articles (7 Feb 1857) which remarks: "The outrages committed by the Irish in this place still continue." It has not been possible, however, to find sufficient further "outrages" to catalogue - so if the riot designation is to be accorded in this instance, at most it can be only a Type B. The Irish featured as victims in the anti-Catholic disturbances in Loughborough in 1850; a mob burnt an effigy of Wiseman in the market place and threatened to tear down St Mary's, whose priest was the Irish-born Fr. Egan. An Irish male parishioner made ready to defend the church, wielding an axe. (See Chapter 7). This situation is in the Type 'B' riot class as a crowd disturbance, but

¹⁵⁰HUSSELL, C. (1987), *Church of Holy Cross Whitwick - 1837-1987* p.6; and ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), *Holy Cross Whitwick, A Brief History, 1837-1987*, p.7

¹⁵¹OWEN, C. (1984) *The Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield, 1700-1900*, p.202. Owen cites four references for his observations (*L. Chronicles* of 7 Feb., 28 Mar., 4 April and 20 May, 1857; most of these in fact refer to the murder committed by Edward Lally, discussed elsewhere in this chapter. Again, such disturbances were common : see letter of 9/7/1866 from Chief Constable of Cumberland & Westmoreland re - a riot between English and Irish miners at Millom, where 500 persons were involved, and public houses were looted and wrecked, PRO, HO, 45/7855.

can be classified as an 'A' Type in that it was a semi-political outburst at the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy. Irish rioters often used sickles. Some were resident and commuting farm workers; many, the majority, would be transient seasonal migrants. Many reported crimes occurred in late summer, at harvest time.

Leicester fortunately never hosted the Murphyite riots. Almost all of the riot situations in Leicestershire comprise Category B in Philip's typology - the less serious definition - with such manifestations as assaults on officers, attempts to rescue arrested parties, and crowd disturbances or brawls. The Leicester police were tightening their grip on popular, rough pastimes and rowdy behaviour; in 1839, they stopped a large "Prize Fight" on the Hinckley Road.¹⁵² Barclay commented how in his youth (the c. 1860-70 period) authority figures including the police were "our enemies, continually interfering, restraining, repressing".¹⁵³ As Phillips points out, the Irish - some of whom in each generation were newcomers to the urban scene - would take time to absorb the lessons of stricter policing, and would, for some time, react with resistance and attempts to liberate those apprehended.¹⁵⁴

(j) Conclusion

Justice was rarely done in specifically media terms. As well as the nationally established pattern of "humorous" reporting¹⁵⁵ replicated in Leicesters' media, there was the ideological factor that Neal refers to: "a prominent feature of the propaganda war between Anglicans and Roman Catholics was the use by Anglicans of criminal statistics regarding the Catholic population."¹⁵⁶ This practice is exemplified in the issues of *Leicester Conservative Standard* already referred to.

There are some examples, in news reports and court judgements, where humanity and fair play appeared available to Irish defendants. In 1837, an Irishman named Quinn shopping for a bargain joint of meat negotiated an advantageous deal with the butcher, who reneged after payment. The police were called, to be struck by the butcher, who was arrested. "The Mayor said that the policeman, when appealed to by

¹⁵²LC, 28 Dec. 1839

¹⁵³BARCLAY (1934) p.16

¹⁵⁴PHILIPS, D. (1974) p.173

¹⁵⁵JACKSON (1963) p.58

¹⁵⁶NEAL, F., A Criminal Profile of the Liverpool Irish in *Trans. Historic Soc. of Lancs and Cheshire*, Vol. 140, Dec 1991, p.1.

Quinn, would have neglected his duty if he had not interfered."¹⁵⁷

A rather more serious case concerned an incident of violence at Atherstone in the summer of 1858. John Dogherty was charged with cutting and wounding an English labourer with a sickle; it was unclear in evidence where the original fault lay. "After some consultation, the magistrates agreed to commit prisoner for trial - but not for the capital offence of cutting and wounding - merely for the misdemeanour of common assault."¹⁵⁸ Dogherty may have been innocent; if not, he was at last liable to a less severe sentence on the lesser charge.

Heinrick in 1872 stressed the poverty of the Irish migrants and their proximity to deprivation, temptation and crime. This is clearly important in explaining both local as well as national Irish involvement in crime statistics. His remarks on the Irish generally are supported by Dare's comment on the poorest parts of St Margaret's parish - the very parts which were the centre of Irish settlement in Leicester in the 1840's, 50's and 60's:

"There are particular localities in all our large towns well known to the Missionary and Scripture Reader, and the policeman, where the reckless and improvident reside. The backyard and the rookery are their favourite resorts, and the strolling beggar may be traced back to the common lodging house, while the striving poor are found here and there, amongst the more respectable class, struggling to keep up a decent appearance."¹⁵⁹

The accuracy vis-à-vis the Irish of Dare's comment is borne out by the residential locations of Irish offenders in 1876-77 (see sections (e) and (f)). It reflects the overall picture accurately. The Irish in Leicester were predominantly unskilled, poor and relatively uneducated, especially so in the earlier decades c1850-80.¹⁶⁰ Of the 124 first and second generation Irish in the 1876-77 jail data, only 16 possessed occupations that could be defined as skilled; if certain factory jobs are defined as semi-skilled, this adds only 6 more persons.¹⁶¹

It therefore needs to be stressed that whatever fraction they represented of the

¹⁵⁷LC, 28 Jan, 1837

¹⁵⁸LJ, 6 Aug, 1858

¹⁵⁹DARE, in *RLDMS for 1853*, pp 6 & 7. Dare's agenda reflected faithfully that of KAY (1832), who linked pauperism, disease and disorder as the ills of the national "body"; see MOONEY, G. 'Remoralizing' the Poor?; Gender, Class and Philanthropy in Victorian Britain in LEWIS, G. (Ed)(1998), p.26-31.

¹⁶⁰HEINRICK (1872) p.39.

¹⁶¹LCRO DE3370 AND DE3492 1/2 Prison Records

total city population (see *Table 3*), the Irish were a much more significant proportion of the unskilled working class - the very group that was most at risk in regard to law breaking. Care is thus needed in describing the Irish as being over-represented in the city's crime statistics. In any of the census years examined from 1841-91 the Irish-born alone, without adding the second generation, are over-represented. The 1876-77 detailed prison data gives, as we have seen, a figure of 7 per cent of all committals being the responsibility of the Irish-born; this 7 per cent represents 83 committals (from the combined city and county figures; 83/1260). This calculation, from the prison records, is complemented by the following findings: 6.9 per cent of the actual Irish-born in the city of Leicester were committed to prison c. 1876. This finding is reached thus: 63 of the 1876-77 city committals were of Irish-born persons. The Irish-born population according to the 1871 census figures for the city totalled 876, and the same figure for 1881 was 948 persons. By splitting the difference, we reach a notional; Irish-born population for c.1876 of 912 persons. The percentage of the Irish-born who were committed to jail is therefore 6.9 per cent (63/912).

Although by no means negligible, the absolute figure is not drastically high compared to the size of the Leicester Irish-born population. This analysis can be applied to the wider Irish community. If to the 63 first generation Irish are added the 19 committals identified as second generation Irish, we have a total of 84. This combined figure can be set against a notional mean figure for the total Irish population (ie. not only the Irish-born, but partners and children also). This latter figure is derived by splitting the difference between the 1871 and 1881 figures for all Irish: ie. 1582 persons. The percentage of the Irish community committed to prison would then be 5.3 per cent - rather lower than the figure for the Irish-born when considered on their own. (See *Tables 3, 7, 8 and 9* for figures used in above calculations).

The argument then, that the Irish, and the Irish as Catholics, were more prone to criminal behaviour is not supported in the case of Leicester. Indeed, the analysis of the 1876-77 statistics has shown that it was in fact the Protestant Irish who were over-represented when compared with both Catholic Irish and the wider community. Protestant migrants experience difficulties in relating to the host population in the same sense that Catholic migrants do; this must be more disturbing and dislocating for

Protestants, who would expect to be accepted as cultural, social and political equals.¹⁶²

Swift has pointed to the Victorians' belief in a link between vagrancy and crime being particularly problematical vis-à-vis perceptions of the Irish. As Section (d) of this chapter has attempted to show, the Irish in Leicester were over-represented in the vagrancy figures throughout our period, and would therefore have been pre-conditioned as vulnerable targets for criticism, as exemplified in Dare's *Reports*. No allowance was made for the pattern of long-term transient labour, or for the Famine catastrophe.

That the Irish could expect attention from the constabulary was attested to by Barclay's mother, who remarked when he returned one night drunk: "to think that the only steady one I've got that I can rely upon to work, and come home quite, and never get into the hands of the police - ah well, let us pray for him!"¹⁶³ His hard-drinking brother Martin, aged 18, a frameworker knitter of Abbey Street, served one calendar month for being drunk and disorderly.¹⁶⁴

The Irish Dominican prison chaplain, Fr. Vincent McNabb, wrote a "factional" account of a typical Irish prisoner, Patrick Glennon, whose wife's desertion led to his subsequent descent into alcoholism, physical and mental disintegration, attempts at suicide, and increasingly frequent spells in prison. McNabb stressed the repetition of often minor crimes exacerbated by alcohol misuse. The pattern of Irish crime in Leicester certainly reflects these twin phenomena.¹⁶⁵

How did Irish community attitudes towards the police eventually develop? The answer probably lies somewhere between hostility, and a grudging respect. Sligo-born Roger McDonagh served in the Leicester Borough Police from 1899 to 1926. His daughter relates that there was much opposition from other local Irish families to men joining; whilst her father persisted, her uncle, under pressure, dropped the idea. From that time on, there was social tension, with the McDonaghs no longer mixing socially with other Irish families.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶²McAULEY, J.W., *The Ulster Diaspora: some reflections of the northern Protestant experience of migration*, in DANAHER, N. (Ed) (1993), *Report on 10th Conference of Irish Dimensions in British Education*, ISW pp.40-41.

¹⁶³BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.51. Martin, whose father was listed as an agricultural labourer, was aged 3 and the youngest of four children when the family lived in Woodboy St. at the 1871 census; a decade later, the family still resided in the same street, at No.6, A court and Martin is listed as a scholar. By 1876, he had grown up, left the family home and received a taste of prison life.

¹⁶⁴LCRO, DE 3492/2, gaol register, and ACD.

¹⁶⁵McNABB, Fr. V., (1915), *An Innocent*, in *The Wayside - A Priest's Gleanings* pp.99-105. (in DCAL). Referring to the period 1908-1914, McNabb stated "by the Grace of God I was chaplain to prisoners in Leicester for six years. I tried to learn from those poor prisoners;" p.229 in VALENTINE, F., (1955), *Father Vincent McNabb*.

¹⁶⁶Ms Kathleen McDonagh, OHA/ISW, Leicester, 1991. This is presumably similar to the pressures experienced by young Afro-Caribbean and Asian recruits to the police at the present time, where community loyalties come up against community policing.

Although the locating of new police stations in working class areas had obvious motives (see sections (b) and (c) above), experiences of individuals could differ. The self-assured Barclay had no trouble in humorously dealing with pompous policemen.¹⁶⁷

Other respondents recalled the police helping lost children, and patrolling the Belgrave Gate public houses.¹⁶⁸ Many of the descendants of the migrants were still living in the same, run-down central area, until the slum clearance programmes of the 1930's. Experiences and therefore opinions obviously varied. The police, for their part, ran a special fund and clothing distribution charity for needy children around the turn of the century, and numbers of families with Irish names appear on their case record sheets.¹⁶⁹

Irish in-migrants were pre-conditioned to attitudes of hostility towards the new policing practices by their experiences of the two main Irish constabularies. The police forces in Ireland and Britain exercised a much resented social and cultural control over working-class communities. Griffin suggests that the troubled relationship between the Irish police forces and the lower classes "reveals a state of affairs similar to that decribed by Storch in nineteenth century England between the English police and plebeian Englishmen." Hostility was provoked not so much by police political partisanship, but by "their enforcement of social control in working-class areas." Griffin emphasises Oliver MacDonagh's point that Ireland was used by the British authorities as an experimental base for developing centralised, professional policing. Despite some individual Irishmen's interest in joining the police, attractive because of the steady pay and subsequent pension, the majority probably felt some element of detachment if not active hostility. Some of the few economic avenues open to Irish migrants, such as lodging house keeping and licensed hawking, were activities either needing legal permits, or subject to police monitoring.¹⁷⁰ Whilst some Irish arrivals brough with them inimical attitudes to the new policing, the opinion-makers hosting the Irish tended to see them as a disorderly contagion and a catalyst for revolt.

Irish crime in Leicestershire can be related to the general experience of the Irish

¹⁶⁷BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp.134 and 75-6

¹⁶⁸Ms Barbara Morris, OHA/ISW, Leicester, 1993/4.

¹⁶⁹LCRO, Police Aided Association for Clothing the Destitute Children of Leicester, files on Frederick Callaghan, Thomas O'Brien.

¹⁷⁰GRIFFIN, B, 'Such vermin': The Dublin Police and the Public, 1838-1913, in *Irish Studies Review*, No. 13, Winter 1995/6, pp. 21-25; Griffin bases his conclusions partly on two articles by STORCH, R.D.; 'The Plague of Blue Locusts : Police Reform and Popular Resistance in N. England, 1840-57,' in *International Review of Soc. Hist.* Vol. 20, Part 1, (1975); p.61-90; and 'The Policeman as Domestic Missionary : Urban Discipline and Popular Culture in N. England, 1850-80', in *J. of Soc. Hist.*, Vol. IX, No. 4 (1976), pp. 481-509. MacDonagh's theory is expounded in his book : *Ireland* (1968), q.v.

in Britain. The raw statistics need to be viewed in the context of the effects of migration on the migrants as individuals. The rural-urban or peasant-proletariat transition is normally discussed in terms of alienation and demoralisation, characterised by idleness, pauperism, alcoholism, delinquency and prostitution. A parallel solvent effect is noted in regard to the maintenance of religious faith and practice.

D'Arcy suggests that, rather than exile producing demoralisation, the Irish in Britain were more likely to find themselves existing in a continuity of conduct and experience rooted in the everyday practices of rural Ireland, and that this helps to explain the pattern of Irish migrant crime. For the first generation immigrants, there is something in D'Arcy's argument; it is less convincing vis-à-vis subsequent generations.¹⁷¹

The final comment here in regard to the Irish and crime in Leicester comes from Heinrick:

The Irish population scattered through the whole shire must be something near 4,000. In such a population so small a percentage of crime furnishes the highest evidence of the character and moral worth of the people. Here, as elsewhere, however, a discount must be made for the fallen and lost; but it is trifling in comparison with what is to be found in other towns.¹⁷²

What Heinrick does not acknowledge is the damage caused to the community by crime being formally presented as an ongoing social, and thereby domestic political threat, to Britain's emerging national self-concept. This problematization of the Irish was to be a recurring factor.

¹⁷¹See D'ARCY, F., *The Irish in 19th Century Britain: Reflections on their Role and Experience*, in HUTTON, S. et al (Eds), *Irish History Workshop No. 1.*, 1981. The indicators D'Arcy refers to other than criminality and delinquency are discussed elsewhere in this research.

¹⁷²HEINRICK (1872), p.40.

CHAPTER 9

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE IRISH COMMUNITY: THE THREAT TO THE BRITISH BODY POLITIC

But here, even amid the most adverse and depressing influences, we met with evidences of the force of Irish genius and the power of Irish patriotism. The educated intelligence is limited, because of the position of the people; but the exceptional cases are striking and creditable. The steady and sober of the working classes, in an Irish population of nearly 2,000, is comparatively very large; and among them, in conjunction with a limited number who have arisen from the ranks of labour, the patriotic spirit is marked by the foundation of a Home Rule Association, and the large support, in proportion to numbers, which they give to Irish national literature. The Home Rule Association, which numbers over one hundred members, is under earnest, energetic, and intelligent guidance, and promises in the future to become a force of much influence in the municipal and parliamentary affairs of the borough. What is wanted here to aid the leaders of the movement in stimulating and extending the organisation, is periodic visits and addresses from trusted and accredited political leaders, who would speak and act in the name of the parent association. This remark applies with equal force to the other towns throughout England. The meetings recently held in the large towns have had excellent results; but something should be done to extend similar benefits to the smaller towns, where in comparison to population the Irish element is equally influential. In Leicester much has been done which is highly creditable to the zeal and patriotism of our fellow-countrymen; and, under the earnest and patriotic guidance which has effected so much, I have every confidence that much more will be accomplished in the future.

from: Hugh HEINRICK, (1872), *A Survey of the Irish in England*, pages 39-40.

CHAPTER 9

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE IRISH COMMUNITY: THE THREAT TO THE BRITISH BODY POLITIC

PAGE	CONTENTS
397	(a) Introduction:
398	(i) The Irish migrants' political agenda c.1841.
401	(ii) The early and ongoing development of negative Irish stereotyping in the Leicester media.
	(b) The Irish and Working Class Politics in Leicester:
407	(i) The Irish in local Chartism: a threatening presence.
417	(ii) The Irish presence in trade unions, in the Labour Movement and in local government.
	(c) Irish Nationalism in Leicester:
424	(i) The impact of Fenianism
433	(ii) The "Irish Question" in Leicestershire: Home Rule, The Primrose League and the Liberals.
449	(d) The Disestablishment Issue : Irish perspectives in the Politico-Religious debate post-1860 in Leicester.
452	(e) The Politics of Education: Voluntaryism versus State Provision.
460	(f) Conclusion.

TABLES

414	1	Location and Timing of Chartist Activity in Leicestershire, 1839-48
448	2	Popular Nationalism: Irish political motifs depicted on clay tobacco pipes, c.1850-c.1900.
459		<i>Cartoon: 'The Schools' Champion.'</i> from <i>The Wyvern</i> , 22 Nov. 1895.

(a) Introduction

The Irish in Leicester, though small in number, developed a political profile from the earliest stage of settlement pre-c.1840. They survived sustained and long-term negative media stereotyping, which reflected the racist ideology fundamental to British nationalism. Throughout the period they were perceived as a threat to the health of the British body politic. Both the migrants and their hosts had specific and evolving political agendas. In general, Catholics found it easier to deal with national rather than local government in terms of meeting prejudiced opposition.¹

The formation of British national identity involved important anti-Irish and anti-Catholic perspectives, which in turn shaped government and institutional practices towards the Irish in Britain. This chapter explains the political context into which Irish migrants were entering, and provides a framework for understanding the political responses they encountered. After 1829, “the popular discourse of the Protestant nation intersected with anti-Irish racism and defined where the danger to the nation lay.”² Irish migrants were thus perceived as a threat to the established Church and State, and by extension to the whole English population. Tories revelled in the Irish threat, propounded endlessly in the local media throughout the period. Even Liberals, Radicals and Non-Conformists, groups with positive interfaces with Irish Catholics, were ultimately susceptible to this ideology of racialization. The parallel process of problematizing the Irish was reflected in the exaggerated fear of public disorder, and the Irish political threat internally (from Chartism) and externally (from Irish rebels and agitators). Both government and media opinion feared a merger of discontent between the British proletariat and the Irish peasantry.

Local Liberals admired O’Connell, and some of the Irish in Leicester co-operated with English dissenters pre-1840; they also made their mark in local Chartism, a development previously denied by local historians. They participated in trade unionism, and a few leaders, especially Barclay, were powerful influences in the labour movement. From c.1870 the Irish made their appearance in the contexts of local government, Anglican disestablishment and education debates. In terms of Irish nationalist activities, a grass-roots Fenianism existed, and both Land League and Home Rule bodies emerged

¹HICKMAN, M. (1995), *Religion, Class and Identity* p.183-4. Whilst concentrating on Church/State relations re-education, the issues explored have a much wider significance.

²HICKMAN, M., Education for ‘Minorities’: Irish Catholics in Britain in LEWIS, G (Ed) (1998), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*, p.144-6.

in the town. By c.1891 the Irish in the town had the problem, common to all the migrants, of balancing Irish and Catholic interests in the Liberal-Tory mainstream interplay.

(i) The Irish migrants' political agenda c.1841

A high degree of political consciousness existed amongst Irish migrants. Some of the incoming Irish had participated in structured opposition through secret political and agrarian societies and in the campaign for religious emancipation, usually in opposition to established authority.³ Barclay's mother had an important cultural role as a disseminator of historical mythology; his father's knowledge of history and politics was similarly passed on.⁴

Barclay's father, a labourer, had read Milner's polemic, *The End of Religious Controversy*.⁵ This partisan work had a powerful effect on literate Irish Catholic migrants: it "would seem to have been the average Catholic who most appreciated and benefited (it) gave back to the generality of the laity an intellectual confidence."⁶ Ward noted that "most of those of Irish extraction sided with Milner."⁷ Milner's observations served to "defend the Irish from certain prejudiced views of their character."⁸ It crossed generations of Irish migrants, helping to develop an Irish Catholic migrant political agenda whilst imparting a nascent sense of power and purpose to it. In Leicester, the pre-Famine Irish developed an agenda, relevant organisations, and co-operation with sympathetic English Protestant interests.

Barclay noted his father's Young Irelander propaganda, and Irish community support for Fenianism. Religion and politics were symbiotically entwined in this ideological upbringing,⁹ and were clearly acknowledged in Leicester by Barclay:

My father was a Limerick man and we were often hearing eulogies of the hero Patrick Sarsfield, and the women of Limerick who fought and repelled the English during the siege of that city. How we gloated over

³See evidence on popular political allegiances in clay pipe motifs.

⁴See LEES, L.H. (1979), p.214-222; and BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.23, 10 & 11, 6 & 7.

⁵BDA; *The End of Religious Controversy*, (1818)

⁶MATTHEW, D. (1936), *Catholicism in England 1535-1935*, p.151. See HICKEY, J. (1967), *Urban Catholics* p.61-2.

⁷WARD, B. (1911), *The Eve of Catholic Emancipation*, Vol. II, 1803-29, p.180-182.

⁸HUSENBETH, F.C; (1862), *Life of Bishop Milner*, p.14. Milner dealt with Maynooth seminary, the work of the nuns in education and charitable institutions, the beauty of the Irish landscape and the artefact treasures and archaeological remains of Irish history.

⁹BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp. 11, 6 & 7.

the way the Irish Brigade defeated the English at Fontenoy

Just seven lines on in the text came the call to prayer:

..... before going to bed we all knelt down, and after a supper of Indian meal, on the bare uneven brick floor recited the Rosary and we arose feeling good and comforted and strengthened for the morrow's work.¹⁰

Many writers of Irish descent have testified to similar personal experiences.¹¹

There was serious opposition to any Catholic revival in Leicester¹² but in 1826-27 a body calling itself the Leicester Civil Defence Society set up the Friends of Religious and Civil Liberty.¹³ The title was a clear reflection of the agitation for Anglo-Irish working class unity organised in the north-west by the radical orator Henry Hunt. Lees has demonstrated how Hunt's influence operated similarly amongst the Irish in London.¹⁴

Leicester's Civil Defence Society met monthly at the White Bear Inn where the landlord, Hammond Shipley, was an English Catholic. Irish surnames crop up repeatedly in reports about early Catholic-Protestant co-operation in Leicester. A politically articulate Irish population then, albeit small (300 or so), existed in Leicester before the "Famine" arrivals.¹⁵

The Irish surnames listed are Hennan (or Hannon or Heenan), Day, Flinn, Lilly, Linch and Finigan, 6 names, which compares well with the 7 English names (Shipley, Smith, Hall, Seal, Wright, Podd and Knight).¹⁶ A growing degree of Catholic and Irish Catholic self-confidence was evident in Leicester. The October Friends' meeting passed various resolutions on Ireland. The 6 with Irish surnames voted on the resolution. It would appear in Leicester that virtually all of the Catholics involved in dialogue with local Protestants were Irish rather than English.¹⁷ This suggests an articulate Irish presence amongst City Catholics pre-1841.¹⁸ Three of the 6 appear in the RC baptismal

¹⁰BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.7.

¹¹eg. See various personal accounts in LENNON, M. Et al (Eds)(1983), *Across the Water : Irish Women's Lives in Britain*, pp. 213-217, p.147-148; also see HICKMAN, M. in *Irish Studies in Britain*.

¹²See chapter on anti-Catholic prejudice, PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), *Radical Leicester*.

¹³See BELCHEM, J. English Working Class Radicalism and the Irish 1815-50; in SWIFT, R & GILLEY, S. (1985), p.88.

¹⁴LEES, L.H. (1979), p.237; a group of London Irish in 1828 organised the Asscn. For Civil and Religious Liberty, and they liaised with English radicals. Belchem (1985) remarks that both Hunt and later O'Connor saw the incorporation and mobilization of the Irish as a "top priority"; p.87.

¹⁵BDA; Andrews, W.E. (Ed.), *The Truthteller*, 14 October 1826, p.67 and 16 December 1826, pp 394-5.

¹⁶The Protestants - are identified by creed (John Knight, the Society's Secretary, was a Dissenter, as was Mr. Seal; Messrs Wright and Podd were Protestants, whilst Mr Day and Mr Smith were Catholics. Presumably those remaining unidentified names are Catholic, partly because they would appear to be Irish. SEARSON (c.1850) notes that Richard Seal was Sec. of the Radical Association in 1836, which embraced Irish Corporation Reform, p.66.

¹⁷eg NORMAN, E (1985), *Roman Catholicism in England*, p6+7.

¹⁸The 1841 City census held a John Lynch, p.12; and a Mark Flinn, p.14; the Mr Day referred to may have been the licensee of the Daniel O'Connell public house c.1840, see chapter on anti-Catholicism.

registers for 1815-35, where approximately 30 per cent of all entries were Irish.¹⁹ Post-1798, it is not surprising that Irish rather than English Catholics sought accommodation with radical protestants. This important political co-operation was to be lost in the great waves of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic feeling occasioned by the profound local impact of the "Protestant Crusade", the "Second Reformation," in the middle decades of the century.

Leicester also hosted persons from, and people sympathetic to, the Irish Protestant and unionist traditions. As a result of the active involvement of Leicestershire troops in the suppression of the 1798 Rebellion, these units imported Orange ideology and organisation into the town.

In common with the north-west of England, but unusually as regards the midlands and south, Leicester came to host no less than 5 lodges of the Orange Order by the mid-1830's. (see anti-Catholicism)²⁰ Senior notes that "it is probable that most of the men joining the lodges were Irish Protestants who had enlisted in English militia regiments or who had come to England to work."²¹ The 1841 and 1851 Leicester censuses show that in 28 ethnically mixed marriages, of Irish women to English men, several men were ex-military with pensions.²² Some of these Irish migrants, male and female, were undoubtedly Protestant.

The 1798 experience was of long-term significance in Leicester's popular culture: "songs composed then were still sung around many Leicestershire hearths." On its return, the unit was fêted locally, receiving royal and parliamentary congratulations.²³ In addition, the regiment began from in the 1850's to include the Irish harp in its badge as a recognition of its work in Ireland; in 1881 this was renewed, "the Harp of Ireland" appearing on Militia badges.²⁴

Thus most of those Irish who came to Leicester from c.1840 onwards, bringing their Catholic and ethnic identity with them, were moving into a milieu where a tradition of militarily containing Irish nationalist revolt was remembered and celebrated, where

¹⁹BMAM, 32, 632 folio 121-296.

²⁰S.C. *Report on Orangeism, 1835*, Vol. I, App 20, p.145; App. 21, p.157; App. 2, p.30, p.12. See SENIOR, H. (1966), p.151-2 and 174.

²¹SENIOR, H. (1966), *Orangeism* p.152. The 17th Regiment was in Ireland 1826-9; their lodge warrant was obtained in 1828. Also, the Leic. Fencibles and Militia served in Ireland c.1798.

²²1841 and 1851; see discussion on male/female migration in settlement section.

²³LCRO; REED, R. (1881), *Modern Leicester*, p.135. Reed reprinted a letter of loyalty from the NCOs in 1798; this was just when tension was building over Home Rule.

²⁴LCRO: WEBB, E A H (1912), *History of the Services of the 17th (Leics) Regiment*, p.257. It should be noted that drafts from the militia fed the regiment of the line, thus intermixing the personnel with 1798 experience with the 17th Foot.

Orangeism uniquely found physical expression in the midlands, and where the locality remained proud of, and practised, its impressive Protestant historical inheritance, despite the short-lived collaboration of Irish (and English) Catholics with liberal local Protestants.²⁵

(ii) The early and ongoing development of negative Irish stereotyping in the Leicester media

This section will analyse the local media outlook on the Irish, as this represented a continuous fundamental conditioning of the host community's mind-set from the 1820's onwards. This formulated a generally negative stereotype of the Irish as being violent in politics, of limited intelligence and lacking *savoir faire* in the most elementary of situations. Less vituperative by c.1890, it was often disguised as humour. By constant repetition and recycling, underlined by pseudo-scientific "research", a negative perception of all things Irish and Catholic was implanted in the readership's collective psyche.²⁶

Jackson, J.A. (1963) noted that: "the Irish were distinctive and noticeable Economic, political and religious motives often lay behind the attack."²⁷ He cited dress, accent, language and a "foreign church" as being part of the construct. In Leicester, frequent and similar descriptions of Irish reapers and labourers were given in court reports (see Crime) and in comic anecdotes.²⁸

Leicester c.1860 possessed a representative political cross-section in four main newspapers. The *Leicester Journal* (1753) expressed strongly Conservative sympathies, as did the *Advertiser*; the *Leicester Chronicle*, (1810), was an advocate of Whig principles; the *Leicestershire Mercury*, (1836), was the organ of the advanced Liberals.²⁹ A radical "alternative" press appeared c.1890 which embraced openly leftist news and perspectives; Barclay seems to have used *The Wyvern* (1891) for socialist writing, and

²⁵ See chapter on mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism..

²⁶ See KIRKALDY, J.M.G., The Return of the Irish Joke, *Quadrant* May 1980, p.14, and CURTIS, L. (1984) *Nothing but the Same Old Story, The Roots of anti-Irish Racism* and O'SULLIVAN, P., The Irish Joke, in O'SULLIVAN, P., (Ed.) (1994) *The Irish World Wide, Vol. 3 The Creative Migrant*, pp. 57-82.

²⁷ JACKSON, J.A. (1963), p.154. See John Denvir (1894) where in Ch. XXI he uses the subtitle 'The War of Creeds and Races;' HANDLEY also dealt effectively with these issues in his 2 works on the Irish in Scotland, published in 1945 (Ch. VIII, Native Attitudes towards the Immigrant) and 1947 (Ch. IV, Religious and Racial Discord).

²⁸ JACKSON, J. A. (1963), p.156.

²⁹ LCRO, *White's Directory* (1863); p.189. See GREENALL, R.L. (Ed)(1980), *The Leicester Newspapers 1850-74: A Guide for Historians*, for a useful introduction to the Leicester press of this period.

also for airing matters of direct Irish interest in the town.³⁰

A press catering specifically for Irish and Catholic interests appeared in the east midlands only c.1875. Diamond's *Irish Tribune* circulated from 1885 in Nottingham Diocese.³¹ The only other outlet for Irish Catholic interests was the *Nottingham Catholic Magazine* of the 1870's (See Section (c) (ii)).

Some of the Leicestershire readership was influenced by pseudo-psychological ideas about humoralism and phrenology. The local Literary and Philosophical Society appreciated a paper on 'Phrenology' from a local cleric in 1838. L. P. CURTIS has shown the underlying importance of these concepts for negative attitude formation about Irish Catholics later in the century. Many Victorian administrators believed in permanent inherited Irish biological inferiority, beyond any amelioration or control by English influences. This was very much the line of the *Leicester Conservative Standard*, published c.1835-6. This view complemented "scientifically" the explicitly hypercritical and racist views espoused by some historians since c.1700.³² A reading of the descriptions of the Irish which were prevalent in the *Leicester Journal* and the *Leicester Conservative Standard* clearly indicate the stereotypically negative picture presented of the Irish; similar patterns of more subtle denigration also appeared locally.

An example of Paddy's apparent cunning - in reality his desperation - reported by the Unitarian, Dare, in 1854, concerning an Irish firewood seller who sought credit from suppliers whilst having gold coins secreted in his coat.³³ (See chapter 4 (b)). Dare unfailingly highlighted the Irish as malefactors. He was influential, as Unitarians formed the leadership clique of the ruling Liberals.

Media artifices were used on Irish targets by Leicester papers across the entire period. Daniel O'Connell, for example, was encapsulated in a range of Celticised images and stereotypes: chapels, shamrock, the St. Gile's rookery, Hibernicised English expressions such as "ould", "misther" and "mimber," lugubrious salutations, building workers, and the ubiquitous pot of ale.³⁴

³⁰BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.52, 68, 76-80, 110 and 123-6.

³¹DUDLEY EDWARDS, O., and STOREY, P.J., *The Irish Press in Victorian Britain*, in GILLEY, S and SWIFT, R. (Eds), (1985), pp.173-4. No copies appear in LCRO, NDA or BDA.

³²CURTIS, L. P. (1971), *Apes and Angels, the Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, p. 9-10, and p.96. See also *TLLPS*, 1838-9; paper by Rev. W. Bird, p.42.

³³*The 9th RLDMS*, 1854, p.11. It may conceivably have been the case that this artful Irish persuader of 1854 had been genuinely "foodless and penniless" as a "Famine" refugee only a few years previously; the experience would have been such that his resolution never to find himself in a similar situation again would help to explain what to Dare's ears was his dishonest comportment.

³⁴DARE, T., *RLDMS*, 9th of 1854, p.11. LC, 21.3.1829.

Other later descriptions were overtly destructive. The *Journal* in 1847, at the height of the "Famine", bitterly judged the Irish people as a whole:

The Irish, as a people, present a strange jumble of the most extraordinary characteristics. Their idiosyncrasy is one of no common kind. It is an aptitude for quarrelling with everybody, and most with those who evince the more earnest desire to do, and wish them well. Conjoined with this, there is reckless indifference to consequences unpardonable in the savage and untutored mind ... In place of lamentation there is cursing; in lieu of prayer, blasphemy and ungrateful murmurings instead of Thanksgiving. When lowly mindedness and humiliation could be shewn we meet with, too often, only the ravings of madness or inebriation.³⁵

The Irish are not just a "jumble" but a "strange jumble" of characteristics of the "most extraordinary" nature. Somewhat tautologically, their idiosyncrasy is itself uncommon. Even their passivity is ascribed to insanity or drunkenness. The *Journal* echoed the extended and vindictive stereotypes of the *Leicester Conservative Standard*, facilitating the continuance locally of the customary negative portrayal. Even the milder *Chronicle* could be condemnatory: "The best friend to the Irish would be he who could effectually persuade them that the fault lay entirely with themselves Their extreme poverty is simply the natural result of their extreme laziness."³⁶

A systematic scan of the *Leicester Journal* for the 1820's reveals a weekly inclusion of humorous Irish material. This reflects editorial policy and popular "taste". The period around 1829 witnessed a plethora of such content. Typical of the genre was the following sample: 'Nothing Like Whiskey', 'Characteristics of an Emerald', and 'Donnybrook Fair.' All of these were from six to eighteen inches in column length, and appeared in just a few weeks in August and September of 1829.³⁷

The piece on Donnybrook Fair was a stage Irish linguistic masterpiece. In popular English usage, a "donnybrook" was a violent, disorderly gathering.³⁸ In 1865, Dare linked Leicester's Irish with the disreputable "Donnybrook Fair," a link frequently made.³⁹ This patronising lampooning buttressed existing prejudices across the century. There was a virtually unbroken local tradition of featuring such anti-Irish material.

³⁵ *LJ*, 23 April 1847, p.3.

³⁶ *LC*, 5 Sept. 1846 p. 1; and 10 October 1846, p.4.

³⁷ *LJ*, 4th September 1829, 21 March 1829.

³⁸ *LJ* 7th August 1829. Donnybrook Fair was a byword for public disorder and immorality in Ireland until it was banned in the 1850s; its use in an English situation was of course deliberate.

³⁹ DARE, Rev. J., *R.L.D.M.S.*, 20th of 1865.

In 1835, the year when both the LAPTS and the *Leicester Conservative Standard* appeared, the *Chronicle* offered that “evergreen” topic, the Irish bull, for its readers’ consideration.⁴⁰ In 1838, it published *Laughter from Year to Year*; the main story was ‘The Furlough: An Irish Incident’, which “gathered a few samples of Irish character.”⁴¹ The host community was then conditioned prior to the “Famine” influx.

In 1854 an Irish “joke” piece was sandwiched beneath a serious report on the Protestant Alliance and above a sensationalist report on a freak animal. The juxtapositioning of the Irish item was an interesting example of editorial layout.⁴² Similar material appeared regularly through to end of the century. In 1855, the *Chronicle* highlighted a bunch of harmless if verbose Dubliners, “Pat Mooney, Dan Finnegan and Mike Kelly,” patronisingly portrayed evaluating the new Lord and Lady Lieutenant in the expected simple, good-humoured dialogue style. ‘An Irishman’s Will’ appeared in 1875; its theme of reinforced stupidity was universal to the Paddy image.⁴³ One critic notes that such pieces presented the Irish peasant “as he is with his innocent delight in his own absurdity (and) the comical twists in his reasoning.”⁴⁴

Certain Irish melodramas may also have contributed to the formation locally of the Irish stereotype. In Leicester in 1861, Boucicault’s *The Colleen Bawn* was “well received” by local audiences.⁴⁵ Much of its success was due to the Myles-na-Coppaleen character: “a lazy, lying rogue, a horse-thief, a poacher, and an operator of an illicit whiskey still - everything that was anathema to respectable Victorians.”⁴⁶ Were audiences laughing at, or with, the story? Abbey playwrights later condemned Boucicault for presenting stage-Irish characters. Could an English audience empathise, or were they just being entertained? *Arrah-na Pogue* played in 1872, to similar audience reaction.

As late as 1895, a titillatingly humorous account of a potentially bigamous misunderstanding, entitled ‘Paddy’s Two Sweethearts,’ was published by the *Chronicle*. Even towards the century’s end, therefore, Leicester papers still regarded such items as normal. From c.1820 to c.1895, specific Irish stereotypes continuously appeared. This

⁴⁰LC, 8th August, 1835. See CURTIS, L. (1984), p.34, re the Edgeworth’s rebuttal of bulls.

⁴¹LC, 14 April 1838.

⁴²LC (extra) 6 May 1854.

⁴³LC, 5th May 1855; *Leics. D. Post*, 11.8.1875.

⁴⁴WILLIAMS, W.H.A. (1996), *Twas Only an Irishman’s Dream, the Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920*, p.77; citing SYMINGTON, A, *Samuel Lover*, p.96. See *Leics. D. Post*, 11.8.1875, on Title Page of Ch.1.

⁴⁵LEACROFT, H & R. (1986), *The Theatre in Leicestershire*, p.58.

⁴⁶FAWKES, R. (1979), *Dion Boucicault*, p.117.

was crucial in public attitude formation, and undoubtedly affected Leicester's views of the Irish newcomers.

The form and thrust of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic propaganda in the Midlands in the last century had been foretold by "W.E.A." the Catholic polemicist and editor.⁴⁷ He related the slanted and biased coverage of Catholic affairs in England to the similar coverage given to the general affairs of Ireland:

That you should be ignorant of the situation of your fellow-subjects in Ireland, who are represented by the Bible distributors and Baptist School supporters as enveloped in Egyptian darkness, is not a subject of wonder, because these men have the press of England at their beck, and the public papers of Ireland are not current amongst you. Thus whatever you see of that ill-fated island comes through a polluted source, and you are therefore as ignorant of the real state of Ireland, which forms a part of the British empire, as you are of the state of the inhabitants of Hindustan, towards whose amelioration you give your pennies with the same degree of credulity as you do to remove the mist which you are told surrounds the mental faculties of the Irish people.⁴⁸

Media attitudes towards the Catholic Irish remained a problem.

A rather different approach to Irish matters was evident towards the end of the century in the serious discourse published by local learned societies. The *Transactions of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society*, founded in 1835, offer revealing insights. A Prof. Matesdorf wrote enthusiastically in 1892 on the topic of 'Old Irish and Anglo-Saxon Art.'⁴⁹ Given the year, and his probable German origins, the inclusion of such a positive topical piece is not surprising for the Gaelic League was in gestation and several contemporary Celtic scholars such as Kuno Meyer were Germans.⁵⁰ In the introduction, Matesdorf commented:

They were hearing now a good deal of Ireland, but it was more about her present political position than her art. Comparatively few people were aware that Ireland could boast of an epoch of art life at a time when the rest of Europe was barbarous.

⁴⁷"W.E.A.," was W.E. Andrews, a well-known controversialist and a long-serving Catholic editor.

⁴⁸BDA: R220; *The Truth Teller*, 25 September 1824.

⁴⁹MATESDORF, Prof., Old Irish and Anglo-Saxon Art, in T.L.L.P.S. (new quarterly series), Vol. II, Part XI, April 1892; pp.482-5.

⁵⁰Meyer (1858-1919) was a German-born Celtic scholar, at Liverpool UC and at Berlin Univ.

This piece highlighted Ireland's "golden age" at a period when the Home Rule issue was clouded over by the Parnell split amongst nationalists. A learned piece on flora and fauna was entitled 'Notes From Galway'.⁵¹ Another was a safari-style report, 'Three Weeks in the Wilds of South Kerry, with Notes on the Insects and Plants,' containing reflections on the native inhabitants:

The people around us were most hospitable, and the peasantry charming, always ready to do one a kindness. Even at the wildest of mountain cabins we were always made welcome to a glass of milk, and the giver would be greatly insulted if payment were offered, but if children were about, they had not the like scruples.⁵²

The intrepid explorers had found the indigenous inhabitants to be quite friendly. The experience reads as if it had been a colonial expedition, and indicates Ireland's status within the then British Empire. It is not difficult to imagine the resulting culture clash when people from "the wildest of mountain cabins" made their way to an urban centre such as Leicester to find work and to settle.

A predominantly negative stereotype of the Irish featured regularly and prominently in Leicester's media throughout the period. Images of the Irish could be contradictory, compounded of humour, violence, wit, drollery, racism, bigotry, and occasionally even objective comment; the end result, however, tended in general to be demeaning. De Nies has recently examined the role of the British press in formulating an Irish identity for its British readers:

In the early Victorian period, racial contrasts and stereotyping were consistently employed to frame and maintain British and Irish identities. In many Famine-era periodicals, Ireland's misery was presented as ultimately a product of her Celtic identity. Her only salvation, it was believed, lay in Anglicisation.⁵³

The popular press in Leicester, as elsewhere, was aimed at a politically literate, middle-class readership, and both local and national government figures looked to it as a major source of insight into the minds of their constituents. Cultural as well as biological parameters were used to describe the Irish disparagingly (landlords as well as peasants)

⁵¹CRUTTWELL, Rev., 'Notes from Galway,' in T.L.L.P.S Vol. V, Part X, October 1900, pp.528-533.

⁵²BOUSKELL, F, 'Three Weeks in the Wilds of South Kerry with Notes on the Insects and Plants', in T.L.L.P.S. Vol. VIII, May 1903 - April 1904 pp.49-60 and pp.152-3.

⁵³De NIES, M., The Famine, Irish Identity, and the British Press, in *Irish Studies Review*, Vol. 6; No. 1; 1998; p.27.

and Leicester's media was as representative as any in this respect, thus laying an ideological foundation for public opinion formation which combined misinformation with prejudice. Thus the press directly helped formate the racialization and the problematization of the Irish. This political agenda was set, and was in place in time for the Hibernian arrivals into the town in the 1840's and 1850's.

(b) The Irish and Working Class Politics in Leicester

(i) The Irish in local Chartism: a threatening presence

According to local historians, there was no Irish dimension in Leicester's Chartist struggle. Patterson (1954) in his pioneering work on Leicester radicalism, emphasised the quietness of local Chartism in the 1838-42 period, and the prevalence of moral rather than physical force in the local context. One of his reasons was that there were fewer Irish migrants in Leicester. As the Irish were associated with physical force Chartism, and they were more prevalent in northern industrial areas, Leicester's brand of Chartism was by implication less violent. Simmons (1974) conceded an "occasionally riotous" element, but, like Patterson, concluded: "It is also worth noting that the Irish, who formed a considerable element wherever 'physical force' Chartism prevailed, were always few in Leicester."⁵⁴ Was there then any Irish profile to Leicester Chartism?

There in fact was a recognisable Irish profile to Leicester Chartism, operating at two levels: it involved certain key individuals, of either local or national importance; and it involved also significant numbers of Irish women who were married to English framework knitters, men noted for the harsh economic predicament of their trade and for their serious commitment to Chartism. There was also a residual aspect, in that Chartist survivors lived on to impart their beliefs to a new generation; Barclay recalled a meeting addressed by the controversial Leicester Chartist leader Thomas Cooper.⁵⁵

The long-term economic problems and consequent social misery of the hosiery workers were what lay at the centre of Leicestershire Chartism. Trade cycles, unemployment and disappointment with failed trade union initiatives worsened by

⁵⁴PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), *Radical Leicester, 1780-1850* p.302; SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present; Vol. 2: Modern City*, p.162. Other useful sources include: PLUMB, J.H., 'Political History, 1530-1885' in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed)(1954), *V C H L* Vol. II, p.130-4; and LANCASTER, B. (1987) *Radicalism, Co-operation and Socialism, Leicester Working-Class Politics, 1860-1906*, re-influence of Chartism. See also EVANS, R.H., *Parliamentary History* in MCKINLEY, R.A. (Ed)(1958), *V C H L*, Vol. IV, p.213-5.

⁵⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.67. WALTON, J. (1952) *A History of T.Uism in Leicester to end of 19th Century*, p.143.

c.1835. In 1830 John Doherty, the Lancashire based Irish Protestant cotton spinner organiser, set up the National Association for the Protection of Labour. It reached out to Leicester, but lasted only two years, leading sadly to a fragmentation of effort amongst Leicester's framework knitters. Doherty's efforts might have inspired other Irishmen, in Leicester as elsewhere. Also his was one of those Irish names associated in the public mind with radical politics, such as Daniel O'Connell, Feargus O'Connor, Bronterre O'Brien and Michael Davitt all of whom visited Leicester and left an impact in media terms.⁵⁶

Plumb (1954) divides Chartism in Leicestershire into two distinct periods: from 1839 to 1840, and from 1848 to 1849: within these time limits the county and the town respectively were the centres of agitation. At Shepshed and Loughborough in early 1839, agitation was superseded by weapons manufacture; cavalry were sent to Hinckley. These factors suggest a serious threat of violence. What can be said about this stage is that Irish settlement already existed in these areas: in 1841 there were 621 Irish in Leicester, 20 in Whitwick (near Shepshed), 155 in Loughborough and 35 in Hinckley.⁵⁷

There are, in fact, several pointers to Irish involvement in and influence on local Chartism at this early period. A local historian noted that:

Its public advocates were for the most part able but violent partisans of their cause; and Mr. Feargus O'Connor, one of the principal Chartist leaders, delivered an inflammatory address in the Leicester Market Place as early as 1838.⁵⁸

O'Connor (1794-1855), born in Co. Cork, was a Repeal MP by 1832. He fell out with O'Connell, founded the Chartist paper *The Northern Star*, and by 1838 was one of the best known of the radical Chartist leaders. O'Connor enjoyed political credibility because although of Protestant landlord extraction, his father had participated in the United Irish rising of 1798;⁵⁹ the son was openly identified with Irish nationalist

⁵⁶O'Connell was very popular with Leics. Liberals; eg in March 1836, he had to turn down an invitation to visit Leicester, attributing the invitation "to a generous sympathy for the people of Ireland whose advocate I am;" Paget Letters, LCRO, DE 1274/13; D. O'C. (London) to T. Paget, 26.3.1836. O'Connell made a celebrated defence in Leicester's Theatre Royal (1841) of one William Baines, a dissenter jailed by a CofE church court for non-payment of church rates (see SIMMONS (1974), p.167). As late as 1846, O'Connell spoke in Leicester to a "Friends of Ireland" gathering at the Crown and Anchor tavern; see LC, 2/5/1846, p.2. In 1844, the "only political demonstration of the year was held by express sympathy with Daniel O'Connell MP," as "he had not had a fair trial" for sedition; see SEARSON (1850), p.115. (In April 1836, O'Connell had spoken eloquently in Loughborough on the problems of Ireland caused by the Union with England; see LC of 9.4.1836).

⁵⁷ACD 1841-91; these 1841 figures include spouses and offspring, as well as Irish-born.

⁵⁸FIELDING JOHNSON, T. (1891/1906), *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester*, p.417.

⁵⁹The Leicester Chartist Cooper noted that "the connection of his family with the "United Irishmen" and patriotic sufferers of the last century, rendered him a natural representative of the cause of political liberty;" COOPER, T. (1872), *Life*, p.179-180.

aspirations, including abolition of the Union. He maintained his Irish agenda, and aimed to build an Anglo-Irish alliance of the common peoples in a single agitation for social and political reform.⁶⁰

Searson, a contemporary Leicester Liberal, described O'Connor's contribution at the "great Radical demonstration" in Leicester in 1838 as an "inflammatory harangue, which put dangerous thoughts into peoples heads."⁶¹ Plumb does not mention this important 1838 public demonstration. The original news coverage explains the relevance of O'Connor's impact.

A crowd of 2,000 crammed the market square, surrounded by numerous large banners, one of which proclaimed 'Away with oppression, and Justice for Ireland.' Three possible explanations exist: the crowd contained either Irish Chartists living in Leicester, or Leicester-born persons who saw Ireland as a relevant issue, or both. Lowe has described how Irish issues received sympathy amongst Lancashire radicals.⁶² A Mr. Woodhouse (from Nottingham) "would not say anything against the Irish (God Bless them!) and there was not a man who would sooner fight for the Irish people than himself."⁶³ O'Connor developed his anti-O'Connell line, which may have served to alienate rather than captivate Irish Catholics present.

Also significant was the presence on the platform of two English Protestant brothers, John and Richard Seal. They are the link with the earlier campaigns in Leicester for Catholic emancipation in Ireland and Britain. Both Seals were members of the Friends of Religious and Civil Liberty, that English-Irish, Catholic-Protestant body which had functioned Leicester c.1826, (see above). John Seal, a bookseller, went on to publish *The Midland Counties Illuminator*, Leicester's own Chartist imprint, edited by Thomas Cooper, whilst Richard in 1836 became Secretary of the Radical Association, a Chartist precursor, which supported Irish Corporation Reform.⁶⁴ Other important Irish-born Chartists who operated in Leicester included George White and James Duffy, neither of whom are featured in existing accounts, and whose contributions therefore challenge the conclusions based on an absence of an Irish input.

⁶⁰MATHER, F.C., (1965), *Chartism*.

⁶¹SEARSON, G.R. (1850), *A Quarter of a Century's Liberalism in Leicester*, p.80; describes O'Connor's fierce attack on Robert Brewin, the Liberal Mayor.

⁶²LOWE, W.J. (1989) *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: the Shaping of a Working Class Community*, p.179.

⁶³*The LC*, 24 Nov. 1838; p.1. Whilst genuine, his expression partly cloaked a venomous personal attack on O'Connell and the Leicester Whigs.

⁶⁴RAFTERY, M. (1984), *The Writers of Leicestershire* - entry re Thomas Cooper, p.31; also see SEARSON (c.1850), *Liberalism*, p.66.

George White, born in Cork (1811), was a fine orator; newspaper reports rarely mentioned his "thick Irish brogue".⁶⁵ Originally a woolcomber, he operated in Leicester from the late 1830's. As he was a Chartist leader in Leeds in 1839-40, and in Birmingham in 1841, he almost certainly must have campaigned in Leicester in 1838, when O'Connor addressed the large demonstration. As one of White's political mentor's was another Irishman, one John Smith (of Limerick), this suggests that an Irish ethnic leadership element was evident in Leicester Chartism in 1838. According to another account, White organised the Chartist committee in Leicester.⁶⁶ He was jailed whilst at Leeds, c.1840-1, and at Kirkdale in 1849.⁶⁷ Within Chartism, White was a reporter and full-time agent for *The Northern Star*, and by inference an ally of Feargus O'Connor.⁶⁸ Despite leaving Leicester, he still attempted to influence events in the town in the early 1840's (see below).

Another Irish activist operating in Leicester by 1842 was one James Duffy, whose involvement is best analysed in the context of Thomas Cooper's activities. Cooper (1805-92), editor of the *Midland Counties Illuminator*, was utterly loyal to O'Connor, and correspondingly critical of Bronterre O'Brien; in effect, Cooper sowed the seeds of serious local division based on allegiances to the two Irishmen. Cooper's memoirs of 1842 make clear his adulation of O'Connor as "The Lion of Freedom" "there was much that was attractive in him his conversation was rich in Irish humour."⁶⁹ Cooper lauded O'Connor's inspiring work in Leicester.⁷⁰ Much later, he came to regret his unfairness towards O'Brien. Cooper's ambivalences were problematic, for on teetotalism and adult self-education, Cooper followed policies in Leicester in conflict with those of O'Connor, who opposed the teetotal lobby.⁷¹ Given the acknowledged Irish pattern for contact with alcohol, such purism may have served to fend off some Irish and other proletarian elements interested in Chartist ideas.⁷²

⁶⁵WRIGHT, D.G. (1987), *The Chartist Risings in Bradford* p.2; 38. See also JONES, D; *Chartism and Chartists*, p.177.

⁶⁶JONES, D., p.177, points out (p.96) that a Chartist leaflet called *What is a Chartist* was translated into Welsh and Irish, which is an indication of the likely reading markets for such political indoctrination.

⁶⁷THOMPSON, D. (1984), *The Chartists, Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*, p.144. In 1841, White was insisting to Birmingham Chartists that the Whigs and the middle classes could not hold power without working class assistance; see EPSTEIN, J. (1982), *The Lion of Freedom: Feargus O'Connor*, p.285.

⁶⁸THOMPSON, D. (1984), p.48.

⁶⁹COOPER, T. (1872), *The Life of Thomas Cooper*, p.176, 179-80.

⁷⁰Letter of Cooper to Robert Gammage, 26 Feb. 1855; cited in PLUMMER, A. (1971), *Bronterre - A Political Biography*, p.174-5.

⁷¹See BARNES, R. *The Midland Counties Illuminator - A Leicester Chartist Journal*; in *T.L.A.H.S.* (1959) Vol. XXXV, p.71.

⁷²Both HEINRICK (1872) and BARCLAY (1934) make numerous allusions to the drink factor amongst the Irish in 19th century Leicester.

With Cooper's relationship with O'Connor in perspective, Duffy's input can now be considered:

James Duffy (a militant Irishman who had been sentenced to three years imprisonment in 1840) was left in joint charge of the Shakespeareans when Cooper left Leicester in August 1842. But his stay was too short to make any lasting impact on the town.⁷³

Harrison's conclusion needs revising, as it pays insufficient attention to the events of 1842 featuring both O'Connor and Duffy. When O'Connor visited Leicester in January, it was Duffy's section of the movement that met him at the rail station.⁷⁴ Later in the year, as political tensions increased, Duffy features prominently. As well as Harrison's (1959) verdict, Evans (1958), firmly contextualised Duffy in Leicester Chartism in 1842:

First the colliers of Whitwick and Snibston struck; then the glove hands; then the Chartists, exhorted by agitators like Duffy, an Irishman from Lancashire, tried to turn the movement into a general strike for the Charter.⁷⁵

August 1842 saw a major outbreak of agitation and threatened riot. Searson noted that "the colliers at Whitwick, advised by Chartist orators, had struck work." Mining witnessed three causes of serious unrest, mass meetings and strikes: these were colliers' grievances, Chartist oratory and general extremist activity. Whitwick, which as early as 1841 had a small number of Irishmen and their families (20 in all), featured prominently in the unrest. Leicester framework knitters, a proportion of whom were either Irish, or married to Irish women, took fright from the rumours circulating in the coal areas:

Night after night hundreds of framework knitters met in the Market Place, where Mr Duffy, a Lancashire Chartist, worked upon the discontent of the men, and advised them to visit the factories and compel the hands at work to leave the frames.⁷⁶

At 6 a.m. on Thursday, 18 August, a parade of 1,000 men with band and flags trooped the town. The Yeomanry Cavalry were in reserve; the Mayor read the Riot Act. The

⁷³from HARRISON, J.F.C., *Chartism in Leicester*, in BRIGGS, A., (1959/72)(Ed) *Chartist Studies* p.133. Cooper's followers had their HQ in the Shakespeare Rooms.

⁷⁴SEARSON, G.R. (1850), p.103.

⁷⁵EVANS, (1958), p.213. These strikes were part of a wider wave, in the north of England and the Potteries. Evans also notes that Cooper's loyalty to O'Connor alienated moderate Leicester Chartists, p.212.

⁷⁶SEARSON, G.R. (c.1850). p.106. A similar account is given by FIELDING-JOHNSON, p.419-420.

next morning, 1,500 men, armed with stones and bludgeons, moved towards Belgrave along Humberstone Gate. They were charged by the new police and mounted yeomanry at Mowmacre Hill; 4 were arrested. Pre-emptive limited violence was used by the authorities to overawe a potentially more violent outbreak. The contention, then, that Leicester's Chartism was not characterised by violence, and that this was so partly because of an absence of Irish agitators, is untenable. O'Connor, White and Duffy made strong contributions to a vibrant, vigorous, and at times violent, manifestation.⁷⁷

There is contributory evidence which highlights this Irish dimension. A Kidderminster Chartist, the Rev. Humphrey Price, went bail in 1842 for the Irish Chartist lecturer John West of Macclesfield. West, a noted orator, was an exiled handloom silk weaver forced from Ireland by the collapse of the textile industry. A mainstream Chartist, "he was always ready to defend the cause of Irish independence and to speak and write in favour of the repeal of the union." The fact that Price was thanked, and that publicly, by the Leicester Chartists for supporting West, provides some indication of at least a latent sympathy for the Irish predicament amongst Leicester's Chartist body.⁷⁸

There is also some significant statistical evidence which suggests that Irish women may have been heavily represented amongst those formally enrolled in Leicester as Chartists. In general terms, "the most dramatic growth in membership occurred in the East Midlands;" Leicester had 3,100 signed-up Chartists in the year 1841-42. Only London could beat this figure.⁷⁹ George White ignored formal membership, and aimed deliberately at the widest possible sympathetic audience, signed up or otherwise.⁸⁰ Table 1, showing Chartist activities and membership in Leicestershire 1839-48, indicates how far the movement had penetrated the locality.

In Leicester almost a quarter of the population (of 1841) had signed the first Chartist petition of 1839, and the affiliated bodies included a branch of the Female Radical Association.⁸¹ The Liberal Searson, writing c.1850, described the formation in

⁷⁷There were also several other individuals, identified as potentially Irish by name only, operating amongst Leicester's Chartists: George Flynn may have been that Flynn mentioned in the 1826 Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty, the lobby of English/Irish RCs and Protestants which was pro-Emancipation; a Chartist framework knitter, Finn, who chaired the Leics. Anti-Corn Law Assn in 1840, had addressed operatives' meetings in 1837 (as had 1 of the Seals) - see SEARSON (1850) p.79; one Finlan, a Reform League worker, spoke in Leicester at least once; a G. Bown, A Leicester Radical, wrote a pamphlet called 'Physical Force'; see HARRISON, J.F.C. in BRIGGS, A. (1959/(Ed)), p.119 and 137. SEARSON (1850) mentions one Mr Riley as an active Liberal in the 1830's, he does not feature as an Irish entry on the 1841 census, despite the surname.

⁷⁸THOMPSON, D., (1984), *The Chartists*, p.171 and 227-8.

⁷⁹See EPSTEIN, J. (1982), membership table, p.231.

⁸⁰EPSTEIN (1982), p. 233; George White, speech of July 1842 to the "land retailers" on the NCA Executive.

⁸¹Table 2 is based on data in THOMPSON, D. (1984), *Appendix*.

May 1839 of the "Female Political Union"⁸². Given these evidences of female political activism in Leicester, an analysis of Irish born females in 1841 shows that there were 28 "mixed" marriages (ethnically) of Irish wives to English husbands. Most males were Leicester-born framework-knitters, (some of whom had presumably met Irish wives whilst on military service in Ireland). Twenty of these couples were both aged over 40, and were therefore less economically flexible; the 19 Irish single males who were framework-knitters or weavers in 1841 were all married, to either English or Irish wives. Of the unmarried Irish females, 12 worked in occupations with textile connections (framework-knitters, seamstresses, stocking makers, worsted makers, and lace and dress makers). Four of the second generation were involved.⁸³ All this suggests a survival of the domestic system of manufacture, with Irish men, women and children bringing over skills already developed in Ireland. Collins and Lees have shown how significant imported Irish female industrial labour was for Britain's burgeoning industrial areas. Leicester was probably a similar scenario, and Irish females married to native framework knitters probably helped produce the disproportionately high numbers of active women Chartists recorded in Leicester (See Table 1). In 1852, for example, 327 of the 390 framework knitters with votes were Liberal supporters, and these formed 14 per cent of the electorate.⁸⁴

That Chartism may have contaminated Catholics in Leicestershire was held to be fact as far as organised Protestantism was concerned. As early as 1842, the Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society declared solemnly: "the lofty pretensions of Romanism have in this immediate locality, as well as at Leicester and Derby, degenerated into a union with Chartism (they) march, in procession, to the Romish place of worship." Again, in 1848, the Society publicly recalled "the connexion of Romanism with that of Chartism This again needs no proof beyond the universal impression made on the minds of those who have witnessed Chartist processions and Romish out-of-door preachings."⁸⁵ A direct parallel was being drawn

⁸²SEARSON (1850), p.88.

⁸³ACD 1841. The 19 Irish males includes 2 tailors and a worsted worker.

⁸⁴COLLINS, B. Irish Emigration to Dundee and Paisley in the first half of the 19th century, in GOLDSTROM, J.M. and CLARKSON, L.A. (Ed)(1981), *The Irish Population, Economy and Society*; LEES, L.H., mid-Victorian Migration and the Irish Family Economy, in *Victorian Studies*, Vol. XX, No. 1. Aut. 1981. Poll Books data cited in LANCASTER (1987). p.78.

⁸⁵LCRO; LPTS: Reports of 1842 and 1848, p.7 and 14 respectively; the 1842 noted: "At Derby, the Chartist petition to the Queen was confided for presentation to the R.C. priest - *The Times*, Jan 26: 1842". Bourgeois RCS also feared Chartism: "A great deal of alarm exists about the Chartists - and people well informed in the highest quarters think the country is in a very critical state. God grant all may turn out for the good of his holy church"; Ambrose de Lisle to Rev. S.A. Procter, OP, Holy Cross, 21 May 1839. The work of Rosminian missionaries such as Gentili and the Irishman Furlong amongst the poor troubled middle class Catholic elements; Gentili was also sympathetic to Irish causes. De Lisle was Conservative to the core.

PLACE	Population in 1841	1839	NCA	1842	1844	1848	Land Branch	Company Members
LEICESTER	53,000 (13,126)	F; PU; TT	3,100	*	*	*	*	*
Hinckley	7,291	*		*		*		
Loughborough	10,170 (6,180)	(c) PU; TT WMA	800					
Ashby de la Zouch	5,652	(c) F; PU; Y					*	*
Wigston	2,189					*		
Thornton	1,375		*			*		
Sheepshead	3,872	P.U						
Earle Shilton	1,287	*						*
Sileby	-----							*

NOTES: (1) Column 2 is from *Parliamentary Gazetteer*, 1841, and Capper's *Topographical Dictionary* for 1813. Such figures are notional, as Chartist localities rarely coincided with parliamentary boundaries. They give some indication of the size of areas. Figures in brackets are of signatures to the first Chartist petition in June 1839. A star in any column indicates some recorded activity of the type or on the date indicated. Column 4 is for NCA membership cards in 1842, from the *Northern Star*.

(2) Source: THOMPSON, D., (1984), *The Chartists. Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*, Appendix, p.341-368.

(3) *Abbreviations Used:*

F = Female Radical Association
TT = Tectotal Chartist Association

PU = Political Union
WMA = Working Men's Association

Y = Young Chartist's Association

TABLE 1	LOCATION AND TIMING OF CHARTIST ACTIVITY IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 1839-48
---------	---

between Irish agitation, Chartist rhetoric and the *svegliarini* techniques of the Rosminians. The leading Rosminian, Gentili, was noted for his open denunciations of English capitalism and of the demoralising effects of industrialisation. The tendency of the national press to play the Irish card in relation to Chartism nationally only underlined this tendency in Leicester.⁸⁶

O'Connor's election as MP for Nottingham in 1847 ensured that he would be often present in Leicester whilst *en route* to his seat. He was cheered as he passed through Leicester station in April 1848; two months later, at Loughborough, the authorities banned a meeting of around 8,000 of O'Connor's supporters and dragoons were brought to the town to keep order. Searson alleged that "agitators" and "plotters" from London, Manchester and Liverpool, "advocates of physical force," had visited Leicester. These were all Irish areas of settlement, but apparently cool heads prevailed in Leicester. All the same, an April meeting attracted 3,500 to the Amphitheatre.⁸⁷

This Leicester meeting of April 1848, which called for the undiluted programme to be enacted, was notable for the Irish dimensions expressed. O'Connor was praised, almost messianically: "They might expect that in very few days Mr O'Connor would be among them." Sympathy was expressed for those "Irish people hissing the soldiers - could they blame the poor Irishmen if the streets were to run down with the blood of the aggressor." An ex-soldier who "had recently returned from Ireland" took the platform, and "described the misery he had beheld in Dublin, and the county of Tipperary."⁸⁸ Such an atmosphere justified central government apprehension of a joint Irish nationalist-Chartist insurrection.

"On the 8th May Feargus O'Connor paid a visit to his 'Chartist children' in Leicester a procession of 2,000 persons escorted him through the town, 10,000 surrounded the hustings to hear and cheer 'the Lion of Freedom.' "⁸⁹ O'Connor "was received at the railway station with great enthusiasm by his many local admirers. A carriage and four conveyed him to the Bell Hotel, where he addressed the assembled crowd from the roof of its portico" Despite the fact that local Tories demanded the employment of constables with staves, and the presence of Yeomanry Cavalry

⁸⁶See BELCHEM, J., English Working-class Radicalism and the Irish, 1815-50 in SWIFT & GILLEY (1985), p.93 re Irish-Chartist axis in the media.

⁸⁷HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed)(1954/69), V.C.H. Vol. 2, p.132, citing L.J. of 28/4/1848 and 16/6/1848; see also SEARSON (1850), p.138-143.

⁸⁸LC, 8 April 1848.

⁸⁹SEARSON, G.R. (1880), p.143.

throughout, no violence was offered. Yet, a serious riot caused by Poor Law distress a week later was laid firmly at O'Connor's door: "The recent presence of Feargus O'Connor in Leicester had no doubt added to the spirit of lawlessness and resistance now manifested."⁹⁰ What is true is that this poverty-inspired riot did take place in the core area of Irish settlement, but this seems to have been coincidental, for the subsequent court cases did not contain Irish names. This does not mean that these marchers were in hostile territory; those Irish just arriving in Leicester by 1848 would have been primarily "Famine" refugees trying to settle in to finding work and accommodation, and presumably were too preoccupied to risk further calamities.⁹¹

Despite the most dramatic riot being rooted apparently in Poor Law protest, Chartist fears, based on threats of violence, were present locally in 1848. Plumb points out that meetings increased as summer drew on; riots occurred in Countesthorpe; and reports that marchers drilled with pikes in Earl Shilton were recorded.⁹² Perhaps Leicester's historians have preferred to avoid discussing the very real threats of serious radicalism and violence in local Chartism, and in doing so wittingly or unwittingly expunged evidence of Irish involvement. It would seem that the early example of "liberation theology" practised by the radical Rosminians in north-west Leicestershire empowered those economically subjugated converts to Catholicism to become supporters of Chartism. As the Loughborough-based Protestant Tract Society pointed out in 1844, "about thirty families of Irish Roman Catholics are now located" (in Loughborough). "The priests have taken due advantage of these their natural allies." It would have been strange for these Irish not to have been associated with the Chartist demands.⁹³

That a residue of Irish-influenced Chartist ideology remained in Leicester minds is attested to by the inquisitive Unitarian missionary, Joseph Dare. Expressing concern about the politically unsuitable reading habits of the working class, he constructed in 1850 a survey of the average circulation of weekly penny publications. Amongst various radical, atheistic and secular publications, noted Dare, were *The Red Republican*, edited by the Irishman Harney, and *The National Instructor*, edited by O'Connor. They sold 66 and 76 copies respectively. Indirectly, an Irish radical influence was still at work

⁹⁰FIELDING JOHNSON, T. (1891/1906), p.422.

⁹¹See chapter on Crime.

⁹²PLUMB, (1954), p.132.

⁹³LCRO; LAPTS, Report of 1844.

amongst Leicester's working-class readership, an influence that burgeoned into other republican and radical organisations later in the century.⁹⁴

(ii) The Irish presence in trade unions, in the Labour Movement and in local government.

It would be misleading to utilise Barclay's high socialist profile to buttress the case for strong support existing for the labour movement amongst the Irish in Leicester.

There is some evidence of Irish involvement in various working class political structures, especially post-1850, centred around Barclay and a few similarly committed activists. Statistical evidence of a significant proportion of Irish committed to trade unions is not there, although there are some links with the Leicester co-operative movement. In Leicester, two prominent Catholic leaders were associated very publicly with justice issues: the bishop of the diocese, Edward Bagshawe, and the famed Dominican preacher Vincent McNabb; these provided a context for local Catholics to consider socialist ideals without compromising their basic religious doctrine.⁹⁵

Some migrants may have imported trade unionism as they settled. Catholics in Ireland could enter craft guilds from 1783; as English and Scottish workers were sometimes imported as "blacklegs," these Irish combinations must have been effective.⁹⁶ By the early 1890's, Irish trades unionism had made almost as much progress as the English organisations had, especially in the trades of transport and general labouring, textiles, and clerical and teaching occupations. Migrants may have transferred membership or joined a new union when re-settling here. The Webbs noted that Irish trade unionism by the 1920's "had become fired with nationalist spirit and almost revolutionary fervour;" and Michael Davitt was prominent in this development.⁹⁷ Davitt visited Leicester twice, in 1886 and again in 1906; his speeches on these occasions are examined below. Generalising also from the Irish input into the great London Dock Strike, one has to assume that New Unionism attracted Leicester's unskilled Irish.

Doherty's national pioneering work in 1830 was discussed earlier; his name and

⁹⁴DARE, J., *RLDMS*, 1850, p.13-16.

⁹⁶There were a number of Christian leaders in Leicester hugely sympathetic to the working people and their causes; most notably, Canon Donaldson of St. Marks (CofE), Belgrave Gate. Much of this support focussed on the 1905 march of the Leicester unemployed to London.

⁹⁷RYAN, W.P (1919), *The Irish Labour Movement from the Twenties to Our Own Day*, pp. 54-73. See also BELCHEM in SWIFT & GILLEY (1985), p. 88 re O'Connell and TUs. O'Connell's opposition to unions undoubtedly deterred many Irish from seeking membership.

⁹⁷WEBB, S & B (1926), *The History of Trade Unionism*, p.472-3. See Educ. Ch. Re TUism amongst Irish male teachers.

reputation may have attracted some of those 300 Irish then in Leicester.⁹⁸ More likely to have promoted their involvement was Richard Seal, a shrewd and radical knitters' leader who opposed sectionalism and who would therefore have supported Doherty's ideas. This same Seal became a Chartist, and in the late 1820's was prominent in the Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty, the combined Catholic - Protestant committee which contained several Irishmen. Seal would have enjoyed the trust of many local Irish, who may therefore have responded by supporting causes of mutual interest.⁹⁹ The Irish in Leicester in 1836 were identified with no one particular trade. They were paid the going wage rate "if of equal capability;" the fact even that "very few, if any, were bricklayers' labourers" indicates that only a negligible amount were in skilled occupations.¹⁰⁰ The testimony of Barclay and Heinrick indicates little amelioration before the 1870's. From census evidence, it is clear that movement into semi-skilled and skilled occupations by the Famine (and succeeding) generations was significant only from c.1880.¹⁰¹ There was c.1841 some small but significant representation of the Irish-born in framework knitting (in terminal decline): there were 15 males and 28 females, the latter married to English knitters. The knitters' enthusiastic support for Chartism suggests that they would have readily embraced trade unionism.

Even in the building trade, in the strike of 1869, bricklayers' labourers, where by then most of the Irish in the trade were concentrated, were forced to accept the *status quo ante*.¹⁰² One Dick Taylor (1901-91), a practising Catholic who had helped build both Holy Cross and the second St. Patricks, "was also a long serving Labour Party member and trade unionist."¹⁰³

Irish involvement in trade unions is more evident from c.1890. In 1906, for example, at a Labour election meeting attended by Michael Davitt, the president and secretary respectively of the Leicester Trades Council were a Councillor Kenny and a Martin Curley.¹⁰⁴ Both probably had Irish connections. Curley, a socialist shoemaker, became a power-broker in the Labour Representation Committee, a supporter of the co-

⁹⁸WALTON, J. (n.d.), *Trade Unions in Leicester*, p.143, citing WEBB (1926), p.121. (in LCRO)

⁹⁹PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), p.183. See BELCHEM in SWIFT & GILLEY (1985), where Irish and English persons, membership of various radical organisations showed evidence of significant overlaps in personnel.

¹⁰⁰1836 Report on Irish Poor in GB; App. G; p.164.

¹⁰¹BARCLAY, T. (1934), pp. 10 and 11, and 14; HEINRICK, H (1872), p.39-40; ACD 1841-91.

¹⁰²LC, 12 June 1869.

¹⁰³LM, 8 Oct. 1991; obituary article; enquiries at parish church suggest the deceased was of Irish extraction.

¹⁰⁴Leicester Daily Post, 15 January 1906; there was a William Kenney, an Irish-born shoe finisher, living at 228 Belgrave Gate, married with 6 children, in the 1881 census; ACD 1881, p.5.

operative movement, and a strong mover for working-class representation on school and poor law boards. Barclay's influence may be perceived here, for Curley was heavily influenced by one of Barclay's ideological pupils.¹⁰⁵

The McCarthy family was particularly involved in the co-operative movement. Dominic McCarthy was on the 1910 General Committee of the Leicester Co-operative Society,¹⁰⁶ and also in an official photograph of 1915.¹⁰⁷ In 1866 the Co-op opened a store in Sanvey Gate, and later in Belgrave Gate branch; both were within the orbit of Irish settlement. The McCarthy family were close friends of Barclay (although Barclay's socialism was much more left-leaning). Dominic's wife also was Irish. He supported the 1905 unemployed march to London; was elected as Poor Law Guardian for Castle Ward; and had been a national organiser of the Boot and Shoe Union.¹⁰⁸ Neither Barclay nor McCarthy can be said to be typically representative of their ethnic community, yet both indicate that basic Labour orientation common to most of the Irish in Britain in the twentieth century.¹⁰⁹

Barclay in fact made real efforts to indoctrinate his ethnic compatriots. He founded the Labour Club which propagated Independent Labour Party and Social Democratic Federation ideals, in 1893 in Bedford Street, in the core area of Irish settlement; in 1889, he had lectured on the meaning of Socialism at Leicester's Irish National Club.¹¹⁰ His personal intellectual development, which embraced every feature of leftist thought from anarchism to social democracy, is only partly relevant in terms of the wider Irish community. His radicalism would have influenced only some of his compatriots:

The lecturer then drew a vivid picture of two great castes - rich and poor - which he showed are not brothers but enemiesMr Barclay passed in review the different proposals for the mitigation and extirpation of poverty - emigration, thrift, trades unionism, co-operation and Parliamentary action, repudiating each and all the

¹⁰⁵See LANCASTER, B. (1987), for a full discussion of Barclay's and Curley's roles. Curley's commitment to co-operative principles may indicate a close working relationship with the Irish leader in that sector, Dominic McCarthy.

¹⁰⁶THOMSON STEVEN, J (1911), *Social Redemption, or the 50 Years Story of the Leics - Co-op Society Ltd 1860-1910*, p.40 and p. 30-31 and 86-7.

¹⁰⁷ANON: LCRO; *Leicester - A Souvenir of the 47th Co-op Congress (1915)*, pp. 155 and 166.

¹⁰⁸JSW/OHA; interview with John W McCarthy, 1988 and 1991; his sisters worked in local Co-op administration for many years. All 3 of his sisters were deeply immersed in Irish language, poetry, dance and other cultural activities, as their surviving collection of Irish books testifies. Also, see Barclay's memoirs, p.138.

¹⁰⁹JACKSON, J.A; (1963), *The Irish in Britain*, p.124.

¹¹⁰See section on Home Rule.

lecturer concluded with explaining and appealing for socialism.¹¹¹

Barclay now embarked on the Marxist programme of H M Hyndman's SDF. He was a powerful advocate and agitator, both in city and county; he edited, wrote, and organised propaganda. He converted many non-Irish, and perhaps a few Irish too. Signing off in 1897 as "Eireannach" (or Irishman); he concluded: "I shall never live to see the 'Social Revolution' that I believed nine years ago must take place almost immediately."¹¹² The pursuit of Irish language and culture became a retreat from mainstream politics; socialism's apparent loss was the Irish cultural renaissance's gain in Leicester.¹¹³ His well-known secularist and Marxist profile militated against Catholic conversions. He was also in competition with Bishop Bagshawe of Nottingham and later Fr. Vincent McNabb for the political souls of the Catholic Irish poor in Leicester.¹¹⁴ (Bagshawe's support for Home Rule is discussed separately).

Bagshawe's commitment to issues of social and economic equality were highlighted in his Birmingham Town Hall speech, published in 1885, *Mercy and Justice to the Poor - The True Political Economy*. Tackling the issues of rural and urban poverty in Britain and Ireland, Bagshawe denounced the basic economic injustice underpinning modern industrial societies and the principle of wealth accumulation. More controversially, he outlined and emphasised the rights and duties of the state and society towards the poor. Abuse arising from capitalism was excoriated, giving added incentives for Tory opposition to Bagshawe's various other viewpoints. His socio-economic priorities gave his opponents, inside the Church and out, a powerful weapon. His advocacy of Irish Home Rule was seen as yet another policy designed to undermine the established structures. His speeches and publications were widely reported, and drew fire; presumably in many Irish eyes he was highly regarded for his political and social candour. Prior to the minimalist pre-1914 Liberal reforms, Bagshawe's arguments must have heartened and given hope to those of his flock, including the Irish, who desired political and social change, with little support from other members of the Catholic hierarchy, Manning included.¹¹⁵ In contrast to Bagshawe's radicalism, the speech given

¹¹¹ *LM*, 30 Nov. 1889.

¹¹² *The Wyvern*, Vol. X, 31 July 1897, No. 301; p.383.

¹¹³ Barclay's important contribution to Irish cultural development in Leicester is discussed elsewhere in the thesis.

¹¹⁴ *The Wyvern*, Socialism in Leicester - A Retrospect, No. 301, Vol. X, 31 July 1897, p.383-4; and Barclay's *Memoirs*, Chs. IV, V and VII.

¹¹⁵ CUMMINS, M. (1977/94), *Nottingham Cathedral - A History of Catholic Nottingham*, p.48; Bagshawe "spearheaded the Catholic Social Movement in this country," to this day his name is recognised in a European political perspective, and church historians assert that his views contributed to the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, 'On the condition of the Working Classes.'

by the Earl of Denbigh at the opening of the new Holy Cross School in 1886 espoused the monarchy and the constitution and roundly condemned socialism (see Education chapter).

Bagshawe's egalitarian message did not die with him; in Leicester, the Ulster-born Fr. Vincent McNabb of the Dominicans maintained a high profile, critical view of public affairs. Whilst presenting arguments that were "not meant to be a defence of Socialism," McNabb in fact managed to do exactly that (and apparently not completely unwillingly). He went on to question the withholding of priestly absolution to committed socialists.¹¹⁶

McNabb was one of Leicester's most revered preachers, and was as popular outside Catholic circles as within.¹¹⁷ McNabb's views were more ambivalent than Bagshawe's, and for many ordinary Catholics there was confusion with the mixed messages emanating from their leadership.¹¹⁸ A few Irish looked to local government for personal fulfilment.

There are indications of Irish and Catholic inputs into local government bodies from the 1870's onwards. In school board elections, one Josiah Fleming served from 1874, being replaced in 1880 by a Matthew Brady. This was the first indication (on surname evidence) of Irish representation. An Irish presence may also have graced the Poor Law Guardians: one Cornelius Finn served for St. Margaret's Ward from 1876-83, together with a Joseph Leeson in 1873. Josiah Fleming represented No. 1 ward in 1883.¹¹⁹ It would appear that some Irish representation was emerging at this period in Leicester; which broadly reflects the pattern of the slow pace of political integration of the Irish in London from c.1860, as described by Lees.¹²⁰ (See section (e)).

For all Catholics, the attractions of socialist solutions were dimmed by fear of anti-clerical action. Barclay founded the ILP in Leicester; Fielding points out that "those most hostile to the church were on the left of the (Labour) party, and were especially numerous in the ILP."¹²¹ If Barclay mirrored the ILP ideology, he, and most of the Irish Catholic community in Leicester, would have found it extremely difficult to develop a *modus vivendi* with each other.

¹¹⁶VALENTINE, F. (1955), *Fr. Vincent McNabb*, p.400-403, App.II, 'Towards Social Thinking'.

¹¹⁷KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), McNabb was at Holy Cross from 1908-14; his views had developed over a long period.

¹¹⁸FIELDING, S (1993), p.109-113; Fielding explores the ambiguities surrounding the RC message, which at times simultaneously criticised both socialism and communism as well as capitalism.

¹¹⁹SEARSON, G.R. (Sen.) (1883), *Pol Book 1835-83*, p.104-8. Fleming may have had Irish connections; Finn and Leeson are Irish surnames.

¹²⁰LEES, L.H. (1979), 235-7.

¹²¹FIELDING, S. (1993), p.106. (Similar debates emerged in Leicester in the 1920's, when a prominent Catholic laywoman, also a Labour Party member and qualified social worker, Dame Emily Forte, became a member of the education and health committees).

Signs of these tensions within Irish community politics were evident during Michael Davitt's visit to Leicester in support of the "Lib-Lab" Broadhurst and the LRC's Ramsay MacDonald, who were both standing in 1906. Billed as the "great progressive rally," the meeting was significant for Davitt's attempt to deliberately exploit the Irish vote in the Labour interest, and Broadhurst's associated claim that labour, far from being a "godless" party, was a Christian caring one.

These attempts to define agendas were not mere window-dressing. Davitt was explicit in his search for the Hibernian vote:

..... this was the sixteenth great meeting he had addressed during the last ten days in support of Labour candidates in England. He had found a wonderful awakening of political self-consciousness and duty amongst working men everywhere The message he had was that every Irish voter in Leicester should on Monday record his voice for the two Progressive candidates.

Broadhurst's claim was designed to ease Irish Catholic consciences. Although the number of Irish in Leicester never matched the high proportion of those elsewhere, contemporary politicians clearly felt that they counted, and were worth courting.

History suggests that Labour's early efforts with the Irish in Leicester were not wasted. For the 1923/4 elections, Mr Pethwick Lawrence was adopted for West Leicester.¹²² A ten year old pupil at St. Patrick's later recalled Pethwick Lawrence's campaign visit: delivery men brought huge baskets of heavy boots, for all those children in need; Lawrence spoke.¹²³ Pethwick Lawrence offered Irish voters more than boots, for Labour MPs worked for Irish prisoners in British jails after the 1921 Truce;¹²⁴ some IRA prisoners were in Leicester Jail, which may have been part of the agenda for the meeting.¹²⁵

The fact that various prominent politicians either of Irish background or with an Irish agenda, visited Leicester is not a reliable indicator of the strength and activity of local Irish lobbies. Barclay was well-known locally, but he was never an active office-seeker, and was therefore effectively confined to the margins of formal political life.

¹²²McKINLEY, R.A. & EVANS, R., in McKINLEY, R.A. (Ed)(1958), *VCHL*, Vol. IV, p.245

¹²³OHA/ISW; Mrs L. Richardson, 13 May 1991.

¹²⁴See COLLETTE, C., *So Utterly Forgotten: Irish Prisoners and the 1924 Labour Government*, in HERBERT, M. (Ed), *North West Labour History Journal*, No. 16, 1991-92, p.73-7; Pethwick Lawrence was listed as a sympathiser.

¹²⁵LCRO, DE4486, Lecture notes and letter of Irish prisoners in Leicester prison, 1921; the notes concerned bomb-making materials and methods.

By contrast, Michael McCarthy of Whitwick, teacher turned entrepreneur, was ambitious. A student from Glasnevin Agricultural College, he left west Cork in 1868 for the post of deputy headmaster at the Reformatory at Mount St Bernard's, home of hundreds of Irish juvenile delinquents (see Crime). He settled, married a publican's daughter, and fathered a family of 13. He eventually succeeded in business and farming. A popular figure with the local mining community, many of them Irish, McCarthy became Town Surveyor and planner of the new industrial town of Coalville. Elected a member of the Local Board, and then urban district councillor in Coalville for the Liberals, he remained unbeaten for 32 years.¹²⁶ The family were, not surprisingly, influential and active in Catholic circles. His political career should be considered alongside that of Fr. O'Reilly, another local councillor for the area, for these two must have represented quite a strong Irish Catholic lobby in Leicestershire political circles by c.1890. The picture in Leicester was rather a different one.

It would appear that the marginal impact of the Irish on local government in Leicester was only to be expected, especially in the light of an analysis of the recruitment of office-holders in the town between 1861 and 1931. Although the number of places available on the Council, Guardians and Bench increased gradually in the period 1861-1914, the number of participants was never as great as the number of places available. Despite various limited reforms, the propertied dealers, businessmen, and professionals continued to dominate appointments. Even the more modest posts were beyond most working-class and Irish aspirations. A councillor needed property, spare time, and ready resources. The turnover of membership of public bodies was limited at all times, except for 1891-94, when conflict in the shoe trade, the foundation locally of the ILP and the decision of the Trades Council to select a candidate to challenge the official "Lib-Lab" Broadhurst, rocked the electoral boat. Whilst it is clear from the foregoing that some Irish individuals were involved at this period with these activities, they represented a minority rather than a majority interest.

In terms of voter power, O'Day has argued that the Irish working-class may have fared better under urban voter registration drives than has previously been supposed; such registration drives were undertaken by the Liberals in Leicester, but the percentage of Irish involved (if any) is unknown.¹²⁷ Even so, the Irish in London post-1885 could

¹²⁶Whitwick Historical Group, from *The Catholic Standard* (Dublin) 7 Feb. 1969.

¹²⁷See Section of this chapter on Home Rule.

not, despite apparently high numerical representation, seriously affect election results; this is therefore even more doubtful in the case of Leicester.¹²⁸

Men of few means were in fact limited to aspiring only to positions as Poor Law Guardians and School Board members, and this accords with the evidence available on Irish involvement. The one area where Irish Catholics made an impact was the School Board, when priests and laymen successfully sought election.¹²⁹ Between the 1860's and 1914, an average of 7 per cent of the working-class served as magistrates, 10 per cent as town councillors, and 5 per cent as Guardians. If these are the figures for Leicester generally, what hopes had the Irish, especially given their rather low demographic representation.¹³⁰

(c) Irish Nationalism in Leicester

(i) The Impact of Fenianism

The threat of Fenianism and the shock-waves of its "outrages", had an impact locally reflected at three levels: in Irish migrants' minds and attitudes (and pockets); in the private writings of the local English middle classes; and much more widely in the sensational and thorough coverage given in contemporary local newspapers to Fenian activities in the British Isles and in Canada.

The reactions of the Irish settled in Leicester were described graphically by Barclay in 1867:

Fenianism is rife about this time: I remember our parents rejoicing over the escape from prison of - the Head Centre, James Stephens (I think it was): Also, we were greatly excited by the news of the blowing up of Clerkenwell Prison. We lamented the hanging of the Manchester Martyrs and our English neighbours danced and rejoiced. What wonder? Some priest said hell was not hot enough for the Fenians.

Barclay, aged 15, was referring to key events reflected strongly in British public opinion, and the differing reactions of the English and Irish communities.

Such migrant reactions to Fenianism were not merely emotional; they were based

¹²⁸See O'DAY, A., *Irish Influence on Parliamentary Elections in London, 1885-1914 : A Simple Test*, in SWIFT & GILLEY (1985) p.98-105.

¹²⁹See section (e), below.

¹³⁰JONES, P., *The Recruitment of Office Holders in Leicester, 1861-1931*; in *TLAHS*. Vol. LVII, 1981-82, p.64-77.

on a reasonably sound grasp of the main outlines of Irish history and Anglo-Irish current affairs. Of his father, Barclay noted:

He had read Byron and Burns and Tom Moore, but I often wonder how he acquired some twenty numbers of a periodical called *The Celt*; he always pronounced the name "Sekt"; it was a Young Irelander periodical I believe.¹³¹

Mr Barclay's reading matter was reflected in his wife's morally disparaging view of the traditional enemy:

Whenever an English man or woman did anything disreputable, my mother was wont to remark "Ah well, sure, what better could one expect from the breed of King Harry?" The Sassenach was regarded by us with a mixture of contempt and hatred ... (we) only saw him embodied in Calvin and Cranmer, the lustful King Henry VIII, Queen Bess the Persecutor, the Orangeman's idol, William of Orange, and "the bloody Cromwell."

Mr Barclay senior reinforced his wife's ideological thrust with his own nationalist interpretation of history (see above). With an agenda spanning 350 years, wherein England's cruelties were highlighted and Irish victories celebrated, there has to be conceded some relatively well informed politico-historical agenda existing in the minds as well as the hearts of the incoming Irish.

Quinlivan remarks that "Fenianism drew upon romantic nationalism in the myths and legends of the Fianna." Barclay recalled how his mother, an acknowledged Leicester community *seanachie*, "was well acquainted with the old legends of Oisín, and Fin, and Cúchullán, and the Gobáin Sair."¹³²

There is evidence that support for Fenianism was practical as well as emotional. Although the Midlands was a difficult area to organise, efforts were made.¹³³ Reports exist on political fund-raising in *The Universal News (1860-69)*, which described itself as "the only organ of Irish Catholic opinion in England."¹³⁴ The recorded effects of

¹³¹BARCLAY, T., (1934), p.6; the priest referred to here is the bellicose anti-Fenian Bishop of Kerry, Dr. Moriarty, p.10. This observation may have helped fuel Barclay's anti-clericalism in later life; QUINLIVAN & ROSE (1982) underline the common factor of anti-clericalism amongst both Freethinkers and Marxists; Barclay figures on both counts, p.167.

¹³²BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.6-7 and 23. QUINLIVAN, P. & ROSE, P. (1982), *The Fenians in England 1865-72*, p.167.

¹³³See WOLLASTON, E.P.M., *The Irish National Movement in GB, 1886-1908*, London Univ. M.A Thesis (History), 1958, p.45-6: "Midlands had many Irish, yet hard to organise ..."; ref. provided by John Dunleavy (researcher of Davitt in Haslingden) to this author, letter of 16.1.1994.

¹³⁴MOODY, T.W. (1982) *Davitt and Irish Revolution, 1846-82*; p.53.

Fenian activity on Leicester suggest a mixture of the dramatic and the traumatic. The local press provided saturation coverage of the main events of 1867 in Ireland and Britain; Leicestershire had a peculiar local interest in the wider international Fenian picture for the very good reason that locally recruited men were involved in containing the ambitious and imaginative Fenian invasion of Canada, mounted from across the United States border, in 1866.

The positive attitudes of some Irish migrants to Fenianism have been touched on; what practical efforts did these sympathisers make? The answer lies in financial support, however modest. Bearing in mind the low standards of living for many migrants, it is perhaps surprising to find any cash spare for Fenian fund-raisers. The amounts donated by the Leicester Irish to the Manchester Defence Fund are in pence; to some individuals, 3d or 6d was not insignificant. Out of 44 donors in the month covered, 9 were anonymous "friends", presumably shunning publicity. William Dix (Dicks) senior seems to have been the local focus, sending much larger amounts than other contributors.¹³⁵ Dix was not Irish but his wife Elizabeth was (from Newbridge, Co. Kildare). In 1861, Dix described himself as a "carpet slipper maker, employing one man;" his wife was a shoe binder in their family business.

Whilst the Dixs were a small family business, the rest were clearly working-class, ranging from skilled and semi-skilled workers through to labourers. Most were in either hosiery or footwear. As in Ireland, support for Fenians in Leicester came from the poorer classes: labourers, school-masters, shop-keepers, clerks and urban workers.¹³⁶ The Leicester supporters' addresses correspond exactly with the core area of Irish settlement: Bedford Street and Abbey Street. Some were neighbours; other family units, sometimes including a relative or lodger.

The two young Dillon brothers, James and Thomas, were close friends of their next door neighbours, the Barclay family.¹³⁷ In 1867, they were mature enough to make their own political choices; as well as lending Tom a volume of Shakespeare, they probably also shared with him their political convictions. The sums subscribed peak in the week before the executions, and then tail off. Of 44 donors, 35 of whom

¹³⁵ *The Universal News* identified Dix's address as being 22 Northumberland Street, which may have been a work or office address.

¹³⁶ MOODY, T.W. (1968), *The Fenian Movement*, p.106.

¹³⁷ BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.15, mentions the loan of "Dick's shilling edition ... by another Irish chap, one Jem Dillon, next door, a little better off than myself."

were prepared to be identified in the press, it could be said that a committed and significant minority of Leicester's Irish were willing to be openly identified as to their politics; most were young (under 40) with four being second generation Irish. Clearly Barclay's comment was not an over-emphasis in regard to the local "rejoicing" surrounding the Fenian actions; Leicester's organized political fund-raising reflects the organised pro-Fenian activities going on simultaneously in London.¹³⁸

The gender breakdown of contributors comprised 26 males, 15 females and 9 "friends". In Leicester therefore over one-third of supporters were female, a noticeably high figure. Dunleavy, an expert on Davitt's work in Britain, has observed that it is "noticeable how many women were active in fund raising at this time." The MDF Secretary was one Ellen Forrester, of a Lancashire Fenian family heavily involved in revolutionary organising and arms procurement.¹³⁹ The Leicester donations were sent on to Mrs Forrester. Although John Denvir felt it necessary to defend the Fenian heroes from the charge of having "squandered the money of the Irish servant girls," there is a basis of truth in the existence of an important dimension of female support for Fenianism (just as there was for Catholic church interests, as shown by Hasia Diner).¹⁴⁰ A Leicester historian reiterated this point in 1881 (see below).

Some limited local English support for Fenianism was forthcoming. The noted Leicestershire poacher, James Hawker (1836-1921), a self-educated and politically aware individual, served in Ireland:

In 1854 the Militia was Called up for Garrison Duty. I was sent with the Northampton Regiment to Dublin I had wondered many times why we took our Rifles and 20 Rounds of Ball Cartridges to Church. I Don't wonder now. We could not Trust the People. There is Something Rotten in the State when we Can't Do that. A Kinder Hearted Race of People never Lived. I mounted Guard Several times at a Prison called Mount Joy. It should Have been called Misery. It was full of Political Prisoners. I was Full Corporal and I had a Chance sometimes to Slip a Bit of Tobacco into the Hands of these Soldiers. Don't Forget these Poor Creatures.

¹³⁸Lynn Lees notes of London that "Both first-and-second generation Irish joined the IRB;" see LEES, L.H. (1979), p.233. For London demonstrations, see NEWSINGER, J. (1994), *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain*, p.62-3.

¹³⁹Letter to this author from John Dunleavy, 16.1.1994; see MOODY, T.W. *Michael Davitt*, p.50-51 re Mrs Forrester. There was an important support committee led by women operating in Bradford. In 1854 a "Phoenix" Quinn was reported as residing at 15 Abbey St.; any connection with the Phoenix Society, a soubriquet for the Fenians, seems accidental, as in the census the name is given as Felix; see LCRO, 20 D.72-55, *MOH to Board*, 1 Dec 1854.

¹⁴⁰DENVIR, J. (1894), p.217-8; and DINER, H. (1983), *Erin's Daughters in America*.

Hawker was aware of the injustice of imprisonment for political motives, of the cultural oppression meted out to the Irish, and¹⁴¹ the general moral vacuum surrounding British administrations in Ireland. Sympathy and support in Britain for Irish nationalism were slow in developing; radicals such as Bradlaugh were consistently positive, whilst the Liberals came to adopt Home Rule in the constitutional context.

In 1891, Charles Bradlaugh MP, the radical republican reformer who had advised the Fenians on the drafting of the 1867 Declaration of the Irish Republic, died. Tom Barclay was discovered by a friend, distraught and weeping at this news.¹⁴² He and Bradlaugh shared a commitment to both secularism and to republicanism; perhaps part of Barclay's reaction of respect was for Bradlaugh's contribution to the Irish cause. Bradlaugh was one of the "intellectual giants" who "brought together the early Marxists and gradualists of a more traditional stream" in the interests of Irish aspirations; he was crucial in reaching out to moderately socialist Irish Catholics.¹⁴³

The Catholic Church publicly condemned Fenianism for its secretive, socialist and revolutionary aims. The influential midlands cleric, Bishop Ullathorne, publicly attacked the Fenians in his Advent Pastoral of 1868: "upholding the duty of obedience to constituted authority, he denounced the spirit of rebellion, and the increasing power of secret and unlawful societies, among which he named that of the Fenians." In January 1869 Ullathorne, referring to his see at Birmingham, asserted that "for two years past there has been a Fenian conspiracy to alienate the Irish people from me."¹⁴⁴ Although he had helped Irish migrants and prisoners in Australia, his pronouncement "divided the Irish congregations and caused a great deal of internal hostility" within Catholic ranks.¹⁴⁵ This confusion of loyalties for Irish Catholic migrants was a problem for Irish communities all over Britain, the midlands and Leicester included.

Not surprisingly, inimical views of Fenianism emanated from various Leicestershire quarters. In 1871, a noted local historian compared the impact of the Fenians with that of the United Irishmen of 1798: the latter's ambitions were of such

¹⁴¹See BENNETT, J.D. (1968), *Leics. Portraits* and HAWKER, J. (Ed. CHRISTIAN, G)(1961), *A Victorian Poacher - James Hawker's Journal*, p.5; with the Northants Militia in 1853-7, he switched to the Leics. Militia in 1858; original spelling.

¹⁴²In 1871, a Democratic (later Republican) Association was founded, led by working men such as Daniel Merrick, once Pres. of Leic. Trades Council. It lasted 10 years; in practice it operated as a radical wing of the Liberals; see EVANS, R. in McKINLEY, R. (Ed)(1958), *VCHL*. Vol. IV. p.224. In 1888, Tom Barclay and 20 other radical workers, met in King St. to honour the Paris Commune, and to found the Socialist (Leicester Labour) Club; see LANCASTER, B. (1987), p.22.

¹⁴³See QUINLIVAN, P. and ROSE, P. (1982), p.68-69 and p. 171 re Bradlaugh; and BARCLAY (1934) p.122.

¹⁴⁴BDA, ANON. (1892), *Letters of Archbishop Ullathorne*, p.206.

¹⁴⁵NORMAN, E. (1984), *The English Catholic Church in the 19th Century*, p.218. Lowe (1989) has suggested that whilst official R C hostility retarded Fenian growth in Lancashire, in practice, many Irish Catholics were capable of reconciling their nationalism and their religion; p.191.

"magnitude that they formed plans like the Fenians of our own day for the expulsion of the English and the overthrow of their authority."¹⁴⁶

The "Fenians of our own day" certainly created an impact in Leicester in media terms. Two major foci received coverage: the two Fenian invasions of Canada, and the complex of events in 1867. In April 1866, demobilised Irish veterans of the American Civil War, sympathetic to the Irish cause, and under American Fenian control, invaded New Brunswick, reaching Fort Erie. The 2nd Battalion of the 17th (Leicestershire) Regiment proceeded by river steamboats to Toronto in July.¹⁴⁷ Throughout June the *Leicester Chronicle and Mercury* covered the campaign. Whilst there was no panic, the paper clearly resented the amazing impudence of such an attack, and employed damage limitation techniques in its reporting: "The American press now almost universally denounce the whole contrivance as an unscrupulous and wicked imposture."¹⁴⁸

Another local historian, writing in 1881 of the military campaign record of the 2/17th Leicesters, belittled the preparedness of the Fenian incursion: "the paltry invader ... owed any equipment he possessed to the savings of well-meaning, but ignorant, Irish *helps*." He quoted an anti-Fenian marching song of the period:

Tramp, tramp, tramps; the boys are marching!
Cheer up comrades, we will come,
And beneath the Union Jack,
We will drive the Fenians back
From our own beloved Canadian home.¹⁴⁹

The battalion provided the permanent guard in Toronto goal for 120 Fenian prisoners captured at Fort Erie. To those troops who took part in suppressing the Fenian raid, a special medal was struck (in 1899, 33 years later).¹⁵⁰ Ironically, of a total of 130 recipients in the 17th Leicestershire Regiment, 26 possessed Irish surnames (around 20 per cent, another evidence of the high representation of Irish in the British army in

¹⁴⁶LCRO; THOMPSON, J. (1871), *Hist of Leic in 18th Century*, p.224.

¹⁴⁷LC, 22 June 1866; WEBB, E A H (1912), *A History of the Services of the 17th Leics Regiment*, p.176-7.

¹⁴⁸eg LC of 16 June 1866 also implied that ground lost could not have been important, as it had not been properly defended. Quinlivan has noted the erasure from history and revisionism which surrounded Fenianism until comparatively recently, see *Hunting the Fenian: problems in the historiography of a secret organisation*, in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed)(1994), *The Irish World-Wide*, Vol. 3, *The Creative Migrant*, Ch.6. p.134. Also, notes Quinlivan, "it is ... customary to dismiss the Fenian raids into Canada as having been no real consequences," p.153. This tendency was evident in Leicester even as events unfolded.

¹⁴⁹LCRO; READ, R. (1881), *Modern Leicester*, p.108-9. Ironically the US Civil War melody which this song was set to, was to be employed shortly after by the Fenians as a hymn of praise to the 3 "Manchester Martyrs" executed in 1867, 'God Save Ireland'. The reference to Irish "helps" is another testimonial to female involvement in Fenianism.

¹⁵⁰See BERRSFORD ELLIS, P., *Ridgway, the Fenian Raids and the Making of Canada*, in O'DRISCOLL, R. AND REYNOLDS, L (Eds)(1988), *The Untold Story, the Irish in Canada*, Vol. 1, p.541-2; and *New York Herald* 6 June 1866, in CRAWFORD, M and ARMSTRONG, K (1970), *The Fenians* (facsimile pack No. C21).

Victorian times).

Whilst the 17th Foot was not specifically mentioned in the news reports (presumably for security reasons) the Fenian incursion into Canada did have some local media impact. This was repeated, on a slightly smaller scale, in May and June of 1870, when a second abortive Fenian attack was mounted across the US-Canadian frontier. The *Chronicle's* editorial described it as a "most wanton, senseless, and indefensible outrage."¹⁵¹ It also carried a report about the "considerable excitement" surrounding the arrest for purchasing illegal arms of one Michael Davitt, providing a link between the Fenian and Land League stages of development in Irish nationalism. The Liberals, most of whom in Leicester were sympathetic to Irish constitutional reform, drew the line at supporting physical force. A speaker at an Irish Church disestablishment meeting in 1868 argued that this measure "will make Fenianism an impossibility" by removing a serious grievance and inculcating loyalty.¹⁵²

As well as the extensive coverage given to the 17th Regiment's involvement with Fenians in Canada, as late as 1883, the *Chronicle's* weekend literary supplement carried a lengthy (apparently fictional) story entitled *A Fenian Night Attack*. This interesting piece combined stereotype, wishful thinking and melodrama. The gist of the story concerned a dissolute Irish peasant, evicted for self-incurred rent arrears, who organised a revenge attack on the "Big House." The story also utilised the racist physical stereotype: "Villain was plainly written on his beetling brow and low receding forehead." As late as the 1880's, therefore, the Fenian menace was being invoked in Leicester for the bifurcated purposes of denigrating Irish political enemies and reinforcing domestic morale.¹⁵³

Extensive and sensational coverage of Fenianism occurred around the central events of November and December 1867. There was minute coverage of the Manchester incident, the dramatic trial, the executions and funerals, the Clerkenwell explosion, and police action against a pro-Fenian meeting in Birmingham. The *Journal* editorial announced its own verdict:

¹⁵¹ Museums in Leicester hold 3 of the Canada General Services Medal, 2 of which bear Irish surnames. See LC for 21 and 28 May, and 4 June, 1870.

¹⁵² LC 4 April, 1868, the visiting speaker was a Mr. Mason Jones.

¹⁵³ LC, 22 Sept. 1883. QUINLIVAN notes that "By the 1880's it was being used in England to describe not only active members of the IRB but any supporter of Irish independence, and so, by analogy, those who showed the slightest sympathy with Irish nationalism," in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed)(1994), Vol. 3, p.141

We are sure that all our readers rejoice in the termination of these exciting Fenian demonstrations, intrigues and crimes Ireland's wrongs will never be remedied by insurrections.

A note of panic was creeping in locally. The *Journal* noted that "precautions against Fenianism" had taken place in Warwick and Leamington.¹⁵⁴ Leicester authorities decided to issue their stock of cutlasses to night duty officers, in the light of possible Fenian threats.¹⁵⁵

A slightly hysterical note crept in to the local press; false and unlikely assertions were reported: barrels of gunpowder were observed, deposited by mysterious strangers, at Burbage Wesleyan chapel, Hinckley and Leicester Baptist chapels, and at Hinckley railway station. A man with "the appearance of an Irish man" came from a "common lodging house" to measure the Free School for demolition!¹⁵⁶ After reciting the rumours at length, the report dismissed them. For the credulous however, the seeds had been sown.

Rumour gave way to outrage after the Clerkenwell bombing. The *Journal* denounced this "Fenian Atrocity" as a "diabolical outrage"; this "fiendish crime" would be "indelibly stamped upon the recollection of all." The editorial went on to declare that "the avowed design of the Fenian desperadoes is to create a war of races."¹⁵⁷ These comments represented considered views; the *Journal* spoke from its heart to the citizens of Leicester:

"of all individuals most likely to set a good example to individuals of other climes ... the Englishman stands foremost Again, of all nations, England is perhaps the strongest and knows best how to manage her strength It has been reserved to Ireland to introduce into Europe a new species of warfare ... We in Leicester were, with the rest of the civilized world, struck with terror and amazement Modern history has no parallel to offer to this terrible butchery No punishment that man can conceive could be too severe in chastisement for an act surpassing in its inhuman attributes the most murderous design of a Thug No part of the kingdom is safe. Leicester may be visited tomorrow. The nation must unite in waging relentless war against the enemies of England."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ LJ, 29 Nov. 1867.

¹⁵⁵ ELLIOTT, B., (1989), *Leicestershire Constabulary 1839 to 1989*, p.6. The cutlasses were first issued in 1843, in connection with Chartist disorders; a cased exhibition is located at the County Police HQ, Enderby (foyer).

¹⁵⁶ LC, 28 Dec. 1867.

¹⁵⁷ LC, 21 Dec. 1867. The day previous, the paper had printed a vituperative and bitter parody of the Fenian anthem 'God Save Ireland.'

¹⁵⁸ LJ, 20 Dec. 1867; uniquely, Irish violence is linked with Indian Thuggee attacks.

These outraged tones were reflected in private writing. Eliza Ellis, prominent local Quaker, was reflective rather than vengeful:

"..... Much distress prevails now here as in many other places These Fenian outrages add to the feeling of gloom and uncertainty that prevails; but diabolical as they truly are, I do hope they will be the means of doing some good by compelling the Government to set themselves earnestly to consider the condition of Ireland, and to remedy the grievances that exist there, for, however little the more sober part of the population in Ireland may sympathize with these outrageous doings of the Fenians, there can be no question that, but for our neglect in taking earlier measures towards bringing about a happier state of things there, Fenianism could not have existed."¹⁵⁹

This philosophical and mature view of British responsibility was complemented by that of contemporary melodrama, presented in Leicester in 1872, by the Irish dramatist Dion Boucicault.¹⁶⁰ *Arrah-ná Pogue* would have been viewed by some sections of a Leicester audience as being inimical to British interests. The plot centred around 1798. Boucicault co-authored the play with Howard House, an anti-British American. The Irish nationalist song *The Wearing of the Green* was up-dated by Boucicault for the production, with extra anti-English lyrics included.¹⁶¹ A distinctly anti-British message would not have been lost on an Irish audience.

Lowe and Quinlivan have pointed to evidence that young Irishmen in Britain enlisted in volunteer military units in order to secure basic military training, but for Irish nationalist motives. Whilst Barclay noted that "there is scarcely an Irish family in the town that has not for the last thirty years furnished one son - generally the eldest - to serve the Queen," there is no evidence discovered that in Leicester any such Fenian-inspired enlistment occurred; military recruiting seems to have been motivated by economic circumstances rather than political commitment.¹⁶²

Despite Ullathorne's criticism of Fenianism, Catholic attitudes later softened somewhat, at least in the local diocese. The new *Nottingham Catholic Magazine* of 1874, under the influence of Bishop Bagshawe, an open supporter of Home Rule,

¹⁵⁹ELLIS, M. (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, letter to H.L., 20 Dec. 1867, p.313.

¹⁶⁰QUINLIVAN (1994) observes that Boucicault's membership of the Fenians is not confirmed; also, see LC, 6 July 1872.

¹⁶¹FAWKES, R. (1979), *Dion Boucicault, A Biography*, p.155-8.

¹⁶²See LOWE, W.J. (1989), *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire* p.193-7; QUINLIVAN, P.J., in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed)(1994), pp.133-153; and BARCLAY, T., in *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, p.149.

regularly ran items of nationalist interest. In May 1874, it reported positively on a deputation of Irish MPs to the Prime Minister seeking the release of the remaining Fenians in goal.¹⁶³

After 1867, Fenianism had shot its bolt, and the nationalist debate in Leicester (as elsewhere) shifted on to the question of Home Rule. O'Day argues that this represented a partial disillusionment with Fenian violence, and a growing recognition of the difficulties facing Irish activists living and working in England. The outcome, reflected in Leicestershire as elsewhere, was increased support for the Irish policies of Gladstone and the Liberal party.¹⁶⁴

Whilst it is difficult to chart the internecine twists and turns of political radicalism in small town localities, it would seem that the Barclay family were at the cutting edge in regards to the transmission of Irish political values in Leicester. Mrs Barclay was a fairly important figure in Irish community terms, being articulate and well able to pass on aspects of romantic cultural nationalism. Her son was to exhibit those traits underlined by Quinlivan and Rose relating to the encompassing and cross-generational nature of Irish nationalist ideology. Barclay recorded in his *Memoirs* how he had been influenced by Chartism, French republicanism, and socialism, all of which contributed to the general debate on the Anglo-Irish relationship. Barclay's work with various radical groupings helped him to support and invite to Leicester persons with sympathetic "track records" on Fenianism and other Irish issues, such as Bradlaugh and Annie Besant.¹⁶⁵ Indirectly as well as directly, Barclay, and perhaps some other anonymous migrants, helped to fan the embers of Irish nationalist ideology in that period between the demise of Fenianism and the emergence of the Land League in British politics. If Fenianism was overtly nationalist but tangential on socio-economic issues, the Land League was to be more overt on the socio-economic, and more subtle on links with nationalist aspirations.

(ii) The "Irish Question" in Leicestershire : Home Rule, the Primrose League and the Liberals

The Irish land question and the Home Rule issue emerged as important issues locally in Leicestershire. This was partly because two key personalities, the Catholic

¹⁶³RCAL, NCM, Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1874, p.17.

¹⁶⁴O'DAY, A., *The Political Organisation of the Irish in Britain 1867-90*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1989)(Eds), p.183-211.

¹⁶⁵See BARCLAY (1934) p. 68, and QUINLIVAN & ROSE (1982) p. 69.

Bishop of Nottingham, Dr. Bagshawe, and the local land-owning English Catholic Tory MP, Edwin de Lisle, clashed publicly, seriously and at length over these matters. Bagshawe's undoubted Irish sympathies were highlighted in the east midlands media; de Lisle became the focus of a bitter, anti-Irish political reaction, which had ramifications across Leicestershire. These concerns were also evident as priorities in the local Irish community, which not only had a branch of the Land League in Leicester, but became actively involved for some time in Home Rule agitation and organisation. The city itself returned Liberal MPs (until the impact of the organised Labour movement was felt) and their record vis-à-vis the Irish agenda is examined.¹⁶⁶

The most accessible secondary sources for local politics at this period are the four *Victoria County History* volumes.¹⁶⁷ These have to be supplemented with recent works by O'Day and Fielding on Irish political organisation in Britain 1867-90 and by new evidence presented here from local archives, especially regarding the Home Rule and Primrose League agitation.¹⁶⁸ The Primrose League was important as it represented both the public face in Leicester of serious opposition to Irish nationalist aspirations and the structural support developed for Ulster Unionism and Orangeism by the Catholic Conservative de Lisle.

This period, from the late 1860's to the turn of the century, is important for the role played by Irish persons and organisations and British sympathisers in the politics of Ireland, for it witnessed the coming together of Conservatives, divisions amongst the Liberals, and the reinvigoration of Ulster Protestant power. All three factors were to be reflected in the Leicester experience.

The forces behind Irish nationalist development in Leicester were twofold: the committed support, intellectual, moral and political, of Bishop Bagshawe of Nottingham, as well as that of several prominent Irish Catholic priests both in Leicester and the wider diocese; and the internal organisation of the Irish in Leicester and its environs into formally constituted bodies representing both the Land League and the Home Rule national organisations.

Irish nationalist bodies certainly existed in Leicester: Barclay recalled "an Irish

¹⁶⁶The local politics surrounding the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland are discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁶⁷See EVANS, R. & McKINLEY, R. in McKINLEY, R. (Ed)(1958), *V.C.H. Vol. IV* p.213-245.

¹⁶⁸See O'DAY, A., in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1989) and FIELDING, S. (1993), ch.5, *The Politics of Home Rule*, p.79-104.

National Club."¹⁶⁹ The nationalist writer Hugh Heinrich covered Leicester's branch of the Home Rule Association in his fact-finding tour of July 1872; (see title page).¹⁷⁰ Heinrich's analysis points to a community leadership limited in numbers, and resulting mainly from the self-education and career success of just a few people.¹⁷¹ Barclay, aged 20 in 1872, would have been a likely candidate as one of this small leadership cadre. Heinrich implies that despite Leicester's small Irish catchment (relative to Irish settlement elsewhere) the numbers involved in active support for Home Rule were high.¹⁷² This may have been an Irish community reaction to the high degree of Protestant religious prejudice which prevailed in Leicester from c.1835 to c.1865 (see relevant chapter). As Butt started the Home Rule lobby in 1870, and Leicester had a thriving branch by 1872, some Irish in the town were clearly proactive.

Whilst praising the leadership elements, Heinrich acknowledged limitations. The early generations of Irish nationalist party leaders were, in general, socially conservative.¹⁷³ Heinrich's optimism about Leicester's branch promising "in the future to become a force of much influence in the municipal and parliamentary affairs of the borough" was to prove a great exaggeration, even though Leicester's presiding Liberal power bloc offered substantial support on Home Rule and other associated Irish issues. Concern at the initial success of Home Rule agitation soon came from Ambrose de Lisle; in 1873, he complained that "The Home Rule movement has been most disastrous to Catholic interests I think nothing can be more deplorable than the extreme line which zealous Catholics are taking everywhere in England (and) in Ireland in the British Empire they are trying to identify their cause with its dismemberment, or at any rate with what most people believe could lead to that"¹⁷⁴ Ambrose's son, Edwin, had serious aspirations in Conservative politics, which were to have a dramatic impact on Leicestershire's Home Rule supporters in the late 1880's.

As in religious affairs (see relevant chapter) the de Lisle-Monsell-de Vere nexus

¹⁶⁹BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.62. Barclay was certainly disillusioned with the English working mens' failure to use positively their Labour Clubs, and this may be reflected in his apparent lack of enthusiasm re-the Irish club. His *Memoirs*, written just after the Civil War in Ireland (c.1924), certainly indicate a disillusionment with Irish politics at that time; see p.138-9.

¹⁷⁰HEINRICK, H. (1872); p.39-40.

¹⁷¹See chapter on Occupations re: the minority of upwardly mobile Irish.

¹⁷²There is some supporting evidence for this in the archaeological finds of clay pipes with Irish political motifs and messages found in Leicester and the midlands; see below.

¹⁷³See FIELDING, S (1993), *Class and Ethnicity*, p.83, on the leading personnel of the H.R. movement in the Manchester area: they were "mainly drawn from the upper reaches of the immigrant population." The young and self-educated Barclay, aged 20 in 1872, may have been an over-eager young radical, and doubly suspect to some of the Irish for being of the second generation.

¹⁷⁴Nat. Archives, Dublin, 1075/3/18; copy in DeLP; letter from A de Lisle to Monsell, 3 Sept. 1873, from Barmouth, N. Wales.

provided the ideological incubus for the de Lisle dimension on all Irish questions.¹⁷⁵ Monsell, a fair Protestant landlord, who converted to Rome, inevitably had a "vested interest in the established order." The Land League he came to regard as both horrifying and communistic. With advice from such Irish moderates, it is small wonder that Edwin de Lisle developed his fanatical opposition to Home Rule, and to all aspects of Irish Catholic political ambition, in Leicester and elsewhere.

The Irish Land League (founded 1879) boasted a Leicester branch. The land issue surfaced locally in 1870, when Bradlaugh spoke to Leicester's Radical Association at a meeting "densely crowded by an audience composed almost exclusively of the industrial classes." He was blunt: "it was the Conservative aristocracy that stole from the Irish their lands and drove them across the Atlantic, and starved them out of the land." There followed some factual, if emotive, descriptions of evictions under military protection. The large numbers and the enthusiasm generated suggest that the Irish land issue was a live one amongst Leicester's proletarian groupings,¹⁷⁶ which conceivably would have included an Irish element. Barclay describes "the wretched emigrants, victims of the 1848 potato famine" as "penniless-tradeless" with "no hope of ever returning to your own country."¹⁷⁷ Clearly, the trauma of the dispossessed was brought across the Irish Sea, and transmitted meaningfully to the next generation.

Even the conservatively inclined Ullathorne conceded in 1881 the justice and relevance of the Irish land issue:

..... What I have told English politicians is, that they will never understand the Irish question unless they study the Brethon (sic) laws the land there originally belonged to the tribe, originally one family Now turn to the invasion of Ireland by confiscation the land was passed to Englishmen and Scotsmen This is the real point of the question, and the key to the feelings of the Irish people; and until our legislators study and understand this, they will never know what they have to deal with.¹⁷⁸

Given these views, Ullathorne's later negative reaction towards Bagshawe is surprising (see below).

The founding date of Leicester's Land League is unknown. In 1887-8 a G.

¹⁷⁵For details of this group and their ideas, see POTTER, M., William Monsell, First Baron Emly of Tervoe, in *The Old Limerick Journal*, No. 32, Winter 1995, pp 58-63; the quotes following are from p.57, 60-63.

¹⁷⁶LC, 29 January 1870, local reports. See reference to memoirs of James Hawker.

¹⁷⁷BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.11.

¹⁷⁸*Letters of Ullathorne* (1892), O'Meara, from Oscott, 4th Feb 1881; p.405-6.

Fleming of Royal East Street was listed as the Manager of the "League Hall" refreshment rooms.¹⁷⁹ Leicester branch of the National Land League of Great Britain met in May 1882 at St. Patrick's School in response to the Phoenix Park murders. A large attendance was supplemented by "many Irishmen residing in Leicester but not members of the League. An intense feeling of horror at the outrage prevailed throughout the proceedings."¹⁸⁰ The fact that St. Patrick's was the venue for such a sensitive meeting indicates clerical support and therefore political acceptability in the Irish Catholic community.

There is corroboration of the dismay felt amongst the Irish, for the *Chronicle* printed in full the 'Protest of an Irishman in Leicester.' The author, Barclay, showed a high degree of political astuteness. After sharing in the general detestation of the crime, he made his points:

Sir, - Will you kindly allow me as a man - as an Irishman especially - to take up a brief space on the cowardly and brutal murders I know I shall not be expressing my own feelings merely, but those also of my Irish fellow-townsmen, when I say that the cold-blooded assassination of the new Irish Chief Secretary can only be regarded with the greatest abhorrence the present murder is of such a character as to make Irishmen hang down their heads. But the ruffians have, it is to be feared, done an incalculable amount of injury besides. They have created a prejudice against Irishmen and the Irish cause that will not be easily dissipated. Just at the time, too, when the Government had agreed to abandon the policy of coercion; when the prisons were flung open, when the arrears were to be dealt with and who knows what large and generous measures besides?¹⁸¹

In this one edition, no less than 26 articles were devoted to the murders and the ensuing reactions. In Leicester, reactions were recorded from Irish organisations, both political parties, the Non-Conformist Board, the Borough Magistrates, the National Union of Operative Boot and Shoe Riveters and various notabilities. There was nonetheless a cautionary note, advising the government not to tar all the Irish with the brush of responsibility. The Editorial conceded that despite the "savage tragedy, we cannot and do not hold either the Irish people or their acknowledged leaders as directly

¹⁷⁹LCRO, *Wright's Directory*, 1887-8. A Fleming was already involved in local politics as a Catholic representative on the School Board c.1874-83 (see section e.) This may be the same man, serving his political apprenticeship on the School Board before moving into national politics.

¹⁸⁰LC, 13 May 1882, p.4. The whole broadsheet page was devoted to the generally horrified reactions on all sides to the assassinations.

¹⁸¹LC, 13 May 1882; see 'Side Aspects of the Assassination,' and 'Leicester Working Men and the Dublin murders.'

responsible." The footwear union speaker sounded a similar note, opining that "the outrage had no connection with the Land League or the Irish people."¹⁸²

However, a note of panic did creep in. An unfortunate rail traveller passing through "had a Yankee appearance, spoke with an American accent, and was wearing a slouch hat and a long overcoat, which gave him a suspicious look." He was soon released; the incident indicates a consciousness of the diasporic element of threat: in 1866 and 1870 the Leicestershire Regiment had served in Canada countering the cross-border Fenian raids; the Hiberno-American dynamitards had yet to make their appearance. In Leicester the connection was not lost.

That the land campaign came into increasingly sharp focus in the east midlands as the 1880's unfolded, was due largely to the political commitment and propaganda skills of Bishop Bagshawe of Nottingham (1874-1901). Bagshawe went public most effectively, which resulted in the full airing of Irish grievances, a correspondingly hostile conservative press, and increasing acrimony towards Bagshawe from all those conservatively inclined interests in Catholicism.¹⁸³

The level of public consciousness vis-à-vis Irish current affairs was raised very effectively by Bagshawe in the east midlands. For Irish Catholics in Leicester, a champion such as Bagshawe can only have raised ideological morale and community self-confidence.¹⁸⁴ In 1875, for example, within a year of his arrival, he personally presided at the opening of the new church extension at St. Patricks, in Leicester.¹⁸⁵ Bagshawe identified consistently with the socio-economic and political problems of both Ireland and its disadvantaged diaspora.

Co-inciding with his accession, a new series of *The Nottingham Catholic Magazine*, an attractive and professionally produced popular journal, was published. Throughout its monthly runs from 1874-6, it carried numerous articles positively reflecting Irish concerns. The scope and depth of the pieces is illustrated across 11 different articles in 1875-76 alone; particularly interesting is the awareness of the editor (Canon James Dwyer, an Irishman) of the diasporic element of Irish migration (especially in America), which represents a sophisticated internationalism. Bagshawe therefore

¹⁸²LC, 13 May 1882, editorial comments.

¹⁸³eg in NDA; see *Nottingham Journal* of 8/9/1882.

¹⁸⁴Barclay gives no hint of Bagshawe's contributions.

¹⁸⁵NDA, *The NCM*, Vol. II, No. 5, Sept. 1875, p.98. Interestingly, the PP, Fr. Cyril Bunce (an Irish-born Dominican), thanked "several Protestants" for their valuable help, an indication of some alleviation of the bitterness occasioned in Leicester by the "second reformation" c.1830-1860.

was from the beginning highlighting publicly and sympathetically Irish nationalist political concerns. His wide personal agenda included, in 1876 alone, distress and famine relief in Ireland, the iniquities of British rule, support for the Land War and Home Rule, and confrontations with Unionism.

In particular, the bishop's two publications, *Mercy and Justice to the Poor - the True Political Economy* (1885) and *The Monstrous Evils of English Rule in Ireland, especially since the Union* (1886) damned him in critics' and opponents' eyes as a communistic agitator and Irish revolutionary respectively. The former work included Irish instances to illustrate the evils of unbridled *laissez faire* capitalism in a most outspoken manner:

Unhappily in England the State, governing chiefly in the interest of the wealthy and land-owning classes, leaves this unjust and barbarous power almost uncontrolled. We see this in the rack-renting and evicting which has gone on for so many years in Ireland, and still goes on with but little mitigation, which has caused the ruin and death of millions, and most mischievously depopulated that country.

The later address concluded with a blunt denunciation of the Protestant ascendancy, of unfair financial burdens, of disabilities suffered by Catholics, of the injustices of the poor law system, of the continued use of coercion, and of English misrule generally. In Leicester, Bagshawe sowed a political whirlwind which came to involve his average Irish parishioner:

The internal administration of Ireland by England and the English Parliament, and especially since the Union, has not been distinguished by justice, beneficence, or success, but on the contrary has been inspired throughout by selfish greed, and has inflicted innumerable horrors and ruinous desolation on that afflicted land. It is time that Ireland should be allowed to administer her own internal affairs.¹⁸⁶

In early February 1885, a group of influential progressive English Catholics including Bagshawe, openly associated themselves with the Home Rule movement.¹⁸⁷ Bagshawe issued on 10 March a formal circular forbidding Catholics in his diocese from joining the Primrose League, an official Conservative front organisation, aimed at

¹⁸⁶NDA, BAGSHAWE, E.G. (1886), *The Monstrous Evils of English Rule in Ireland*, p.23.

¹⁸⁷The other influential RCs who openly supported Home Rule were the Earl of Ashburnham, Lord Clifton, Edmund Lucas, W.S. Blunt and J.G. Kenyon.

attracting working class popular support, in order to promote Irish Unionism and to undermine Home Rule. Bagshawe was perhaps provocative; yet his was a brave (if risky) political ploy.¹⁸⁸ More cautious English Catholics, including virtually all his episcopal colleagues, were dismayed at the possibility of being "smeared" with Bagshawe's sympathies.¹⁸⁹ Bagshawe denounced the League, accurately and justifiably, for its total commitment towards Protestant and Orange causes. The Leicestershire Catholic magnate Edwin de Lisle emerged as Bagshawe's most dangerous opponent. De Lisle and other Conservative Catholics secretly lobbied Rome, and within 10 days Bagshawe was forced to rescind his statement. This represented a classic instance of the man paying the piper (de Lisle) calling the local Catholic tune. With an establishment media accusing bishops generally of collusion with the National League in Ireland, and Bagshawe in particular of being involved with the enemy within (the Irish in England), Bishops Ullathorne, Manning, Clifford and Vaughan all undermined Bagshawe's position in pontifical eyes. De Lisle defied Bagshawe's ban by a co-ordinated and provocative announcement in the east midlands and national press of his intention of founding and promoting a "habitation" of the Primrose League in the Whitwick colliery area, a part of Leicestershire heavily populated by Irish labour:

..... with a view principally to counteract the pernicious example and influence of the Irish National League which your lordship has established in Nottingham in support of a party "steeped to the lips in treason"¹⁹⁰

Whilst Bagshawe obeyed Rome's instruction to withdraw his ban, he did not feel impelled to be silent. On 25 March 1886, he renewed his verbal offensive at a large gathering in Birmingham Town Hall, later published as *The Monstrous Evils of English Rule in Ireland*. A ferocious pamphlet warfare emerged between the pro and anti Home Rule lobbies, the authors in the main being Bagshawe and de Lisle.

Edwin de Lisle was elected as MP for Loughborough for the 1886-92 parliament; otherwise, from 1885 to 1914, the seat remained firmly Liberal. The Home

¹⁸⁸Bagshawe was quite correct in his evaluation of the Primrose League, which in 1893 held 5/36 seats (14%) on the Ulster Unionist Council, a representation second only to the 9 held by the Orange Order; see BUCKLAND, P. (Ed)(1973), *Ulster Unionism 1885-1923, a Documentary History*, No.68, p.134. See also BIGGS-DAVISON, J. et al, (1984), *The Cross of St. Patrick - The Catholic Unionist Tradition in Ireland*, p.257, which notes that the Irish Unionist Alliance of 1891 had the Primrose League centrally represented.

¹⁸⁹The discussion here re Bagshawe is informed by source data available in O'CALLAGHAN, E, *English Catholics and the Irish Question 1870-93*, PhD, N.U.I., 1975 pp.269-295; copy in NDA.

¹⁹⁰NDA, O'CALLAGHAN, E (1975), quoting *St. James Gazette*, 16 March 1886; for "habitation" read "lodge" as in Orange. Also, see *Leicester Mercury* of 13 March 1886, and *Morning Post* of 19 March 1886.

Rule issue was the reason for de Lisle's victory, for Gladstone's firm declaration in favour of Irish devolution split the Liberals locally as well as nationally.¹⁹¹ De Lisle deliberately forced the issue in Leicestershire, for his widely syndicated letter announced that "I am about to found, promote and attend" the new Primrose League branch amongst the Whitwick Collieries, in the very heartland of local Irish support for Home Rule. His speech was published as *Unreason in High Places*, the title an ungracious insult to Bagshawe.¹⁹²

De Lisle's speech, of 11 May 1886, attempted to drive a wedge between English and Irish Catholics on the issue of loyalty and the integrity of the Empire:

"It is the solemn, premeditated and undying object of the Primrose League to smash and pulverize the Irish National League now that it pleases him (Gladstone) to make friends with Mr Parnell, Mr Davitt and the Irish irreconcilables, and to say that all their violent speeches and letter against England and England-loving Irishmen mean nothing we do not believe him. We know what the whole movement is subsidised by England's bitterest enemies in America and Ireland we are also opposed to every republican aspiration I sincerely hope that before the summer is over, Leicestershire may be studded with *Habitations*, and the principles of the League deeply rooted in the County."¹⁹³

Given the heavy incidence of Irish settlers in the mining townships around Whitwick, trouble ensued at the meeting. De Lisle's mother recorded in her diary:

11 May 1886: Edwin went to the National School at Whitwick to inaugurate the Gracedieu Habitation of the Primrose League. It was a very riotous meeting, marred by the Irish, as Edwin is not a Home Ruler.¹⁹⁴

The national papers picked up the story; the ultra Tory *Morning Post* reported that de Lisle was shouted down "by a phalanx of colliers" who kept up "a steady barrage of cheers for Gladstone, Parnell, Davitt, Bagshawe and Morley."¹⁹⁵ At a Catholic gathering in Loughborough shortly after, Canon Monahan accused de Lisle of having "outraged the feelings of his co-religionists," and of scandalising many non-Catholics to boot "by

¹⁹¹The Loughborough Liberal candidate in 1886, J E Johnson-Ferguson, supported Gladstone, but many local party members split over Home Rule, letting De Lisle in. By 1892, Liberal unity was restored and the seat was re-captured; see ELLIOTT, B., Edwin de Lisle MP, *The Catholic Orangemen, Bulletin of the L'boro Arch. Soc.* (1992) p.49-50.

¹⁹²De LP, numerous entries in Laura de Lisle's *Diaries*, q.v.

¹⁹³DeLP; De LISLE, E., *Unreason in High Places*, delivered 11 May 1886, pp. 3,4 and 6.

¹⁹⁴De LP; *Diary of Laura de Lisle*, 11 May 1886.

¹⁹⁵*Morning Post*, 13 May 1886, cited in O'CALLAGHAN, E, p.287.

his extraordinary conduct in reference to his ecclesiastical superior."¹⁹⁶

Not surprisingly, in the next month the local Home Rulers continued to hit back hard, with a pamphlet of their own, *Plain Reasons why the Irish Claim the Right to Manage their own Affairs* (June 1886). The author, identified only as "J.C", was an Irish miner and innkeeper, James Commons, settled in Whitwick.¹⁹⁷ Ambitious in scope, the work rehearsed convincingly the evidence of Irish grievances, and various evidences of anti-Irish prejudice. With relish and statistical accuracy, it proceeded to demolish de Lisle's claims about Irish support for the status quo, exposing the Primrose League as the English branch of the Orange order, and ably defending Bagshawe's stand.¹⁹⁸

The defeat of the first Home Rule Bill of 1886 was only the start of a long, drawn-out local struggle. The local Conservative opponents of Irish devolution continued to develop and expand the number of Primrose League Habitations in the county. The rate of progress was impressive. It is clear that the League was not a mere passing fad, being operative continuously from 1886 until 1893 (and beyond).¹⁹⁹ It had numerous branches; in Leicestershire these included Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Whitwick and Shepshed. Whilst de Lisle can be perceived as a focus, it reached out beyond him as a mobiliser of ideas and personnel in the pro-Union cause.

The Primrose League's growth was, of course, a reflection of the Irish nationalist agitation and organisation which it was set up to counter. The Leicester Liberals also showed a clear commitment to Irish issues (see below).

The emphasis which the Land League made on the recruitment of priests was reflected locally, in a "top-down" model. The exemplary contribution of Bishop Bagshawe (1829-1915) was outstanding.²⁰⁰ He held the see from 1874 to 1901, possibly the most crucial period for Anglo-Irish relations in the last 200 years. He was a focus for nationalist clerics. Of 94 diocesan priests c.1870-1910, approximately 40 were of either Irish birth or extraction; many progressed into positions of responsibility. Some became prominent politically on Irish issues, such as Fr. Matthew O'Reilly (Leicester

¹⁹⁶ *The Tablet*, 17 July 1886, cited in O'CALLAGHAN, E. p.287.

¹⁹⁷ I am indebted to the Whitwick Historical Group, who appear to have the only copy extant. It was printed in Leicester.

¹⁹⁸ See BIGGS-DAVISON, J et al (1984), p.212: "The Primrose League and the Primrose Dames as well as the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union led the opposition to Home Rule." Randolph Churchill founded the League in 1883; see MARTIN, R. *Jennie, The Life of Lady Randolph Churchill*, p.170-2; it soon had 2 million members.

¹⁹⁹ The Primrose League remains an official component of the UK Conservative Party today. The de Lisles kept up the pressure on their opponents: in Dec. 1893, Gerard de Lisle supported Beckworth against Fr. O'Reilly for the Co. Council; *DeLP*, *LdL's Diary*, 2.8.92 28.12.1893.

²⁰⁰ O'DAY, A., *The political organisation of the Irish in Britain 1867-90*, in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S. (1989), p.194-6. Bagshawe's tenure of office ended in 1901 under a cloud, mainly because of his unrelenting adherence to support for Home Rule and social justice issues.

Sacred Heart, and Whitwick, Holy Cross), who supported the resolution condemning the Tory government and praising Gladstone at the Irish National League meeting at Loughborough in November 1889.²⁰¹

One incident in particular encapsulates the diocesan Hibernian dimension at work; this centred round the candidature of Provost Harnett for election to the School Board. Bagshawe managed the meeting adroitly: gauging that some school board electors felt that Harnett might not be sufficiently pro-Home Rule, the Bishop declared that whatever Harnett might or might not feel on the Irish issue:

He (B. Bagshawe) could only say that whatever Prov. Harnett's feelings on the matter were HE was a Home Ruler (applause) he felt excessively strong the importance of Home Rule, and that it was the first question of the day. He should, therefore, sympathise with a man as a Home Ruler, but he did not think it was necessary he should be declared in a case like this which had nothing to do with Home Rule at all (hear! hear! applause) He begged, as a personal favour of all Home Rulers of the town, that they would lay the H.R. question aside on this occasion and not disgrace the Catholic party and show it's influence in the town to be weaker than they hoped it to be and believed it to be.²⁰²

A consummate politician, Bagshawe kept his lines open to the local Liberals, by indicating that the school board election was an exception to the general rule of supporting the Liberal interest in return for their support on Irish constitutional matters. This rapport between clerics and Home Rulers was part of a wider national pattern, as observed by Fielding in the Manchester area.²⁰³ Not surprisingly then, Denvir in 1894 referred to Dr. Bagshawe as "a firm friend of our cause."²⁰⁴

Home Rule organisation and structure in Britain declined. Throughout the 1875-86 period, it was a members' dog wagged by its Irish leaders' tail. Once Gladstone altered direction in 1886, however, the whole organisation, on both sides of the Irish Sea, had to orient itself alongside Liberal Party priorities. This caused two problems: that minority of politically radicalised Irish, such as Barclay, felt that other socio-economic issues were also priorities, whilst the majority of Catholic Irish had to try to balance what they felt to be inimical about the Liberals (on matters such as education and

²⁰¹NDA; *Nottingham Guardian*, 30 Nov. 1889; O'Reilly became a School Board member, a Poor Law Guardian, and a Liberal County Councillor.

²⁰²NDA; *Nottingham Guardian*, 16 Nov. 1889; quote as presented in archives.

²⁰³FIELDING, S. (1993), p.92-3.

²⁰⁴DENVIR, J. (1894), p.429.

Boards of Guardians) with Gladstone's clear conversion to Home Rule.

Barclay's *Memoirs* offer surprisingly little on Home Rule. Being immersed in succession in every variety of post-1870's leftist thought, ordinary Liberalism would have had little appeal. In the mid-1890's he and anarchist colleagues were purged by the ILP. He was disillusioned, and "soon left Leicester for London and a short career in the Gaelic League."²⁰⁵ Given that Home Rule still attracted only a small proportion of the Irish in Britain; given that many Irish settlers had advanced inevitably along the paths of integration and assimilation; and that the leadership propelled the movement into integration with main stream parties and politics; many Irish sought an outlet in the alternative attraction of the Irish cultural renaissance of the 1890's. Barclay and the McCarthy family provide typical Leicester reflections of this tendency in action.²⁰⁶

What was the nature of the links in Leicester between the Home Rule Liberals and the Irish community? There is some clear evidence of Leicester Liberal support and enthusiasm for Home Rule in the late 1880's and the 1890's, and this would have earned some Irish support. In February 1886, a letter from the Free Land League was accepted for consideration (outcome unknown). In April 1886 the local Association met "specially to consider the Irish Home Rule and Land Purchase Bills." In June the branch submitted a vote of confidence in Gladstone's Irish policy; the Executive Committee declared its intention "to support you in your noble efforts to do justice to Ireland". In March 1889 they formally endorsed the aims of Parnell's Irish National Party. The advance towards Irish Home Rule was again urged by Leicester's Liberals in 1890-91, and they remained supportive throughout most of the Parnell *imbroglio*.²⁰⁷ This reflected their commitment at the time of the 1st and 2nd Home Rule Bills (April 1886 and January 1893 respectively).

In October 1892 the local Association endorsed the suspension of the Irish Coercion Acts, as well as repeating its support for Irish devolution, and in the March following it announced its "unanimous support" for Gladstone's second bill.²⁰⁸ The genuine vibrancy of support for Home Rule was evinced in the intense activity

²⁰⁵LANCASTER, B. (1987), p. 111 and 113.

²⁰⁶See also RYAN, W.P. (1894/1970), *The Irish Literary Revival, its History, Pioneers and Possibilities* re the Irish cultural renaissance in Britain.

²⁰⁷LCRO, 11 D57 2, *Leic. Lib. Party Min Bk 1882-92*; entries for 8.2.1886, , 11.6.1886, 16.6.1886, 25.3.1889, 3.12.1890, and 27 Jan. 1891. See below re-defection of Parnell and Nationalists, and effect on local Liberal attitudes to Ireland.

²⁰⁸LCRO, 11 D57 3; *Leic. Lib. Asscn. Min Bk 1892-3*, entries for 12.10.1892 and 8.3.1893. In the City, the Liberal Manifesto for the 1895 General Election, endorsed both the Home Rule and Irish Land Bills, the candidates being Henry Broadhurst and Walter Hazell; see *The Wyvern* No. 193, Vol. VIII, 5 July 1895, p.162.

surrounding the election of 1889, when the Irish issue dominated packed meetings in the city and county. In just 5 weeks in November/December the Liberals organised no less than 11 pro-Home Rule meetings across Leicestershire.

There is not a great deal of direct evidence of Irish community involvement in Liberal Party planning or campaigning in Leicester at this period. There is evidence of long-term commitment from many Leicester Liberals, including the leadership, and there is evidence of some willingness amongst non-Irish Liberals to identify in politically awkward or potentially embarrassing situations. The following are persons identified as attending the Leicester Land League meeting on May 1882 held in response to the Phoenix Park murders.²⁰⁹ A Mr Kirkland, an Irishman who proposed the motion of condemnation and sympathy in 1882 was, for example, also present when Michael Davitt spoke as a guest of the Leicester Radicals (Left Liberals) in early April 1886.²¹⁰ Also present at Davitt's meeting were Councillor Butcher, Alderman Hart (a future Lord Mayor and friend of St. Patrick's School) and the Rev. J.P. Hopps, all three of whom were also present at the important Home Rule support meetings in Leicester throughout December 1889.

Also present at the 1882 Leicester Land League meeting were a Dr. O'Malley, who seconded the motion, one L. O'Farrell, who spoke in support, and a G. O'Shea who was the branch president. O'Shea can possibly be identified as a Liberal Party member, for an A. O'Shea was present at the Leicester Liberal Party meeting of 4 October 1893. So too were a W. Beamish and a J. McCall, which suggests that there was an element, however small, of Irish membership amongst the Leicester Liberals. On surname evidence, these last two may have been Protestant Irish.²¹¹

It is the case that Home Rule and Liberalism in Leicester were in reality not dependent on an Irish numerical input. Strong support for Irish issues was forthcoming from Liberals, whether leadership cadres or rank and file.²¹² James Hawker, a self-educated Leicestershire poacher, offered an eloquent analysis of the Home Rule issue.

²⁰⁹LC, 13 May 1882, p.4.

²¹⁰LC, 3 April 1886. Fielding (1993) suggests that by c.1900 most Irish Nationalists in England had come to accept Davitt's view, viz. that Home Rule could only be won with the support of the English working class. Therefore a strong labour movement was an essential prerequisite, whilst Lib-Lab pacts were to be preferred to doctrinaire ILP onslaughts on Liberals. Davitt spoke again in Leicester in 1906, at "the longest political meeting held in Leicester in modern times." 6,000 attended this "great progressive rally enthusiastic mass meeting," in support of the 2 Labour candidates, Mr Broadhurst and Ramsey MacDonald. Davitt declared that "every Irish voter in Leicester should record his votes for the two progressive candidates," and he dwelt at some length on this, and the need for Home Rule, see *Leicester Daily Post*, 15 Jan. 1906.

²¹¹LCRO, Leic. Lib. Assc Min Bk, 11 D57 3, entry for 4 Oct 1893. See McLYSAGHT re-surnames.

²¹²HAWKER, J.A. (Ed. 1961) CHRISTIAN, G., *A Victorian Poacher, James Hawker's Journal*, p.74. Hawker shared Barclay's views on the gullibility of their own class; he went on the Wigston School Board as a Liberal.

In a critique of Joseph Chamberlain, the man who caused the damaging Liberal split on Home Rule, he wrote:

..... After the assassination of Burke and Cavendish (in 1882), he told Parnell and Justin McCarthy that if he could only be Chief Secretary for Ireland, he would assist them in Home Rule.

What is this man's attitude to Home Rule today? There is no bigger enemy. But if the Irish was deserving of Home Rule then, why not now? As soon as the Old Man brought in his Home Rule Bill, Joe turned traitor. He wrecked Gladstone's government.²¹³

The views of such an ordinary "man in the street" complemented the contribution of local Liberal leaders such as the MP for Market Harborough John William Logan, who was returned in 1891 at a by-election. Well travelled, Logan, a railway engineer and contractor, was part of the Liberal *élite*, but one who related well to the local working-class. He spoke out regularly on Home Rule, and was available for numerous meetings at various locations. In 1892, his own workforce presented him with an impressive illuminated address for his generosity in keeping his men in full pay whilst heavy snow stopped all work for eight weeks in the winter of 1890-91. The signatories included 4 Irish names.²¹⁴ In March 1892, his photograph featured on the cover of *The Wyvern*, with a very positive appreciation of his profile as a Liberal MP. Logan's success was based on a genuine humanitarian reputation, his full commitment to Home Rule, and the careful groundwork of his election team, which brought sophisticated techniques for arousing the interest and support, and the formal registration of voters, into the smallest of local villages.²¹⁵ It must be assumed that Irish electors, especially those lately enfranchised, would have been garnered, however few in number. Certainly there is evidence of this development in 1906, when Davitt again visited Leicester, to specifically urge Irish voters to give the Labour candidates their support.²¹⁶ The Conservatives showed their concern: the Earl of Denbigh, guest speaker at Holy Cross School in 1886, noted that "lately a great number of persons had been admitted to the franchise and asked to choose their rulers (they) should learn the duty of obedience to constituted authority" he hoped they would be "loyal subjects and good Irishmen."

If the labouring man formalised his political ambitions in the 1890's, it is clear that popular political allegiances on Irish issues were made evident in other ways. There is evidence of a popular political consciousness in the amount and variety of Irish

²¹³See McKINLEY, R.A., *Political History 1885-1950*, in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed)(1954), *VCHL*, Vol. II, p.137; and PIKE, T.W. (1902), *Leicester and Rutland-Contemporary Biographies*, p.85. in LCRO.

²¹⁴LCRO, Misc. 323; Illuminated Address to J.W. Logan MP, 25th January 1892, from the workmen on the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway.

²¹⁵*The Wyvern*, No. 21, Vol. 1, 18 March 1892, cover and p.323; also, 23 August 1895, p.323 re Logan's "Spin doctor" Charles Coppack, ex-media man, and Logan's political secretary from 1892.

²¹⁶*Leicester Daily Post*, 15 Jan. 1906, and 2 Aug. 1886.

political motifs and messages to be found emblazoned on clay pipes.²¹⁷ Recent British and American research suggests that customers purchased their clay pipes much as a modern football supporter sports a team scarf: allegiances were thereby exhibited, and informal messages relayed to both friends and opponents:

Many of the Irish, both in the United Kingdom and here in America, openly flaunted their objections to what they considered unfair treatment by smoking clay pipes deliberately designed to solicit sympathy for their causes.²¹⁸

Clay pipes with significant Irish emblems have appeared in Leicester archaeological sites quite frequently; all are post c.1850. (See Table 2) The finds indicate areas where the Irish lived and worked.²¹⁹ The Elbow Lane site in Leicester was adjacent to the old St. Michael's chapel used by the earlier Irish settlers in Causeway Lane (the precursor of St. Patrick's). The two most popular Irish political motifs were the shamrock, and the harp. (see Nos. 38, 105 and 106). These were home produced copies directed at the Irish migrant market. The local incidence of "Dublin" and "Cork" models reflects the significant numbers who migrated from these areas to Leicester (see settlement chapter).

By the 1880's, ranges of pipes were being marketed which reflected both sides of the Irish national political debate. Most models reflected nationalist interest, and distribution predominated in the midlands and the north. Relief portraits of individuals such as Parnell and Gladstone, competed with models displaying overt political slogans, such as "Home Rule", "Ireland a Nation", the "Gaelic League" and the "Who Fears to Speak of '98".²²⁰ Leicester in mid-century had its own Irish clay pipe-manufacturing family, the Coxes (1815-44), who would have known the likely market for the Irish models.²²¹ Their base in Bedford Street was in the most Irish area of the city. Some finds in Leicester represent a Unionist, Loyalist, anti-Home Rule outlook. The main motif was a capital L, surmounted by a crown, inside a circular border. They may have

²¹⁷eg Barclay described "the old calaighs in plain shoulder-shawls and bordered caps who used in these parts, years ago, to squat on their hunkers and smoke *dudheens*;" see *The Wyvern*, No. 192, Vol. VIII, 28 June 1895, p.150; he was referring to the core Irish area of Abbey St/Green St. Also see COLUM, P. (Ed)(1967), *A Treasury of Irish Folklore*, p.399-400, quoting 'My Pipe of Irish Clay' from *The Gael*, Sept. 1904, p.312, and DANAHER, K. (1962), on Tobacco, *In Ireland Long Ago*, p.64-71.

²¹⁸See ALEXANDER, L.T., (N.D.) *Historic Clay Tobacco Pipes Studies*, Vol. 3 (USA), pp.69-75.

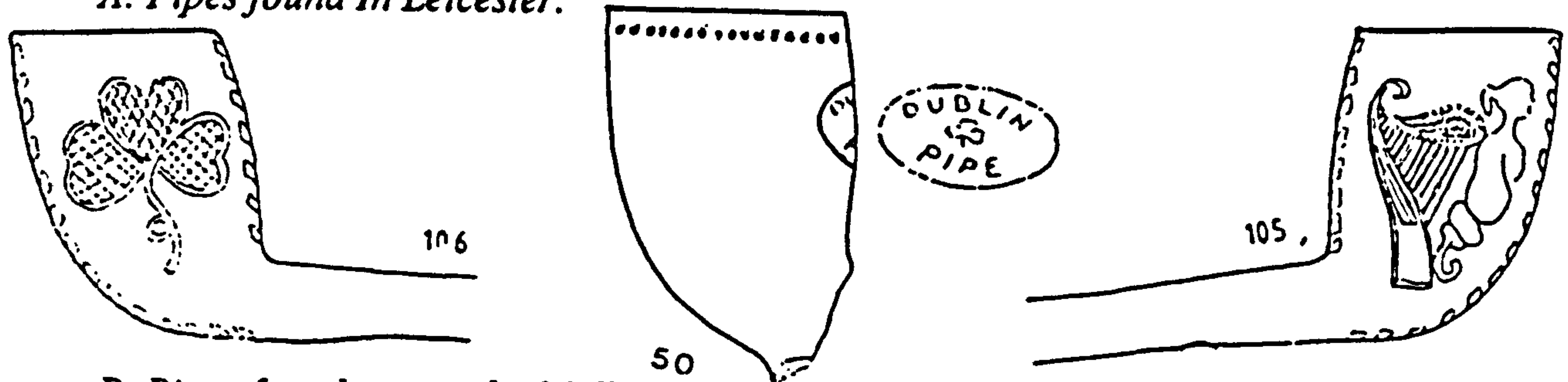
²¹⁹See HIGGINS, D. (1985), *Leicester Clay Tobacco Pipes*, p.295, 300, 304-5; the dig in Elbow Lane in 1977/8 found pipes in a thick layer of soil and domestic rubbish in houses built between 1802/1828; obviously, the "Irish" pipes of the post-1850 period were found buried in these refuse disposal pits.

²²⁰The best articles on clay pipes are by Peter Hammond; see *Trade Pipes*, in *Antique Bottle Collecting*, Nov. 1980, p.10 & 11; *Military Pipes*, ABC, Dec. 1980, p. 6 & 7; *Commemorative Pipes: I, III*; ABC Aug. 1980, p.14-16; ABC Oct 1980, p.16-18; and *Patriotic Pipes - II, Ireland*, ABC in May 1981, p.2-4.

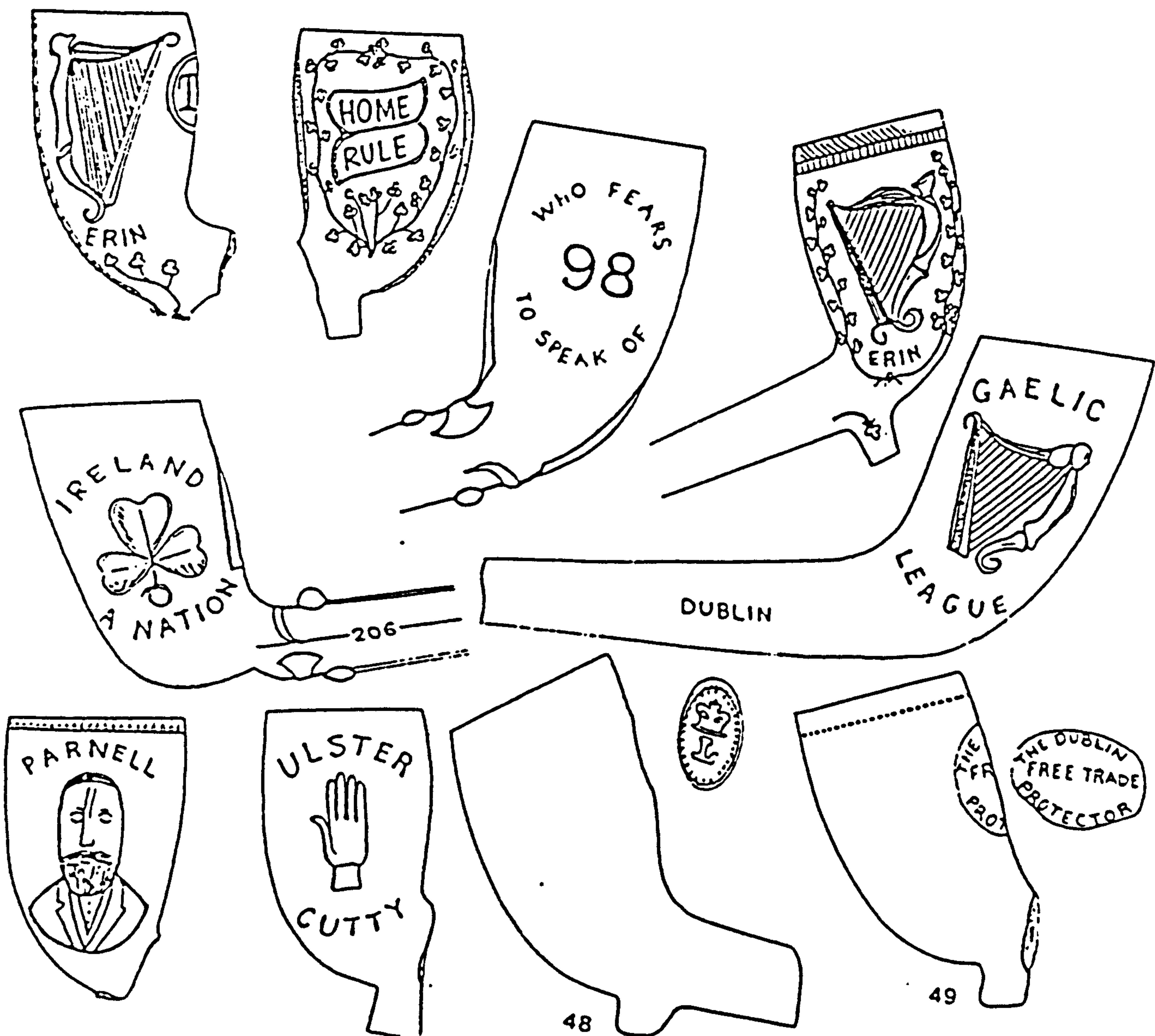
²²¹See DANIELS, J.A., *The Making of Clay Pipes in Leicester*, in *TLAHS*, Vol. XL, 1964-5, p.59-62.

TABLE 2	POPULAR NATIONALISM : IRISH POLITICAL MOTIFS DEPICTED ON CLAY TOBACCO PIPES, c.1850-c.1900
Notes: (1)	The 3 pipes at top of page (A) are from the Elbow Lane archaeological site in Leicester; the others are finds from across the Midlands generally (B).
(2)	SOURCES: HAMMOND, P; GREEN, MJ; HIGGINS, D (details in footnotes).

A. Pipes found In Leicester:



B. Pipes found across the Midlands:



originated from Holland (indicating a possible Orange link).²²² As to Home Rule, the dreams of the smokers remained just that - pipe dreams.

As the Liberals had supported the disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1868, their credentials remained sound to a majority of Irish Catholic voters. When J.A. Picton replaced P.A. Taylor as Liberal candidate c.1880, Picton may have seemed less attractive personally to Irish voters, as he was celebrated "nationally as the author of a eulogistic study of Oliver Cromwell." The local Conservatives maintained their unionist stance for the 1885 Election, their new man, William Millican, embracing a political "faith which (also) led him to insist that the Irish Union must be maintained." Under Picton's control, local Liberals, "embarrassed perhaps by the defection of the Irish vote under Parnell's instructions, maintained some reserve about Ireland." Although the Leicester Liberal Association remained loyal to Gladstone's Home Rule policy, in 1886 a split nonetheless occurred, and Liberal Unionists broke away. The Tories attempted to exploit the situation by working through the local Liberal Unionists, and Central Office resurrected the Bickersteth factor (see chapter on prejudice). They put up Robert Bickersteth of "a well known evangelical family distantly connected with Leicestershire," who had been MP for N. Shropshire. Despite the Protestant profile, the Liberals won, with a decreased majority." In Leicester, the Irish Question proved to be the catalyst for a long-fermenting Liberal split,²²³ when certain leading employers and businessmen shifted their allegiance rightwards. The long-term legatee of the Liberal split was the Labour movement, which developed healthily from around 1890, attracting external support from speakers like Davitt, which in turn engendered Irish proletarian backing.

(d) The Disestablishment Issue: the Irish Perspectives In the Politico-Religious Debate In Leicester post - 1860

As the vociferous anti-Papist campaigns of the 1850's grew less strident, disestablishment was a continuing issue for both Catholics and Non-conformists. Ambrose de Lisle opposed Disestablishment.²²⁴ His wish for a *modus operandi* and eventual unity with Anglicanism inevitably conflicted with Irish Catholic political

²²²See GREEN M.J.(1984), *Clay Tobacco Pipes and Pipe Makers of Leicester*, p.21. Also, discussions and correspondence with P. Hammond and Peter Davey, Archaeology Depts Univ. of Liverpool; the fact that the "Loyalist" pipe was particularly popular in the Scottish market supports the link with Unionist-Orange interests. (An "Ulster cutty" model displayed the Red Hand of Ulster on the side of the bowl). ALEXANDER notes that "In addition to Ireland, Scotland and Holland also produced such pipes, particularly for export to the USA and to England;" see *Historic Clay Tobacco Pipe Studies - Vol. 3 (USA)*, p.69

²²³See EVANS, R. & McKINLEY, R., *Parliamentary History*, In McKINLEY, R. (Ed)(1958), *VCHL*, Vol. IV, p.225, quoting *Leic. Mercury*, 20 Feb. 1886; p.226; 228-231.

²²⁴PURCELL, E.S. (1900), Vol. II, p.296.

objectives.²²⁵ He was out of step with contemporary developments. Pressure for deregulating Anglicanism was building up nationwide. Irish Catholics found his views very difficult to sympathise with.

In April 1868 a crowded meeting at the Temperance Hall had Liberal Party support; the visiting speaker was a Mr Mason Jones.²²⁶ His address denounced the Reformation in Ireland, the Protestant plantations, and the penal laws. He lauded the achievements of Protestant Irish patriots, recalling Fitzgerald, Emmett and Tone. Sympathising with Catholic and moderate nationalist considerations, he made effective use of the financial arguments to undermine the case for the establishment. Disestablishment and subsequent land reform would isolate extremists:

You will make Fenianism an impossibility; You will take away the fuel which feeds it, and transfer the whole of the population to the side of loyalty and order.

At the next meeting, in the Town Hall, one speaker declaimed, dramatically:

How long would the Protestant people of England submit to a Catholic ascendancy here, a Catholic Church dominant, and Catholic priests in their pulpits?²²⁷

The opposition, the Leicester branch of the Irish Church Society, responded. Two guests, Church of Ireland clergymen, attended specially; the proposed chair was C.H. Frewen, of the well-known local Non-Conformist evangelical Frewen-Turners, prominent in the widespread anti-Catholic activity of the 1835-60 period.²²⁸ As the meeting turned heated, interruptions started and "The Chairman suggested that the interruptions emanated from a few Irish Catholics." The visiting speaker charitably intervened to lay the blame not on the "Irish Catholics" in the audience, but on local "Leicester Radicals". The following harangue ensued:

He (Dr. H.) Then proceeded to speak of the objects of the society, and was remarking on the way in which the Bible was excluded from Catholic families through the agency of the priest, when a little scene occurred. An Irishman, named Reilly, in the body of the hall, called out,

²²⁵PAWLEY, M. (1995), ch.9, pp.226-304.

²²⁶LC, 4 April 1868, p.8.

²²⁷LC, 9 May 1868, p.3.

²²⁸LC, 29 Aug. 1868; p.8. The visitors were Rev. A.P. Hanlon from Mount Shannon, and Rev. G. Blake Colcannon, of Dromod.

"Its false; I've had a Bible in the Irish language six and twenty years. I brought it with me from Ireland: it was a free gift from the priest for services in the school. You say the priest doesn't allow the reading of the Bible. I wonder how you dare stand there and make such a statement." (Great uproar)

Dr. Hanlon: I will see you to-morrow: what is your address?

A prominent local Liberal, Mr. W. Stanyon, finally succeeded in getting the meeting to pass a motion "to express its unreserved approval of his proposition to disestablish and disendow the Irish Church. (Tremendous Cheering)."²²⁹

The Conservative response was their "Indignation Meeting" of June 1869.²³⁰ They again invited Hibernian protagonists: a Dr. Corran from Enniscorthy with his brother Rev. W. Corran of Templesdigan, representing the Central Protestant Association of Ireland. An entry fee of 6 pence was charged (a fee which presumably would exclude working-class and Irish Catholic elements). A heckler was closely supervised for the rest of the meeting by a policeman.

William Connor Magee (1821-91), the Irish-born local Anglican Bishop of Peterborough from 1868, made a celebrated speech on 15 June 1869 in opposition to the Bill, which some described as the "finest speech ever delivered by any living man in either house of parliament."²³¹ Magee was a tolerant evangelical. Given his strong Irish antecedents as a Protestant of Cork - Dublin background with an education at TCD, it is interesting to speculate on the part he might have played in furthering the liaison between the English and Irish allies on the pro-establishment side. Did he assist with the visiting speakers for Leicester? Was he pro-active in recruiting Irish Church clergy for Leicester, either as a matter of policy, or as a barrier to Irish clerical unemployment, for the census figures indicate that some Protestant Irish-born clerics worked in the city. The answers are elusive.

In the study period, there certainly were Irish-born Protestant clerics resident locally: the Rev. McCormick at Coalville c.1841; the City Prison chaplain, Rev. William Fox c.1841;²³² the Rev. Brassington at Hoby in 1851 and Ragdale in 1871;²³³ and Rev. Linklater in Leicester in 1881.²³⁴ Perhaps the grandest was the Rev. La Grange Leney,

²²⁹ LC of 17 Oct. 1868, p.6; all subsequent references are from this same source. Stanyon was very prominent in agitation to secularise education in Leicester; see section on Education politics.

²³⁰ LCM, 5 June 1869, in the source for this particular gathering.

²³¹ D.N.B, entry on W.C. Magee, p.760.

²³² 1841 ACD, and see FISHER, R. (c.1988), *Reminiscences of Coalville*, typed MSS in Coalville Lib.

²³³ 1851 and 1871 ACD.

²³⁴ ACD for 1881, p.35. (Reel 125)

M.A., son of a physician and surgeon, born in Wicklow, educated at TCD. From 1884-90 he was Vicar of Horninghold and from 1890 Chaplain to Hinckley Union.²³⁵

Quite apart from personal associations with Ireland, Leicester's pro-establishment Protestant community had for long publicly sympathised with those economically hard-pressed Irish Church clergy. Packed supporters meetings had been held in Leicester from c.1835, such as that supported by the Duke of Rutland and John Stockdale Hardy in January 1836, and attracting the signatures of 65 prominent local Protestant clerics and gentry.²³⁶

Even though the Irish Catholics of Leicester were, in the late 1860's, still relatively deprived economically and socially, they would have nonetheless been aware of the issue of Irish Church disestablishment. Some of those born in Ireland would have experienced unjust exactions and would have been fully aware of the implications in terms of undemocratic and inequitable practices. As the news reports indicate, some at least felt confident enough to make their voices felt at public meetings on the issue, however anonymously. There was a long-term local Protestant lobby in support of the Irish Church; and this was prepared to go to the trouble and expense of inviting Irish Protestant clerics to Leicester to plead their case.

(e) The Politics of Education: Voluntaryism versus State Provision, and the Impact of National Issues.

The 1870 Act "exacerbated political controversy as vigorously as ever" in Leicester. School board elections came to be hotly contested on political lines. Non-Conformists, Catholics and Anglicans in Leicester formed associations (mirroring the national pattern). The Liberals could not heal internal rifts over education, a situation worsened in that "they were faced with the formidable opposition over the Education Act of the Roman Catholics"²³⁷

Amidst the obvious ambiguities in the legislation, the Catholic Church "insisted unequivocally on a Voluntary System fully rate-aided."²³⁸ Anglican and moderate Non-Conformists inclined to the same view, unlike those of openly secularist opinion.

²³⁵PIKE, T.W. (Ed)(1902), *Leics. & Rutland at the Opening of the 20th Century - Contemporary Biographies*; Pike's New Century Series, No. 7; in LCRO; p.113. This was a local 'Who's Who'; with photos to boot.

²³⁶LC, 30 Jan. 1836.

²³⁷See EVANS, R. & MCKINLEY, R., *Parliamentary History* in MCKINLEY, R. (Ed)(1958), *VCHL*, Vol. IV, p.225-7, citing LC of 7 Feb. 1874.

²³⁸BEALES in BECK (1950); p.373.

Anglican feeling was ably articulated by Bishop Magee, (1868-1891),²³⁹ who was skilfully supportive of voluntarism.²⁴⁰ From 1872, his twin policies were to maintain existing Anglican schools, and gain a footing on the new School Board.²⁴¹ Was Magee's policy for east midland Anglicans consciously allied with or sympathetic to the parallel efforts of local Catholics? There is little direct evidence available either way. In Lancashire, Anglicans and Catholics co-operated.²⁴² At a school board meeting in Nottingham in 1889, where Bagshawe had to perform a juggling act on the Home Rule issue, he concluded with "a lengthy diatribe on the Church of England, the Act of Uniformity, etc."; this is hardly suggestive of joint policy or planning by local Catholics and Anglicans.

The typical stalemate that emerged in most areas was exemplified in Manchester, where, from 1875, a compromise operated between "Unsectarians" and Anglicans on a minimalist religious education package; this had the twin effects of isolating Catholics on School Boards, and of encouraging increasing numbers of Protestant Schools to merge into the Board system. Leicester Anglicans gradually merged their schools into the *Board system*: by 1900, of 49 grant schools, 23 were Anglican.²⁴³

How did Catholic educational interests in *Leicester politics fare between 1870 and 1902*? Many of the themes noted in the wider national context also appear in Leicester. The Catholic authorities quickly grasped the need for joining and negotiating with elected local officials; also, their increasing self-confidence led to a decreasing focus on the Protestant School threats, and a new focus on the inadequacy of Protestantism as the religious core of the new national system. The semi-official proselytism of Catholic pauper children began to diminish with the delinquency and poor law reforms of 1866/68. The Catholic Church "would not now be satisfied with anything other than separate schools for Catholic pauper children;"²⁴⁴ this new dimension emerged locally.²⁴⁵

Representation on Leicester Boards has been analysed for 6 of the 11 Boards elected from 1871-1903. Of 53 persons, just 3 were women. Most were clergymen;

²³⁹McKINLEY, R.A., *Elementary Education in HOSKINS (1955), VCHL Vol.III; p.248-250.*

²⁴⁰D.N.B., Col. XII, p.760; in 1861 he published a successful defence of voluntarism.

²⁴¹McKINLEY, R.A. in HOSKINS, W.G. (1955), *V.C.H.L., Vol. III, Elementary Education* p. 249.

²⁴²FIELDING, S. (1993), p.62.

²⁴³McKINLEY, R.A., p.250.

²⁴⁴HICKMAN, (1995), p.183-5. Leicester was no exception.

²⁴⁵GILL, A., *The Leicester School Board, 1871-1903*; in SIMON, B., (Ed), (1968), *Education in Leicestershire 1540-1940*; pp.156-177. All factual data in this section is from Gill. See LANCASTER, B. (1987), pp. 78-79; Liberal party domination, locally and nationally, was reflected in School Board elections which "breathed new life into the old controversy on the role of the established church in the early 1870's," especially after the 1867 Reform Act enlarged the local electorate.

8 Anglican, 4 Non-conformist and 1 Catholic. 33 were middle-class; 8 were "upper" working class; 9 were "artisans." Most also had a genuine interest in education. The contribution of Fr. Hawkins, the Irish-born parish priest at St. Patrick's, was important:

There was usually one Roman Catholic on the Board, but of these, I. Fleming (1874-83) and G. Evans (1886-95) voted with the Liberal Party and only when Fr. Hawkins was elected in 1895 did any distinctive attitude emerge. He objected to the extension of educational facilities by the Board on the ground that Roman Catholics could not take advantage of them, but otherwise was not always at one with the Church party (ie Anglicans).²⁴⁶

Kimberlin's account makes clear that Catholics had a deliberate policy of maintaining a continuous presence; Fleming was possibly of Irish descent. Fr. Hawkin's emergence as a Board member is the first definite sign of an Irish-born Catholic emerging.²⁴⁷ Fleming was replaced in 1880 by one Matthew Brady, also probably Irish.²⁴⁸ In Leicester then, Catholic representation on Boards commenced early on. Ullathorne had been concerned about Catholic representatives becoming isolated and lapsing.²⁴⁹ Fr. Hawkins, whilst making friends and gaining respect for both himself and his Church, was quite able to engage in vociferous public debate in a series of strenuous defences and justifications of Catholic interests. Manning felt Catholic representatives were essential because : "Their presence and vigilance are the only securities we possess for the safety of our children," these members could "guard against our greatest danger, namely, the committal under the Industrial School Acts, of Catholic children to Protestant Industrial Schools."²⁵⁰ Hawkins supported this line totally.

In January 1897 the School Management Committee noted that Fr. Hawkins wanted a blind Catholic boy (Higgins) to be sent to a Catholic institution. The Committee agreed.²⁵¹ The Liverpool R.C. institution was investigated and approved; Higgins was then sent there.²⁵² A similar case involved Nellie Walsh, an epileptic pupil

²⁴⁶GILL, A., in SIMON, B. (Ed. 1968); pp.164-5. KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), p.23 confirms this. See READ, R. (1881), p.78. Evans was chair of Leics. Co-op. Soc. Fleming was Mngr of the Home Rule Club.

²⁴⁷GILL (1968) examines the multiple vote system for school board elections, and the possibilities for targeting groups or individuals; "plumping" (ie giving all one's votes to a selected candidate) was used to ensure Fr. Hawkin's election in 1900; he was 7th of 20 candidates, gaining 14,421 votes as opposed to 17,254 for the most popular candidate; a good performance for one with such a RC and Irish profile.

²⁴⁸SEARSON, G.R. (Senior) (1883), *The Leicester Municipal Borough and County Poll Book 1835-83*, pp.104-8.

²⁴⁹A useful review of this debate can be found in SELBY, D.E.; Manning, Ullathorne and the School Board Question, 1870-1876, in *J of Education Admin. & Hist.*, Vol. V, No. 1, January 1973; pp.21-27.

²⁵⁰quoted in SELBY, D.E. (1973), p.25.

²⁵¹*School Management Minute Book, 1895-97* LCR 19 D59/V/17; p.222.

²⁵²*Management Book, 1895-7*, p.226.

at St. Patrick's. Her parents, via the Head Teacher, asked the Schools Sub-Committee for Nellie to be sent to an institution; St. Patrick's was in Fr. Hawkin's purview.²⁵³ Through the intervention of a well-known local Secularist Independent named Gould (see below), Fr. Hawkins obtained a place on the Industrial Schools Committee,²⁵⁴ where he was able to protect the interests of Catholic children.

The threat to the maintenance of Catholic faith and practice was real. James Patrick Riley, although baptised at Holy Cross and educated at St. Patrick's, married outside the faith. From 1884-6 he had been in care, at the Countesthorpe Cottage Homes for orphans. This may explain his later detachment from his religious roots. Concern was articulated by Fr. Hays, curate of St Patrick's (1894-96):

He always endeavoured to bring the interest of his own co-religionists to the front, and last September he made applications to the Guardians for the removal of the Roman Catholic children from the Cottage Homes to the duly-certified Catholic Homes. In this he completely failed to gain his object, but in two series of newspaper correspondence which arose from this, he proved his ability as a writer, and on both occasions he came out with credit.²⁵⁵

The Dominicanesses were still expressing serious concern in 1906 about poor Catholic children at Countesthorpe:

Having received a petition from Mr Harrison the Catholic Poor Law Guardian, asking us to take in the Catholic Poor Law Children from the Protestant houses at Countesthorpe, it was unanimously decided that we should get the home certificated for 12 girls from 3 to 12 years of age, the Guardians to pay 6/- per week per child.²⁵⁶

As well as tackling leakage, the clergy were actively involved in the campaign for a fair share of rates expenditure. On 4th March 1895, Fr. Hawkins moved that the Leicester School Board copy the Manchester School Board, which, "in the interest of justice and religious freedom" had ordered that "the School Board Rate should be shared in by all alike whether Board of Voluntary School." It was agreed unanimously that the memorial should be on the agenda of the next meeting. On the 1st

²⁵³ *Minutes Schools Sub-Committee*, LCRO 19 D59/VII/34; p.82, 26 June 1904.

²⁵⁴ See Gill, A., in SIMON, B. (Ed) (1968) p.165.

²⁵⁵ AHOMSW Collection; interview with Mr Pat Riley, a family historian of Irish descent; revised version (1991); *The Wyvern*, No 224, Vol. IX, 7 Feb. 1896, p.243; it has not been possible to trace the correspondence.

²⁵⁶ DCAL, L16-A(ii), *Council Records*, 1894-1917; 9 December 1906, p.73. --

April, a proposal "that the memorial lie upon the table" was followed swiftly by an "Amendment moved by the Rev. H. A. Hawkins and seconded by a Miss Gimson : That the Memorial of the Manchester School Board be supported by this Board." Only 2 of the 14 voted in favour: Fr. Hawkins and the Secularist Miss Gimson. This was another occasion when Catholics and Secularists co-operated. The amendment was lost.²⁵⁷

The good working relationship between Catholic and Secularists on the School Board centred on the facts that both parties were minorities and Independents. The Leicester School Board usually had a Liberal majority - a common occurrence in most towns at the time. Twice, in 1871-74 and 1900-1903, was the balance held by Independents. The Anglicans enjoyed substantial representation but never held a majority, and naturally reflected Conservative opinion. Non-conformists allied themselves usually with the Liberals. Magee's Anglicans generally aimed to preserve Anglican Schools; Liberals and their allies pursued a non-doctrinal perspective, whilst simultaneously reserving their rights to influence religious and moral teaching.

The Liberal interest was not ashamed to use its power subjectively. In 1895, for example, Liberals reserved the chairs of sub-committees for their representatives; both the ILP and the Catholic members objected, Fr. Hawkins denouncing such "hole-in-the-corner arrangements." The Liberal preponderance generally prevented Independents from making a great impact. The Catholic members before 1895 normally voted with the Liberals; Hawkins, however, voted according to each issue. Anglicans and Non-conformists started to unite against the Independents who desired the introduction of "systematic moral instruction." Hawkins believed that all members voted on political and religious lines, which was in fact correct.²⁵⁸ Hawkins is a typical example of a powerful Irish Catholic cleric committed to a pro-active approach to community politics.

That Fr. Hawkin's did not mellow with age is clear. In early 1901, in an editorial sub-titled 'The Tirade of Fr. Hawkins', *The Leicester Guardian* whilst admiring his strong convictions and fearless advocacy, and accepting also that "non-conformists get a good deal more good from Board Schools than churchmen or Catholics do," felt impelled to point out:

²⁵⁷School Minute Books, LCRO; 19 D59/V/8; 4th March 1895, p.364; 1st April 1895; p.300.

²⁵⁸GILL, A; in SIMON, B. (Ed) (1968) p.163-4; AND 168.

"But when he says that his church regards attendance at a Board School as a mark of sin, we are inclined to think that he is making certainly a bitter, and possibly a stupid statement."

The editorial noted that Hawkins was damaging the Church's ambition to reconvert Britain, and the generally positive reputation of the Board Schools.²⁵⁹ Considering that the *Guardian* was liberal-left and even-handed in its religious reporting, this editorial was basically fair. Hawkins was giving local expression to Cardinal Vaughan's unequivocal remark: "Catholic children will go to Catholic schools - or nowhere."²⁶⁰

Fr. Francis Hays, the League of the Cross activist and curate to St. Patrick's (1894-6), also succeeded in making a positive impact:

He always took an active interest in public matters, and his stirring addresses on behalf of the Catholic candidates at the School Board and Guardians' elections will be long remembered ...²⁶¹

Another renowned Irish priest, Fr. O'Reilly of Holy Cross, Whitwick, had served his political apprenticeship at Barrow on Soar, where he was elected to the School Board in 1883.²⁶² A decade later, the Catholic Laura de Lisle contentedly recorded: "Whitwick Board Election: Dr. Burkitt (a Conservative) elected by seven against three - Fr. O'Reilly defeated," - an example of political blood being thicker than religious water.²⁶³

In January 1896, Bagshawe posited two public resolutions outlining the essential Catholic objections on the twin issues of religious teaching and fair financing. He concluded: "We confidently hope that you will attend in great numbers to support the action of your bishops, and not be wanting to your duty on an occasion so important."²⁶⁴

The Wyvern defended the status quo in Leicester against a resurgence of sectarian wedge-driving. A Mr. William Stanyon attempted, unsuccessfully, to stir up strife in the local press. In November 1895, *The Wyvern* observed that if voluntary schools could match the standards of Board Schools in secular education and

²⁵⁹ *The Leicester Guardian/The Wyvern*, 9th February 1901.

²⁶⁰ SNEAD-COX, J.G. (1910), *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan*, Vol. I, p.110; quoted in FIELDING, S. (1993), p.62.

²⁶¹ *The Wyvern*, No. 604, Vol. XXIV, 23 May 1903; see also *The Wyvern* No. 224, Vol. IX, 7 Feb. 1896, p.243.

²⁶² GIRAUD, S.L., (1906) *The History of Whitwick R C Mission* p.29 (in NDA).

²⁶³ DeLP; L de Lisle's Diary, 26 January 1894; Board here is assumed to be School Board.

²⁶⁴ N.D.A., Bagshawe file, E fo 6/3; dated 14 January 1896.

in non-partisan religious education, no problems would arise.²⁶⁵

A cartoon accompanied the story. Reproduced here, *'The Schools' Champion'* shows Stanyon in a stereotypical "Irish" format, with shillelagh, a trailing coat, a battered hat, a small clay pipe tucked into the hat band, and a sturdy policeman. Irish *leitmotifs* were employed, but Stanyon had no Irish connections. It may have been an indirect comment on the forcefulness of the Irish Fr. Hawkins. It is interesting that the Irish aggressive stereotype was still seen, in 1895, as an appropriate vehicle.

In the gathering debate which ensued in the run-up to the 1902 Act, Catholic interests stepped up the pressure. Bagshawe issued a rumbustious Pastoral in September 1900, uniting Catholic opinion against Liberal education policy before the impending General Election. Irish Nationalists such as Fr. O'Reilly, and Bagshawe himself, were, paradoxically, recommending voters to desert the party most attuned to the aspirations of constitutional Irish nationalists and to support Conservatives personified locally by the vehement anti-Home Ruler, Edwin de Lisle. Fielding has pointed to the severe political cost of defending Catholic schools.²⁶⁶ The serious dilemma this represented for Irish Catholics in Britain is fully reflected in Bagshawe's trenchant Pastoral. The vocabulary he employed against the Liberals included the terms "infamy", "injustice", and "unchristian, godless and disreputable schools". He ended his prolonged denunciation with a historically-referenced emotional appeal.²⁶⁷ This powerful, negative denunciation of the Liberals was a bitter task for the man who had, only four years earlier, delivered a stirring address on Home Rule.²⁶⁸ The contradictions posed for Bagshawe were probably most manifest in the furore surrounding the candidature of the Provost Harnett, for the Nottingham School Board in 1889. (See section c(ii) above).

The issue of Church-State relations in education became even more heated during the 1890's. Efforts were being made to finance re-building as the City Council joined the Department of Education in its critical assessments of school premises. Leicester's

²⁶⁵*The Wyvern*, 22 November 1895, No. 212, Vol. IX. The only other accessible reference to a Mr. Stanyon is as a hosiery and footwear manufacturer of Belvoir Street, in Leicester, who gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Children's Employment, 2nd Report (1864), quoted in LANCASTER, B (1987), p.28/9. Stanyon was involved by the 1880's in the cocoa/coffee promotion temperance movement, which indicates that he was almost certainly a Non-Conformist - this would explain the attitudes attributed to him in the news report. Also quoted in LANCASTER, B., (1987) p.51. A Stanyon is mentioned by name in a news report on a meeting of the Leics. Protestant Alliance (see LC, 28 April 1860, p.1); if this is the same man, it confirms his Protestant credentials.

²⁶⁶FIELDING, S. (1993), p.93.

²⁶⁷NDA, Bagshawe Correspondence, E. Fol/3; September 1900.

²⁶⁸NDA and DeLP., BAGSHAWE, E.G., address given at Birmingham Town Hall, 1886; printed pamphlet.

'THE SCHOOLS CHAMPION'



THE SCHOOLS' CHAMPION.

MR. WILLIAM O'STANYON (badly in need of an opponent).—Sure thin, who'll tread on the tail of my coat?

The Education Debate in Leicester in the 1890's: Mr Stanyon, a Protestant Dissenter in a stereotypical Irish cartoon setting. Stanyon is trailing his coat "in Defence of Non-Sectarian Schools" whilst wielding his shillelagh ("The Reedy Letter Writer"). His *caubeen* (hat) has fallen off, complete with clay pipe stuck into the band. A policeman approaches, taking up the challenge. Source: *The Wyvern*, 22 Nov. 1895, No. 212, Vol. IX

Catholic Schools were once again under pressure. St Patrick's had almost been closed in 1895 over building issues; in 1904-5 Sacred Heart too was faulted, not just for material inadequacies but also for "the previously reported inefficiency of the teaching staff". It survived with Hawkins' assertive leadership.

These disputes between Catholic Schools, local authorities and central Government raise the question: did Catholic parents, by their loyalty to creed, disadvantage their children by supporting what were always overcrowded, often under-resourced, and occasionally poorly staffed schools? The class and gender based curriculum inhibited all working class children. Presumably the sense of purpose and spirit of community that were generated in Catholic Schools partly made up for the physical drawbacks. Certainly, in oral history and school memoirs, much feeling tends to be positive. Negative reactions tend not to be put on the record. It was probably mounting staffing problems due to training and qualification issues, leading to Fr. Hawkin's intemperate dismissal of the Dominican Sisters from the Leicester schools in the mid-1890's, which forced Catholics to reach a *modus vivendi* with the secular authorities.

(f) Conclusion

In Leicestershire, the foundations of Irish community political activity were laid down before the "Famine" migrant influx. As in most other locations, the composition of the migrant body was overwhelmingly working class, especially from c.1851; and this remained an accurate description of most of Leicester's Irish until c.1880. "Justice for Ireland" was an issue on the existing Leicester political agenda as early as the late 1820's, continued to feature in Chartist agitation, and transformed itself into the land question and nationalist formats in the period c.1870 to c.1900. Unusually, the land and national questions were taken up prominently, formally and effectively by the local Catholic Church leadership (in the person of Bishop Edward Bagshawe, 1874-1901). The Irish as a group, however, seem to have been cautious about mass involvement in English radicalism before c.1850, because both Daniel O'Connell and the Catholic Church counselled caution, whilst post c.1845, Irish migrant community involvement with the structures and activities of the church of the majority of the migrants gave a valuable central focus to Irish community life and expression.

Perhaps the most important political agenda item for the Irish in Leicester, a

predominantly working class community, was the issue of control of education. It was internal, local, and all-embracing, even if the poor attended school for only a minimal period. A paradox developed: the separate system for Catholics nurtured religion, but *simultaneously incorporated and denationalized the Irish* in wider terms of identity.

Whilst certain Irish individuals embraced left-wing ideologies and organisations (especially Tom Barclay), Irish active attachment to such ideology was slow in developing. Barclay's measured views on the problems presented for progressive Irish people in Britain in the 1920's by the Irish Civil war and by the Free State's occasional culturally retrograde initiatives (such as literary censorship) indicate the type of strains which would have given pause to those politically progressive Irish Catholics who considered flirtations with radical politics. It may have been the case that the majority successfully managed to combine their more radical tendencies with their Catholic faith and practice, and successfully avoided the *crises de conscience* which could affect a certain minority. Certainly, there is some evidence (admittedly sometimes sparse) of Irish Catholic involvement from c.1870 in local government administration in relation to the poor law and to education; by the 1970's, a century on, Leicester had three Irish City councillors, two of whom were Labour, and the leadership of the Labour county group was held by another Irishman. Two were active trade unionists (in the National Union of Miners, and of Railwaymen); one became Lord Mayor of the city, the other leader of the County Council. The groundwork for these achievements was laid a century ago.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹By comparison, however, the post-1960 Asian community, largely East African, entered into Labour politics very quickly, achieving office as City Councillors and electing an Asian MP in the 1980's.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

Question No. 8: Do the Irish in your neighbourhood mix much with the native inhabitants, and adopt their habits and customs; or do they remain distinct from them, and retain their own peculiarities; and is there any difference in those respects between the Irish who came from Ireland and the children from Irish parents born in Great Britain.

Answer No. 8: Dependant on their location, associating with English or Irish, as their neighbours may happen to be, apparently falling into the habits and customs in general of the natives.

From the *1836 Report on the Irish Poor in Great Britain*, Queries sent to R.C. Clergymen, No. VII, Vol. XXVIII, p.156 and 164; respondent Rev. H.L. Oxley OP, of Holy Cross Priory, Leicester.

The greeceens were the raw recruits that came over every summer to reap the harvest, before the advent of the reaping machine. They had never been out of Erin before, and were regarded as greenhorns by our Anglicised Irish, who regularly chaffed and teased them to the point of a row The Green street fights are past; more than half the inhabitants of the street are English, and the rest, - the Irish - are (allow me the bull) "quite English, you know." We haven't a word of the old language of the mother country, and divil a taste of the brogue remains with us either. I am talking of the present generation Their sons and grandsons know nought and care nought for the history and language of their race. Many of them have dropped the O's and Mac's of their names in deference to English feeling; Crochans have become Crowsons, Munroes Rows, Faheys Fays. The brogue that once you could have cut with a knife, so thick was it, is extinct; and not a soul knows the difference between "The Boyne Water" and "The wearing of the Green." The wake is gone forever but *O Wirra s' thua!* The absence of the flute-player, and the shaking of the foot to 'Apples in Winter,' 'Miss McLeod's Reel,' 'The Connacht Man's Ramble,' and 'Haste to the Wedding.'

Tom Barclay on *Abbey Street and Green Street*, in *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895, No. 192, Vol VIII, p.149.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

The central aim of this thesis has been to pioneer an in-depth study of the wider Irish community, in the largely unstudied east midlands town of Leicester, across the half-century 1841-91. The Irish experience in Leicester is contextualised against current historiographical debates about the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain, and is contrasted with that of Irish settlers elsewhere, including where relevant the wider diasporic framework. Social, economic, political and cultural agendas have been addressed within a wide-ranging analysis, locating local developments within a national context. Patterns of migration, with reference to diachronic decennial analysis and the issue of transience, have been examined. The thesis has addressed: the centrality of prejudice experienced by the Irish via a prejudiced media and the mobilisation of popular anti-Catholicism; the social structure of the migrant and settled community (re: housing, health and poverty); occupational patterns in relation to class, gender, ethnicity and generation; the important but ignored contribution of Irish males and females to local Catholic growth, especially in terms of leadership, personnel, infrastructure and resourcing in education; patterns of criminal behaviour, including variations occasioned by differing religious and gender backgrounds and the situation of second as opposed to first generation Irish; and finally the community's political development vis-à-vis both local as well as national agendas. Thus the Irish community was identified in a wide sense, embracing the "effectively Irish" (ie spouses and siblings) as well as the Irish-born, as this was felt to be a more valid way of evaluating developments. This approach also facilitates comparisons between the Irish-born sector and the wider Irish community when appropriate.

The analysis was based on an extensive specially compiled database using all relevant identifiable entries from the censuses for Leicester from 1841 to 1891 inclusive. Extensive integrated use was made of prison, poor law, corporation and other sources, such as local media files and religious archives.

The thesis concludes that, whilst the Irish were, and remained, a minority, with very little expansion in relation to the host community's growth, this did not deter the development of a sense of community. Whilst a Protestant, anti-Irish and anti-Catholic culture permeated the town, and probably intersected with economic factors to limit immigration, it was not powerful enough to deter the models of religious and political

internal community development that were taking place in other Irish communities in Britain at that time. By c.1891 then, the Leicester Irish had not been assimilated; they had achieved levels of integration which in employment terms reflected the situation of c.1841, when there had been some small representation in jobs outside the unskilled sector. In ethnic and cultural identity terms the Irish experienced upturns and downturns; in the case of the latter, especially via formal education, and this took place despite the hibernophilic attitude of the local Catholic leadership from c.1875. An identifiable Irish Protestant dimension existed, and this group may have been more widely represented in Leicester than elsewhere.

As MacRaild (1998) has recently shown for the Irish in Cumbria, current research must consider the Irish in small town situations, the plural nature of Irish migrant society (especially in religious terms), and the patterns of Irish migrant life outside the artificial and narrow limits imposed by over-concentration on the 1840's and 1850's. By addressing these issues in relation to the experience of the Irish in Leicester, a picture gradually emerges which counters the "ethnic fade" and assimilation presumptions which are common to much of the work of the last two decades. Importantly, the evidence from Leicester challenges the conclusions about community reached by Herson (1999) about the small town of Stafford. The Leicester conclusions, that Irish large town experiences can be replicated in small town situations, and that small town size does not automatically indicate assimilation, have important implications for similar research.

A central problem with the debate about the nature of the Irish community in Victorian Britain is the question of agreed definitions and terminology. Modern definitions, although out of context in terms of time, can be useful. Two problematic terms, commonly employed, are "integration" and "assimilation"; for present purposes, the following definitions are offered:

- "integration" into British society implies being involved in the full social, civic, political, religious and economic life of Britain, having achieved some degree of occupational and residential mobility, but without developing any allegiance to Britain and without loss of Irish cultural identity.
- "assimilation" assumes identificational and cultural absorption into the mainstream society and its structures, with a probable loss or even denial of ethnicity.

Using this definition of integration, the Irish in Leicester c.1891, despite Barclay's

observations of 1895 (see title page) and the subsequent decade of the diasporic Irish cultural revival, were struggling in term of becoming integrated, let alone assimilated. Whilst some elements of social acceptability were increasingly in evidence, most Irish remained outsiders, as indeed did most of the working class in various respects. The limited suffrage, the failure to impact significantly in local government and the skewed occupational structure c.1890 all indicate a social group which was less than integrated. Although numbers served in the British military, this was an occupational as much as a political decision; the loss of identity was influenced by cyclical cultural upheavals and renaissances; Barclay's parents were literate in respect of politics, religion, history and folklore in the early part of the period; their son transmitted the end-of-century Gaelic renaissance to Leicester, and continued to do so well into the 1920's.

With such a wide range of evidence pertaining to the Irish in Leicester, what conclusions can be reached about the nature of the Irish community there? Debate for over two decades has generally polarised around the integration/assimilation continuum, and has focused on the relative speed and impact of the "ethnic fade" factor. The most recent contributions stress the importance of current research on specific localities rather than regions.¹ Leicester can be viewed usefully within this context. Furthermore, the existing philosophical and analytical framework for overviewing the Irish experience in Victorian Britain has been seriously challenged by Hickman (1999), who promotes an alternative historiography to the prevalent integration/assimilation model, one which suggests, convincingly, that the Irish experience should be contextualised within pertinent broader debates about British social and political history, in particular about the formation of a British national identity. Hickman also argues for a more pronounced diasporic dimension, an approach which this writer already recognises, and some effort has been made to draw relevant parallels.

The concentration on "the local dimension" in Swift and Gilley's new volume (1999) is then a relevant starting point.² Even though Leicester's Irish population like, for example, Stafford's, was relatively small, the evidence does not suggest that Leicester's experience was simply idiosyncratic. Unlike some of Herson's conclusions about Stafford's Irish (eg in relation to the low impact of Fenianism and Home Rule),

¹See SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds) (1999) *The Irish in Victorian Britain: The Local Dimension*, especially those contributions by John Herson and Mary Hickman. See Bibliography.

²See bibliography for essays by Belchem, Chinn, and Hutchinson/O'Day in SWIFT & GILLEY (1999).

Leicester is a microcosm in regard to the generality of issues and experiences of the Irish in Victorian Britain. This is not to deny that we are considering both family and individual responses as well as the monolithic community response to the problems of settlement and survival.

To contextualise this conclusion, it is useful to consider the three key social forces identified by Herson (1999): migration, community and integration. Migration was dynamic: the Irish did not simply arrive and settle. Some had travelled (often widely) beforehand prior to settling permanently; others kept on the move; some re-migrated to the USA, Canada and Australia. Leicester provides some evidence of these patterns, especially pre-settlement mobility; however, it provides considerably more evidence to challenge notions of integration and assimilation.

Some Irish families and individuals settled in Leicester only after sojourns of varying duration in other parts of England, in Wales and Scotland, in the wider British Empire (especially Canada) and in the USA. The analysis of evidence relating to the birth-places of the children of the Irish-born settling in Leicester showed a clear and consistent pattern. Leicester was rarely the priority destination for most of the migrants. At all the censuses studied (1841-91), two-thirds of Irish families had already spent some time in the wider Midlands region and in the South. Interestingly, Chinn's (1999) study of the contemporary Birmingham Irish concludes that the majority migrating to Birmingham came from Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Dublin and Cork, a finding which parallels the Leicester evidence, and which lends weight to the notion of migrant mobility in a cross-Midlands context.³ The oral history of the Geraghty-Sharratt family indicated the far-flung international nature of the migrants' geographical targets: some went to America, and others to Britain. Those in military families experienced regular postings abroad; deferred gratification came in the form of pensions. By the 1890's, some of Leicester's Irish in lower middle-class clerical work in government bureaucracies made the same choice voluntarily: to work as a tax or customs official in Britain and enjoy the accompanying pension rights. Interestingly, these were the people O'Day and Hutchinson (1999)⁴ identify as being the backbone of the Irish cultural revival in London from c.1890, and Barclay describes similar personnel coming to work near Leicester, and

³CHINN, C, in SWIFT & GILLEY (1999), p.74. Also, see Ch. 3 (c) re-agricultural labourers' mobility in Midlands.

⁴HUTCHINSON, J. & O'DAY, A., The Gaelic Revival in London, 1900-22: limits of ethnic identity, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1999), p.254-276.

thereby helping him to set up Leicester's first Irish language class c.1905.⁵

Do such cultural manifestations suggest an Irish community in Leicester unified by ethnicity? As early as 1836, and again in 1895, witnesses suggest that the Irish sloughed off their cultural identity, especially in the second and succeeding generations (see quotes on title page). Whilst this picture is true for parts of the study period as narrowly defined, it is misleading for its artificial "cut-off" points of c.1841 and c.1891. Barclay travelled to London in the mid-1890's and joined the Gaelic League in the heyday of its influence and expansion, and shared his experience with the wider Irish community in Leicester and Whitwick by starting Irish language classes (at St Patrick's in Leicester), by organising Irish dancing lessons and by sharing his knowledge of Irish traditional music via his acknowledged abilities as an accomplished tin-whistle player.⁶ His parents, a half-century previously, had similarly exhibited a strong Irish cultural awareness.

The relationship between ethnicity and nationalism was tackled squarely by Barclay in one of his regular columns in *The Wyvern*. In a piece entitled *Patron Saints and National Festivals* in 1896, he admired the Welsh for "having preserved their national tongue" by speaking the language and supporting Welsh-language media. "Irish Gaelic is rapidly becoming a dead language" he noted. Moving his discussion onto the festival of St Patrick, remarked cogently:

There is one thing that some Irish import into their festival that they will have to get rid of..... I allude to intolerance. They are so bigoted on the question of religion that they cannot - some of them - conceive why a man should go away from Roman Catholicism. They must learn that nationality has nothing to do with religion, and be tolerant to others if they want others to be tolerant to them As the Scotch are organised here, and as the Welsh are organising, so I hope to see the Irish re-organise. They were organised once, they must be so again; and the subject of religion must not be introduced in their national gatherings.⁷

The Church had tightened its moral grip on the Patrician celebrations ever since the 1870's in an effort to make the event less fiesta-like; perhaps Barclay was asking too much of an Irish festival based on the paramount Celtic Saint's memory and reputation. In fact, the Catholic Church assisted the process of incorporating (as opposed to

⁵BARCLAY, T. (1934), *Memoirs*, p.101-2.

⁶BARCLAY, T. (1934), p.101-2, 43, 108-9; espec. Ch. VI, from p.95.

⁷BARCLAY, T. in *The Wyvern*, 20 March 1896, No. 230, Vol. IX, p.351, "Britains" is in the original.

assimilating) the Irish by legitimising peaceful democratic Irish nationalism (Leicester's Land League met at St Patricks) and by accepting a place within a British state education structure for its numerous pupils of Irish Catholic descent.

Integration leading possibly to assimilation, as opposed to the formation of a sense of community based on ethnic identity, were processes that were mutually subject to similar pressures. A community unified by ethnicity was formed by birthplace and kinship links; the areas chosen for residential settlement; religious, social, cultural and political affiliations, and negative sub-cultural influences derived from the host population (eg a criminal underclass). Paradoxically, there were similarities here with those forces impelling integration, such as housing and educational needs; church and parish relations; occupational pressures; and varied social, political and cultural factors. The Catholic Church's repeated efforts to prevent state proselytism in terms of institutional care (in workhouses, prisons and hospitals) reflect its conscious and voluntary approach to incorporation via education, where the interface of community was under church control.

The *prima facie* evidence regarding Leicester in the 1836 *Report on the Irish Poor in Great Britain* and in Barclay's comments of 1895-6 support the indication of a limited sense of ethnic community both at the start and end of the study period (see quotes on title page). The 1836 evidence suggests that, regardless of the ethnicity of their neighbours, the Irish in Leicester were "apparently falling into the habits and customs in general of the natives." As 200 of the 300 Irish resident were classified as poor, this poverty factor probably affected the physical ability to identify (eg by not possessing appropriate wear to attend church). Also, in 1841, over 70 per cent of the Irish-born in Leicester married out. In the mid-1890's, Barclay talks of "our Anglicised Irish" who described themselves as "quite English, you know." The succeeding generations c.1895 had no knowledge of the Irish language, of their history, and of their traditional dance and musical inheritance. Many even changed their names. Some of this is suggestive of reaction to negative pressure, not surprising given the tone of Leicester's media treatment of the Irish and their affairs.

Yet, of the 1850's, Barclay speaks of the impact of national feeling, and of public reaction by the Irish to the Fenian escapades. Home Rule and the Land League featured prominently in the Leicester media, and in the post-1870 diocesan magazines. By the late 1890's and early 1900's the Irish cultural renaissance is being imported back into

Leicester by Barclay and like-minded supporters, and this was not an isolated trend, but part of a national pattern affecting the midlands and the north of England.⁸

Other evidence supports the trend towards integration in Leicester. Street settlement patterns indicated steady dispersal, away from the core areas (which were at no stages ghettos), and into the newly-built artisan terraced periphery. Leicester, however, was a small city - Catholic churches and schools were possible to reach on foot, and cheap public transport was being developed before c.1900.

Marriage patterns analysis offered some elucidation of the Leicester situation. In 1841 and 1881, Irish-born females marrying out outnumbered those Irish-born males doing similarly; the excess was less significant in 1851 and 1871, but nonetheless present. In 1841, prior to the Famine exodus, the number of women marrying out was around two and half times the number of men. Despite Church strictures, by 1891 approximately 90 per cent of Irish men and women in Leicester were married to non-Irish spouses (a trend reflected in small urban centres in the county: Hinckley, Loughborough and Whitwick). The national trend suggested that the larger the urban centre, the more likely both partners were to be Irish; Leicester's pattern was not typical; probable reasons included the relatively static input of fresh Irish-born migrants, and the dominant Protestant culture prevailing in the city.

The trend towards integration was reflected in the diachronic decennial analysis outcomes. Whilst at each inter-census decade (excepting 1841-51 and 1861-71) around 25 per cent of the Irish stayed on) the corollary remains that around 75 per cent moved on. As in more than 80 per cent of marriages the wife was Irish and the husband English, the propensity of Irish working females in Leicester post c.1870 to work in hosiery and footwear especially meant that they were arguably more open to the forces of assimilation through the workplace situation (whereas men in labouring, for example, were less exposed). In terms then of both contemporary evidence and modern statistical analysis the idea of integration assumes some central importance.

However, there are several significant factors which suggest that Leicester (unlike Stafford, for example) supported a multi-faceted sense of Irish ethnicity and community. Unlike Stafford, Leicester's Irish community exhibited socio-economic trends comparable to the wider picture of Irish settlement in Victorian Britain. In Leicester,

⁸RYAN, W.P. (1894), *The Irish Literary Revival*.

Fenianism and Home Rule were more than just surface issues; Irish community reactions and organised activity are on record. Leicester's size meant that it could support Irish pubs and clubs, such as The Daniel O'Connell c.1830 and The Shamrock Inn c.1880; both establishments had names with implied messages, political and ethnic.

Again, Leicester enjoyed a plural Irish cultural identity; as well as a mainstream Catholic body, there were Irish Protestant soldiers, students, clerics and administrators. Even the Orange Order made its presence felt. As Leicester's economy settled down and improved post c.1870, opportunities existed for men as well as women in the hosiery and boot and shoe trades. A negative sense of community identity was provided by the media; the local press not only stressed the ethnicity of criminals (especially pre-c.1885), it also furnished a regular pattern of prejudiced and stereotypical material, both formally and informally. As in Liverpool, a small but recognisable Catholic bourgeoisie, actual and aspiring, was emerging.⁹ Belchem talks of "class, creed and country" in this respect; the model can be applied to Leicester, despite the demographic differences. Irish nationalism in Leicester showed a number of similarities with the manifestation in Liverpool: it was politically conformist; it was opposed to violence and therefore supported by the Catholic authorities; it dissociated itself from socialism and radicalism; and it reflected professional respectability and citizenship.

The evidence from Catholic education and Church-supported politics in Leicester, however, supports Hickman's interpretation centred on the process of incorporation. She argues persuasively that "the strengthening of Catholic identity became the principal objective of Catholic elementary schools. This was a strategy designed not only to arrest stagnation but also to weaken Irish national identity This was a strategy of denationalization."¹⁰ The contradiction in the church's position in Leicester was that it simultaneously used church media, personnel and buildings, especially after 1870, to support constitutional Irish nationalism and Gaelic revivalism. The Catholic authorities dreaded splitting their flock on issues such as Fenianism and social rights. The strategy of incorporation was subtle; by keeping Irish priests away from posts of prelates (which is why Bagshawe was so outstanding in Irish eyes) and by controlling indirectly the political agenda of the Irish in Britain, the Church maintained its presence on its own terms. Hence the paradox of offering a curriculum denying Irish identity whilst offering

⁹See BELCHEM, J. In SWIFT & GILLEY (1999), p.190-211 re Irish middle class in Victorian Liverpool.

¹⁰HICKMAN, M., in SWIFT & GILLEY (1999), p.249, and HICKMAN (1997), p.111-120.

school buildings for Irish political meetings.

It would seem to be the case then that in Leicester, the extant Irish senses of community and identity were tempered by the incorporating and denationalizing processes. There is no substantial evidence indicating that by c.1890 the Irish of Leicester had become assimilated. There were some indications of integration. Of underlying significance were the Catholic Church's two strategies of incorporating whilst denationalizing the Irish. The evidence shows the existence of interest in cultural identity both in the 1840's and 1890's; the evidence for political awareness is there across the period. If the Irish of Leicester had been assimilated, if their ethnicity had totally faded, it is hard to explain the ongoing and steady exhibition of anti-Irish prejudice (even if that involved humour) in the local press across the period. Assimilation would have made targets unavailable. Finnegan's (1983) conclusions on the Irish in York, that the popular view of their anti-social behaviour was exaggerated, and that it resulted largely from a plethora of misleading material based as much on racial, religious, social and political prejudices as it was on fact, have equal validity when applied to the Irish of Leicester. A modern definition of "integration" suggested that it is best viewed as "not a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual trust."¹¹ Perhaps the chrysalis of this dream was just beginning to emerge in regard to the Irish of Leicester at the turn of the nineteenth century.

¹¹JENKINS, Roy, (1966), *An Address Given on 23 May 1966 to a Meeting of the Voluntary Liaison Committees*; London, NCCL.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Place of publication London, unless stated otherwise)

1. Manuscript Primary Sources

Bodleian Library, Oxford: Correspondence of the Herrick Family of Leics. & Co. Cork.
Dominican Convent, Leicester - *Minutes, Necrologies and Council records*.
Holy Cross (Neville Holt) *Register of Baptisms and Confirmations 1772-1854*.
Holy Cross (Catholic) *Register of Baptisms, Leicester, 1815-35 and 1836-56*.
Leicester County Records Office - Secular Society Records; De Lisle correspondence; various gentry family papers: Herricks, Martins, Hartopps, Finch.
Quenby Hall; The De Lisle family papers, correspondence, Laura de Lisle's Diary.

2. Printed Primary Sources

BARCLAY, J., (1861), *Ale, Wine, Spirits and Tobacco*, Pamphlets Vol.57.
BENNETT, J.D., (1985), *The Street Names of Leicester*, Leics.
CRAWFORD, M., & ARMSTRONG, K. (Eds.), (1970), *The Fenians*, No.C21, Toronto.
CHAMBERLAIN, B.G., (1861); *Report as to Administration of the Poor Law in Leicester Union, 27th September 1861*; Leicester.
DARE, J., (Ed.), (1846-63), *Annual Reports of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society*, M/F.
ELLIS, I.C., (1935), *Records of Nineteenth Century Leicester*, privately printed, Leicester.
ELLIS, M., (1883), *Letters and Memorials of Eliza Ellis*, Leicester.
ELWIN, M., (1967), *The Noels and the Milbankes, Their Letters for 25 Years, 1767-1792*.
EMERY, Rev. A., (c.1939), *St Alban's Barrow-on-Soar, 1839-1939 - A Retrospect*; NDA.
FREEBODY, N.K. et al (1967), *The History of the Collegiate Girls' School in Leicester 1867-1967*; Leic.
GROUSSET, P., (1887/1986), *Ireland's Disease - The English in Ireland 1987*, Belfast.
HALL, Mr & Mrs S.C., (1841), Ed. SCOTT, M., (1984). *Hall's Ireland - Mr. and Mrs. Hall's Tour of 1840, Vol.I and II*.
HAYNES, B., (1991), *Working Class Life in Victorian Leicester - The Joseph Dare Reports*; Leics.
HENSON, G., (1831/1970), *History of the Framework Knitters*. (Intro. CHAPMAN, S.D.), Devon.
LEE, W., (1849), *Report to the General Board of Health of the Parish of Loughborough (Public Health Act)*, HMSO.
MAYHEW, H., (1851), 1985, *London Labour and the London Poor*.
Obituaries - Priests of the Chapter 1852-1955, NDA, Typescript.
QUENNELL, P., (Ed.), (1950/1862) *London's Underworld - Henry Mayhew*.
QUENNELL, P., (Ed.), (1969/1851) *Mayhew's London*.
QUENNELL, P., (Ed.), (1969/1851) *Mayhew's Characters*.
SOMERVILLE, A., (Ed. SNELL, D.K.M.). (1852/1994), *Letters from Ireland during the Famine of 1847*, Dublin.

3. Official Publications/ Parliamentary Papers

A Bill to Prevent the forcible Detention of Females in Religious Houses, 11 Mar. 1851, 14 Vict (B2143, BDA)
Seventh Annual Report of the Registrar General (Abstract of 1843 & '44), (1846) London, OHMS.
Digest of the English Census of 1871 (1873), London, OHMS.
Second Annual Report of the Registrar General (1840), DHMS.
Population Abstract, 1821 Census, (1822) Enumeration (1893), OHMS.
Population Abstract, 1831 Census, (1834) Enumeration (Vol. I), OHMS.
Census of Great Britain, 1851; Population Tables 1801-1851, I; Vol. II. (1852) OHMS
Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables, Age, Occupation, etc. II, Vol. II (1854), OHMS.
Census of England and Wales, 1871, Vols. I, II, III & IV

Census of England and Wales, 1861, Vols. I, II, & General Report.
Census of England and Wales, 1881, Vols. I, II & III.
Census of England and Wales, 1891, Vol. IV, General Report (1893), OHMS.
Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain (1836).
Health, General, 5 - Health of Towns - 1844 Session.
Select Committee on Orange Lodges, 1835 (3 Reports), Vol. 1, 5, 6.
Crime, Report on Reformatories and Industrial Schools, 1897.

4. Newspaper Files

The Irish Post
The Leicester Mercury
The Leicester Chronicle
The Coalville Times
The Leicester Journal
The Loughborough Echo
The Leicester Daily Post
The Times
The Wyvern, Nos. 1-415; 30 Oct. 1891 - 13 Oct. 1899, continued as:
The Leicester Guardian, or The Wyvern, Nos. 417-791, 21 Oct. 1899-22 Dec. 1906.
The Leicester Chronicle/Leicestershire Mercury

5. (a) Directories and (b) Databases

(a) *White's Directory of Leicestershire of 1846 .*
 COOK, T., *The Leicestershire Almanac, Directory and Advertiser for the Year 1842.*
Wright's Directory (various years).
 (b) DANAHER, N. (1991) *Author's Census Database* for Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley and Whitwick; 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891.
 KELLY, J. (1987), 1851 Census of Quorn, Leics. (Quorn Rawlins Community College, Hist. Dept)

6. Contemporary Printed Works

ARUNDEL, Earl of. (1847), *A Few Remarks on the Social and Political Condition of British Catholics*, DeLP.
 ANON, (1892), *Letters of Archbishop Ullathorne* (Intro. by Sr A.T. Drane).
 ANON, (1898), *The Priory Church of Holy Cross, Leicester*, (Leicester).
 BAGSHAW, E.G. (1885), *Mercy and Justice to the Poor - The True Political Economy*.
 BAGSHAW, E.G. (1886), *The Monstrous Evils of English Rule in Ireland, Especially Since the Union*, Birmingham Town Hall address, Nottingham.
 BARCLAY, T., Leicester Slums: Abbey Street and Green Street; *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895; No.192, Vol.VIII, pp,149-150.
 BIGGS, J.T., (1912), *Leicester: Sanitation Versus Vaccination*.
 BLANDFORD, T. & NEWELL, G. (1898), *History of the Leicester Co-operative Hosiery Manufacturing Society Limited*, Leics Co-op.
 BOUSKELL, F. (1904), Three Weeks in the Wilds of South Kerry, with Notes on the Insects and Plants, pp.49-60 in *T.L.L.P.S., Vol.VIII, Parts I and II, May 1903 - April 1904*, Leicester.
 BURKE, T., (1910), *Catholic History of Liverpool*, Liverpool.
 CALAMY, E., (1799), *The Life of the Rev. John Howe*.
 CASARTELLI, Rev Dr., (1895), *A Forgotten Chapter of the Second Spring*.
 COMMONS, J., (1886), *Plain Reasons Why the Irish Claim the Right to Manage Their Own Affairs*, Leics.
 CONWAY, Rev. J.P., (1908), *The Mission of St Peter's Hinckley*, Hinckley.
 CO-OPERATIVE WHOLE SOCIETY, (1915), *Leicester: A Souvenir of the 47th Co-operative Congress - Whitsuntide (1915), Including some Aspects of Co-operation in the Midlands*, (C.W.S, Manchester).

- CRADOCK, J., (1826-8), *Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs*, (3 Vols; Vols.I & II, 1826; Vol.III, 1828).
- DENVIR, J., (1894), *The Irish in Britain*.
- FELKIN, W., (1845), *An Account of the Machine-Wrought Hosiery Trade - The Extent and Condition of the Framework Knitters*, in CARPENTER, K.F.(Ed.), (1972) *British Labour Struggles; Contemporary Pamphlet 1727-1850*, USA.
- FELKIN, W., (1867/1967), *History of the Machine-Wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufactures*, Devon.
- FIELDING, JOHNSON, T., (1891; 1906 Edn.), *Glimpses of Ancient Leicester*.
- COOK, T., (1886), *The Temperance Jubilee Celebrations, 1886*, Leicester.
- CRUICKSHANK, A.P.J., (1897), *Laura de Lisle, Wife and Widow of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle of Garendon Park and Gracedieu Manor - a Sketch of Her Life and Character*.
- CRUTTWELL, Rev. Canon, (1900), *Notes from Galaway*, pp.528-533, in *T.L.L.P.S, Vol.V, Part X, October 1900*, Leicester.
- HAMMOND, J.L. & HAMMOND, B., (1919), *The Skilled Labourer 1760-1832*.
- HASBACH, W., (1908), *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer*.
- HEINRICK, H., (1872), (Ed.O'Day, A.), (1990), *A Survey of the Irish in England (1872)*.
- HIRST, J., (n.d. c. 1890), *Words and Works of Father Rinolfi, Provincial of the Order of Charity in England*, Market Weighton.
- HIRST, J., (n.d. c. 1890), *Slight Sketch of the Life and Character of the Reverend Andrew Egan Priest of the Order of Charity*, Market Weighton.
- HUSENBETH, F.C., (1862), *The Life of the Right Rev. John Milner, DD Dublin*.
- HUTTON, BEALE, C., (1895), *Catherine Hutton and her Friends*, Birmingham.
- JEWITT, L. & CRUICKSHANK, A.P.J., (1897), *Guide to the Abbey of Mount St Bernard, Leicester*. (Originally paper read to N. Staffs Field Club and Archaeological Society, 20 July 1882).
- JONES, C., & STOKES, A.H., (1898), *Whitwick Colliery - Underground Fire Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department*, London.
- KELLY, B.W., (1907), *Historical Notes on English Catholic Missions*.
- McNABB, Rev V., (1915), *The Wayside - A Priest's Gleanings*.
- MAZIERE BRADY, W., (1877), *Annals of the Catholic Hierarchy in England and Scotland, 1585-1876*, Rome/London; NDA.
- NICHOLS, J., (1815), *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester, Vol.I, Part II*.
- NICHOLS, J.G., (Ed.), (1852), *The Literary Remains of John Stockdale Hardy*.
- O'HAIRE, Rev. Fr. (1871), *A Glance at Ireland's' Apostle and Ireland's' Faith*, Dublin.
- PAGANI, Rev., (1851), *Life of the Rev Aloysius Gentili, Father of Charity*, Dublin..
- READ, R., (Jnr), (1881), *Modern Leicester*, Leics.
- ROYLE, S.A., (1982/3); Coalville: Mines and Villages in the 1840's, in *The Leicestershire Historian*, 1982/3; pp.15-20; Vol.3; No.1.
- RYAN, W.P., (1894; New York 1920), *The Irish Literary Revival - It's History, Pioneers and Possibilities*.
- SEARSON, G.R., (1850), *A Quarter of a Century's Liberalism in Leicester; What the Liberals Did, and How They Did It, 1826-1850*, Leicester.
- SEARSON, G.R., (1883), *The Leicester Municipal Borough and County Poll Book*.
- STOCKDALE, HARDY, J., (1825), *Speech and Petition Against the Roman Catholic Claims*, in NICHOLS, J.G. Ed, (1852), *The Literary Remains of John Stockdale Hardy*.
- STONE, S., (1844), *Report on the Law of Parochial Settlement (from Committee of Leicester Town Council), 23rd. October 1844*, Leic.
- STONE, S., (1849), *Statistics of Crime in the Borough of Leicester, 1st Jan. 1844 - 1st Oct. 1848* (Town Clerk's Report to Town Council); Leic.
- STONE, S., (1850), *Statistics of Crime in the Borough of Leicester, 1st Oct. 1848 - 1st Oct. 1849* (Town Clerk's Report to Town Council); (L352).
- STONE, S. (1870), *Report on the Elementary Education Act 1870 (from Samuel Stone, Town Clerk to Leicester City Council)*; Leic.
- THACKERAY, W.M. (1843/1985), *The Irish Sketch Book, 1842*, Belfast.
- THOMPSON, J. (1871), *The History of Leicester in the Eighteenth Century, Vol. II*, Leics.
- THOMSON STEPHEN, J. (1911), *Social Redemption or the 50 Years Story of the Leicester Co-operative Society Limited 1860-1910*; Leicester.
- DeTOCCQUEVILLE, A. (1835/1968), *Journeys to England and Ireland*, New York.
- ULLATHORNE, Rt. Rev. (1857), *Notes on the Education Question*.
- ULLATHORNE, Bishop (1851), *A Plea for the Rights and Liberties of Religious Women, with reference to the Bill proposed by Mr Lacy*, BDA.

WEBB, E.A.H. (1912), *A History of the Services of the 17th (The Leicestershire) Regiment, 1688 - 1912*, London.

7. Biographies and Autobiographies

ANON, (1927) *Life of Mother Mary Agnes Amherst, First English Superior of the Rosminian Sisters of the Convent, Loughborough*.

ARMITAGE, F.P. (Ed.), (1947), *A Torchbearer - Memoirs of Emily C. Fortey*, Oxford.

BARCLAY, T. (1934), *Memoirs and Medleys - The Autobiography of a Bottle Washer*, Leicester.

BUTLER, C. (1926), *The Life and Times of Bishop Ullathorne, 1806-1889* (2 Vols.), London.

COOPER, T. (1872/1971), *The Life of Thomas Cooper*, (Ed. J. Saville).

COUVE de MURVILLE, M.N.L. (1980), *John Milner, 1752-1826*, Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission.

CRANE, D. (C.1906), *James Flanagan : The Story of a Remarkable Career*.

DENVIR, J. (1910/1972), *The Life Story of an Old Rebel*.

DRANE, Mother F.R. O.P., (1869/1934) 2nd. Edtn., *Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan, Foundress of the English Congregation of St. Catherine of Siena of the Third Order of St. Dominic*.

EPSTEIN, J. (1982), *The Lion of Freedom: Feargus O'Connor and the Chartist Movement, 1832-1842*.

FITZPATRICK, W.J. (1885), *The Life of the V. Rev. Thomas N. Burke, OP*.

FYFE, H., (1934), *T.P. O'Connor*.

GARDINER, W. (1838/53), *Music and Friends or Pleasant Recollections of a Dilletante*, Vols. I, II & III (ie. Vol. I & II, 1838; Vol. III, 1853).

GUMBLEY, W., Fr., (1938), *Mother Margaret Hallahan, O.P. - Margaret of the Mother of God - Foundress of the English Dominican Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena, 1802-1868*; London & Hinckley.

HAWKER, J. (Ed. CHRISTIAN, G.) (1961), *A Victorian Poacher - James Hawker's Journal*.

HIRST, J. (n.d. c.1890), *Words and Works of Father Rinolfi, Provincial of the Order of Charity in England*, Market Weighton

HIRST, J. (n.d. c.1890), *Slight Sketch of the Life and Character of the Reverend Andrew Egan, Priest of the Order of Charity*, Market Weighton

HUSENBETH, C.C., (1862), *The Life of the Right Rev. John Milner D.D.* (Dublin).

McHUGH, J. (1958), *Father Gentili, Priest and Missionary*, Dublin.

O'DONOVAN, ROSSA, J. (1882/1991), *Irish Rebels in English Prisons*, Kerry.

PLUMMER, A., (1971), *Bronterre - A Policital Biography of Bronterre O'Brien 1804-1864*.

PURCELL, E.S. (1900), *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle*, Vols. I & II, Macmilian.

PAWLEY, M., (1993), *Faith and Family - The Life and Circle of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle*, Norwich.

RUSSELL, R.W. (1920), *The Life of James Flanagan: Preacher, Evangelist, Author*.

SAVILLE, J. (Ed.) (1872) *The Life of Thomas Cooper*, Leicester.

VALENTINE, Rev. F., (1955), *Father Vincent McNabb, O.P., The Portrait of a Great Dominican*.

YOUNG, Rev. U., (1933), *Life of Father Ignatius Spencer, C.P.*

8. Works of Reference

ANON., (1981) *St Charles Borromeo, Measham - Centenary Souvenir 1881-1981*, Notts. (Eds. Mr. J. & Mrs Green).

ANON., (1890) *Brief Memoir of the Rev. W.H. Anderdon, S.J.*, (Leics.) Vol.57.

ANON., (1868) *Rambles Round Loughborough* (Reprinted from 'The Loughborough News'), Loughborough and London.

ANON., (1816-1851) *Annual Reports of the Proceedings of the Committee of the Loughborough and Ashby Protestant Tract Society*.

ANON., (c.1910) *Leicestershire and some Neighbouring Records - Historical, Biographical and Pictorial*, London.

ANON., (1957) *Donors' Book 1957 - St Patrick's Church, Leicester*; St Patrick's Church.

ANON., (1950) *Centenary Book 1850-1950 - A Short History of the Diocese of Nottingham*, Newport Mon, NDA.

ANON., (1935) *Who's Who in Leicestershire*, Leics.

- ANON., (c.1922?) *Catholicity in Leicestershire*, Liverpool.
- ANON., (1891) *Leicester in 1891 - Arts, Trades and Manufactures - Historical and Discriptive*, Leics. PRO.
- ANON., (1835) *Leicester Conservative Standard, and Midland Counties Monthly Magazine*, Vol.I, and Vol.II, London and Leicester.
- BENNETT, J.D., (Ed.), (1988), *Leicestershire Portraits* Leics.
- BOYLAN, H. (1988). *A Dictionary of Irish Biography*, Dublin.
- BROUGHTON, H., (1991), *Family and Estate Records in the Leicestershire Records Office*, Leics.
- BUCKLAND, P. (Ed.), (1973), *Irish Unionism 1885-1923 - A Documentary History*, Belfast.
- COLUM, Padraic, (Ed.), (1954/67), *A Treasury of Irish Folklore - the Stories, Traditions, Legends, Humour, Wisdom, Ballads and Songs of the Irish People*, U.S.A. (2nd edtn, rvsd.).
- CUMMINS, M. Rev., (1977), *Nottingham Cathedral - A History of Catholic Nottingham*, St Barnabas Cathedral.
- DIOCESE, (R.C), OF NOTTINGHAM; *Diocesan Yearbook* (NDYB) - whole series.
- Dictionary of National Biography*
- FARRELL, J., (1987), *Family Forebears - a Guide to Tracing Your Family Tree in the Leicestershire Record Office*, Leics.
- FIRTH, J.B., (1926), *Highways and Byways in Leicestershire*.
- GANDY, M., (1993), *Catholic Missions and Registers 1700-1880; Vol.2, The Midlands and East Anglia*, London.
- GANDY, M., (1993), *Catholic Parishes in England, Wales and Scotland - An Atlas*.
- GILLOW, J., (from 1885), *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, Vols. I-V, London.
- HELFERTY, S. & REFAUSSÉ, R., (Ed), (1988/93), *Directory of Irish Archives (2nd Edtn)*, Dublin.
- HERBERT, M., The History of the Irish in Britain: Further Sources of Information, in *An Pobal Eirithe, Magazine of the Irish in Britain Representation Group*, No. 5, Spring 1991.
- HICKMAN, M. Ed (1986), *The History of the Irish in Britain - A Bibliography*, Irish in Britain History Group.
- JONES, G., (1989), *The Descent of Dissent - A Guide to the Non-Conformist Record at the Leicestershire Record Office*; Leics.
- LANE, S., (1987), *Loughborough's Heritage - A Bibliography of the Holdings of Leics. Libraries and Information Service and Record Office*, Charnwood Borough Council/E. Mids. Studies Unit, Loughborough Univ.
- LEICS. C.R.O. (1991), *Roman Catholic Records in Leicestershire and Rutland*, Phamphlet.
- MacLYSAGHT, E., (1964/85), *The Surnames of Ireland*.
- PIKE, T.W. , (ED.), (1982), *Leicestershire and Rutland at the Opening of the 20th Century - Contemporary Biographies*.
- RAFTERY, M., (1984), *The Writers of Leicestershire - A Biographical Dictionary and Literary Gazetteer*.
- SWIFT, E., (1979), *The Inns of Leicestershire*, Leics.
- WALLACE, M., (1983), *100 Irish Lives*.
- FISHER, S., (c.1988), *Reminiscences of Coalville*, Coalville Library Local Hist. Collection; Typed Manuscript.
- HAWTHORN, A.E., (1951), *A History of Mount St Bernard's Abbey, Charnwood, Leicestershire*, Coalville Local Hist. Lib.
- MAP - MICHELIN, 405, *Ireland, Index of Places, 1-400,000; 1 inch - 6.30 miles*.
- Road Atlas Ireland*, (1982), John Bartholomew, Scotland.

9. Secondary Sources

- ANON., (1949), *Stone and the Catholic Revival*.
- ARCHER, A. (1986), *The Two Catholic Churches - A Study in Oppression*.
- ARMITAGE, F.P. (1933), *Leicester 1914-1918: The War-time Story of a Midland Town*, Leicester.
- ARNSTEIN, W.L. (1982), *Protestant Against Catholic in mid-Victorian England - Mr. Newdegate and the Nuns*, London.
- BARROWS, J. (Ed) (1990), *Market Harborough as I Remember it*, Leics.
- BEALE, J. (1986), *Women in Ireland - Voices of Change*.
- BEAVIN, H. (1983), *The Book of Hinckley*, Bucks.
- BECK, G.A. (Ed) (1950) *The English Catholics, 1850-1950*.

- BIGGS-DAVISON, J. & CHOWDHARAY-BEST, G., (1984), *The Cross of St. Patrick - The Catholic Unionist Tradition in Ireland*.
- BILLSON, C.J. (1924) *Leicester Memoirs*, Leicester.
- BROADFIELD, A. (1972), *Leicester as it Was-Photographs and Commentary*, Leics Libs.
- BROMLEY, R. (1974) *150th Anniversary, Holy Cross RC School, Leicester - Short Historical Sketch* (DAE).
- BROWN, A.E. (ED) (1970) *The Growth of Leicester*, Leicester.
- BUCKLAND, P. & BELCHEM, J. (Eds) (1993), *The Irish in British Labour History*, Liverpool.
- BURRILL, M.B. (1986) *Sacred Heart School Leicester, 1886-1986*.
- CLEAR, C. (1987), *Nuns in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, USA.
- COLEMAN, T. (1968), *The Railway Navvies, A History of the Men who made the Railways*.
- CONDON, K., (1986), *The Missionary College of All Hallows 1842-1891*; Dublin.
- CONNOLLY, S.J. (1982), *Priests and People in pre-Famine Ireland, 1780-1845*, Dublin.
- CORPUS CHRISTI CARMELITES (Anon), (1944), *A Great Adventure - The Story of Corpus Christi Carmel*.
- CROUCHMAN, E. (Ed) (1984) *Belgrave As I Remember It*, Leics.
- CUMMINS, Rev. J.D., (1949) *Catholic Reference Book, 1949, St. Mary's, Loughborough*; N.D.A.
- CURTIS, L.P., (1971), *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*.
- CURTIS, L.P., (1976), *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: a study in anti-Catholic Prejudice*, Connecticut.
- D'ALTON, I. (1980) *Protestant Society and Politics in Cork, 1812-1844*, Cork.
- DONNELLY, J.S. Jnr., (1975), *The Land and the People of Nineteenth Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question*.
- DANAHER, K. (1962/86), *In Ireland Long Ago*, Cork.
- DANAHER, K. (1972), *The Year in Ireland - Irish Calendar Customs*, Cork.
- DANAHER, K. (1984), *That's How It Was*, Cork.
- ELLIOTT, M. (1979) *Victorian Leicester*.
- ELLIS, C. (1948/69), *History in Leicester*, Leicester.
- ENGELS, F. (1845/1987), *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.
- EPSTEIN, J. & THOMPSON, D. (1982), *The Chartist Experience - Studies in Working-Class Radicalism and Culture, 1830-1860*.
- FAHEY, P. (1991), *The Irish in London: Photographs and Memories*.
- FIELDING, S. (1993), *Class and Ethnicity, Irish Catholics in England, 1880-1939*, Bucks.
- FINNEGAN, T., (1982), *Poverty and Prejudice, A Study of Irish Immigrants in York, 1840-1825*, Cork.
- FOSTER, S., (Ed) (1990), *Recall-A Little of the History of Orangeism and Protestantism in Fermanagh, Enniskillen*.
- FRANCIS, J.H. (1930), *A History of Hinckley*, Hinckley.
- FRIZELLE, E.R. & MARTIN, J.D. (1971), *The Leicester Royal Infirmary 1771-1971*, Leicester.
- FLORANCE, J. Ed (1986), *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, Studies in Irish Economic and Social History, No. 1., Economic & Social History Society of Ireland.
- GILL, A., The Leicester School Board, 1871-1903, in SIMON, B. (Ed) (1968), *Education in Leicestershire, 1540-1940*, Leics.
- GILL, R. (1985) *The Book of Leicester*.
- GRIFFIN, C. (1981), *The Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Mines, Vol. 1., (1840-1914); Vol. II (1914-45) & Vol. III (1945-72)*, Leicester.
- GWYNN, D. (1942), *The Second Spring 1818-1852, A Study of the Catholic Revival in England*.
- HEWITT, M. (1958), *Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry*.
- HANDLEY, J., (1943/5) *The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845* (2nd Edtn), Cork.
- HANDLEY, J., (1947), *The Irish in Modern Scotland*; Cork.
- HARRISON, Fr. M (O.P.) (1958) *Hinckley, St. Peters - Dominican Revival 1734-1958*.
- HASTINGS, A. (1986/7), *A History of English Christianity 1920-1985*.
- HICKEY, J. (1967), *Urban Catholics: Urban Catholicism in England and Wales from 1829 to the Present Day*.
- HICKMAN, M.J. (1995), *Religion, Class and Identity: The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain*, Aldershot.
- HILLIER, K. (1984), *The Book of Ashby de la Zouch*, Buckingham.
- HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed) (1954), *Victoria County History of Leicestershire, Vol. II*.
- HOSKINS, W.G. & MCKINLEY, R.A. (Ed), (1955) *Victoria County History of Leicestershire, Vol. III*, London.

- HOWES, C. (Ed) (1927) *Leicester, Its Civic, Industrial, Institutional and Social Life*, Leics.
- HUSSELL, C. (1987), *Church of the Holy Cross, Whitwick - 150th Anniversary, 1837-1987*, Notts; NDA.
- INGLIS, K.S. (1963), *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*.
- JACKSON, J.A. (1963), *The Irish in Britain*.
- KENNEDY, B. (1990) (Ed.), *A Celebration, 1690-1990 - The Orange Institution, Tercentary Book*, Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland.
- KIMBERLIN, A.H. (1946), *The Return of Catholicism to Leicester, 1746-1946*; Hinckley.
- KINEALY, C. (1990), The Famine, Great Hunger or Starvation, in DANAHER, N. (Ed) *Irish Dimensions in British Education*, ISW, Leicester.
- KINEALY, C. (1994), *This Great Calamity - The Irish Famine 1845-52*.
- KNIGHT, J. (1990), *A Brief History of Whitwick Colliery*, Whitwick.
- KIERNAN, R.H. (nd, c. 1950) *The Story of the Archdiocese of Birmingham*.
- LACEY, A. (1985), *The Second Spring in Charnwood Forest*, Loughborough.
- LANCASTER, B. (1987), *Radicalism, Co-operation and Socialism: Leicester Working - Class Politics 1860-1996*, Leicester.
- LENNON, M; McADAM, M; & O'BRIEN, J. (1988), *Across the Water - Irish Women's Lives in Britain*.
- LEETHAM, C.R. (1950), *Ratcliffe College, 1847-1947*, Leics.
- LEACROFT, H. & R. (1986), *The Theatre in Leicestershire*; Leics.
- LEES, L.H. (1979), *Exiles of Erin - Irish Migrants in Victorian London*, New York.
- LOWE, W.J. (1989), *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire - The Shaping of a Working Class Community*, New York.
- LUDDY, M. (1995), *Women in Ireland 1800-1918: A Documentary History*, Cork.
- LUNN, K. (Ed.), (1980), *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities - Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society 1870-1914*.
- MacCURTAIN, M. & O'CORRAIN, D. (Eds) (1978), *Women in Irish Society - The Historical Dimension*, Dublin.
- MacRAILD, C. (1998), *Culture, Conflict and Migration; the Irish in Victorian Cumbria*, (Liverpool).
- MATHEW, D. (1936/55), *Catholicism in England - The Portrait of a Minority: It's Culture and Tradition*.
- MAXWELL, C. (1940), *Country and Town in Ireland Under the Georges*.
- MAXWELL, C. (1956, Rvsd) *Dublin Under the Georges, 1714-1830*.
- McKINLEY, R.A. (1958), *Victoria County History of Leicestershire, Vol. IV, The City of Leicester*, Oxford.
- MOODY, T.W. (1982), *Davitt and Irish Revolution, 1846-82*, Oxford.
- MORASH, C. (Ed.) (1989), *The Hungry Voice - The Poetry of the Irish Famine*, Dublin.
- MURRAY, A.E. (1903/1970), *A History of the Commercial and Financial Relations Between England and Ireland from the Period of the Restoration*, New York.
- NEAL, F., (1988), *Sectarian Violence, The Liverpool Experience, 1819-1914: An Aspect of Anglo-Irish History*, Manchester.
- NEAL, F., (1998), *Black '47, Britain and the Famine Irish*.
- NEFF, W.F. (1929), *Victorian Working Women - An Historical and Literary Study of Women in British Industries and Professions 1832-1850*.
- NEWSINGER, J. (1994), *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain*.
- Ni CHUILLEANAIN, E. (Ed.), (1985), *Irish Women - Image and Achievement - Women in Irish Culture from Earliest Times*.
- NOLAN, J.A., (1989), *Ourselves Alone - Women's Emigration from Ireland 1885-1920*, U.S.A.
- NORMAN, E. (1984), *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford.
- NORMAN, E. (1985), *Roman Catholicism in England from the Elizabethan Settlement to the Second Vatican Council*.
- O'BRIEN, G., (1918/1977), *The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, U.S.A.
- O'DRISCOLL, R. & REYNOLDS, L. (Eds.) (1988), *The Untold Story - The Irish in Canada*, Vol.I, Toronto.
- O'SULLIVAN, C.J. (1987), *The Gas makers - Historical Perspectives on the Irish Gas Industry*, Dublin.
- OGLESBY, L. (Ed.) (1988), *Coalville as I Remember It*, Leicestershire.
- O'LOCHLAINN, C. (1939/1960), *Irish Street Ballads*, Dublin.
- O'LOCHLAINN, C. (1965), *More Irish Street Ballads*, Dublin.
- OWEN, C. (1984), *The Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield 1200-1900*, Leics.
- PALMER, N. (1984), *Framework Knitting*.
- PALMER, R. (1974), *Poverty Knock - a picture of Industrial Life in the 19th Century through Songs*,

- Ballads and Contemporary Accounts*, Cambridge.
- PALMER, S.H. (1988), *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780-1850*, Cambridge.
- PATTERSON, A.T. (1954), *Radical Leicester - A History of Leicester 1780-1850*, Leicester.
- PAZ, D.G., (1992), *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England*; U.S.A.
- POIRTEIR, C. (Ed.) (1995), *The Great Irish Famine (Thomas Davis Lecture Series)*, Dublin.
- POSTGATE, R.W. (1923), *The Builders' History*, National Federation of Building Trades Operatives.
- PYE, N. (Ed.) (1972) *Leicester and its Region* (BAAS).
- PYRAH, C. (1984), *Inns and Taverns of Leicester*, Leicester.
- QUINAULT, R. & STEVENSON, S. (Eds.); (1974), *Popular Protest and Public Order - Six Studies in British History 1790-1920*.
- REDFORD, A., (1926/76), *Labour Migration in England 1800-1850*, Manchester.
- ROBERTS, E.E. (1978), *The Leicester Gas Undertaking 1821-1921, (Studies in East Midlands Gas History)*, Leicester.
- ROBINSON, A.E. (1987), *Holy Cross, Whitwick, 1837-1937: A Brief History*, Whitwick Historical Group.
- RIMMINGTON, G.T. (1978), *Education, Politics and Society in Leicester, 1833-1903*, Nova Scotia.
- SACRED HEART CHURCH, *Centenary: 1882/4 -1984, Leicester*, N.D.A.
- SCHIEFEN, R.J. (1984), *Nicholas Wiseman and the Transformation of English Catholicism*, USA.
- SENIOR, H., (1966), *Orangeism in Ireland and Britain, 1795-1836*.
- SMITH, S. (1984), *A Brief History of Whitwick*, Leics.
- SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present, Vol.I - Ancient Borough to 1860*.
- SIMMONS, J. (1974), *Leicester Past and Present, Vol.II - Modern City 1860-1974*.
- SIMMONS, J. (1976), *Life in Victorian Leicester*, Leics.
- SIMON, B. (Ed.), (1968), *Education in Leicestershire, 1540-1940, A Regional Study*; Leic.
- SIMPSON, D. (1992), *Manning - The Peoples' Cardinal*, Coventry.
- SINDALL, R., (1990), *Street Violence in the Nineteenth Century; Media Panic or Real Danger?* Leicester.
- St WINEFRIDE'S CHURCH, *Centenary Celebrations, 1842-1942*, Shepshed; N.D.A.
- St WINEFRIDE'S SCHOOL, (1980), *Blessing and Opening of New School Premises, 21st June 1980*, N.D.A.
- STEVENSON, P.S. (Ed.); *The Midland Counties Railway*, Clwyd.
- SWEENEY, G.D. (1950), *Centenary Book - A Short History of the Diocese of Nottingham*.
- SWEENEY, G.D.S, (1961), *A History of the Diocese of Nottingham in the Episcopate of Bishop Bagshawe, 1874-1901*, Typescript in N.D.A.
- SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds.) (1989), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*.
- SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds.) (1985), *The Irish in the Victorian City*.
- SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds.) (1999), *The Irish in Victorian Britain - the Local Dimension*, Dublin.
- THOMPSON, E.P. (1968), *The Making of the English Working Class*.
- TRAYLEN, A.R. (Ed.), (1980), *Railways in Rutland, Vol.3*.
- WARD, B. (1911/12), *The Eve of Catholic Emancipation, Vol.II + III, 1803-1829*.
- WILLIAMS, W.H.A., (1996), *'Twas only an Irishman's Dream: the Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920*; Illinois, USA.
- WOLFFE, J., (1991), *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860*; Oxford.

10. Articles and Journals

- ASPINWALL, B., Irish Americans and American Nationality, 1848-66 in GALLAGHER, T. and O'CONNELL, J. (Eds.) (1983) *Contemporary Irish Studies*, Manchester.
- AKENSON, D.H. (1970), The Irish Textbook Controversy and the Gospel of Free Trade, in *Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol.III, No.1; Dec. 1970*.
- BARBER, S., Irish Migrant Agricultural Labourers in Nineteenth Century Lincolnshire; in *Saothar, No.8, 1982*, pp. 10-23.
- BARCLAY, T., Leicester Slums: Abbey Street and Green Street; *The Wyvern*, 28 June 1895; No.192, Vol. VIII, pp 149-150.
- BARNES, R. (1959), The Midland Counties Illuminator: a Leicester Chartist Journal (pp.68-77) in *T.L.A.H.S. (1959). Vol.XXXV*.
- BATTERSBY, W.J. Rev. (1950), Educational Work of the Religious Orders of Women: 1850-1950, in BECK, G.A. (Ed.).
- BEALES, A.C.F. (1950), The Struggle for the Schools, in BECK, G.A. (Ed.), (1950).

- BÉCHERAND, A., (1972), Life in the Loughborough Workhouse in, *The Leicestershire Historian*, Vol.2, No.3, Winter 1972, LCRO.
- BELCHEM, J., Class, creed and country; the Irish middle class in Victorian Liverpool, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp.190-211.
- BRENDON, P., (1991), *Thomas Cook - 150 years of Popular Tourism*.
- BUCKLAND, P. & BELCHEM, J. (Eds.) (1992), *The Irish in British Labour History* (CPIS. No.1), Irish Studies Inst, L'pool Univ.
- BUSTEED, M. & HODGSON, R., Made in Manchester: the Articulation and Diffusion of Irish Stereotypes in 19th Century Britain, in DANAHER, N. (Ed.) (1994), *Irish Dimensions in British Education 1993* ISW Conference.
- CASARTELLI, Rev. Dr. (1895), *A Forgotten Chapter of the Second Spring*, London (LCRO)
- CHAMBERLAIN, B.G. (1861); *Report as to Administration of the Poor Law in Leicester Union*, 27th September, 1861; Leicester..
- CHASE, M., The Teesside Irish in the Nineteenth Century, in BUCKLAND, P. & BELCHEM, J. (Eds.) (1992).
- CHINN, C., 'Sturdy Catholic emigrants': the Irish in early Victorian Birmingham, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp 52-74
- COLLETTE, C., So Utterly Forgotten: Irish Prisoners and the 1924 Labour Government, in HERBERT, M. (Ed.), *Journal of the North West Labour History Group*, No.16, 1991-92.
- COLLINS, B., (1981), Irish Emigration to Dundee and Paisley during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, in GOLDSTROM, J.M. and CLARKSON, L.A., (Eds.), *Irish Population, Economy and Society*.
- CONNOLLY, G., The Transubstantiation of Myth: Towards a New Popular History of Nineteenth-Century Catholicism in England; *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol.25; No.1; January 1984. pp 78-104.
- CONNOLLY, G., Little Brother be at Peace: The Priest as Holy Man in the Nineteenth-Century Ghetto; *Studies in Church History*, Vol.19 1982, pp. 191-206.
- CRUICKSHANK, A.P.J. (1897), *Laura de Lisle, Wife and Widow of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle of Garendon Park and Gracedieu Manor - A Sketch of her Life and Character*.
- CRUISE, E.Dom (1950), Development of the Religious Orders, in BECK, G.A. (Ed.) (1950).
- CUMMINS, M., (1993), All Hallows College - 150 years, in *Notts Dioc. Yearbook 1993*, pp. 158-9.
- DANIELL, J.A., *The Making of Clay Pipes in Leicestershire* in *TLAHS*, Vol.XL (1965)
- DAVIS, G. (1990), Beyond the Georgian Facade: The Avon Street District of Bath, in GASKELL, M. (Ed.) (1990) *Slums*.
- DAVIS, G. (1989), Little Irelands, in SWIFT, R. and GILLEY, S., (1989), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1939*.
- De LISLE, E. (1885), *Pastoral Politics - A Reply to Dr. Bagshawe, Catholic Bishop of Nottingham Loughborough*.
- De LISLE, E. (1886), *Unreason in High Places - An address for the Inaugural Meeting of the Gracedieu Habitation of the Primrose League at Whitwick*, Loughborough.
- DONNELLY, J.S., Jr., (1983), *A Contemporary Account of the Whiteboy Movement: the John Barter Bennet Manuscripts*, in *Journal of Cork Historical & Archaeological Society*, No.247, Jan-Dec. 1983, Vol.LXXXVIII, pp.1-50.
- DOYLE, P., Bishop Gosse of Liverpool (1865-72) and the Importance of Being English; in MEWS, S. (Ed.), (1982), *Religion and National Identity*, Vol.18.
- DWYER, J.J. (1950), The Catholic Press 1850-1950 in BECK, G.A. (Ed.), (1950).
- DYOS, H.J. & REEDER, D.A., Slums and Suburbs, in DYOS, H.J. & WOLFF, N. (Eds.) (1973), *The Victorian City, Images and Realities: Vol.II - Shapes on the Ground/ A Change of Accent*, pp. 359-386.
- ELLIOT, B., (1975/76), *Mount St Bernard's Reformatory, Leicestershire* in *TLAHS*, Vol.51, 1975-76, pp.51-53.
- ELLIOT, B., (1980), Mount St Bernard's Reformatory or Agricultural Colony, in WILLIAMS, D. (Ed.) (1980) *The Adaptation of Change - Essays Upon the History of 19 Century Leicester and Leicestershire*, Leics.
- ELLIOT, B., (1982), The Return of the Cistercians to the Midlands, in *Recusant History*, Vol.16, No.1 May 1982, pp. 99-104.
- ELLIOT, B., (1979-80), Ambrose Philipps de Lisle, 1809-1878, in *TLAHS*, Vol.LV, 1979-80.
- ELLIOT, B., (1981/2), The Return of the Monks to the Midlands, in *Transactions of the Vaughan Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol.XXV, 1981-82.
- ELLIOT, B., (1986), A Leicestershire Recusant Family-The Nevills of Nevill Holt - III, in *Recusant History*, October 1986, Vol,18, No.2.
- ELLIOT, B., (1989), Loughborough Riot, in *Leicestershire Constabulary 1839-1989; 150 Years of Service*

to the Community, Leics.

ELLIOT, B., (1985), *Edwin de Lisle, M.P.* in *Bulletin of the Loughborough Archaeological Society*, pp.49-53.

ELLIOT, B.; The Provision of Reformatory Schools, The Landed Class and the Myth of the Superiority of Rural Life in Mid-Victorian England: A Footnote, in *History of Education*, 1980, Vol.9, No.1.

ELLIOT, B., Sources for a Study of 19th Century Juvenile Delinquency, in DYMOND, D. (Ed.), *The Local Historian*, Vol.13, No.2 1978.

ELLIS, P.B. (1988), Ridgway, The Fenian Raids and the Making of Canada in O'DRISCOLL, R. & REYNOLDS, L. (Eds.) (1988) *The Untold Story - The Irish in Canada (Vol.1)* Canada.

EVANS, R.H. (1970), The Expansion of Leicester in the Nineteenth Century in BROWN, A.E. (Ed.) (1970), *The Growth of Leicester*, Leicester pp.63-70.

EVANS, R.H. (1958), Parliamentary History Since 1835 - The City of Leicester in MCKINLEY, R.A. (Ed.), (1958) *VCHL, Vol.4, The City of Leicester*.

EVANS, R.H. (1972/73), *The Biggs Family of Leicester, T.L.A.H.S. Vol.XLVIII, 1972/73*.

FITZPATRICK, D., (1989), A Curious Middle Place: The Irish in Britain, 1871-1921, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1989).

FITZPATRICK, D., The Irish in Britain; Settlers or Transients? in BUCKLAND, P. & BELCHEM, J. (Eds.) (1993).

GAGE, G., (1984), The Rise and Fall of the St Giles Rookery - An Account of the Notorious Slums in the Parish of St Giles, in *Camden History Review*, No.12, 1984, Ed., J. Gage.

GILL, A., The Leicester School Board, 1871-1903, in SIMON, B. (Ed.) (1968), *Education in Leicestershire, 1540-1940*; Leics.

GILLEY, S., Nationality and Liberty, Protestant and Catholic: Robert Southey's Book of the 'Church', in MEWS, S., (Ed.), (1982), *Religion and National Identity, Vol.18*; Studies in Church History.

GILLEY, S., The Roman Catholic Mission to the Irish in London, *Recusant History*, Vol.10, No.3, (October, 1969).

GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No Popery and the Irish Poor, 1830-1860: I-1830-1850; *Recusant History*, Vol.10, No.4 (Jan.197-).

GILLEY, S., English Catholic Charity and the Irish Poor in London: 1 (1700-1840), *Recusant History*, Vol.11, No.4 (1972).

GILLEY, S., Papists, Protestants and the Irish in London 1835-1870, *Studies in Church History* Vol.8 (1972).

GILLEY, S., English Catholic Charity and the Irish Poor in London: 2 (1840-1870), *Recusant History*, Vol.II, No.5, (1972).

GILLEY, S., The Roman Catholic Church and the Nineteenth-Century Irish Diaspora; *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol.35, No.2, (1984).

GILLEY, S., The Catholic Faith in the Irish Slums: London, 1840-1870, in DYOS, H.J., & WOLFF, M. (Eds.), (1973), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, Vol.I.

GILLEY, S., Protestant London, No Popery and the Irish Poor; II (1815-1860), *Recusant History*, Vol.II, (1971-72).

GILLEY, S., English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900, in HOLMES, C., (Ed.), (1978), *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*.

GILLEY, S., Catholics and Socialists in Glasgow, 1906-1912, in LUNN, K. (Ed.), (1980), *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities* Ch.7, pp.160-200.

GRAY, P., Ideology and the Famine, in POIRTER, C., (Ed.), (1995), *The Great Irish Famine Dublin*.

GREEN, D.R. (1986), *People of the Rookery - A Pauper Community in Victorian London*, No.26 Univ. of London.

GREEN, M. (1984), *Clay Tobacco Pipes and Pipe Makers of Leicester*.

GRIFFIN, B., 'Such Varmint' - The Dublin Police and the Public, 1838-1913, in *Irish Studies Review* No.13, Winter 1995/6, pp.21-25.

GWYNN, D. (1950), The Irish Immigration in BECK, D.A., (Ed.) (1950).

GWYNN, D. (1950), Growth of Catholic Community, Ch.XIV, in BECK, G. (Ed.).

HALL, B., Alessandro Gavazzi: a Barnabite Friar and the Risorgimento, in BAKER, D. (Ed.), (1975), *Church, Society and Politics, Vol.12 in Church History Series*, Oxford, pp.303-356.

HARRISON, J.F.C., Chartism in Leicester (Ch.4) in BRIGGS, A., (Ed.), (1959/72), *Chartist Studies*, pp.99-147.

HAYNES, B. (1990), Aspects of Working Class Life in Leicester c. 1845-8; *Bulletin of Local History, East Midlands Region*, Vol.24/25, 1989-90; pp.5-24; Dept. Adult Educ., Univ. of Nottingham.

- HAYNES, B., (1991), The Memoirs of a Leicester Bottle-Washer, in *Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage*, No.13, Sept-Oct. 1991, pp.30-31.
- HEIMANN, M., Devotional Stereotype in English Catholicism, 1856-1914, in TALLETT, F. & ATKIN, N. (Eds.), (1996), *Catholicism in Britain and France since 1789*.
- HERSON, J. (1989), *Irish Migration and Settlement in Victorian Britain: a small-town Perspective* in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1989).
- HERSON, J. (1988), *Why the Irish went to Stafford - A Case Study of Irish Settlement in England 1830-1871*, Liverpool.
- HERSON, J. Migration, 'community' or integration? Irish families in Victorian Stafford, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp156-189.
- HEYDON, S., (1979-80), The provision of medical care for the poor in Leicester in the 1830's, in *TLAHS*, Vol.LV, 1979-80.
- HICKMAN, M., Integration or Segregation? The Education of the Irish in Britain in Roman Catholic Voluntary - aided Schools, in *Brit. J. of Sociology of Educ.*, Vol.14; No.3, 1993; pp.285-300.
- HICKMAN, M., Education for Minorities: Irish Catholics in Britain, in LEWIS, G. (Ed.), (1998), *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare*.
- HICKMAN, M.J., Alternative historiographies of the Irish in Britain: a critique of the segregation/assimilation model, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp.236-253.
- HIGGINS, D. (1985), *Leicester Clay Tobacco Pipes*, B.A.R, offprint Leics. Museums.
- HOGG, V.W. (1958), The City of Leicester - Footwear Manufacture in McKINLEY, R.A. (Ed.), (1958).
- HUGHES, P. Rev. (1950), The English Catholics in 1850, in BECK, G.A. (Ed.).
- HUTCHINSON, J and O'DAY, A., The Gaelic revival in London, 1900-22: limits of ethnic identity, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp.254-276.
- JENKINS, R.P., (1991), "History, Habits, Dispositions etc" - The Squad Roll of the Light Company, 17th Regiment of Foot, pp.8-10 in WELDING, J.D. (Ed), *For the Record - Newsletter of the Friends of the L.R.O. Sept 1991, No. 15*.
- JONES, P. (1981), The Recruitment of Officer Holders in Leicester 1861-1931, in WILLIAMS, D. (Ed), *T.L.A.H.S.*, Vol. LVII, 1981-82, Leicester; pp.64-77.
- KARSTEN, P. (1983), 'Irish Soldiers in the British Army: Suborned or Subordinate' pp.31-64, in *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, (Autumn 1983).
- KIMBERLIN, A.H., *Catholic Education in Leicester After the Reformation (Parts I-IV)*, in *Holy Cross Magazine*: (I) August, 1957, No. 4, p.5-7, (II) October, 1957, No. 5, 5-7, (III) December, 1957, No. 6. p.5-6, (IV) February, 1958, No. 7, p.7-10.
- KIRK, N. Ethnicity, Class and Popular Toryism, 1850-1870, in LUNN, K. (Ed) (1980), *Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities - Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society 1870-1914*, Ch.4. pp.64-106.
- KITCHING, J., (1969), The Catholic Poor Schools, 1800 to 1845: Part I, The Catholic Poor: Relief, Welfare and Schools, in *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, Vol. 1, No. 2: June 1969; (pp.1-8).
- KITCHING, J., (1969), The Catholic Poor Schools, 1800 to 1845: Part II, The Schools: development and distribution, in *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. II, No. 1; Dec. 1969, Leeds, (pp.1-12).
- LARGE, D. (1985), The Irish in Bristol in 1851: A Census Enumeration, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (1985).
- LEE, J.J. (1978), Women and the Church since the Famine, in MacCURTAIN, M., & O'CORRAIN, D. (Eds), (1978) *Women in Irish Society - The Historical Dimension*, Dublin.
- LEES, L.H. (1976), *Mid Victorian Migration and the Irish Family Economy*, in *Victorian Studies*, Vol. XX. No. 1 Autumn, 1976.
- LEETHAM, C.R., Rosmini and the Irish Famine, in *Rosminian Notes*, Vol. 1; No. 2, March 1960.
- LEETHAM, C.R., on Writing Biography (Rosmini), in *Rosminian Notes*, Vol.4, 16, Sept. 1963, pp.112-115.
- McAULEY, J.W., The "Ulster" Diaspora: some reflections on the northern Protestant experiences of emigration, in DANAHER, N. (Ed) (1994), *Irish Dimensions in British Education, ISW Leicester*.
- McCLELLAND, M, *Catholic education in Victorian Hull*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp.101-121.
- MacCURTAIN, M., The Historical Image, in Ni CHUILLEANAIN, E. (Ed), (1985).
- McINTYRE, A.D, O'Connell and British Politics, in NOWLAN, K.B. & O'CONNELL, M.R., (Eds), (1985), *Daniel O'Connell - Portrait of a Radical*, USA.; pp.87-99.
- McKINLEY, R.A. (1954), Political History, 1885-1950 in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed) (1954).
- McKINLEY, R.A. (1958), *Victoria County History of Leicestershire*, Vol. IV, *The City of Leicester*, Oxford.
- McKINLEY, R.A. & SMITH, C.T. (1958), The City of Leicester - Social and Administrative History since 1835 pp.251-302 in McKINLEY, R.A. (Ed.), (1958).

- MARTIN, J.D. (1958), The City of Leicester - Elastic Web Manufacture in McKinley, R.A. (Ed.), (1958).
- MARTIN, J.D. (1958), The City of Leicester - Primary and Secondary Education, as in McKINLEY above, etc.
- MARTIN, G.C. (1970) Twentieth Century Leicester - Garden Suburb and Council Estate in BROWN, A.E. (Ed.), (1970).
- MATESDORF, Prof. (1892), *Old Irish and Anglo-Saxon Art*, pp.482-5 in *TLLPS, Vol. II, Part XI, April 1892*, Leicester.
- MATHER, F.C. (1965), *Chartism*, London.
- MEWS, S., (Ed.), (1982), *Religion and National Identity, Vol. 18; Studies in Church History*.
- MILLER, T., (1991) The Rosminians at Loughborough - First 150 Years, in *NDBY, 1991*, (pp.101-4).
- MULLEN, T. Rev., *The Rosminians at Loughborough-First 150 Years*; in *NDYB 1991* (pp. 161-4).
- NEAL, F. (1990-1), Manchester Origins of the English Orange Order, pp. 12-24, in *Manchester Region History Review, Vol. 4, No. 2, Autumn-Winter 1990-1*.
- NEAL, F (1991), A Criminal Profile of the Liverpool Irish, in *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol.140, Dec. 1991*.
- O'DOWD, A. (1981-2), "Sweeten That to Your Liking" - Irish Seasonal Workers in Fact and Fiction.
- O'HARA, B. (1984), *Michael Davitt Remembered*, Michael Davitt National Memorial Asscn, Straid, Co. Mayo.
- O'LEARY, P. The Irish in Wales: The Integration of a Minority, in DANAHER, N. (Ed.), (1994) *Irish Dimensions in British Education, ISW*.
- O'NEILL, T.P. (1973), Poverty in Ireland 1815-45, in JENKINS, J.G. (Ed.), (1973), *Folk Life - A Journal of Ethnological Studies, Vol.II, 1973*, pp.22-33.
- O'ROURKE MURPHY, M. (1983), Irish-American Theatre, in SELLER, M.S. (Ed.).
- O'ROURKE MURPHY, R., A Mission Remembered - Reflections on Irish Women Migrants in 19th Century USA; in DANAHER, N. (Ed.), (1994).
- O'TUATHAIGH, M.A.G. *Ethnic Theatre in the United States*, Connecticut.
- O'TUATHAIGH, M.A.G. (1985). The Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Problems of Integration, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds.), (1985).
- O'TUATHAIGH, M.A.G. (1978), The Role of Women in Ireland Under the New English Order, in MacCURTAIN, M. & O'CORRAIN, D. (Eds.), (1978).
- PAGE, S. (1989), Pauperism and the Leicester Workhouse in 1881, in, *TLAHS, Vol.LXIII, 1989*.
- PAGE, S.J. (1986); Late Victorian Pauperism and Poor Law in Leicester, in *TLAHS, Vol.LX (1986)*.
- PAGE, S.J. Lodging and Poverty in Late Victorian Leicester: A Socio-Geographic Perspective, in *TLAHS, Vol.LXVIII, 1994*, pp.121-144.
- PALMER, M., Ed. (1983), *Leicestershire Archaeology - The Present State of Knowledge, Vol.3 - Industrial Archaeology*, Leics.
- PHILIPS, D. (1974), Riots and Public Order in the Black Country, 1835-60 in QUINAULT, R. & STEVENSON, S.
- PLUMB, J.H. (1954), Political History 1530-1885 in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed.).
- POTTER, M., William Monsell, First Baron Early of Tervoe; *The Old Limerick Journal*, No.32, Winter 1995, pp.58-63.
- RAFFERTY, Rev. O.P., Nicholas Wiseman, Ecclesiastical Politics Anglo-Irish Relations in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, in McCLELLAND, V.A. (Ed.), *Recusant History, Vol.21; No.3; May 1993*, The Catholic Record Society pp.381-400.
- RICHARDS, E. (1988), Regional Imbalance and Poverty in Early 19th Century Britain, in MITCHISON, R. and ROEBUCK, P. (1988), (Eds.) *Economy and Society in Scotland and Ireland 1500-1939*, Edinburgh.
- RICHARDSON, C., *Irish Settlement in Mid-19th Century Bradford*; in *Yorks Bulletin of Econ. Research Vol.20, No.1, May 1968*.
- RICHARDSON, C., The Irish in Victorian Bradford, in *The Bradford Antiquary, New Series, Vol.IX, 1976*.
- RIMMINGTON, G.T. (1964/5), *Leicester Foundries 1845-1914*, in *TLAHS, Vol.XL (1964-65)*.
- ROYLE, S.A. (1978-9), 'The Spiritual Destination is Excessive - the poverty overwhelming': Hinckley in the mid-nineteenth century, in *TLAHS, Vol.LIV, 1978-79*.
- SELBY, D.E., Manning, Lord Howard of Glossop, and the Catholic Education Crisis Fund, 1970-71; in PLANCKE, R.L. (Ed.), *Paedagogica Historica, XIV, 1-International Journal of the History of Education, 1974*; pp.118-135; Univ. of Ghent, Belgium.
- SELBY, D.E. (1973), Manning, Ullathorne and the School Board Question? 1870-1876, in *Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol.V; No.1; Jan. 1973* (pp.21-27).

- SEWTER, A.C. (1955), *Leicestershire Artists* in HOSKINS, W.G. & MCKINLEY, R.A. (Eds.), (1955).
- SHEEHY, G. (1984), *St Patrick's Church, Leicester, 1959-1984*, NDA.
- SIMMONS, J. (1970/71) *A Victorian Social Worker - Joseph Dare* in (Ed.) TLAHS, Vol.46 (XLVI).
- SIMMONS, J. (1973/74), *Thomas Cook of Leicester*, TLAHS, Vol.XLIX, (1973/74).
- SMITH, C.T. (1955), *A History of Leicestershire, Table of Population 1801-1951*, in HOSKINS, W.G. & MCKINLEY, R.A. (Eds.), (1955).
- SMITH, D., (1989), *Irish Travelling People in England*, in DANAHER, N. (Ed.), *Irish Dimensions in British Education*, ISW Leicester.
- ST. PETER'S CHURCH (1978), *The Story of St Peter's Church, Hinckley Road, Leicester*, Souvenir Booklet, 5th Oct. 1978.
- SPENCER, J. & T. (Eds.), (1891/93), *Leicestershire and Rutland Notes and Queries, and Antiquarian Gleaner, Vol.II April 1891 - Jan, 1893*, London & Leicester.
- SPIERS, E.M., *Army Organisation and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, in BARTLETT, T. & JEFFERY, K. (Eds.) (1996), *A Military History of Ireland*, pp.335-357.
- STACK, J.A. (1982), *Interests and Ideas in Nineteenth-Century Social Policy; the Mid-Victorian Reformatory School*, in *Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol.XIV, No.1; Jan 1982*, Univ of Leeds.
- STANLEY, C.R. (1971/72), *The Birth and Early History of the Leicestershire Constabulary* in GOODACRE, J. & POTTS, R. (Eds.); *The Leicestershire Historian*, Vol.2; No.2; 1971/72, Leics. Record Office.
- STANLEY, C.R. *A Centenary Tribute to Frederick Goodyer, Leicesters' First Chief Constable, 1836-76*; in *T.L.A.H.S., Vol.LI, 1975-76*; pp.15-28.
- SWIFT, R., "Another Stafford Street Row" - Law, Order, and the Irish Presence in Mid-Victorian Wolverhampton, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds.), (1985), pp.170-206.
- SWIFT, R., *The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City: problems and Perspectives*; in *Irish Historical Studies, Vol.XXV, No.99 (May 1987)*, pp.264-276.
- SWIFT, R., *The Historiography and the Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Some Perspectives*, in BUCKLAND, P. and BELCHEM, J. (Eds.), (1993).
- SWIFT, R. (1989), *Crime and the Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds), (1989)
- SWIFT, R., (1990), *The Irish in Britain 1815-1914, Perspectives and Sources, (H93)*; London.
- SWIFT, R., (1992), *The Historiography and the Irish in Nineteenth-Century Britain* in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed.), (1992). *The Irish Worldwide History, Heritage and Identity Vol.II - The Irish in the New Communities*, Leicester, pp.52-81.
- THIRSK, J. (1954), *Agrarian History, 1540-1950* in HOSKINS, W.G. (Eds.), (1954).
- THOM, G; *Rutland Convicts Transported to Australia*, in FIRMIN, C. (Ed.), *J. of Hist & Records Soc.*, No.13, 1993, p.136-141.
- THOMPSON, D. (1982), *Ireland and the Irish in English Radicalism before 1850* in EPSTEIN, J. and THOMPSON, D. (Eds.), (1982), *The Chartist Experience, Studies in Working-Class Radicalism and Culture, 1830-1860*.
- TRANter, Sr. J, *The Irish Dimension of an Australian Religious Sisterhood: the Sisters of St Joseph*; in O'SULLIVAN, P. (Ed.), (1996), *The Irish Worldwide; Religion and Identity, Vol.5* (Leicester).
- TRAPPES-LOMAX, T.B. (1954), *Roman Catholicism in HOSKINS, W.G. (Ed.)*.
- TURTON, J, *Mayhew's Irish: the Irish poor in mid nineteenth-century London*, in SWIFT, R. & GILLEY, S. (Eds)(1999) pp.122-155.
- WALTER, B. (1989), *Gender and Irish Migration to Britain*, Geography Working Paper No.4, June 1989, School of Geography, Anglia Higher Education College.
- WARD, M. (1991), *Putting Gender into Irish History*; in DANAHER, N. (Ed.) *Conference on Irish Dimensions in British Education*, ISW, Leicester.
- WELDING, J.D. (1985), *The Leicestershire Boot and Shoe Industry from its origins to the Present Day* Leics Libraries.
- WHITE, B. 'The Refuse of their own Nation', *Criminal Confessions of Eighteenth-Century Irish Women*, in *Irish Studies Review*, No.14, Spring 1996, pp. 12-16.
- WHITWICK HISTORICAL GROUP, 1990, *The Changing Face of Whitwick*.
- WILLIAMS, D. (1960), *Leicester and Education Before 1870* (Leicester Inst. of Educ. Dip. Ed.1960).
- WOODCOCK, D., (1911), *Tom Moore and Kegworth, Kegworth*.
- WOLFFE, J., *Change and Continuity in British Anti-Catholicism, 1829-1982*, in TALLETT, F. & ATKIN, N. (Eds.), (1996), *Catholicism in Britain and France since 1789*.

11. Unpublished Theses

- BASTOW, J., (1970), *The Development of Catholic Elementary Education, in the Nineteenth Century, in the Five Counties of the Diocese of Nottingham*, M. Phil. Thesis, Univ. of Nottingham, May 1970.
- BÉCHERAND, A. (1972), *The Poor and the English Poor Laws in the Loughborough Union of Parishes, 1837-1860*, Université de Nancy, Faculte des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Institut D'Anglaise.
- BUCKLER, S., (no date), *The Charity Organisations Service in Leicester, 1876-1939*, (Leics PRO).
- HOLT, E., (1989), *Catholic Conversions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Leicester* (Dissertation, Part II, History Tripos), Cambridge Univ., Fitzwilliam College, at NDA.
- INNOCENT, G.A.G., (1969), *Aspects of the Practical Working of the New Poor Law in Leicester and in Leicestershire 1824-1871*, M.A.Thesis, Victorian Studies, Leicester.
- MURPHY, P.J., (1993), *"Poverty and Lace" : Irish Settlement in Nottingham 1835-51*; MA. Mod. Soc. Hist, Univ. of Nottingham.
- O'CALLAGHAN, E., *English Catholics and the Irish Question 1870-93*; Ph.D Thesis, NUI. c.1975.
- SLINEY, T., (1980), *Irish Immigrants in Leicester, 1850-60*, Univ. of Leicester MA Thesis.
- THOMPSON, K.M., (1982 and 1988), *The Leicester Poor Law Union, 1836-71*, Ph.D. Thesis Univ. of Leicester.

12. Archives Consulted

Bodleian Library, Oxford
British Museum, London
Public Record Office, Kew
Nottingham Diocesan Archives
Birmingham Diocesan Archives
Leicestershire County Record Office
Catholic Education Service, London
De Lisle Archive, Quenby Hall
Dominicaness Convent, Stone
Rosminian Convent, Loughborough
Oral History Archive/Irish Studies Workshop
Mount St. Bernards Abbey (Cistercians)
Dominicaness Convent, Leicester
Dominican Archive, Edinburgh (OP)
Rosminian Archive (Inst. Of Charity), Durham

ABBREVIATIONS

ACD	-	Author's Census Database.
BDA	-	Birmingham Diocesan Archives (R.C.)
CAI	-	Cork Archives Institute.
CD/R	-	Catholic Directory/Register 1839-1900.
CES	-	Catholic Education Service.
CM	-	Catholic Magazine.
CPSC	-	Catholic Poor Schools Committee.
DAE	-	Dominican Archives, Edinburgh. (O.P.)
DCAL	-	Dominican Convent Archives, Leicester (Glenfield).
DCAS	-	Dominican Convent (Order) Archives, Stone; Staffs.
DeLP	-	De Lisle family papers, Quenby Hall, Leics.
DNB	-	Dictionary National Biography.
DPL	-	Dominican Priory, Leicester.
HCM	-	Holy Cross Magazine.
LAPTS	-	Loughborough & Ashby Protestant Tract Society.
LCS	-	Leicester Conservative Standard.
LCRO	-	Leicestershire County Records Office.
LJ	-	Leicester Journal.
LC	-	Leicester Chronicle.
LM	-	Leicester Mercury.
MSBA	-	Mnt St. Bernard's Abbey Archives.
NDA	-	Notts Diocesan Archives (RC)
NDYB	-	Nottingham Diocesan Year Book, 1921-98.
OHA/ISW	-	Oral History Archive (Irish Studies Workshop).
PRO	-	Public Records Office (Kew).
RCAL	-	Rosminian Convent Archive, Loughborough.
RLDMS	-	Report of the Leicester Domestic Mission Society.
TLAHS	-	Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.
TLLPS	-	Transactions of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society.
VCHL	-	Victoria County History of Leics.