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A Vision of 'Home'

An Investigation into the role of Nostalgic Memory

in Irish American Identity Formation 1899 - 1904

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A note on COVID-19

This dissertation was prepared over the period 2020 – 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a result the following issues were encountered:

- Total closure of archives and libraries during UK lockdown of March – June 2020 when preparing the annotated bibliography and research outline which formed the basis for the work.
- Continued total and partial closure of archives and libraries throughout the whole period September 2020 – July 2021 making access to books and archival sources impossible in some cases, and very difficult in others.
- Total and partial closure of the Institute of Historical Research during the period above, making adhoc enquiries and discussions about the research with lecturers and other students impossible.
- As a parent, home-schooling three children during a total period of 6 months, March to June 2020 and January to March 2021 was a considerable obstacle to study and research.
- Finally, as a result of COVID-19 I have not been able to meet my supervisor face to face at any point during the dissertation, all communication has taken place via Zoom which is not ideal when engaged in a long-term project in isolation from the IHR, archives and libraries and all other lecturers and students.

Abstract

This study examines the Irish American community's efforts to construct a collective memory and identity for themselves at the turn of the twentieth century. Through the examination of magazines, newspapers, and books from the period 1899-1904, I have endeavoured to reconstruct their attempts to find a way of being both Irish and American. This was a formative period for the Irish American community, as they emerged from the traumatic memories of famine emigration and just as they were beginning their rapid rise through American society. It will be argued here that as it became more established, this now multigenerational diasporic community chose to construct a highly nostalgic and easily accessible shorthand that both transported them back 'home' and provided an acceptable ethnic identity for their new lives. It was in this period that they tried to find and understand their place and invent for themselves a new identity - keeping hold of what was deemed important, letting go of other elements they had brought from home. I have also extended my study outside the US and taking a transnational perspective - examining the Irish Australian community where I have found evidence of an exchange of ideas, and shared visions of home between the two diaspora geographies.

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Contents

Introduction

The turn of the twentieth century was, for the Irish American community a period of identity formation and a moment of searching for place in the new nation which they now called their home. It was also a climactic time in Ireland itself. Political nationalism was increasing in strength, albeit in a more moderate form than later would be the case. Fenianism had demonstrated the role that violent struggle would play. By the 1880s, the Gladstonian Liberals had become convinced by the case for modest Home Rule. By the mid-1890s, when Gladstone died, there had been two attempts to push Home Rule through the imperial parliament in London. Meanwhile, culturally, the Gaelic Revival was in full flower. Just as Fenianism and political nationalism criss-crossed the globe, firing the imaginations of the Irish diaspora, so to the cultural nationalist movement was quickly transported across the Atlantic, especially the USA, where many new Irish associations and organisations sprang up – principally with the purpose of preserving the Irish language and culture and teaching Gaelic.

Through the examination of magazines, newspapers and books primarily from the period 1899 to 1904, this study aims to explore the interstices between culture, ethnic identity and belonging in this community and show how they developed against the background of a multi-generational diaspora community. I aim to understand how Irish Americans came to define themselves as demonstrated in their cultural organisations, social events and reading matter during a time when American born second and third generations outnumbered the Irish born by 3 to 1[1]. In the final part of my study, I will take a wider transnational perspective on these themes and look across the Pacific to Australia. My

[1] James R. Barrett *The Irish Way: Becoming American in the Multi-ethnic City* (London: Penguin, 2014) p.241.

decision to consider Australia is not a random one, I have discovered examples of diasporic communication between the Irish of Australia and the US which merit further exploration. As we shall see, there are linkages, connections and flows of cultural communication between these two communities that went towards creating an Irish diasporic identity.

My work is situated consciously under the broader umbrella of diaspora studies, itself a crowded and complex field. Given that complexity, it is important to consider here what 'diaspora' means in the context of this study. For, as Kevin Kenny, one of the leading scholars of the Irish diaspora argues, if we want to use the term, we must define it. At an analytical level, there have been numerous attempts to categorise what makes a 'diaspora' where various diasporic communities are examined for 'fit'. William Safran for example, argues that to be a 'diaspora', a community of people must meet the following six criteria: They must have been dispersed from their original region to two or more foreign regions, yet retain a collective memory or myth of the homeland. The group must feel that they cannot be accepted by their new home or feel isolated by it and continue to regard their ancestral homeland as their ideal home. The group should be committed to maintaining their homeland and continue to relate to it. [2] There are number of different versions of these typologies for example, Robin Cohen's focused on nine common features, including the idealisation of an ancestral home, which will be particularly pertinent for this study.[3]

Other scholars such as Brubaker have approached diaspora from a more sociological perspective, arguing that the term itself has been over stretched, and that, if 'everyone' is diasporic then no one is. Brubaker argues that we should, in fact, consider diaspora through three elements - dispersion in space, orientation to a homeland and boundary maintenance

[2] William Safran, 'Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies,* 1 (1991), 83-99.
[3] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2008)

(the preservation of a distinct identity versus the host society). Brubaker's definition is a fluid one, telling us that diaspora is, 'an idiom, stance or claim, a way of formulating the identities and loyalties of a population'.[4]

In a similar vein, both Paul Gilroy and Stuart Hall have seen diasporas as fluctuating and defined by experience - in opposition to the traditional view of a diaspora as originating in an uprooting, they focus on it as an expression of hybridity and identity.[5] For Hall the condition of diaspora or transnationalism is comprised of ever-changing representations that provide an 'imaginary coherence' for a set of malleable identities.[6] More recently Avtar Brah developed the concept of 'diaspora space' – a term which effectively captures the hybrid nature of diasporic identity and can connect multiple locations, encounters and the mixing of different identities. Brah's 'diaspora space' is 'the intersectionality of diaspora, border and dislocation as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural, and psychic processes'.[7] Whilst I feel that typologies of diaspora can be useful in initially understanding what diasporic groups have in common, if we are to truly understand their complex identities and connections with the homeland a more malleable and fluid definition is more useful.

Scholars of the Irish diaspora have in turn questioned how to regard the Irish experience - despite some debate more often than not the Irish are regarded as a diaspora due to the traumatic dispersal of the Great Famine of 1845-1852. Enda Delaney states that in terms of sheer numbers, emigration from Ireland clearly constitutes a diaspora: since

[4] Roger Brubaker, 'The "diaspora" diaspora', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 28, (2005), 1-19, (p.12).
[5] Paul Gilroy, 'Diaspora', *Paragraph*, 17, (1994), 207-212 and Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference* ed. by Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990) pp. 222-237.
[6] Stuart Hall, *'Cultural Identity and Diaspora'*, pp.222-237.
[7] Avit Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities,* (London: Routledge, 1996) p.208.

1800 nearly ten million people have left the island of Ireland and, 'Irish emigration since the early modern period represents one of the most significant dispersals of population in European history'.[8] Delaney also argues however, that it is a 'shared collective memory' that defines diaspora at its most essential level, and MacRaild tells us that we must look for evidence to understand how this is maintained and enhanced. Theory is for him one thing; finding evidence of diasporic consciousness through transnational action, is quite another.[9] Collective memory is another important theme frequently touched upon by scholars of diaspora - Appadurai and Breckenridge, for example, alert us to the fact that 'diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment', however they warn us that these are often collective memories 'whose archaeology is fractured'.[10] The concept of collective memory is at the crux of what I wish to explore and my study aims to observe a window to view how it evolved in action. I aim to examine how the Irish American community made deliberate and distinctive attempts to connect with, and build collective cultural touchpoints for themselves, some of which endure even today. Inevitably, there were some elements of memory which were omitted and disregarded in the process of creating of a new identity that melded both Ireland and their new home.

An important part of my study will be to widen my geographical scope for the last part of my research to examine if we can find evidence that this process of collective memory creation was a transnational one. I aim to understand if the ideas, poems, and stories that we find in Irish America were also evident in Irish Australia and discover

[8] Enda Delaney, The Irish Diaspora, *Irish Economic and Social History,* 33, (2006), 35-45, (p.36)
[9] Donald MacRaild, 'Diaspora' and 'Transnationalism': Theory and evidence in explanation of the Irish world-wide, *Irish Economic and Social History*, 33, (2006), 51-58, (p. 55).
[10] Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge, 'On Moving Targets', *Public Culture*, 2, (1989) i-iv (p.i).

concrete evidence of an exchange of ideas and shared visions of an ancestral home. It is important here to touch on the meaning of 'Transnationalism'. Transnationalism is an approach with origins in the early twentieth century, and which began to be applied to History in earnest during the mid 1990s - it has been the subject of a great deal of debate amongst historians and academics ever since.

It goes almost without saying, but must be stated nonetheless, that one of the key points of debate has been much about the definition of transnationalism. Although as Patricia Clavin tells us, 'some students of the phenomenon argue that to offer such a definition is contrary to the character of the phenomenon.'[11] Whilst the original concept of transnationalism began life closely linked to the history of multiple nation states and their interactions, this has now widened and transnational approaches are today often used to explore bilateral links between communities and 'transnationalism from below' which encompasses social spaces and includes kinship ties, circuits and communities.[12] It is no longer necessary to think only in terms of transnational links between institutions and elites. Indeed, one of the reasons that I have decided to adopt this approach is, as Clavin tells us, 'Despite its early identification with the transfer or movement of money and goods, it's first and foremost about people: the social space that they inhabit, the networks they form and the ideas they exchange.'[13]

Expanding more on what transnationalism really means and how it can be used, Thomas Faist's definition of transnational social spaces is useful. Faist defines these as comprising of 'combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and

[11] Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14 (2005), 421–39 (p.433).
[12] Peter Kivisto, 'Social Spaces, Transnational Immigrant Communities and the Politics of Incorporation', *Ethnicities*, 3 (2003) 5-28
[13] Clavin, *'Defining Transnationalism'*, pp. 421-39, (p.422)

organisations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places'. [14] I would like to incorporate this sense of the term and use it alongside the definition of transnationalism put forward by Iriye and Saunier in 2009, who described it as 'the transfer of people, ideas, products, processes, and patterns that operate over, across, though, beyond above, under or in between policies and societies.'[15]

The number of historians taking a transnational perspective when looking at the Irish diaspora has greatly increased in recent years, however, as MacRaild reminds us there is work still to be done and 'evidence of networking, communication and transnational group consciousness needs to be found'.[16] Taking a transnational approach to a study of the Irish diaspora allows us not only to explore the connections between the diaspora but provides us with a lens to look through, as Whelehan tells us, it is an approach that is, 'perfectly suited to explore subjects - migration, empire, diaspora, religious networks - that historians have long recognised to be vitally important to Ireland's past and present'.[17] Indeed, as Delaney also tells us, value is not just in finding the out that history is constructed between different places but that it is 'constructed through this movement'.[18] Transnationalism is a very useful approach to take in a study such as my own as it sits at the centre of debates on diaspora, collective memory and identity.

Turning now to the detail of my study, I intend to look in significant depth at the years 1899 to 1904, examining primary sources to investigate how the complex process of

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[14] Thomas, H. Faist, 'International Migration and transnational social spaces: their evolution, significance, and future prospects' *InIIS-Arbeitspapier*, 9 (1998), 1-40, (p.8).
[15] Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'Introduction: The Professor and the Madman', in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* ed. by Akira Iriye and Pierre Yves Saunier (London: Macmillan Palgrave, 2009) p.xviii.
[16] Donald MacRaild *'Diaspora' and 'Transnationalism'* pp.51-58, (p. 53).
[17] Niall Whelehan, *The Dynamiters: Irish Nationalism and Political Violence in the wider world, 1867-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) p.11.
[18] Enda Delaney, 'Our island story? Towards a transnational history of late modern Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies,* 37, (2011), 599-621 (p.7).

creating an Irish American identity can be seen in magazines and newspapers of the time. The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact has inevitably meant this work has had to be based on digitally available sources. Despite that fact, there are a considerable number of interesting archives in existence for this period. After all, today's digital archive was yesterday's paper one.

My principal source is *The Gael*, a bi-lingual monthly journal published in Brooklyn from 1881 to 1904 which described itself as 'the only distinctively Irish *literary* magazine catering to the millions of cultivated and refined Irish and Irish Americans in the United States and Canada'.[19] *The Gael* was to all extents and purposes the mouthpiece of the Gaelic Revival in America and was run by a group of activists who believed passionately in their cause. I was also able to examine a number of copies of *The Irish American*, *The Irish Standard* and *Donahoe's Magazine* for this period as well as *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, all of which allow access to this very active Irish American population. The first two are obviously Irish American newspapers and *Donahoe's* was a monthly Catholic magazine with a wide Irish readership, as was *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle.*

My focus on the New York area is not without reason, in the introduction to *The New York Irish,* Bayor and his co-editor Meagher tell us that 'Irish Americans were more likely to wind up in New York than anywhere else in America' and indeed by 1920, one in five New Yorkers could claim Irish ancestry.[20] Brooklyn was also somewhat of a heartland for Irish Americanism and the birthplace of the second US Philo-Celtic society, established in 1874 by Michael Logan who subsequently went on to found *The Gael* in 1881. With regard to *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, I was able to access a wider time frame, from the 1880s to 1915 and I

[19] 'Important to Advertisers', *The Gael,* September 1899, *(*p.144).
[20] Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher eds. *The New York Irish* (London and Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996) Introduction, pp. (p.4)

will therefore include evidence of interest from this period which included social activities, demonstrations, language classes and lectures.

My first chapter will focus on the attempts made to create a collective identity through the informal education of Irish Americans in the Gaelic language, Ireland's history, geography and topography and knowledge of its principal industries amongst other things. This educational aspect was one of the key aims of *The Gael* who wished to, 'instruct your children and inculcate in their minds a knowledge of Ireland and a respect for her history and institutions'.[21] I will examine what our sources can tell us about the role of The Gaelic League in America at this time, a subject for which there are a considerable number of references in the Irish American press and the press more generally. I will also investigate which topics were chosen for articles in *The Gael* and why this might have been.
We can see that there was a herculean effort on the part of a committed but minority group of activists to teach as many people as possible the Gaelic language and also to educate them in some basic facts about their homeland. Their co-ordinated programme had as its unofficial aim the maintenance of an Irish American community who held the same level or an even better knowledge of Gaelic than those in Ireland and who had a working knowledge of Ireland which was as good as those who still lived there. Whilst this was a feasible aim for the first generation of Irish Americans, many of whom had first-hand knowledge of the Gaelic language and were born and had lived in Ireland it was ultimately unsustainable for second and third generation Irish Americans.

My second chapter will argue that, in fact, it was the evocative popular Irish literature of the time that was to be instrumental in the formation of an enduring and multi-

[21] 'Six Reasons', *The Gael,* March 1901, (p.90).

generational Irish American diasporic identity, tapping into nostalgic and emotional themes of home, exile and longing. As James P. Byrne has argued in his study of the significance of Thomas Moore's melodies, the American Irish initially sought comfort in nostalgia, but later saw it as 'a means of reconceiving and reconstructing their present uncertainty as a publicly acceptable ethnic identity'.[22]

Whilst Irish Americans became more established in their new home, romantic nostalgic literature and poetry was an easily accessible way to remember home or imagine it even if one had never visited the 'ould sod'. It required little effort and did not distract from the business of constructing a new life and making progress in a land of opportunity, yet it still afforded a way to connect with the past and understand who one was and where one had come from. It also provided an easy shorthand to explain what it meant to be Irish American for others in America, non - Irish Americans too were aware of "'ould Ireland" and all that it represented. This somewhat utopian vision of Ireland therefore offered the opportunity to construct a positive ethnic identity that was not overshadowed by the traumatic events of the Great Famine. In order to access this popular literature, I have examined of *The Gael's* monthly book review and news pages as well as looking at the regular stories and poems that were printed. In addition, I have looked across all my newspaper sources and selected three authors who appeared very regularly and who represent a cross section of the Irish immigrant diaspora of the time. In chapter two, I will carry out a detailed analysis of the work of these three very different writers all prolific in producing this genre of poetry and fiction, these were Seumas MacManus, the Rev. James B. Dollard and Nora Hopper. I intend to outline the vision they created and how this was to

[22] James P. Byrne 'Cultural Memory, Identity and Irish-American Nostalgia', in *Memory Ireland: Diaspora and Memory Practices, Volume 2*, ed. by Oona Frawley (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012) pp. 49-61 (p.54)

become part of a collective cultural memory that was one of the most effective ways of creating an enduring Irish American and (to some extent) an Irish diasporic identity.

Before moving on it should be noted that there were of course other representations of the Irish immigrant in American newspapers at this time, which presented a different model of for Irish Americans to relate to. The most notable of these the being figure of Mr Dooley, created by Finley Dunne he has been seen as 'perhaps the most memorable Irish character in turn of the century American culture.'[23] Mr Dooley was a fictional saloon owner and philosopher who provided an insight into the Irish American working-class community of Chicago at the turn of the century. Finley Dunne's more than 300 columns were published in *The Chicago Post*, and in 1898 as a book *'Mr Dooley, In War and Peace'.* Whilst a rich source through which we can understand the Irish community of the time, Dunne's columns were not published in Irish newspapers and were not specifically targeted at an Irish audience, indeed 'no accounts of the period in Irish American journalism or literature intimate that Mr Dooley's commentaries of the world of the Chicago Irish were read by them'. [24] Therefore, I have chosen instead to focus particularly on what the Irish were choosing to print about themselves in Irish publications or publications with high Irish readerships, what they chose to write to these publications about, and what we can say with some certainty resonated with them.

[23] Barrett, *The Irish Way*, p. 188.

[24] Ruth-Ann M Harris, 'Mr. Dooley and the Chicago Irish: The Autobiography of a Nineteenth-Century Ethnic Group', by Finley Peter Dunne; edited, with a new introduction by Charles Fanning (Book Review) *Journal of American Ethnic History,* 9 (1990), p.132

Finally, in my third chapter I will demonstrate the importance of this literature not only for Irish Americans but in how it formed part of a much wider connection for communities across the diaspora, with a particular transnational focus on Irish popular literature in Australia. Through a process of comparison, I have examined the same authors across the same years in a cross section of Australian newspapers. It has been possible to find not only their work appearing but also occasionally their voices delivering information or warnings to their Australian cousins on certain subjects.

There is, therefore, evidence that Irish Australian communities were reading and talking about the same stories and poems as those on the city streets of New York, a fact which demonstrates the effectiveness of the often overlooked and unassuming art form of popular fiction and poetry. Its popularity, portability and affordability were the secrets to an easy to connect with, robust and highly mobile expression of diasporic memory and identity. As such, and in addition to trying to understand more about Irish American identity formation in the United States at this time, I aim to show how the Irish Diaspora was in practice communicating transnationally and dynamically forming its own identity independently of the homeland.

The Historiography of the Irish American Context

In this section I will set out the background to the Irish American community as well as relevant historiographical debates which set my study in context. Alongside Great Britain, the United States has been the most significant destination for Irish emigrants, indeed during the nineteenth century it was the number one destination for eighty percent of Irish immigrants and particularly so during the Great Famine which saw over one million people leave Ireland and another million depart in the five years that followed.[25] Before looking in detail at who these immigrants, were an important caveat which must be made is that although the term 'Irish American' has become synonymous with 'Irish Catholic', the bulk of Irish ethnicity in America has always been Protestant, or Scotch Irish. This is due to the fact that although from the nineteenth century onward immigration to America was overwhelmingly Catholic, Protestant 'Irish Americans' still dominate numerically due to a generational multiplier effect caused by their much earlier arrival in America.[26] Furthermore, clarifying the exact religious and ethnic make-up of those who arrived in America from the island of Ireland has always been hindered by the fact that until 1969-70, no questions on ethnicity were asked on the American census and it does not provide any data on individuals' religious denomination. The implications of this are significant for Irish American historians, as Akenson tells us, the fact that one's place of birth began to be recorded on the census from 1850 onwards this did not include those with foreign born parents – and as such 'a permanently invisible majority of the Irish have been excluded from U.S. records.[27]

[25] Enda Delaney, 'Diaspora', in *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland,* ed. by Richard Bourke and Ian McBride (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 490-508 (p. 496).
[26] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora, A Primer* (Toronto: Meany, 1996)
[27] Ibid. p.227.

With the above being borne in mind we can, however, say that in the most general terms, the Irish Catholic immigrants who came to the United States from Ireland followed the pattern of Irish immigrants going to other parts of the globe. This being that the immigrants were in roughly equal numbers men and women and they were young, from the mid 1880s two fifths of Irish immigrants were aged between 20 and 24 and by 1914 86.6% were between 15 and 35 years old.[28] New arrivals tended to travel alone rather than in family groups, a fact which was unusual compared to other immigrant groups. However, this did not mean however that they were arriving to live alone, often they would be met by extended family members or friends who were already settled in the United States and who had in many cases paid for their passage. As David Fitzpatrick tells us, habitual emigration was funded by previous emigrants' remittances, and anglicisation was an essential tool for equipping Irish people in the global competition for jobs and status.[29]

Looking now at the overarching statistics of the immigrant community, we know that between 1800 and 1920 five million Irish men and women emigrated to the United States, and by 1901 there were 1,615,000 Irish born people in the United States.[30] The number of Irish born in the United States therefore reached a peak just before the period of this study and the second generation reached a peak in 1900. As Kenny tells us, in 1900 the number of first and second generation Irish in the US actually exceeded the total population of the island of Ireland by 500,000.[31] For the most part these immigrants came from the poorer Western counties of Ireland, and were also therefore more likely to be Irish speaking. In

[28] L.P. Curtis Jr, 'Ireland in 1914' in *A New History of Ireland IV,* ed. by W.E. Vaughan, pp. 145-188 (p.147).
[29] David Fitzpatrick, *The Americanisation of Ireland: Migration and Settlement, 1841-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019)
[30] Cormac O'Grada, 'A Note on Nineteenth Century Irish Emigration Statistics', *Population Studies* 29 (1975), 143-149.
[31] Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) accessed as an eBook https://ereader.perlego.com/1/book/1557220/15

fact, we know that between 1891 and 1900, 24.4% of Irish in the US were Irish speaking.[32] In terms of where Irish immigrants settled, New York was the largest Irish settlement in the world in 1890 and 1900, making it an excellent location for focus in this study, indeed, 'Two thirds of Irish born Americans in the latter half of the nineteenth century were living in the North East and mid-Atlantic regions and over 20% in the Midwest, 5% settled in the south and 7% in the west.'[33]

Turning now to the skills and education of the immigrant group, we can say that by 1890 this group was reasonably well educated, primarily helped by an Irish national educational system which had been set up in 1831. Akenson provides us with statistics on this telling us that data collected for the US Senate in 1911 showed that only 2.6% of Irish immigrants were illiterate. In addition, their knowledge of English as a language gave them an automatic advantage in comparison with other immigrant groups.[34] In contrast with this rosy picture unfortunately the Irish immigrants who came to the US were often poverty stricken with few skills, indeed in 1900 91% of Irish immigrants were labourers and servants.[35] Donald Akenson has described them as potentially being the 'worst' of the diaspora, with a lower percentage of skilled workers coming from more of the poorest counties in Ireland.[36] Therefore whilst social mobility did and was happening in this period, it was far from meteoric.

Coming from such poverty at home economic motivations were obviously important push factors for these immigrants, however, they were not the only reason for leaving Ireland and Enda Delaney has demonstrated that the hope of a better life, was a very real

[32] David Fitzpatrick, 'Emigration, 1801-70' in *A New History of Ireland IV,* ed. by W.E. Vaughan, pp.562-622.
[33] Kenny, *The American Irish,* https://ereader.perlego.com/1/book/1557220/15
[34] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora,* p.39.
[35] Kenny, *The American Irish,* https://ereader.perlego.com/1/book/1557220/15
[36] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora,* p. 235.

consideration, and one for which females in particular were well equipped.[37] In fact, Irish women immigrants slightly outnumbered men, and as Diner has argued their willingness to take on roles which others would not meant that they had a faster rate of social and economic progress, 'Irish women viewed themselves as self-sufficient beings with roles to play in their families and communities'.[38] Diner highlights that immigration was a liberating experience for Irish women who chose to leave a country where they had few choices for a world with many more. Kenny also agrees that, 'Emigration could become a form of escape, a means of throwing off the shackles of an authoritarian, patriarchal society in which womens' status was distinctly subordinate.'[39] Indeed we shall see through the pages of *The Gael*, whose editor Geraldine Haverty was a woman, that they took a very active role in the life of the American Irish community and unsurprisingly were often the propelling force behind the social mobility of Irish families in America.

Upon arrival in the United States, the Irish faced considerable anti-Catholic discrimination during the nineteenth century, however, by the turn of the century intergenerational socio-economic mobility was beginning to occur, and the Irish were on the verge of becoming 'average', a rise which would continue throughout the rest of the twentieth century.[40] This internal social mobility was reflected in class divisions within the Irish community, for example between the 'shanty' Irish, a term used to describe the poorest immigrants and the more upwardly mobile 'lace curtain Irish' who may themselves have risen from the 'shanties' not so long ago. This slow but steady rise in economic situation may have been helped by the fact that 'the Irish overseas were a highly mobile

[37] Delaney, *Diaspora*, p.499.
[38] Hasia R. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983) p.xiv.
[39] Kenny, *The American Irish*, https://ereader.perlego.com/1/book/1557220/15
[40] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora,* p.243.

proletariat acutely responsive to fluctuations in demand and unusually adept at securing the best of the worst jobs'.[41] Additionally, and by way of context it is important to note that at the turn of the century the US was at the beginning of 'four decades of unprecedented immigration into the country'.[42] This surge coupled with a rise in Nativism gave rise to a wish to restrict mass immigration, and the eventual establishment in 1907 of The Dillingham Commission. The Commission consisted of three members from each of the House of Representatives and The Senate alongside three 'experts' appointed by the President - the majority of which held strong anti-immigration views. Their work consisted of 'independent' investigations into the situations of 'new' immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe as opposed to those 'old' immigrants such as the Irish and British. Published in 1911, the final report of forty-one volumes (including a 'Dictionary of Races') was based on flawed data, incorrect categorisations and a disregard for the poor economic situations of recent arrivals. It concluded that these 'new' immigrants were not successfully integrating into the American way of life and paved the way for compulsory literacy tests for future arrivals and the complete exclusion of certain nationalities.

Their report also gave rise to a new fearful attitude in the general population towards those who were 'other' - as Katharine Benton Cohen tells us, 'Restriction, exclusion and quotas have been a legacy from the commission reports'. This background puts into context and helps us to understand the anxieties of the Irish American community around firmly establishing themselves as a respectable and respected ethnic group within American society at this time.

[41] David Fitzpatrick, Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century, *Irish Historical Studies,* 22 (1980), 126-143, (p.134).
[42] James S. Pula, 'American Immigration Policy and the Dillingham Commission Source' *Polish American Studies* 37, (1980), 5-31 (p.5)

The Irish themselves have often been seen as America's first ethnic group, firstly because of their numbers but more importantly because their culture was sufficiently different to those who were already 'Americans'.[43] Much of the discrimination that the Irish faced was in the form of negative stereotypes which denigrated them on many levels, this was seen particularly on stage and in popular song. William Williams has studied the Irish in popular song and stage productions of the time and argues that whilst these negative stereotypes preceded the emergence of an Irish American identity during this period the Irish themselves built on them to some extent, renegotiating and remoulding how they were seen, leaning heavily on nostalgia and an idealised Ireland. He reminds us that when we think of the development of Irish American identity, we must acknowledge that this took place on many levels and that there were cross sections with religion, urbanisation, industrialisation, and class.[44]

In terms of historiographical debate, Irish America has an extremely rich and varied historiography. Two key themes of these historical debates have been questions of Irish American Nationalism and Irish American Ethnic identity, the two are at times hard to separate there is much cross over between them. Looking back to the middle of the twentieth century William Shannon and Thomas Brown both put forward important and enduring studies of the American Irish during the 1960s. Shannon's work 'The American Irish' was published in 1963 and despite being a diplomat rather than a historian, his book was significant - he unequivocally judged the American Irish project as, 'a distinct success' arguing that 'broadly speaking the Irish progress in this country testifies to the validity of the open society and the continuing success of the American democratic experiment.' [45]

[43] William H.A. Williams, *'Twas only an Irishman's Dream'* (Illinois: Illinois University Press, 2009)
[44] Ibid., p. 237.
[45] William Shannon, 'The Irish', *American Jewish Historical Quarterly,* 55 (1965) 22-31.

Shannon was a strong believer in the power of the Catholic church as the best way to keep the Irish identity alive both in the past and the future.

In contrast Thomas N. Brown's 'Irish American Nationalism' of 1966 was one of the first historical works to make a strong connection between Irish American Nationalism and the nineteenth century Irish immigrants social and economic aspirations in their new home country. He saw this Nationalism as motivated by the need to win respectability and acceptance.[46] For the 'lace curtain Irish' an independent Ireland would remove the slur of oppression and 'slavery' meaning Irish Americans could claim their rightful place as Americans with a proud history. Present day historians are still highlighting this connection, for example, Doorley's study of *The Gaelic American* between 1903 and 1914 showed that 'Irish American nationalists were as much concerned about the position of Irish Ethnic groups in America as they were about Irish demands for nationhood'.[47]

Following Brown's important work, left wing historians such Eric Foner stepped up to challenge his view, placing more emphasis on the class aspects of Irish Nationalism. Foner argued that in the 1880s there was 'a symbiotic relationship between class conscious Unionism and Irish National consciousness.'[48] Emmons also emphasised the importance of class solidarity in his study of the Irish American community of Butte, Montana. He argues that 'the American Irish sought safe and steady work at a wage that would allow them to build an ethnic enclave replicating the social and political worlds they had left behind'.[49] He

[46] Thomas Brown, *Irish American Nationalism*, *1870-1890* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966)
[47] Michael Doorley, 'The Gaelic American and the shaping of Irish-American opinion, 1903-1914', in *Probing the Past: Festschrift in Honor of Leo Schelbert* ed. by Wendy Everham and Virginia Schelbert (Peter Lang: New York, 2015) pp. 63-72
[48] Eric Foner, 'Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism in the Gilded Age: The Land League and Irish-America, in *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp.150-200
[49] David Emmons, *The Butte Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989) p.75.

saw The Ancient Order of Hibernians, a Catholic working class and Nationalist friendly society as a cultural antidote, which challenged capitalists control of workers lives and its presumed hegemonic authority over working class values. Ultimately however, Emmons concluded that Butte made greater demands over the time and resources of its inhabitants than did the cause of Ireland, and by 1925 the AHO's membership had fallen from 1200 to 125 members, as the younger Irish felt less like exiles and relied on the American state for assistance. Barrett agrees and has argued that this could be seen throughout the United States as, 'immersed in making a living, building their own institutions and in navigating the rough and tumble of urban politics most Irish Americans viewed old country affairs at a considerable distance.'[50]

Today the historiographical dichotomies outlined above are less pronounced and Whelehan tells us that, 'Irish Americans should not be looked at as a 'block' either as lace curtain (Thomas N. Brown) or working class (Eric Foner)'.[51] Whelehan examines 'The Dynamiters' who in the 1880s organised bombing campaigns in Britain from their base in New York, he argues that their form of Nationalism was not a bid for respectability but the militant expression of social and political frustrations due to the fact that they were supported by the marginalized lower classes.[52] Nationalism continues to be a much debated part of the historiography of the Irish in America, of particular relevance to this study is the fact that New York City was leading centre of Irish republicanism in the world – Kevin Kenny sees the Irish as fighting for acceptance through Nationalism and returns to the theme that an independent Ireland would ultimately raise their status. [53]

[50] Barrett, *The Irish Way* p. 241.
[51] Whelehan *The Dynamiters*, p.176.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: a very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.47.

Perhaps the most seminal, ambitious and largest study of its kind was carried out in the 1980s, by Kerby Miller. His work combined an analysis of Nationalism and identity studying the transatlantic Irish and Irish American community through their own words, examining over 5000 immigrant letters, memoirs, poems, and songs. His findings were ground-breaking, and showed that, 'large numbers of Irish emigrants certainly did see themselves as involuntary exiles and their letters and songs suggest why the image offered so pervasive and unifying a sentiment to the politics of Irish-Nationalism'.[54] He concluded that memories of the Great Famine were fundamental to the retention and growth of a sense of exile which then fed directly into Irish Nationalism, in short, the exile motif ensured the survival of Irish identity and Nationalism in the new world.[55] Controversially Miller also argued that there were certain traits in rural Irish Catholicism which contributed to a fatalistic, dependent and passive outlook – one which was altogether not prepared to take advantage of the opportunities offered America.

Miller's work, although widely admired has also garnered significant criticism, and has not aged particularly well, especially with regard to the perceived agency of the immigrants. In the 1990s, Donald Akenson would firmly dismiss what he referred to as Miller's, 'Gaelic Catholic disability' theory.[56] Akenson felt that any view of the diaspora as exiles was condescending as they had 'made strong and conscious decisions and were not merely bits of flotsam on some alleged historical tide'.[57] His own methodology for examining the diaspora was a comparative one and he formulated his own six point 'yardstick' which represented the typical migrant against which to compare the diasporic

[54] Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) p.6.
[55] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*
[56] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora,* p. 237.
[57] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora* p. 11.

population in each of the major geographies during the period 1815-1920. In his important and wide-ranging study Akenson argues that the diaspora is a 'marvellously complex phenomenon', which can only really be understood through examination as a whole.[58]

McCaffrey has also strongly challenged Miller, telling us that 'unlike the culturally dysfunctional exiles that inhabit the pages of Kerby Miller's *Emigrants and Exiles* the overwhelming majority of Irish immigrants in New York and other American cities knew that the US liberated them from the dreary static life of rural Ireland.'[59] Although Miller's 'Exiles' theory has received serious challenge it has an important legacy in the historiography. Kevin Kenny for example, argued as recently as 2013 that even when the American Irish had gained some political power and made significant advances they were still filled with a strong sense of grievance. Indeed, whilst Miller's 'exiles' theory may not have applied as extensively as he argued, the concept of 'exile' does appear to some extent as a theme in the culture, literature and song of all Irish diasporic communities. However, I would argue that this does not mean that it dominated the lives, identities and ambitions of the immigrants, and certainly not after the first generation. Indeed, my research goes some way to demonstrate that whilst the Irish tapped into the 'exiles' motif to shape their culture and identity there is much robust evidence to support McCaffrey's view that their concrete actions showed a people striding on with their lives and taking advantage of all the 'land of opportunity' had to offer.

The historiography around questions of identity amongst this population has not been any more straightforward than those around Nationalism. My period of study, the turn of the century has long been seen as a transition point by historians, for example, William

[58] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora* p. 3.
[59] Lawrence McCaffrey, 'Forging Forward and Looking Back' in *The New York Irish* ed. by Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy Meagher, pp. 212-233 (p.233).

Shannon identified the five decades spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a state of change. Shannon tells us that by 1900, whilst many Irish were still unskilled labourers, as a group they were 'the closest to being in while still being out'.[60] It was at this time that the famine generation's children were coming of age and the Irish were moving out of poverty, as Meagher has described it, 1880 to 1928 was a crossroad of sorts, a transitional point in the history of Irish Americans, he tells us that, 'By 1900, Irish Americans were clearly enmeshed in a process of transition, yet that transition is difficult to chart'.[61] His study of Worcester, Massachusetts fascinatingly found that the Irish moved through a number of alternative ways of being and identifying, from initial accommodation to ethnic revival to finally being part of a new broader group of emigrants with a focus around the Catholic Church.[62] Meagher emphasises the continuing centrality of Catholicism as the most enduring and stable source of cohesion among Irish Americans - he rejects the labour movement which he feels played an insignificant role. Enda Delaney too sees previous assertions of Irish immigrant assimilation as a 'now discredited process' and focusses on how an interchange of ideas and led to hybridity within the diaspora. For Delaney 'the key concern now is explaining the construction and articulation of an Irish ethnic identity and how this varied over time and space'.[63]

Alan O'Day also argued that Irish identity had a tendency to, 'mutate in content over space and time according to benefit which favoured preservation from one locale to another'.[64] He coined the phrase 'mutative ethnicity' to describe this phenomenon and felt

[60] Timothy Meagher, *From Paddy to Studs: Irish American Communities in the Turn of the Century Era, 1880 to 1920* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986) p. 8.
[61] Timothy Meagher, *Inventing Irish America: generation, class, and ethnic identity in a New England city 1880-1928,* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2001) p.10.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Enda Delaney, *Diaspora,* p.501.
[64] Alan O'Day "A Conundrum of Irish Diasporic Identity: Mutative Ethnicity," *Immigrants and Minorities,* 27, (2009), 317- 339 (p.317).

not only that it was the best theory to explain the history of the diaspora, but it also cast light on Irish belief and behaviour - in order to preserve their 'Irishness' the Irish had to change it. His 'mutative ethnicity' was ethnic assimilation and he used powerful case studies to show that an Irish identity has persisted based on 'myths' and the invocation of "histories" about a collective past'.[65] This way of looking at Irish ethnicity has strong echoes of Benedict Anderson view of ethnicity as a social construct, an imagined community created in the context of time, circumstances, and environment.[66]

More recently Fiona Lyons has also made the link between the Gaelic speaking community and Anderson's imagined communities.[67] Lyons in her study which examines Irish American newspapers from 1857-1897 demonstrates how the Irish linguistic community began to recognise themselves as a group on a transnational basis, and 'how questions of nationality, identity and responsibility were interwoven with futuristic visions for Ireland which were in turn contingent on representations of Ireland's past' [68]

It should also be remembered that the ethnic identity development of the American Irish did not exist in isolation and Conzen et al have studied this wider process of ethnic identity 'invention'. They find strong support for their theory of invented ethnicity with the Irish community, arguing that whilst 'The Irish in Ireland were a divided people. City against countryside, clergy against laity, class against class, and region against region, were sources of tension' in the United States they united and sought political power, legitimising

[65] Ibid., O'Day p.323.
[66] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Verso: London, 2016)
[67] Fiona Lyons, 'Chaos or Comrades? Transatlantic Political and Cultural Aspirations for Ireland in nineteenth century Irish American print media' *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* (forthcoming 2021)
[68] Fiona Lyons, '"The language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is the language of the slave": Visions for Ireland and for her language as depicted in nineteenth-century Irish American print media,' in *Dreams of the Future in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, ed. by Richard Butler (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021) (page number not available as unpublished copy provided by author)

themselves along the way. [69] Conzens sees the Irish American celebration of St Patrick's Day in particular as a cultural invention which was essential for this new identity and tells us that 'The Irish had so arranged their conception of themselves through this new tradition of public self-representation that the more Irish they were, the more American they became and the more their self-interested, American group behaviour became, in their own eyes, historically legitimate'.[70]

Another central theme of ethnic identity and of this dissertation is memory and nostalgia. Oona Frawley in 2012 studied the significance of memory in diaspora identity telling us that 'memory becomes a conduit to a particular past but simultaneously because it distorts and stretches, invents an alters it constitutes a new Ireland, one that never was and passes it on to descendants for whom Ireland never was.'[71] It is this particular distortion that I hope to demonstrate in the work of the three authors that I will focus on, I aim to demonstrate how although it was a constructed vision it was a necessary conduit not only to the past but also to a present and future identity. It incorporated both thorny themes of nationalism and exile and assuaged them in a comforting vision of a perfectly preserved homeland.

James Byrne has also argued that there was a real and recognised need by immigrants in the late nineteenth century to reimagine the past to moderate they perceived 'otherness'. Through his study of Moore's melodies he shows that the immigrants 'reconceived' cultural memory as nostalgia, to construct a sentimentalised identity and a mythical homeland which offered comfort, 'from which to stage assimilation and

[69] Conzen, et al, 'The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 12 (1992), 3–41, (p.20).
[70] Ibid. (p.21).
[71] Oona Frawley, 'Introduction', in *Memory Ireland: Diaspora and Memory Practices, Volume 2* ed. by Oona Frawley (Syracuse University Press: Syracuse, N.Y., 2012) p.4.

advancement into American culture.'[72] Returning once again to the 'Exiles' theory Byrne argues that Irish American's did believe themselves exiles, which gave them a publicly acceptable ethnic identity but also absolved the guilt they felt at having left, he tells us that 'nostalgia cannot be simply dismissed as a salve to present conditions it must be considered a political act.'[73] Indeed the levels of immigrant return to Ireland even for holidays were among the lowest of any emigrant groups in the United States, Kenny argues that to return 'may have undermined the sense of exile at the heart of their ethnic culture'.[74]

There is also an important intergenerational aspect to be taken into account here and a connection to the work of Marcus Lee Hansen and Herbert Gans. Hansen writing in 1938 in 'The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant" tells us that 'what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember' he argues that while second generation immigrants are keen to assimilate, the third generation, wish to remember the history and heritage of their ancestors.[75] In 1979 Herbert Gans took up and expanded this theme formulating his own concept of 'symbolic ethnicity'.[76] He argued that this idea was emerging as many ethnic groups in the US were now in their third or fourth generation. Paradoxically, these later generations were less interested in their ethnic culture and organisations, having more choice about their roles in society, however they still felt, Irish or Italian and needed to find a way to express this which was easy and didn't disrupt their everyday life. For example, he tells us that 'they refrain from ethnic behaviour that requires an arduous or time-consuming commitment, either to a culture that must be practiced

[72] Byrne, *Cultural Memory, Identity, and Irish American nostalgia* p.53.
[73] Byrne, *Cultural Memory, Identity, and Irish American nostalgia*, p.60.
[74] Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: a very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.47.
[75] Marcus Lee Hansen, The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=inu.30000118510415&view=1up&seq=5&skin=2021 , (1938) (p.9).
[76] Herbert Gans, 'Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2 (1979) 1-20

constantly, or to organizations that demand active membership' in this light the lack of commitment to The Gaelic League and arduous practice required to master Gaelic makes sense.[77] Gans feels that this ethnicity expressed itself by way of symbols extracted from the original culture, and is characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love for and a pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour.[78] It is this very process that I believe we can see the beginnings of in the subscription struggles of The Gael and the prominence of popular fiction and poetry filled with shorthand for a mythical homeland.

Returning to Conzens et al we find highlighted the significant impact of transgenerational change on the immigrants' communities as the second generation took over leadership positions from their parents. They tells us that whilst the second generation remained committed to ethnic organizations and institutions, 'Language change, often bitterly fought, in publications, sermons, business meetings, etc., was a key indicator of the transition, as was a pronounced focus upon American concerns rather than old world issues'.[79] Whilst Gaelic was rarely the only language spoken by the Irish in America, the waning appetite for its use is a direct example of this process.

As discussed in my introduction we can also see the current emphasis on transnationalism, reflected in the historiography, notably in his 2011 seminal article Enda Delaney called for a new integrated history of Ireland, one where the history of the Irish diaspora has parity with events on the island of Ireland.[80] He argues that historians of late modern Ireland have 'unconsciously constructed an "island story" with its central focus on

[77] Ibid., (p.8).
[78] Ibid., (p.9).
[79] Conzens et al, *The Invention of Ethnicity* (p.13-14).
[80] Enda Delaney *Our Island Story*

domestic events'.[81] He tells us that historians have, in effect, largely ignored and marginalised the huge diaspora population and focused almost exclusively on domestic political and constitutional events and biography. The Irish diaspora lends itself perfectly to a transnational approach, for example, Alan O'Day very usefully compared and contrasted Liverpool in the UK, and Boston in the US drawing attention to not only their similar urban communities, but also the visits from high profile nationalists and middle-class leaders that they received. O'Day argues that 'Dundee had more in common with Butte, Montana than Edinburgh or Bath'.[82] Through taking this approach and mapping across the diaspora rather than examining geographical silos we can see a more integrated and complex picture of the Irish diaspora which today numbers more than seven million people. The continuous flow and movement of people and ideas from throughout the diaspora led to the development of a vibrant and influential community which is yet to be fully explored.

There are already a number of transnational histories whose lead we can follow, for example, David Fitzpatrick's study of the Americanisation of Ireland which looks in detail at how those who returned to Ireland from America and how this influenced Ireland itself. [83] Advocates of the approach such as MacRaild, tells us that one of the principal ways to investigate this in an Irish context is to examine transnational networks where there is, 'simultaneously an expression of shared identity in multiple organisations or the organisation of consciously Irish social and cultural enterprises'.[84] As such I intend to shine a spotlight on The Gaelic League, I also intend to look at how the very distinctive ideas of our three romantic Irish authors travelled between the United States and Australia. Finally,

[81] Ibid., p.599
[82] O'Day *A Conundrum of Irish Diasporic Identity: Mutative Ethnicity* p.328.
[83] Fitzpatrick, *The Americanisation of Ireland*
[84] Donald MacRaild 'Diaspora' and 'Transnationalism', p. 54.

and to close this discussion on historiography I would like to highlight the contribution of Kevin Kenny who has taken a somewhat of a mid-way point between Akenson's comparative approach and Delaney's transnational one. Kenny reminds us not to forget the influence of where in the diaspora immigrants settled, each group had its unique challenges and culture to integrate with. Whilst it is out of the scope of this research to carry out a comparative approach in addition to a transnational one, I agree that, 'too much is lost if we forget that immigrants settled in nation-states and that their subsequent histories were moulded by distinctive national contexts.' [85]

[85] Kevin Kenny, 'Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a case study' *The Journal of American History*, 90 (2003), 134-62 (p.135)

Sources

Having intended to study the Irish American community at the turn of the century and having to do so remotely, I was aware of several specific Irish American newspapers which would be of value. Firstly, *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator* (1878 – 1951), founded by Patrick Ford. This publication appealed to a working class and radical left-wing audience, it campaigned against injustice in Ireland but also in the US too. Ford saw the Land War as part of a more general fight against economic oppression. Another key publication was *The Boston Pilot* (1829 – present), edited by John Boyle O'Reilly. *The Pilot* had a middle-class conservative readership and is the oldest catholic newspaper in the United States, Boyle O'Reilly was a Fenian and strong advocate for Irish independence. Finally, *The Gaelic American* (1903-1951), the weekly newspaper of Sinn Fein which was edited by John Devoy, a member of Clan na Gael and organiser of the American Land League who took a very strong nationalist stance. As heirs to the Fenians, Clan na Gael felt that any emphasis on economics was a distraction from Ireland's independence.

Unfortunately, the only available digital copies for these publications were, *The Boston Pilot* – 1838 to 1857, the rest of the archive being held at Boston College, Boston, US and *The Gaelic American*, which has the following online copies - 1903 (2 copies), 1904 (39 copies) 1905 (52 copies) 1906 (52 copies), 1907 (28 copies) accessible through Villanova University. Further copies of *The Gaelic American* are available on microfilm at various locations in the US. Three copies were also available for 1887 through nyshistoricnewspapers.org. Whilst there is paid access to *The Gaelic American* through geaneology.com this only allows one to search on a relative's name and read clippings about them rather than browse the archive freely and therefore is a rather restricted source. Two further Irish American newspapers which were available digitally from The American Library

of Congress, for the correct period were situated in Minnesota (*The Irish Standard*) and Kentucky (*Kentucky Irish American*). I also undertook general searches of all American newspapers which were digitised, this was to some extent fruitful in finding the work of the authors that I wished to focus on and meant that I was able to extend my study to non-Irish American papers of the time.

In light of the fact that coverage of Irish American newspapers was patchy I chose to focus on *The Gael* where a run of copies could be accessed digitally from 1899 to 1904, via The Haithi Trust digital library. In addition, I was also able to access copies of Donahoe's magazine for the same period. Donahoe's magazine ran from 1878 to 1908 and was a monthly general interest magazine with a Catholic leaning, published in Boston.

The Gael was founded in 1881 by Michael Logan and was a bilingual publication published in Brooklyn New York. Logan had emigrated to New York at the age of 35 in 1871 where he worked as a teacher and later in real estate. A committed Gaelic speaker, in 1872 Logan wrote a letter to The Irish World where he argued that Irish Americans should not stop speaking their language, arguing that the language, and pride in it, were central to identity. Following on from this letter Philo-Celtic societies and Irish language classes began to spring up on the East coast cities of the US such as Boston, Brooklyn, and New York. In 1881 Logan founded 'An Gaodhal. *The Gael*: a monthly journal devoted to the preservation and cultivation of the language and anatomy of the Irish nation'. The publication was to be a first in many ways, the first Irish language newspaper and the first American publication to print Irish lessons which could be followed at home. Whilst there has been much recent work done on the content of Irish American newspapers of the time by Lyons (2019) and Knight (2019) their work has focussed primarily on the Irish speaking community and Irish

language pages and articles in the Gaelic language. My focus will be on articles and letters written in *The Gael* in English.

When Logan died suddenly in 1899 a new editor was found in Geraldine Haverty who reasserted that 'the mission of *The Gael* consists mainly in educating and encouraging our race in America in their duty towards the motherland'.[86] Throughout its publication *The Gael* strived to remain politically neutral stating that 'We admit there are times when the neutrality which we feel necessary to maintain is a little irksome, but we believe it is the wisest course to pursue'.[87] It is an ideal publication to use as a transnational source because as Matthew Knight tells us *The Gael* did not exist in isolation, 'material was often reprinted in these journals weeks after it appeared in columns in Ireland or in the US'. Knight's work is on Gaelic language columns, and he sees this as a bilingual public sphere, which created both a linguistic and imagined community and where San Franciscans could become producers and active participants in this imagined community.[88]

Despite great enthusiasm from some readers, it is clear in the years 1899 – 1904 that *The Gael* is struggling with its current base of subscribers. We see within its pages many incentives and exhortations for new subscribers, for example, sample copies and advertising placards were given to 400 newsagents in Ireland to advertise *The Gael*. However, their aim was never to supplant homegrown Irish newspapers, and it was made clear that 'The field for *The Gael* is in America and we are not in any sense in competition with our friends in Ireland'.[89]

[86] *The Gael,* March 1901, (p.80).
[87] *The Gael,* December 1899, (p.256).
[88] Matthew Knight, Gaels on the Pacific: The Irish Language Department in the San Francisco Monitor, 1888–91, *Éire-Ireland,* 54 (2019), 172-199 (p. 176).
[89] *The Gael,* February 1901, (p.48).

I was also able to find digitally through archive.org, collections of poems and stories that the authors I have focussed on produced, for example *'Through the Turf Smoke'* and '*Donegal Folk Tales'* by Seumas MacManus, *'Ballads in Prose'* by Nora Hopper and *'Irish Mist and Sunshine'* by the Rev. James B. Dollard.[90] As well as autobiographical and semi biographical works from Irish immigrants of the time such as *'The Hard Road to Klondike'* by Micheal MacGowan and *'A Tree Grows in Brooklyn'* by Betty Smith.[91]

My access to secondary sources has been made logistically much more difficult through total and partial library closures for almost the entire period of study for my dissertation, however, I have been able to build up a substantial bibliography through careful planning and use of JStor and electronic resources.

Having decided to take a transnational perspective to understand if these authors were also popular within the Australian Irish diaspora, I was able to use https://trove.nla.gov.au/ which has a wealth of newspapers from the period of study. Although there are no specific Australian Irish newspapers I have searched across the breadth of all available newspapers for that period, with particular focus on Catholic newspapers.

Source Advantages and Limitations

The digitisation of newspapers and magazines has allowed me to continue with my research during the pandemic, and there are many advantages to the use of newspapers for this period. Thompson, for example, tells us that during the nineteenth century the press

[90] Seumas MacManus, *Through the Turf Smoke* (New York: Doubleday and McClure, 1899) and *Donegal Fairy Stories* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1900). Nora Hopper, *Ballads in Prose* (London: John Lane, 1894) Rev. James B. Dollard, *Irish Mist and Sunshine* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1901)
[91] Micheal MacGowan *The Hard Road to Klondike* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1962), Betty Smith *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (London: Arrow Books, 2000)

became ‘a powerful agent of transnational communication and encouraged an increasingly global sense of community’.[92] It allows us to tap into what the communities at the time were interested in, discover what was popular and to trace trends and reprints of particular poems and stories around specific themes, as MacRaild tells us it is a seriously underutilised basis for assessing the dialogue of both Orange and Green communities in Ireland’s diaspora particularly as there was ‘an organic material culture among emigrants with advertisements for books and other goods from the homeland’. [93]

Newspapers provide us with a valuable window onto the communities that they serve and there is a wealth of information for the historian which reflects the readers’ political and social interests and hopes for the future, the rhythm of their lives and leisure activities, and even their purchasing decisions. Conboy argues that newspaper genres can tell us a great deal about communities and through looking at patterns we can ‘begin to understand more about the ways in which readers shared their social knowledge’.[94] There is even an argument to say that newspapers are more concerned with the ‘re-creation and confirmation of social groups than they are with the transmission of information.’[95] In the newspapers that I have examined, this is often in evidence and the attempts to foster a new Irish American identity are plain, examining the sources from these years we can clearly see themes emerging as to what communities chose as symbols of their new identity or reminders of their old one, what behaviours were encouraged and disdained and most importantly what was to endure as the years passed by. More recently Potter’s work has

[92] John B. Thompson, *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p.8.
[93] Donald MacRaild, *'Diaspora' and 'Transnationalism'*
[94] Martin Conboy, *The Social Language of Newspapers, Socio-historical perspectives* (London: Continuum, 2010) p.7.
[95] Ibid., p.7.

shown through his study of newspapers that throughout the nineteenth century connections were being formed between different parts of the British Empire. These connections possessed characteristics of webs or networks and we can also see them in evidence within the Irish diaspora.[96]

In terms of limitations, it is the case that there are only five years of *The Gael*, digitally available, as such, I have tried to focus in great detail on each available copy taking a micro-historical approach to my source, carefully scrutinising each line and column for what they can offer up. We also need to be cognisant of the fact that newspaper sources allow us to tap into a particular segment of society, and whilst American Irish immigrants were on the whole literate, *The Gael*, for example was self-styled as appealing to a certain subset of Irish immigrants, namely the aspirational middle classes. This group, whilst being in a minority amongst the Irish community at the time, was growing and did perhaps carry disproportionate weight in terms of their influence within the community. Fortunately, I was also able to access the much more complete records of *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* a more widely read publication, although not specifically for the Irish. In throwing my net much more widely to all American newspapers I was able to capture not only a diverse geography but also a wider readership and not just the urban middle classes.

[96] Simon Potter, 'Webs, Networks and Systems: Globalisation and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century British Empire', *Journal of British Studies,* 46 (2007), 621-646, (p.622).

Chapter One - 'A few really good books about Ireland'

> …to puncture the shams and lies that are part of the many banes of Irish life; to foster honesty and direct thinking – surely that is a mission that is practical and not sentimental. This the Gaelic League has for its purpose. By means of festivals. Of exhibitions in literature, music, oratory, singing, dancing, and games; by lectures and classes, summer schools, prizes and newspapers, thousands of Irish people are gaining a degree of real native culture.[97]

This 1909 advertisement for The Gaelic League from *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* demonstrates how those who supported the Gaelic League and other revivalist societies strongly believed that they were educating their compatriots. Their purpose was to build an Irish American community that was educated not only in the language of Ireland but also in its traditions, geography literature and history.

This chapter provides background to The Gaelic Revival and then examines each of the principal ways in which the Irish American community, and more specifically readers of *The Gael*, members of the Philo-Celtic Society and the Gaelic League sought to educate their community about the Irish homeland and culture. This emphasis on the educative aspects of Irish American community life demonstrates how the Irish American diasporic identity was developing at the turn of the century but also how ultimately this earnest approach had its limitations. It was to be from the heart rather than the head, in nostalgic visions of the past that an enduring Irish American identity would truly emerge.

[97] *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 9th May 1909, (p. 32).

The Gaelic Revival and The Gaelic League

The Gaelic Revival was a late nineteenth century movement which saw a resurgence of interest in the Irish language, Irish traditions and culture. Its primary goal was to revive Gaelic and cultural pursuits including music, dancing, sports, and the making of Irish goods, as Nic Congáil tells us - it sought to realign Ireland with its pre-colonial state.[98] The revival not only instigated the creation of The Gaelic League in 1893 but it was the backdrop and raison d'etre for *The Gael* and many of its contributors.

Whilst the Gaelic revival is commonly held to have originated in Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century and spread throughout the diaspora, recently historians have begun to question whether in fact, nascent Gaelic societies in the US were influential in showing societies in Dublin how organisation and structure could be used to advance their cause. Fiona Lyons points to the role of US Philo-Celtic societies that had taken root in the US forty years before the foundation of the League, seeing them as foundational to, and sharing many similarities with The Gaelic League in Dublin.[99]

The Gaelic League was established in Ireland in 1893 by Eoin MacNeill and Douglas Hyde with the belief that Irish self-sufficiency could decrease emigration, within ten years a total of 400 branches had been established holding weekly meetings and lectures for interested enthusiasts, its membership peaked in 1906.[100] An important and successful part of The League's work was a very effective campaign to include the Gaelic language as part of

[98] Riona Nic Congáil, 'Life and the Dream: Utopian Impulses Within the Irish Language Revival' *Utopian Studies,* 23 (2012), 440-449 (p.431).
[99] Fiona Lyons, 'Irish Diaspora, Cultural Activism and Print Media in Transatlantic Contexts between Ireland and North America c. 1857-1887', *Studi Irlandesi - A Journal of Irish Studies*, 9 (2019), 113-135 (p.246).
[100] Michael Tierney, *Eoin MacNeill: Scholar and Man of Action, 1867-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) p.28.

the school curriculum – as a consequence the number of schools teaching Gaelic rose from only 88 national schools in 1900, to 1983 in 1904.[101]

Despite having a clause in its constitution that set out its non-political and non-sectarian nature, the reality was not always as clear cut, and Peter Murray has argued that whilst initially the role of the Gaelic League was, 'primarily a pressure group intent on promoting radical change in the field of educational policy' it grew rapidly into a large organisation, well organised with branches and officials.[102] The political nature of the league has been a point of debate for historians and one of the foremost scholars of The Gaelic League, Tom Garvin argues strongly that it was essentially a political party which denied that proposition.[103] In contrast, John Hutchinson sees the movement as a form of 'cultural nationalism' which was 'quite independent of political nationalism' and acted outside the political system.[104]

Both Hutchinson and Garvin do however agree (to differing extents) that The Gaelic League was key in the development of a new nationalist elite and a conduit for frustrations of the Catholic majority who were blocked occupationally. As far as the Gaelic League in Ireland was concerned any delicate political balance came to an end in at the Ard Fheis in 1915, when the more radical elements of the organisation made an amendment to the constitution to ensure that one of the aims of the Gaelic League was a 'free' Irish nation, soon after Douglas Hyde resigned his presidency in protest.

[101] Nic Congáil, *Life and the Dream* (p.433)
[102] Peter Murray, Irish cultural nationalism in the United Kingdom state: politics and the Gaelic League 1900 - 1918*, Irish Political Studies,* 8 (1993) 55-72 (p.58)
[103] Tom Garvin, The Anatomy of a Nationalist Revolution: Ireland, 1858-1928, *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 28 (1986), 468-501
[104] John Hutchinson, *The dynamics of cultural nationalism: the Gaelic revival and the creation of the Irish nation state* (London; Allen and Unwin, 1987)

Another point for debate around The Gaelic Revival and The Gaelic League has been in terms of their membership composition and impact. Scholars such as Kibberd see the revival as an empowered moment which fuelled cultural creativity whilst others have seen it as a somewhat 'elitest project designed to hijack Irish culture'.[105] The extent to which The Gaelic League was a grass roots movement has been hotly debated, with more recent views arguing that 'historical evidence points to considerable popular support for the kind of cultural decolonisation led by the Gaelic League'.[106] Nic Congáil agrees with Garvin in seeing the revolutionary potential of the movement and claims that, 'in essence the Gaelic League with its espousal of patriotism and self-sufficiency was to pave the way for Irish independence from Britain'.[107]

The American Gaelic League societies in many respects took their lead from Dublin, for example, on the question of The League's political neutrality. However, as previously mentioned, Ossianic and Philo-Celtic societies had been springing up in America since the mid nineteenth century, clearly the American Irish saw Gaelic as a badge of ethnicity that indicated a glorious past rather than a demeaned one.[108] From a very early stage these Irish speaking societies were very important to an enthusiastic minority of Irish Americans. Matthew Knight in his study of Gaelic speaking communities in San Francisco describes the societies as 'conduits between home and the immigrant communities in their adopted country'.[109] He has found a strong and dynamic subculture of Gaelic speakers within the Irish American community. Indeed, by the 1890s Gaelic speakers numbered 400,000 Irish

[105] L. H. Platt, "Joyce and the Anglo-Irish Revival: The Triestine Lectures," *James Joyce Quarterly,* 29, 264-65
[106] Mustafa Shakir, 'Revisionism and Revival: A Postcolonial Approach to Irish Cultural Nationalism' *New Hibernia Review,* 2 (1998), 36-53 (p.39).
[107] Nic Congáil, *Life and the Dream* p.431.
[108] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*
[109] Matthew Knight, *Gaels on the Pacific* p.179.

speakers in the US and Lyons tells us that 'Irish American print media, cultural societies and language classes also had a symbiotic relationship with one another.'[110]

There is, however, another side to the Gaelic League movement in the United States, as Ni Bhroimiel's research shows, the societies faced a constant struggle to recruit and retain members and attendance at entertainment events was always greater than at the language classes. Indeed, she goes as far as to claim that there wasn't a Gaelic revival movement in the US arguing that 'The Gaelic societies in America were focussed primarily on the American Irish and on their need for asserting a distinctive and cultured identity in the new world'.[111]

In addition, there were financial tensions between the US and Irish societies. The American branches of Gaelic League had long been seen as the financial supporter of their Irish cousins and there were frequent requests such as this one from Douglas Hyde in *The Gaelic American,* 'Irish men across the water will you not help us? We are straining every nerve. The next ten years will decide the question of Ireland as a nation or Ireland as an English county'.[112] Later on in this issue we hear from the Brooklyn Gaelic Society that, 'the League is in desperate straits for money and the contributions are used up as quickly as received.'[113] These constant financial requests let to rifts between the two organisations and as time progressed, Irish American communities began to expect something more from their organisations, and for this they turned increasingly to Clan na Gael or the Ancient Order of Hibernians whose aim was not relinguification –but the use of the Irish language as

[110] Lyons, *The language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is the language of the slave*
[111] Una Ni Bhroimiel *Building Irish identity in America, 1870-1915: The Gaelic Revival* (Dublin: The Four Courts, 2003) (p.135).
[112] *The Gaelic American*, April 2nd1904 (p.2).
[113] *Ibid.*

'a building block of ethnic pride and separateness'.[114] Therefore from a relatively early point the Irish and American Gaelic Leagues were two distinct organisations under the same umbrella and despite the Irish Americans nostalgia for a lost heritage making them appear to be as one with their Irish counterparts the needs and the enthusiasm of their members were clearly different.

Language Classes and Lectures

Gaelic language classes were a key pillar in the work of The Gaelic League both in Ireland and abroad, and almost whenever we see reports of The Gaelic League in *The Brooklyn Eagle* there is mention of these classes, their times and locations. As early as 1881 articles began appearing in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* encouraging attendance at Gaelic language classes, such as

> Irish American fathers and mothers who have had no opportunity to learn this venerable tongue are urged to send their children to the hall and to come themselves in like manner. It is strange that a large portion of the Irish people do not know the letters of the alphabet of their native tongue, they should try to remove this apparent slur on their patriotism.[115]

Without access to these societies documents it is difficult to uncover attendance figures, although we can glean that these may not have been very high given the continuous encouragement for new learners that we see in published in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle.* I

[114] Ni Bhroimiel *Building Irish identity in America*, p.134.
[115] *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* 7th June 1881, (p.2).

have been able to locate one or two references which may help in this task, and which seem to confirm that attendance was somewhat restrained. In 1900 in an article on the New York Gaelic Society we hear that the language department 'fairly well attended'[116]

Later, in early November 1903 the Brooklyn Philo Celtic Society reported that 'the beginners class established here the first Sunday evening in October now boasts more than thirty students'.[117]

The Gael also frequently listed Gaelic League meetings and classes throughout the United States and provided motivational pen pictures of those who had learnt the Irish language from scratch, however these seemed to be a minority. In a 1903 article from *The Gaelic American,* it is acknowledged that 'though in the US it is not everyone has time, let alone inclination to become Gaelic Leaguers yet in all the populous centers here Irish men abound, and is it only reasonable to expect encouragement from many of them in furthering the propaganda of the Gaelic League.'[118]

Irish newspapers also published serialisations of Father Eugene O'Growney's '*Simple lessons in Irish'*. O'Growney was a pivotal figure in the Gaelic Revival in both Ireland and America, born in County Meath in 1863, he had learnt Gaelic as an adult whilst training for the Priesthood and still in Ireland. His 'short lessons' were first published in *The Weekly Freeman* in Ireland and he was instrumental in the foundation of The Gaelic League - indeed there can be no discussion of the educative role of The Gaelic League without mention of his series which was eventually published in five books and had by 1903 sold a remarkable 320,000 copies.[119] Unfortunately, poor health saw O'Growney move to the United States in

[116] *The Gaelic American*, September 29th 1903, (p.5).
[117] The Brookyn Daily Eagle, November 1st 1903, (p.25).
[118] The Gaelic American, September 29th 1903 (p.5).
[119] Timothy McMahon *Grand opportunity: The Gaelic revival and Irish society, 1893-1910* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008) p. 10.

1894 where he became an occasional contributor to *The Gael* and much respected member of the Irish American community. He remained in the United States until his death in 1899, his loss was keenly felt in American Irish circles where he was seen as a figurehead for the movement. In the years following his death a funeral fund was set up to raise $1500 to finance the repatriation of his body back to Ireland, an event which made front page news in *The Gaelic American* with contributors' names proudly listed in *The Gael.* [120]

Alongside their classes and serialised lessons, Gaelic speakers or students could brush up on their language skills by reading some of the monthly articles published in Gaelic in *The Gael* and other Irish American newspapers. These articles have been studied in detail by Fiona Lyons who highlights their educational aspects, she tells us that, 'writers often found it necessary to explain to their readers the scholarship and antiquity associated with the Irish language'.[121] Lyons sees this as part of an attempt to 'create a cultural, national and political consciousness among the diaspora in these articles'.[122] In fact, such was the importance placed on this language learning that we even find evidence that those writing and reading *The Gael* felt it their duty to chastise and encourage those at home in Ireland to do more to publish articles in Gaelic. In 1899 they encouraged the Gaelic League in Dublin to produce and send Irish lessons to the editors of Nationalist papers in Ireland, telling them that 'We cannot comprehend any newspaper refusing' to print them and promising to send $100 to help the scheme get started.[123]

In addition to the language classes regular educational lectures were given (often by visitors from Ireland) by the Philo-Celtic Society and The Gaelic League. A selection of these

[120] *The Gaelic American*, September 19th 1903, (p.1).
[121] Lyons, *'The language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is the language of the slave'*
[122] Ibid.
[123] *The Gael,* June 1899, (p.64).

titles includes a lecture by Father Leeming on 'Justice to Ireland', in 1883, 'Ireland Past and Present' by The Hon. William E. Robinson in 1886 and Father McHale on 'Ireland, land of the living heroes.' These were by all accounts well attended, and often ended with customary Irish songs and dancing, indeed, the social aspect of meetings was very much in evidence and there are many reports of balls, picnics, concerts and dances organised by Irish societies such as 'an exhibition of Irish figure dancing at Celtic Park' in August 1905. In early September of 1905 a 'Gaelic League night' was held at Manhattan Beach with fireworks depicting scenes from Irish history, Douglas Hyde himself and over 300 Irish dancers.[124]

One consistent theme in the articles we find about Gaelic language classes is a constant call for more learners and greater attendance. This is also echoed the subscription struggles of *The Gael*. Throughout the period examined the magazine regularly called for subscription renewals and new subscribers, even tempting interested parties with offers of an Irish flag or a popular book as a sweetener. Eventually in 1904, *The Gael* ceased publication, despite the fervent enthusiasm of the small but dedicated number who attended lectures and subscribed to the magazine they had not been able to sustain or grow the publication. The emphasis on language and learning had not been sufficient to engage the Irish American population in great enough numbers, in the words of one reader P.M Youngstown, "I think the name of your magazine '*The Gael*' is against it, I don't believe that one Irishman in twenty knows what the word means. Ask a few and find out'.[125] There is no doubt of the enthusiasm felt by Gaelic speakers and those who had newly learnt the language, but it is plain to see from the evidence here that attendance was poor and apathy amongst the community was high. In particular for those who had no knowledge of the

[124] *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 20th August 1905, (p.13).
[125] 'Twenty Five Volumes Given for a few Ideas' *The Gael,* April 1903, (p.122).

language the effort required to learn it would have seemed significant and the rewards not evident in a society where other immigrants were striving to learn English to enhance their prospects.

Books and Stories

One cannot read *The Gael* without being stuck by its literary style. Whilst certainly not a 'highbrow' publication, books, and the mention of them are constant themes within its pages, *The Gael* was proud to be 'the only magazine making a feature of Irish books'.[126] It should be borne in mind of course that the pages of *The Gael* tell us much more about the tastes and leisure pursuits of the lower middle-class readership of *The Gael*, than the majority of Irish Americans. However, it must also be remembered that by the turn of the century the Irish American population were highly literate and beginning to enjoy upwards social mobility. I would also argue that whilst the lower middle classes may not be fully representative of the wider Irish American community, at least numerically, I would argue that they were a vocal group whose presence had a disproportionate influence on its community.

The regular books page of *The Gael* served as both a news page to inform readers about up-and-coming releases as well as carrying book reviews and recommendations. These books were largely on Irish subjects by Irish authors but books about Scotland or Wales or even Brittany were also included from time to time, as were numerous biographies of famous Irish people and politicians. There were on occasion full page advertisements devoted to scarce miscellaneous books for sale which were also exclusively Irish or

[126] 'Books and Authors' *The Gael*, February 1902, (p.56).

advertisements for booksellers in America or Ireland. Whilst many of these book pages simply outlined the latest book to read or carried news of authors, there is much in *The Gael* which points to a deliberate emphasis on books as a means of self-education as well as a leisure pursuit.

One such example can be found in 1899, when Eugene O'Growney, the celebrated Gaelic revivalist and priest, who was at that time living in the United States, wrote a piece which outlined his 'Twelve Good Books about Ireland'. These tomes included, as would be expected, a number of somewhat obscure books with a religious bent such as Father Meehan's *'Rise and Fall of the Irish Franciscan Monasteries'*, however the majority were more general such as *'Irish Names of Places'* by Joyce or *'One Hundred Irish Airs'* by H.P. Graves.[127] O'Growney told readers that 'every public library or reading room frequented by Irishmen should have a few really good books about Ireland'.[128] It is clear that these were in some way seen as a necessary grounding for being knowledgeable about Ireland and in some way being 'Irish', one could not envisage needing to know the names of Irish place names if one had never visited the country nor intended to do so. A year later in 1900, in reply to a reader request *The Gael* published a comprehensive list of seventy books they recommended for every Irish library - these covered various subjects but were heavily focussed on Irish history, literature, songs and ballads. To encourage access to these books for those who could not buy them the editor urged readers to, 'endeavour to see that the public libraries in his town or city have on hand for reference at least one copy of each of the leading works relating to Irish History, literature, antiquities, industries etc.' and explained to them how to solicit their librarians for these books. Douglas Hyde's *'A Literary*

[127] 'Twelve Good Books about Ireland', *The Gael,* April 1899, (p.37).
[128] Ibid., (p.37).

History of Ireland' is of particular interest as it was seen as indispensable for every Irish person and indeed seem to appear in some form in almost every issue of *The Gael*.[129] In a similar vein was the *'The Cabinet of Irish Literature'* which took up a full page advertisement at Christmas 1903, it was a form of encyclopaedia in four volumes which promised to give 'a complete view of Irish Literature from the sixteenth century down to present times'.[130]

As previously mentioned throughout the period of this study *The Gael* was in need of additional subscribers and indeed in 1904 it ceased to exist, in almost each issue there were exhortations for more subscribers and recommendations. In 1903, this went a step further with a competition for ideas to be sent in as to how the magazine could, 'extend and increase its influence and usefulness,' the person sending the most useful suggestion would win a prize of ten books. The prize books provide us with an interesting snapshot of the books the readers of *The Gael* most coveted or the books which the editor of *The Gael* felt would be the most useful, appropriate and enticing. Whilst these books for the most part also centred around history and literature, there are also books from the more popular authors Nora Hopper - *'Ballads in Prose'* and one from a most prolific contributor to *The Gael*, the Rev James Dollard whose *'Irish Mist and Sunshine'* was also on the list.[131]

As well as its book pages *The Gael* was packed full of short stories and poems, the editor and contributors to *The Gael* were very well connected with many newspapers arriving from Ireland every week, meaning that they could not only update their members on the latest book news but also reprint stories which were popular in Ireland and other parts of the Irish diaspora. For example, in January 1903 the editor was busy reviewing the Christmas stories which had just arrived and finding that 'where all are so commendable it is

[129] *The Gael,* July 1899, (p.96).
[130] *The Gael,* December 1903, (p.431).
[131] 'Twenty-Five Volumes given for a few ideas' *The Gael*, March 1903, (p.92).

difficult to make a selection'.[132] These stories tended to fall into two categories, the first being the recounting of traditional Irish myths and legends, a genre which appeared on a monthly basis, and was supplemented by articles also on the theme of an enchanted and mythical Ireland. Both the stories and articles included much speculation on ghosts, fairies, witches and of course, the Jack o'lantern.[133] The second genre was the fictional romanticised popular story or poem of 'ould' Ireland and there were a plethora of authors such as, Seumas MacManus, Katharine Tynan, Denis A. McCarthy the Rev. James B Dollard and Nora Hopper who submitted who supplied these works. In general, these contributors played heavily on the enthusiasm for a taste of home, for example Shan F. Bullock's 'Irish Pastorals' depicted the simple lives of the Irish 'peasantry'. On a similar note, Fiona MacLeod's 'The Dominion of Dreams', was described as having a 'thorough belief in the "old mysteries, old myths, gods and demoniac powers, dreams and the august revelation of eternal beauty"' and enticed the reader to 'live again in the olden world of Gaelic romance'.[134] I will return to analyse this genre of popular fiction in some detail in Chapter Two.

Photography and Geography

Another way that *The Gael* attempted to educate its readers on Ireland was through its pages dedicated to specific towns or interesting sites in Ireland. This was a regular component of the magazine in the years examined here in detail, 1899 to 1904 although by 1903 to 1904 it had somewhat run out of steam. These articles usually included one or two photos of the place in question, a brief history, a description of its topography and any

[132] *The Gael,* January 1903, (p.31).
[133] 'Popular Superstitions in Ireland', *The Gael*, 1901, (p.329).
[134] 'Books and Authors' *The Gael,* January 1900, (p.62).

remarkable features. The aims of these pages were clearly set out in this 1899 note from the editor:

> We ask our readers to send us for publication any photographs of beautiful Irish scenery that they may have. What we want is the uncommon and comparatively unknown – pictures of home life, street scenes in the smaller towns and villages, pictures of ruins, antiquities, etc. We will select a subject from a different county each month until all have been represented.[135]

Examples of areas which featured include, Boyle Abbey, Enniscorthy, Limerick, and Castle Dermot, later similar sections in the magazine focussed in more detail on the history of particular counties or cities such as the history of Leitrim (1899) or the City of Cork (1900) and were often spread over two months. Another regular theme in *The Gael* were historical articles focussed on specific items such as ancient gold ornaments which were accompanied by photographs of the artefacts in question. These pages brought Ireland to life and for many like P.T. O'Sullivan who wrote to *The Gael* 1900: 'the reading of each number of *The Gael* is to me, in spirit, a short and pleasant visit to the old land'.[136] However, not all readers were so enthralled and in 1903 the editor of *The Gael* tells us that they had received criticisms that *The Gael* was 'a little *too literary* and *too learned* to ever become popular. It is said that the average Irish- American reader does not appreciate Antiquarian folklore, Irish Country History, Genealogy, Folk' lore etc'.[137] Interestingly, we also have the editor's reply, which shows us that their target audience was not the 'average man', they sought to

[135] 'Photographs Wanted', *The Gael,* March 1899, (p.14).
[136] 'Correspondence', *The Gael*, October 1900, (p. 295).
[137] 'Twenty Five Volumes Given for a few ideas' The Gael, March 1903 p. 92

'appeal to the educated, the intelligent and the patriotic of our race who desire to be correctly informed concerting their native country or the country of their ancestors'.[138] Whilst the publication of these photos undoubtedly brought pleasure to those who knew their subjects well and had no idea of when they might see them again, they also formed part of a larger theme in the magazine. They aimed to foster a familiarity, a sense of belonging and a sense of place to those who had never set foot in Ireland, as well as educating those Irish born who had a limited grasp of the geography of their homeland, it was part of an unspoken cultural education.

It may not be a coincidence that 1898 also saw the publication of Finnerty's 'Ireland in Pictures,' containing four hundred pictures covering a wide variety of Irish scenes, it was 'a stunning and evocative overview of Ireland on the eve of the twentieth century'.[139] Whilst Finnerty himself was based in Chicago, Kevin Molloy has demonstrated how popular his book was in Australia, both at the time and for the decades that followed. A contemporary review by the Melbourne Advocate spoke of how the book was '…to Ireland a monument and for Australia an instructor.' This book in fact places Ireland in our homes'.[140] At around the same time *The Gael* was also recommending a book called 'Picturesque Ireland' which in a similar way to Finnerty's work showed 'natural scenery, remarkable places, historical antiquities, public buildings, Ancient Abbeys, Towers, Castles and other Romantic and attractive features of Ireland'.[141] Both the images in *The Gael* and those in Finnerty's book were fostering a collective sense of Irishness on both sides of the Pacific.

[138] Ibid.
[139] Kevin Molloy, 'Tradition, Memory and the Culture of Irish Australian Identity 1900 -1960' *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies,* 16 (2016), 47-64 (p. 49).
[140] Kevin Molloy, *Tradition, Memory and the Culture of Irish Australian Identity* p.49.
[141] 'Books you want', *The Gael*, November 1899, (p.240).

I would argue here however that these collections of photographs were a different concept to the educative articles in *The Gael* which were accompanied by rather humdrum photographs of county towns. The picture books of Finnerty et al were immensely popular throughout the twentieth century in Ireland, within the diaspora and to second generation Irish and beyond, perhaps due to the fact that in the same way as a sentimental poem they offered an instant connection to an idealised view of Ireland. With a glance one could visualise one's cultural heritage in a way that was easily accessible, near and yet very far away from everyday life.

Everyday Irish life

Continuing the theme of cultural education, *The Gael* also focussed on showing and describing the everyday life of those still living in Ireland, for example, in the joint August and September issue of 1900 a lengthy article entitled 'In the By-Ways of Rural Ireland' describes in detail Ireland's mud-wall cabins, what these looked like and how they were slowly disappearing. It also details how the habits of the Irish in Ireland were changing, from what they smoked to how they dressed, the latter having apparently worsened somewhat as the labouring classes had 'taken to wearing shoddy or second-hand English clothes.[142]

The breadth of such articles was wide ranging and highlighted Irish industries such as Belleek pottery or Irish lace, they also provided readers with a way to keep in touch with what was happening at home and a way to understand what everyday life was like in rural Ireland if one had only known the streets of New York, as reader Shaun Ruadh put it 'I have

[142] 'In the By-Ways of Rural Ireland' *The Gael,* August and September joint edition 1900, (p.248).

learned more about Ireland from its pages during the past half year than I ever knew before. *The Gael* has given me a most favourable impressions of the land of my ancestors which I have never seen and has also removed not a few prejudices'.[143]

In addition to providing a wealth of useful information about Ireland and what it was to be Irish a strong theme of both the articles in *The Gael* and the books they recommended were refutations of some of the more unfavourable depictions of the Irish prevalent at the time. One such example from 1900 was Rev. Edmund Hogan's 'The Irish People: Their Height, Form and Strength' which aimed to 'refute the calumnies that have so long been directed against the Irish people, chiefly in the English press and on the English stage'.[144]

Interestingly, there seems to have been some intergenerational friction on how seriously the image of respectable Irishness was valued. In 1904 we see a report in *The Gaelic American* condemning a frivolous play which had been staged at The Holy Rosary Church. Such plays were seen as extremely demeaning to Irish servant girls, however, those participating in the play and even the Priest were even more harshly condemned as they were themselves second generation Irish. We are told that, 'the actresses who disgraced themselves by taking part in this base caricature are the daughters or grand-daughters of Irish servant girls.'[145] Williams has pointed out that many Irish were initially welcoming of the stereotype of 'Paddy' as he was a subversive character, 'juggling about brandishing a shillelagh he could either personify the joie de vivre of the Celtic spirit or the threat of a looming Celtic underclass'. However, after 1900 when their status improved the centre of

[143] 'Correspondence' *The Gael*, April 1902, (p.132).
[144] 'Books and Authors' *The Gael* January 1900, (p.31).
[145] 'Profaning the temple disgraceful caricatures of the Irish at catholic church entertainments – time to sweep it away' *The Gaelic American,* April 30th, 1904, (p. 6).

their identity became 'a thoroughly Americanized, yet sentimental citizen and patriot who drew his or her strengths from a mythical land known as the `Emerald Isle.' [146]

This recounting of the Irish way of life came very literally to life almost ten years later in 1913 when three 'Irish colleens' dressed in traditional Irish costumes made the journey from Ireland to an exhibition in Loeser's & Co department store. This was advertised in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* as 'lacemaking, rug weaving, and embroidering…there will be replicas of ancient Irish pewelry, postal views of Ireland, books in Irish and English on many interesting subjects, bog oak ornaments etc'.[147] This Gaelic League exhibition was seen by an estimated 500,000 people throughout the United States and was another example of bringing Ireland to life, albeit with the added bonus of raising funds for The Gaelic League.[148]

Whilst this exhibition played more on some of the more romantic Gaelic Revivalist ideals, on the whole *The Gael's* approach and the vast majority of articles it published struck an informative and instructive note, it was to all extents and purposes an in-depth travel guide for visitors who would never arrive. What we also see in its pages is a good example of what Howard Lune describes as the formation of a collective identity he sees this happening through 'rituals and prayer, styles of clothing and food and the repetition of shared stories that define them as a group.'[149]

[146] Williams, *'Twas only an Irishman's Dream',* (p.239).
[147] *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 30th March 1913, (p.37).
[148] Alex Ward, 'Dress and National Identity: Women's Clothing and the Celtic Revival' *Costume*, 48 (2014) 193-212
[149] Howard Lune, *Transnational Nationalism and Collective Identity among the American Irish* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2020) Accessed as an eBook https://ereader.perlego.com/1/book/2040073/21

Chapter Two - 'Songs of the Little Villages'

A plethora of popular writers appealed to the Irish communities throughout the world at the turn of the century, and in this chapter, I will examine the role that three of these authors played in the development of Irish American and Irish diasporic identity and how this contrasted with the educational efforts seen in *The Gael* and spearheaded by local Gaelic League branches.

With regard to the literature and literary circles of the Gaelic revival there has been a great deal written on some of the better-known figures such as W.B Yeats and J.M. Synge, interestingly, whilst mentioned in *The Gael*, their works were rarely reproduced in the publications I have examined here. I have chosen to focus on some of the less well-known literary characters of the day and in particular three authors who were frequently published and very popular at the time but who are now somewhat forgotten, these are Seumas MacManus, the Rev. James B. Dollard and Nora Hopper.

There are a number of reasons for choosing these authors, firstly they were very well known and popular at the time, evidenced by the frequency of their appearances in the press and their publications, I wanted to choose authors who had a following in The Gael and were well known to the Irish American community of the time. Secondly, I was interested to learn more about them, uncover their stories and understand more about their work. Thirdly, they represent a spectrum of diaspora stories, Seumas MacManus was born in Ireland, and for many years lived between his native Donegal and New York. Following the death of his first wife he moved to the United States permanently and married an American with no connection to Ireland. The Rev. James B. Dollard was also born in Ireland but moved to Canada as a young man, as a Priest he represents the Catholic

Church which loomed large in Irish immigrant life. Nora Hopper was born in Great Britain and her Irish connection was through her Irish father, although surprisingly she herself was unfamiliar with the country about which she wrote so much. Finally, their works share familiar themes and as well as being deeply Irish, they were at times melancholy, romantic, and nostalgic.

I intend to examine each of these authors in turn, understanding who they were, and how and why their work struck a chord with the Irish at home and abroad as well as how they may have contributed to Irish Americans finding their own identity. I will also examine their influence from a transnational perspective, because, as well as being popular in Ireland, from where many of their stories were sent to the United States, they were also being read by Irish readers in the remotest parts of Australia.

Seumas MacManus

Seumas MacManus was a poet, playwright, and writer, born in County Donegal in 1867. He initially worked as a teacher whilst contributing poems to Irish publications and as a committed nationalist he was active in The Gaelic League movement from an early stage. However, it was not his work in The Gaelic League which saw him feted in immigrant circles. In fact, it was only once MacManus began to spend time in America at the end of the 1890s and his work was published in *The Gael* as well as other publications including *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Monthly* and *The Catholic World* that he found a degree of fame.[150] Indeed, MacManus represented something of an American success story 'coming to America with a letter of introduction and a roll of manuscript, he made some friends who

[150] Dictionary of Irish Biography (online ed https://doi.org/10.3318/dib.005736.v2)

secured for him an entry to literary circles, and when he left for home six months later quite a number of American publications were printing his short stories or had contracted the writing of one'.[151]

In 1901 Seumas married Anna Johnston, a fellow author who wrote under the name of Ethna Carbery, and who also contributed to *The Gael*. Ethna died in 1902 and found considerable fame posthumously for her work '*The Four Winds of Eirinn'* which Seumas ensured was published.[152] It had been her wish that 'the volume should be printed in Ireland, on Irish paper, bound with Irish-made binding and dedicated to the Gaels of Argentina'.[153] After Ethna's death, Seumas considered making his permanent home in the States as he was under scrutiny from the authorities in his native Donegal, being described at the time as 'a fighting Irishman and a hot-headed patriot and upon all matters pertaining to Ireland's rights, he is most militant'.[154]

Unsurprisingly, in 1903, we find him as a signatory in a letter printed in the Australian *Freeman's Journal,* written by a number of fellow authors and Nationalists including W.B. Yeats and Maud Gonne. The letter was a protest following a visit to Dublin by the King of England and stated that, 'no Irish woman or Irishman who values National dignity or Honour…can participate in any address of welcome to the King of England who can come only as the existing representative of the power responsible for all our evils.'[155] MacManus did eventually go on to move to and stay in America until his death in 1960, marrying Catalina Violante Paez in 1911, a granddaughter of the first President of Venezuela with whom he had two children.

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[151] 'Seumas MacManus' *The Gael*, December 1900, (p.357).
[152] Ethna Carberry, *The Four Winds of Eirinn* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son Ltd., 1906)
[153] 'Irish Books and Authors' *The Gael,* July 1902, (p.233).
[154] 'Bits about Latest Books' *The Gael*, June 1903, (p. 196).
[155] 'Ultra-Nationalist and The King', *Freeman's Journal*, Saturday 18th of July 1903, (p.8).

MacManus was a folklorist, capturing and re-telling old tales, such as those in his *'Donegal Fairy Stories'* which retold folk lore tales such as '*Hookedy-Crookedy'* and '*The Plaisham'* and were variants of those he had heard during his childhood in Ireland. We hear an account of how he did this in Donahoe's magazine of 1904, where in an article by Edith Wheeler who had gone 'folk song collecting' with MacManus, she tells us that, 'we drove miles into the country every day and picked up songs in the schoolhouses, and by the roadsides and by the hay fields'.[156] Some of these tales and legends were also reprinted more widely in the American press such as 'The Princess Sorcha' which we see published in The St Louis Republic in 1904.[157]

'*Donegal Fairy Tales'* was advertised in the January 1901 edition of *The Gael* as 'A series of tales to make glad the heart of childhood. They tell of enchanted kings and peasants who lived in Ireland at the dawn of civilisation'.[158] MacManus' work was clearly very popular as we can see it being regularly advertised and reviewed, for example in Donahoe's magazine in 1899.[159] The appeal of such stories was simple, as were the tales which would have been familiar to many readers and would have transported them back to their pre-emigration days in Ireland, or a romanticised version of this. He also gave lectures in some of the larger cities, and in 1904 we see his latest lecture, 'Irish wit and humor' advertised in *The Gaelic American*, this was to take place at the Columbian Lyceum on Broadway [160] Interestingly, on one occasion we also have the report of one such lecture, held in Philadephia in 1904. We hear that, 'The house was well filled and when Mr. MacManus arose to speak it was evident form the ovation he received that man of those present were familiar with his works.' Said

[156] *Donahoe's Magazine* November 1904, (p.453).
[157] 'The Princess Sorcha' *The St Louis Republic*, 5th June 1904, Magazine Section, (p.70).
[158] 'Advertisements', *The Gael,* January 1901, (p.32).
[159] *Donohoe's Magazine*, 1899 (p. 513).
[160] The Gaelic American, April 9th 1904, p.7.

a man from Cork, 'I have been fifteen years in the country, and it is the best night's enjoyment I had since I arrived.' [161] What we can also see here is that emotional response to his poems when we hear that they, 'Deeply affected the hearers, especially the ladies' [162] MacManus also engaged in more serious journalism and in 1904 wrote a lengthy article for *Donahoe's Magazine* on the subject of Irish industries, giving his views on the way forward and advocating capitalising on Irish cottage industries such as linen weaving, lace making and Donegal tweed.[163]

One of his most popular books, *'Through the Turf Smoke'* published in 1899 included a foreword addressed directly to American readers which included the lines, 'The same hearts that rang out a little peal of childish laughter beneath a smoke-blacked Irish roof tree, have, afterwards, on red fields, often raised a *rann* (verse) that fluttered the folds of the defiant and triumphant Stripes and Stars'.[164] We see here that MacManus is clear about his aim, to turn back the hands of time and gather the emigrants around the fire to listen to his stories. In the twelve stories of *'Through the Turf Smoke'* we see all the usual characters one would expect to see in Irish village life included, the Priest of course is there, but so too are the quarrelling married couple, and a selection of other characters whom he often portrayed with heavy Irish accents in his dialogue. The stories are heavy in nostalgia as in the following passage from *'Dinny Monaghan's Last Keg'.*

> "The peat and fir piled high up on the hearth shoot upwards merry, playful, dancing tongues of flame, that send fanciful shadows wavering over the soot-stained rafters

[161] 'M'Manus at Philadephia', *The Gaelic American* April 23rd 1904, (p. 5).
[162] Ibid.
[163] *Donohoe's Magazine,* September 1904, (p.204).
[164] Seumas MacManus, *'Through the Turf Smoke'* (New York: Doubleday and MacClure co.,1899) p.IX-X.

aloft and appear like some blithe, shadowy beings looking down upon the revels below, with restless delight…And you must know, too most all the 'old familiar faces' that circle around – Paddy Teague and Charley the Rooshian and Billy McCahill – a lad who could run a dhrop of the rare stuff as well as the next'.[165]

One can see how this would appeal to those missing home, who were the faithful readers of his work, and their children also who had heard of such places and such tales, MacManus became a regular contributor to *The Gael* where his short stories and poems were printed.[166] We must remember however that that even at the time, some critics felt his work bordered on caricature and he was chastised by *The Gael* in 1900 for his 'constant introduction of the whiskey bottle'.[167] He was also the author of a number of other folk tale books during this period such as *'In chimney corners – Merry tales of Irish Folklore'* and American publishers also took up his novels such as *'A Lad of the O'Friels'* which was published in 1903 and was described as a 'pastoral and idyllic novel', telling the story of life in an Irish village through the eyes of young boy Dinny O'Friel.[168]

Seumas MacManus' regular contributions to *The Gael* reinforced the view of the Irish in America as longing for home, and whether or not this was the case, within its pages they could for a while, indulge their feelings of homesickness and nostalgia in a way which surely must have been cathartic. An example of one such contribution is the poem *'Disillusioned'* which appeared in the January 1903 issue:

[165] MacManus, *Through the Turf Smoke* p.117-118.
[166] Other works printed in *The Gael* but not reproduced here are, *Donegal* (June 1899), *The Lonely Road* (Sept 1902) and *A Call* (Nov 1902)
[167] 'The Bewitched Fiddler and Other Tales', *The Gael,* May 1900, (p.152).
[168] 'Some Splendid Stories of Ireland' *The Gael,* June 1903 (p.180).

Disillusioned

From a far world, and cold, and lone, I plead a heart-wrung plain,

O Mountain Guardians of my home throw wide your arms again,

For, desolate, heart hungry and sore sick of soul am I

In my heart sad depths I yearn, I yearn within your arms to life

The world has proved so false, and life grows bitter on my tongue,

Gone every rainbow hope that fore my foolish eyes had sprung

I'm weary worn and at my breast there gnaws a sharp toothed pain

O Mountain Guardians take me to your loving arms again!

Dear Mountains of my love, long-lost forbear that hurting frown:

To my woeful weight of sorrow add not Sorrow's iron crown

'You cherished me in childhood, you held me, when a boy

In your big embrace and gave me all the world may give of joy

You told me tales and sung me songs, and showed me treasures gay

I turned my back on you – may God forgive – one evil day

Nor dropped a tear but left you and now when sorrows rain

I cry, O mountains of my home, throw wide your arms again!'

Woe worth that luckless day of days I climbed thy topmost knoll!

That bitter day and hour downdropped from my peace of soul.

I saw a glittering world beyond: whereat a strange unrest

That my dreamlife had never known was stirring in my breast.

A – through that world, afar it drove me many a footsore mile

To find it base, it's glitter false and treacherous its smile

My breast is racked my heart is dry and throbbing loud my brain

O Mountains take me, draw me, to your loving arms again!

O Rugged Ones! With hearts so warm for all ye look so wild,

Stretch out your mighty arms and gather me, an errant child,

In your great grasp and bathe my weary spirit with your balm

To your blue bosom fold, me, cloak me, with your holy calm

That's only broken by the black-cock's crow, the plover's flap

And plash of specked trout on the still lakes within your lap

With ye I'll find forgetfulness of a world so void, so vain,

O Mountains, Mountains of my youth, fling wide your arms again.[169]

Whilst it must be remembered that this poem was written in the year following the death of his wife Ethna Carberry, to whom he had been married for just one year, it is also full of homesickness, regret, and melancholy. It would have directly appealed to those thinking about childhood days in Ireland where their mountains or the communities they represented who had 'cherished me in childhood' and who now saw themselves as exiled far from home. With these words, MacManus also contrasts the wild, rugged rural life that most Irish immigrants had left behind to the starkly different urban world that most of them lived in in the United States. As Barrett tells us in his exploration of the Irish in the multi-

[169] 'Disillusioned' *The Gael*, January 1903, p. 26.

ethnic city of this period, 'The Irish were America's first ethnic group and their deepest roots lay in rural Ireland.'[170]

In addition to having his poems and short stories widely republished in American newspapers during the period under examination, MacManus also wrote more widely for the American press with humorous columns on the Irish press and American Irish policemen. Of particular interest is his own column called, 'Tales from an Irish Hilltop' which was printed in both the *The Sun* (New York) and *The Evening Star* (Washington) in the United States as well as *The Freeman's Journal* in Australia. This column provided updates and musings on current events in Ireland. MacManus contributed a range of other non-fiction pieces, notably on life in his native Donegal but even here we see a suitably sanitised view of life in a rural Irish village. In one idyllic description he ends by telling readers that, 'In every Donegal cottage on every night around the year the mother…leads the family in the rosary before retiring to bed, and at the end of the rosary…prays for the boys and girls in America, mentioning each by name.'[171]

It is crucial however that there we acknowledge the disconnection between this longing for home and regret with the small number of Irish who did return home even when they were able to. Barrett's study has touched on this and tells us that, 'For all the nostalgia of later years, most Irish had no desire to return to their native soil, they wished only to thrive where they had landed.' [172] MacManus himself ironically was to live out the majority of his life in New York by choice – whilst his poems provided an outlet for the uncomfortable feelings of sadness and loss familiar to immigrants abroad, and a reminder to

[170] Barrett, *The Irish Way,* p.3.
[171] *The Morning News,* May 13th 1900.
[172] Barrett, *The Irish Way,* p.4.

their descendants about what 'home' was like - they served and would continue to serve for generations as a motif to unite around rather than a serious call to action.

Rev. James B. Dollard

Alongside Seumas MacManus, a more obscure but even more regular contributor to *The Gael*, was the Rev. James B. Dollard. Dollard was born in County Kilkenny, Ireland in 1872 and later moved to Canada where he was ordained as a Priest in 1896. Despite living in Canada rather than the United States he became a regular and important contributor to *The Gael* writing under the pseudonym Sliav-na-mon, the name of a mountain in County Tipperary close to his native home. Dollard's work also occasionally appeared in Donahoe's magazine, for example, The Book O'Fire and in 1899 and Moon-bheg-dhown which was featured in 1904.[173]

Indeed, by 1901 he was so much an established contributor to *The Gael* that he merited an article of his own where he set out the reasons behind the choice of his pen name, it being, 'the name of that beautiful mountain of mist and sunshine which is the pride and glory of my lonely valley of the Suir'.[174] He goes on to describe this landscape and finishes with a lament that 'old dreamy Sliav-na-mon still watches over all and waits for the return of the exile – waits in vain alas, for many a one'.[175] Alongside nostalgia and idealisation, a third theme often evoked by many of these authors was that of melancholy in the sense of exile. Exile is a major theme in the work of Dollard, more so than for MacManus or Hopper, in an article from *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of 1910, Dollard tells us that amongst other things Irish music has the distinct trait of being 'the wild and passionate

[173] 'Book o'fire', *Donohoe's Magazine,* August 1899, (p.177) and Moon-bheg-Dhown, November 1904, (p.422).
[174] 'Sliabh na m-Bhan or Thoughts on a Gray Mountain' 1901, (p.38).
[175] Ibid., (p.39).

wail of hopeless grief or the tender melancholy such as surrounds one whose memories are all of the dead'.[176] He was also vehemently opposed to immigration and there is evidence of him using his reputation to speak out in a bid to prevent immigration from Ireland or across the diaspora. In a preface to *'Irish Mist and Sunshine'* by William O'Brien, we are told that 'His lyrics have done very much indeed to discourage the unnatural Hegria from their native land which has tempted such myriads of the race from their wholesome mountain glens into the contamination of the factories and city slums in stranger lands'.[177]

Dollard's first collection of poetry *'Irish Mist and Sunshine'* was published in 1902, followed by *'Poems'* in 1910, and *'Irish Lyrics and Ballads'* in 1918. We can find evidence that his work was read throughout the diaspora, for example *The Gael* in 1903 carries a review of *'Irish Mist and Sunshine'* from the Westminster MP W.M. O'Brien telling us that Dollard writes with, 'the intensified passion of an exile'.[178] He also wrote a collection of short stories titled *'The Gaels of Moonharrig'* from which extracts often appeared in *The Gael*.[179] The frequency of his appearances tells us much about the popularity of his work amongst readers and a review of *'Irish Lyrics and Ballads'* by *The Irish Monthly* in 1918 describes his wider appeal also telling us that although 'There is no great depth of thought in the poems', they 'should make songs as beautiful and as popular as any Davis and Moore have written'.[180]

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[176] 'Ancient Bards of Erin' *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 10th April 1910, (p.38).

[177] Preface, 'Irish Mist and Sunshine - A book of Ballads' by James B. Dollard (Boston; Badger and Company, 1901)

[178] *The Gael*, January 1903, (p.32).

[179] Other pieces published in *The Gael* but not reproduced here include *The Round Tower of Ardmore* (Nov 1900) *The Wrestling at Gurtharda'* (1901) *Lav Laidhir Abu* (Jan 1901) *The Ballad of Grey Norris* (April 1901) *When night is on the Suir* (Sept 1901), *The Curraghmore Hurleys* (Nov-Dec 1901) *The Fairy Rath* (May 1902), *Meehal Na g-Caman* (July 1902) *The Ballad of the Banshee* (Aug 1902), *The Brown Smooth Hill* and *The Sweet River Suir* (Aug/Sept 1900), *The Mourne Mountain* (Sept 1902), *The Burial of Moran Og* (Jan 1903), *When Stubborn Ross Ran Red – A Story of 98,* (March 1903) *The Isles of Arran* (March 1903), *The rescue of Meehal – na – Caman* (March 1904).

[180] *The Irish Monthly,* Vol 46, August 1918, 483-444 (p.483-484).

Whereas MacManus focussed on the folkloric and community aspect of Irish life Dollard's emphasis tended more towards melancholy laments of exile or the supernatural world of fairies and mysticism. This spiritual bent was reflected in the titles of many of his poems and stories, such as '*The Ceol Sidhe'* (The Fairy Music), published in July 1901, '*The Fairy Rath'*, '*The Ballad of the Banshee'* and '*Mourne Mountain'* (A Fairy Ballad) all of which appeared in *The Gael* in 1902. This theme is also continued in his short stories such as '*The Moondharrig Hurlers – recollections of 'Gaelic days'*.[181] In Moondharrig, a fictitious village where the narrator tells us of a hurling game played in his youth, the Moondharrig fairies replay a lost hurling match to try to, 'retrieve the fortunes of their fallen district'.[182] Dollard evokes the players as 'great, good-hearted, rollicking fellows who were grand specimens of Ireland's matchless peasantry'.[183] In the work of Dollard we also see a healthy dose of idealisation and nostalgia for Ireland, for example, in his poem, *'Song of the Little Villages'*:

Song of the Little Villages

The pleasant little villages that grace the Irish glynns
Down amongst the wheat fields- up amid the whins,
The little white walled villages crowding close together,
Clinging to the Old Sod in spite of wind and weather;

Ballytarsney, Ballymore, Ballyboden, Boyle,
Ballingarry, Ballymagory by the banks of Foyle,

[181] 'The Moondharrig Hurlers', *The Gael,* January 1900, (p.5).
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.

Ballylaneen, Ballyporeen, Bansha, Ballysadare,

Ballybrack Ballinalack, Barna, Ballyclare.

The cosy little villages that shelter from the mist,

Where the great West Walls by ocean spray are kissed.

The happy little villages that cuddle in the sun,

When blackberries ripen and the harvest work is done.[184]

Corrymeen, Croaghakeela, Clogher, Cahirciveen,

Cappaharoe, Carriagaloe, Cashel and Coosheen,

Castlefin and Carrigtohill, Crumlin, Clara, Clane,

Carrigaholt, Carrigaline, Cloughjordan and Coolraine.

The dreamy little villages where by the fire at night,

Old Shanachies with ghostly tale the boldest hearts affright;

The crooning of the wind blast is the wailing banshees cry,

And when the silver hazels stir they say the fairies sigh.

Kilfenora, Kilfinnane, Kinnity, Killylea,

Kilmoganny, Kiltamagh, Kilronan and Kilrea,

Killashandra, Kilmacow, Killiney and Killashee,

Killenaule, Killmyshall, Killorgan, and Killeagh.

[184] 'Song of the Little Villages', *The Gael*, October 1900, (p.272).

Leave the little villages o'er the black seas go,

Learn the stranger's welcome, learn the exile's woe,

Leave the little villages but think not to forget,

Afar they'll rise before your eyes to rack your bosoms yet.

Moneymore, Moneygall, Monivea and Moyne,

Mullinahone, Mullinvatt , Mullagh and Mooncoin,

Shanagolden, Shanballymore, Stranorlar and Slane,

Toberaheena, Toomyvara, Tempo and Strabane.

On the Southern Llanos – North where strange light gleams,

Many a yearning exile sees them in his dreams;

Dying voices murmur (past all pain and care)

"lo! The little villages, God has heard our prayer."

Lisdoonvarna, Lissadill, Lisdargan, Lisnakea,

Portglenone, Portarlington, Portumna, Portmagee,

Clonegam and Clonegowan, Cloondara and Clonac,

God bless the little villages and guard them night and day.

In this poem we see very clearly many of the same themes as in 'Disillusioned' although the tone is somewhat less foreboding with its evocations of 'cosy' and 'happy' villages designed to bring back pleasant memories. The idyllic rural life is once again evoked,

and a picture painted which would sit in harmony with that of MacManus and Hopper - the poem is full of escapism and distinctly unchallenging for the reader. Dollard has inserted the names of seventy-five real Irish villages and one can imagine the reader looking closely to find out if their own or their friend's village had been honoured and made an appearance. This type of poem would have had a direct appeal to the provincial nature of Irish immigrants in the United States who often socialised and lived closely within their own county circles. With folkloric references to 'wailing banshees', 'fairies' and stereotypical images of story tellers by the fire Dollard has crammed in as many nostalgic references as possible here. The one sombre note in the poem does interestingly focus on exile and dark seas, Dollard was a strong advocate against immigration and his views are made plain here:

Leave the little villages o'er the black seas go,
Learn the stranger's welcome, learn the exile's woe,
Leave the little villages but think not to forget,
Afar they'll rise before your eyes to rack your bosoms yet.

In a similar way to MacManus this poem is not a call to action but echoing his clerical profession Dollard invokes the power of God and the Catholic church to bless these little villages at the end of the poem.

Whilst Seumas MacManus stood on the edges of the literary circle surrounding The Gaelic League, Dollard too held strong Nationalist views and was described as being 'very widely known as a clever and talented poet of strong nationalist tendencies…he inherits all that hatred of English misrule, which was centuries ago, implanted in the whole Irish

race'.[185] Indeed, in 1902 we see him being consoled by Eugene O'Growney who had heard Dollard lamenting the Norman origins of his name. O'Growney tells him that in fact the Dollards were a well-established family, having been 'long settled in Ireland'. O'Growney also tells him that, 'we are very badly in need of a ballad (or two or three of them) to work up our young people at home to study the old tongue. When the spirit moves you again do not forget us…modern and practical we want.'

Nora Hopper

The third contributor to *The Gael* which I will examine is Nora Hopper. Nora Hopper was unusual amongst the contributors to *The Gael* as she lacked a strong connection to Ireland, born in Exeter in 1871 Hopper was half Irish through her father, Captain Harman Baillie Hopper, who had died when Nora was eight months old, her mother was Welsh. However, despite her lack of concrete knowledge of the country she wrote about, she is rather more well-known than MacManus or Dollard, in main part due to her connections to the literary circle of the Gaelic Revival and her interactions with W.B. Yeats – indeed Hopper was heavily influenced by both Yeats and Katharine Tynan.

Interestingly, in the context of this study is the fact that Hopper, like many of the second-generation American Irish who read her work had never been to Ireland when she wrote much of her work, only travelling to Dublin to meet Irish writers in 1905, a year before her death in 1906 at the age of thirty-five. Hopper published her only collected book of poems, *'Ballads in Prose'* in 1894, although her overall published body of work was much

[185] 'Sliav-na-mon,' *The Gael,* January 1900, (p.25).

larger and included many poems and short stories which were published in newspapers and journals such as *The Gael.*[186]

Despite this somewhat unusual background she was welcomed as one of their own in the pages of *The Gael*, who in 1904 described her as 'endowed with the temperament of the race, which highly imaginative in nature, is repelled by the hard practical common-places and glaring sensualities of modern literature, and childlike loves to tread the paths of Tir-an-n'Og and gather the fairy blossoms sown in ancient days'.[187] In 1904, *The Gael* ran a full page article on Hopper, describing her in its title as 'Lyrist, Folk-lorist and Magazine Writer'.[188] She was commended for her style which drew on Irish folklore, referred to as, 'the soul of the Irish intellect', her many poems had a distinctly Celtic feel and tapped into both the folkloric, nostalgic and mystical elements of both MacManus and Dollard. One such example, *'A Lift on the Road'* printed in April 1900 was a supernatural story about fairies, and *'April in Ireland'*, contains the following verses full of nostalgia:[189]

'She hath woven a garland all of the sighing sedge,
And all her flowers are snowdrops grown on the winters edge
The golden looms of Tir an n'Og wove all the winter through,
Her gown of mist and raindrop shot with a cloudy blue'
Sunlight she holds in one hand, and rain she scatters after.

[186] Other pieces published in *The Gael* but not reproduced here include *Rose o' the world* (June 1901) *A Christmas Carol* (Dec 1901), *My Red Colleen* (Sept 1902), *A Song of the Sidhe* (Sept 1902)
A Connacht Lament (Feb 1903) *World's Delight* (March 1903), *Banshee's Bridal* (April 1903), *The Little Red Dog* (Aug 1903).
[187] 'Nora Hopper Chesson' *The Gael,* March 1904, (p.117).
[188] Ibid.
[189] 'A lift on the Road' *The Gael,* April 1900 (p.113) and 'April in Ireland' *The Gael,* August 1899, (p. 137).

And through the rainy twilight we hear her fitful laughter.

She shakes down on her flowers and snows less white than they

Then quickens with her kisses the folded 'knots o' May'

As with the work of MacManus and Dollard Hopper's work found its way to Australia, for example the following poem *'Donegal!'* was published in *The Gael* in December 1903, had been published in Australia in 1899. Laura Izarra has also found *'Donegal!'* published in Fianna, the Nationalist Review for the first time in Argentina in 1910 - she tells us that 'evocations of homeland with nostalgia marks the rhythm'.[190]

Donegal!

Faint is the fairy music and pale the fairy rings,

And lonely grow the quickens around the holy springs

The strangers' forts no longer hear the Danish battle call

My sorrow and my sorrow, Donegal!

You will hear them if you listen all the twilight through

The ragweed flowers talking to the feather few

When the foggy dews upon them with their love gifts fall.

My sorrow and my sorrow, Donegal!

[190] Laura Izarra, Locations and Identities in Irish Diasporic Narratives, *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies,* 10 (2004), 341-352 (p.344).

The World cries out for Una of the shadowy air,

Sad music wails for Oisin; and the coloured air

Weeps heavy tears for Niam and her spell-songs all,

My sorrow and my sorrow, Donegal!

There is weeping water in the holy well of Doone,

For the gay and gentle people by the harvest moon,

Unseen the sleep seed's dropping from the king fern tall -

My sorrow and my sorrow, Donegal!

Will the strangers come again with their great swords made bare

And the horned helmets shining on their yellow hair?

Will Manan of the Waters take their ships as steeds to stall?

My sorrow and my sorrow, Donegal!

If the strangers come no more in the eye of the sun

Their ghosts shall still hold revel in the forts they won

They shall match themselves at hurling, and of gold shall be their ball,

And their glory still be on thee, Donegal!

'Donegal!' is different in tone and feel from the other two examined here, as it is looking back far into the historical and mythical past rather than being based on a real-life experience. In contrast to *'Disillusioned'* or *'Songs of the Little Villages'* it is not about being welcomed home or remembering real places. This was in all probability due to Hopper's

rather remote experience of Ireland. In fact, Hopper's popularity was in some respects due to her invocation of Irish myth and legend in her work which was highly popular due to the Gaelic revival. There are a number of themes blended together here such as fairies and holy wells, the legends of Una and Oisin and an evocation of Ireland's Viking past also. Donegal is visualised as magical place where all three of these come together, it is fantastical and evocative and would surely have gone down very well with all those missing home in Donegal. Interestingly here for Hopper, a second-generation immigrant herself there is no pretence of returning to the 'old sod' just an appreciation and visualisation of Ireland as a kind of magical invented kingdom. Therefore, this work can give us some insight into the appeal of such poems for the second generation and beyond and how the imaginary vision of home was evolving for those who felt Irish but would in all likelihood never visit the country.

Martin Williams has observed that whilst authors such as Seumas MacManus and Nora Hopper 'are unknown today except in occasional reference by literary critics…these writers produced a great deal of verse on national topics and were close to the general public and its preoccupations'.[191] Like many other contributors to The Gaelic Revival, they drew on and were influenced by the work of Standish O'Grady who in 1878 and 1880 published volumes of his *'History of Ireland'*. These works popularised and translated Irish legends into English for the first time and were to deeply influence many turn of the century Irish writers. It is certainly the case that the 'slightly archaic language and a shadowy, mystical quality in the style, seeming to throw a dim golden haze over everything it describes' can be clearly recognised in the works touched on here.[192] Their invocations of

[191] Martin Williams, Ancient Mythology and Revolutionary ideology in Ireland 1878-1916 *The Historical Journal* 26 (1983), 307-328, (p.307).
[192] Ibid. p.315

Ireland as a magical homeland can also be seen in the popular songs of the time or earlier beginning with Moore's melodies, and I agree with Williams who argues that the Irish community's tireless devotion to their country ultimately transferred the positive qualities Americans associated with Ireland onto themselves. In a powerful and relevant argument, he he tells us that in general Americans saw Ireland as a 'rural Eden', Irish Americans capitalised this to elevate their status but ultimately lost out when they were left with a vision of Ireland which was a mere ethnic symbol lacking in substance.[193]

The regular publication of the works of MacManus, Dollard and Hopper and the frequent author profiles or news references to them are evidence of their popularity. Indeed, the scenes, feelings and tropes evoked consistently by authors such as MacManus, Dollard and Hopper were to stand the test of time, even if they themselves were to fade from view. The images they created provided an easily accessible set of stereotypes with an emotional pull that would last longer and provide a stronger backbone of identity than the Gaelic language.

[193] Williams, *'Twas only an Irishman's Dream'* p. 242.

Chapter Three - Transnational Connections

It is clear from an initial reading of *The Gael* that this was a publication and a community with wider international links. This section will explore what we can learn from the pages of *The Gael* about the nature of these transnational connections to other parts of the Irish diaspora and vice versa. I will begin by looking at some of the obvious markers which tell us how international *The Gael* was as a publication; it should be noted that whilst its circulation was low its reach was geographically very wide. I will then examine in more detail how we can trace the work of Seumas MacManus, Nora Hopper and Rev. James B. Dollard from the pages of *The Gael* to the streets of London and to the Australian Bush and back again.

Turning first to what we can see from the content of *The Gael* there is significant evidence of a web of connections stretching across the diaspora. A monthly column within *The Gael* listed meetings not only of The Gaelic League and other Irish associations across America but also in London. It also carried many reports of newsworthy events which had happened abroad in wider Irish diasporic society, for example in 1900 we hear of a reception given for the Irish Literary Society by Lady Russell.[194]

There is also clear evidence of communication not only with other publications but also with agents who sold *The Gael*, and in September 1899 we see published a long list of agents selling *The Gael* which included not only over 200 agents in Ireland but also agents as far afield as South Africa, Cuba and Porto Rico.[195] Indeed in 1900, M.C. Seton an Irishman wrote an article for *The Gael* about his experiences in South Africa which included detailed descriptions of the immigration picture there and notable community figures with those

[194] 'Lady Russell's Reception' *The Gael,* January 1900, p.23
[195] 'List of Agents in Ireland who sell The Gael,' *The Gael,* September 1899, p.174

who worked for the British Empire being given equal weight as those who were Fenians on the run.[196]

As well as providing updates from Ireland it is clear when looking through the pages of *The Gael* that it also acted as an informal gathering place and source of information for many Irish societies. Its pages are full of the latest news and meetings from not only The Gaelic League but also, The Ancient Order of Hibernians, The Young Ireland Society, The Philo-Celtic Society and many other Irish historical and literary societies that were springing up across the states and indeed the world. *The Gael* reported on the establishment of new branches and special events as well as providing opportunities for Irish Americans to enter competitions from as far afield as the Irish Literary Society in London. It also carried reports on each of the annual conventions of the Gaelic League of America and updates on the sometime controversial Pan-Gaelic League organised by Lord Castletown.

Despite having relatively few agents overseas compared to in the United States it is clear that the publication could have a far ranging reach, for example, in July 1900 we hear of a new Gaelic League button designed by Father O'Growney which has been requested by readers in both South Africa and Australia.[197] *The Gael* also regarded itself as having considerable agency to influence what was published in Irish newspapers with regard to the revival of the Irish language - in 1900 drawing attention to the fact that '…*The Gael* has been published for the purpose of supplying interesting matter relating to Ireland which the Irish papers fail to publish'.[198]

[196] 'Irishmen in South Africa' *The Gael,* January 1900, p.19.
[197] 'The Gaelic League Emblem' *The Gael,* July 1900, p.223.
[198] *The Gael*, October 1900, p.280.

We can also tell however that obtaining news to fill its pages was somewhat easier from the Northern hemisphere than from Southern hemisphere - reports of news from Australia tended to come via Britain or Ireland. One example of this is in December 1901 when we learn, via the *Irish Standard* that, 'About twenty-five talented Irishmen occupy seats in the first parliament of the united colonies of Australia.[199] Furthermore in 1902 we hear two members of the 'new Ministry just formed in western Australia are Irishmen' a certain Timothy Quinlan and Mr F. Moorhead.[200]

The Irish American community were keen to capitalise on the success they saw in other parts of the diaspora too, and in February 1903 the establishment of The New York Irish literary society was announced.[201] Its aim was to be 'a centre of social and literary discourse for persons of Irish nationality and descent' with a library and lecture room planned they hoped to work for 'promoting the study of the Irish language, Irish history, Irish literature, music and art and the keeping alive of Irish nationality'.[202] We can see by its aims and even its name that the New York society was heavily influenced by the successful and prolific Irish Literary Society which had been founded in London in 1892 by William Butler Yeats, Rolleston and Charles Gavan Duffy as well as its namesake in Dublin. We are told that the society 'will be able to act more or less in co-operation with the Irish Literary Society of Dublin and with the Irish Literary Society of London, both of which have been splendid successes since their formation.'[203] This demonstrates that there was not only communication and a spreading of ideas but there was also the hope of working together.

[199] 'Irishmen in Australia' *The Gael*, December 1901, p.396.
[200] 'Irishmen in Western Australia' *The Gael,* January 1902, p.31.
[201] *The Gael,* February 1903, p.62.
[202] Ibid.
[203] *The Gael,* February 1903, p.62.

There are other markers too which tell us about the transnational nature of *The Gael* for example, one can often see advertisements recommending clothes and bookshops to Americans visiting Ireland. At the 'The Irish Poplin Scarf House' one could call and see Irish made goods such as shirts, handkerchiefs, and scarves. [204] Interestingly, in 1903 we learn what *The Gael* knew about its own subscription numbers - it estimated that these stood at between 26,000 and 28,000, with 5,000 going to Great Britain and Ireland and 1,800 to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Cuba and The Philippines. As the editor of *The Gael* put it, they were sent to 'every country where members of our scattered race are found. There is absolutely no magazine more widely circulated.'[205] It is also worth noting here that although these circulation numbers were low and would in fact end up contributing to the *The Gaels's* demise in 1904 they do not tell us the whole story as it is likely that each copy was circulated several times within the community.

Ironically and somewhat confusingly, despite being edited by an Irish American born in the United States and having a large readership of Irish Americans there was on occasion a decided negativity to the figure of the 'Yank' within the pages of *The Gael*. We can see this strikingly in an article by Denis A. McCarthy in 1903 where he very forcefully picks apart those who return to Ireland and are 'active disseminators of the emigration idea and as such deserve to be decidedly frowned upon.' [206]

[204] 'Advertisements' *The Gael,* June 1902, p.176.
[205] 'Twenty-Five Volumes given for a few ideas' The Gael, March 1903, p.92.
[206] The 'Twang' of the 'returned Yank' *The Gael,* May 1903, p.137.

Australia

Turning now to the transnational connections between Irish America and Irish Australia, we have clear evidence that *The Gael* was making its way to Australia. In 1903 for instance, along with a report of the meeting of the Gaelic League of Western Australia, we can read a letter from an Australian reader, who tells us that, 'Your journal is very much appreciated amongst Irish readers here…with greetings from the Gaels across the great southern ocean'.[207] In this section I aim to trace wider links between the works of Seumas MacManus, the Rev. James B. Dollard and Nora Hopper in Australia. These authors were based respectively in Ireland and the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, none of them had ever visited Australia nor never would. However, we can find their work being reprinted, read and talked about there, it had struck a chord with the Australian Irish.

Before tracing these links it is important to understand a little about the make-up of the Irish diaspora in Australia, we know that in 1891 there were 229,156 Irish born in Australia.[208] Moreover, during the years 1838 to 1864, 79% of immigrants were government assisted migrants, 'chain migration' was also strong due to the use of nomination schemes.[209] Indeed, by 1901 Catholic Irish immigrants and their Australian born offspring made up around 23% of the total non-indigenous population'.[210] Those who left for Australia had often been in other parts of the diaspora first, notably Britain or The US which served as jumping off points for further moves. Interestingly, Malcolm Campbell's comparative study of Irish immigrants in the United States and Australia has demonstrated

[207] 'Greetings from Australia' *The Gael,* 1903, p.345.
[208] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, p.102.
[209] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, p.92.
[210] Dianne Hall and Elizabeth Malcolm, *A New History of the Irish in Australia,* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2018) https://0-ebookcentral-proquest-com.catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk/lib/ulondon/reader.action?docID=5652096&ppg=10

that Irish immigrants in the Pacific, Australia and Western American had more in common and had a more similar experience than those in the Eastern and Western parts of the US. He tells us that 'California and Eastern Australia together with New Zealand were for much of the later nineteenth century part of a pacific Irish emigrant world' [211]

In general, however, the immigrants who left Ireland to go to Australia were representative of diasporic immigrants in general. It was immediately on arrival that their experience would diverge from that of those in the industrial heart of England or the bustling cities of the United States. In contrast to their fellow immigrants, they were not faced with an unfamiliar urban setting, instead they found a more recognisable rural landscape on arrival which they fully embraced and used to their advantage. As Akenson puts it they had, 'eyes that were used to watching crops and livestock, hands accustomed to hard agricultural work and a sense of comfort and security living in a rural environment'.[212]

The relative strength of the Irish in numbers was also important, as Akenson again points out, the Irish in Australia were not ghettoed, either physically or occupationally – they were the second largest immigrant group after the English and were not willing to be pushed around.[213] By 1901 Angela McCarthy tells us they constituted '21.5% of the foreign-born population and 4.9% of the total population'.[214] Alongside their numerical strength, the Irish arrived at a fortuitous time when much land was still available and where they could put their rural skills to good use. Indeed, this importance was also recognised by the Irish politicians themselves for example, Malcolm Campbell has looked in detail at John

[211] Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815–1922* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008) p. 86.
[212] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora,* p.110.
[213] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, p. 113.
[214] Angela McCarthy, 'The Irish in Australia and New Zealand' in *The Cambridge Social History of Modern Ireland* ed. by Eugenio F. Biagini and Mary, E. Daly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) pp. 478-496, p. 479.

Redmond's long tour of Australia prior to becoming Prime Minister. In an important example of transnational exchange, he tells us that Redmond, 'drew considerable support from the working-class Irish in particular. Ireland's demands were articulated in ways that were readily understandable in the colonial context'.[215] Likewise, Redmond learnt from the Australian Irish and when he returned to Westminster two years later, he was 'a man possessed of new experiences and wider visions.'[216]

I have examined all digitally available Australia newspapers in my period of study, searching for the work of Seumas MacManus, the Rev. James B Dollard and Nora Hopper and seeking to understand whether their popularity was solely within the Irish American community or whether it travelled throughout the diaspora. Newspapers of particular interest were those with a focus on the Catholic community or cities with dense Irish populations, recommended in the work of Kevin Molloy who has carried out several studies of the Australian book trade in this period. I began by focussing on *The Age* (Melbourne 1854 - present), *The Advocate*, (Melbourne 1868 - 1919) and *The Freeman's Journal* (Sydney 1850 - 1932) however, I quickly extended this search to all Australian newspapers of the period.

Kevin Molloy has studied many of the same themes of identity, tradition and memory as are examined here through a survey of Australia's Irish Catholic press during the period 1900 to 1960.[217] Interestingly, his findings echo the evidence I have found in *The Gael*: that, there was, 'a gradual consolidation of an overarching fossilised image of an Ireland past for Australia's Catholic community. This image was one that allowed nostalgia,

[215] Malcolm Campbell, 'John Redmond and the Irish National League in Australia and New Zealand 1883', *The Historical Association*, (2001) 348-362 (p.351).
[216] Ibid. (p.362).
[217] Molloy, Tradition, Memory and the culture of Irish Australian identity 1900-1960, *The Australasian Journal of Irish Studies,* 16 (2016) 47-64

inherited memory and the place of Ireland as a source and referent for both religious and cultural tradition to have free play'.[218] As with Irish America, this identity definition was an important part of the immigrants finding and consolidating their place in their new home. We can also see this through the words of Irish Australian's themselves - David Fitzpatrick's extensive study of immigrants letters in the years 1841-1915 has shown us that there was 'Nostalgia for the past and loneliness in the present , encouraged attempts to locate and characterise the lost home.'[219] Fitzpatrick found that nostalgia and homesickness was a major theme in their letters, but interestingly he saw no evidence to support Miller's view of emigrants seeing themselves as exiles, in fact, 'the overall impression is of largely successful settlement'[220]

Turning now to each of the individual authors studied we find that each can be found in the Australia press of the time. Beginning with Seumas MacManus we see that he appears a total of forty-nine times during this five-year period, in the main we see his short stories being printed, however he does also come in for criticism at points. For example, in 1900 we see an article berating him for using humour against the Catholic church, this was reprinted in *The Advocate* from *The Catholic Union and Times* (A paper based in Buffalo, United States). We are told that 'The sacredness of confession needs no defence from Seumas MacManus, but it is too holy an institution to be used by a hireling to keep him in meal and praties. And as Catholics we cannot but deplore that he is allowed to use a high-class American magazine to exploit his un-Irish humour and evident contempt for the faith

[218] Molloy, Tradition, *Memory and the culture of Irish Australian identity,* p.48.
[219] David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of consolation: personal accounts of Irish migration to Australia*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1994) p.609.
[220] McCarthy, '*The Irish in Australia and New Zealand'* p. 484.

cherished by the great bulk of his countrymen'.[221] It is evident here that the Irish were highly sensitive about attacks on their religion, particularly from one of their own.

There are three main areas in which we find MacManus in the Australian press, firstly as in *The Gael* we see his poems and short stories which have their usual distinctive Irish feel, for example, *'Patrick's Proxy'* a humorous tale of love and money recounted in heavily accented dialogue.[222] It is also worth mentioning that many of these short stories and poems are reprints from American Papers such as *The Boston Globe* which must have provided a useful source of Irish content for Australian newspaper editors.[223]

Among his published poems we see '*The Hedge Schoolmaster'* which would have drawn on his own experiences as a teacher, this is reprinted again from *Donohoe's* and *Harpers* Magazines in the States.[224] Secondly, we see mention of MacManus in book review columns designed to keep readers updated with his latest releases, for example, In *The World's News* of 1903 we see The Sydney Book Club telling us that 'it is always a pleasure to welcome a new Irish writer, especially when that writer comes with so high credentials as to style as does Seumas MacManus. We also hear from them that MacManus has said that his work does not attempt to '"sound the depths nor trace the currents of Irish life, nor show its billows and surges." He rather invites to "come a summer day idler to this little tale. If here you see the ripples on the sunny waters, and hear the wavelets falling on the shingly shore of our out-of-the-world lives; and, that leaving, you carry away with you in your heart a little music of minor chords, I shall have achieved the utmost I have attempted.'[225] This shows us

[221] 'An Irish-man's Un-Irish humour', *Advocate,* 17th March 1900, p. 11.
[222] 'Patrick's Proxy' The Grafton Argus and Clarence River General Advertiser, 7th May 1900, p.4.
[223] 'The Humourist' *Southern Cross,* 18 May 1900, p.12.
[224] 'The Hedge Schoolmaster' *Freeman's Journal,* 22nd June 1901 p.6 and 'Various Verses', *The Clipper,* 10th October 1903, p.1.
[225] 'Books and Bookmen', *The World's News*, 16th May 1903, p.31.

that by his own admission MacManus was aiming to evoke the best of Irish life and transport its readers back home. Thirdly, and in different departure for MacManus we see him acting as a correspondent when in November 1904 he writes an almost full-page article for *The Freeman's Journal* entitled *'From An Irish Hilltop'* which updates readers on a number of events in the House of Commons, strange events in Belfast and literary publications.[226]

Turning now to The Rev. James B. Dollard we see that he makes considerably fewer appearances in Australian papers during this period, appearing on fewer than twenty occasions. [227] This may be due to the fact that his publications in North America appeared much more frequently in *The Gael* than the mainstream press making reprints difficult, he was also a practising Priest during this time and so not as prolific a contributor as MacManus. Where he does appear we see strikingly Irish themes such as, *'The Land of The Gael', 'The Pikemen*, and *A Ballad of '98'.* [228] Interestingly, we see a much stronger Nationalist tone in the poems and contributions from Dollard in the Australian press, perhaps this is due to the fact that *The Gael* tried very hard to be politically neutral. One such example is his poem *The Cry of the Exiles*, published in 1899 where we see Dollard appealing to both those in Australia and America with the lines:

'Hear ye the cry of the exiled dead, —
their mandate is "Unite!"
Hear ye the cry of the living, the

[226] 'From An Irish Hilltop, *The Freeman's Journal*, 26th November 1904, p.9.
[227] 'From An Irish Hilltop' *The Freeman's Journal*
[228] 'The Land of The Gael', *The Catholic Press*, 19th October 1901, p.12. and 'The Pikemen, A Ballad of '98', *The Catholic Press,* 31st December 1902, p.4.

exiles' cry that rings

From where Missouri wanders, and far

La Plata springs,

From drear Australian Bushland, where never a warbler sings!'

This poem is a call to action and tells us that 'He is a traitor to Ireland who now shrinks back from the fight,' Dollard certainly appears as a more vigorous character in the Australian press and at one point writes an article entitled, '*Irish People don't Emigrate'* for *The Freeman's Journal*.[229] In this article he begins with the question, 'In the name of God why cannot the Irish people stay at home and make endeavour to better the condition of themselves and their country?' He urges those who do not have to leave but only want 'to see life' to devote themselves to staying In Ireland. Four years later he writes a half page article titled *'Those Canadian Fairy Tales, A warning to Australians'* in *The Catholic Press* with a 'startling warning to intending immigrants', he cautions them in great detail about the cold weather and asks them to consider why:

> 'If the North-West farms of 150 acres are such bargains why do not the farmers' sons of Quebec and Ontario rush them instead of the English and Irish emigrants? Because they know that these farms are, for the most part in inaccessible places hundreds of miles from a large town, scores of miles from a railway, and they know what an amount of money would be required to buy stock and farm implements,

[229] "Irish People don't Emigrate', *The Freeman's Journal* 7th July 1900, p.4.

and build, houses and barns. They do not care to face a Canadian winter without a snug well-heated house'. [230]

Although this article above talks about Irish and English immigrants it is pointedly directed to Australians in the note from the editor, and it demonstrates that not only were people in different parts of the diaspora helping each other to move but they were also warning each other of difficulties and hardship.

Turning finally to Nora Hopper we find that she appears regularly in publications throughout Australia, in fact on 219 occasions between 1899 and 1904 one of her stories or poems is printed or we find a short article mentioning her or her latest poem or story. Importantly and interestingly, she is always described as Irish, for example as, a 'sweet Irish singer' or as 'gifted Irish poetess'.[231] Whilst many the Hopper poems which we find printed in Australia are not the same as those we see in *The Gael* there are a number of poems with an Irish theme such as, *The Black Boreen, The Passing of the Shee* and *Irish Ivy*, which show that these are being read in Australia. Particularly popular were *'Donegal!', 'My Red Colleen', 'Rose o'the world'* and *'Christmas Carol'* which have made the journey from Hopper's pen in London to the Irish in New York and Australia.[232]

Although it is of course, difficult to ascertain the popularity Hopper's work, the fact that it is frequently printed provides some indication that it was appreciated. We also on

[230] 'Those Canadian Fairy Tales. A Warning to Australians.' *The Catholic Press*, 16th July 1903, p.29.
[231] 'A Sweet Irish Singer' *The Daily Telegraph*, 9th June 1900, p.6 and 'Literary Notes', *Southern Cross*, 15th March 1901, p.18.
[232] 'Donegal' *The Catholic Press*, 2nd June 1900, p.9, 'My Red Colleen'*, Advocate,* October 11th, 1902, p.18 and 'My Little Red Colleen' *The Catholic Press*, 5th February 1903, p.29, 'Rose o'the world', *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser,* 13th July 1901, p.5, 'Christmas Carol', *The Queenslander,* 15th December 1900 p.25.

occasion find articles pertaining to Hopper which can provide an additional insight into how she was viewed, for example in an article titled ‘In the heart of "ould ireland"’.[233]

> ‘Miss Nora Hopper…is declared, by her Irish admirers to be one of the most Irish of the daughters of Erin though she has both Irish and Welsh blood in her veins, she has lived nearly all her life in Kensington, and has never been in Ireland at all — a remarkable instance of hereditary Interest which depends not at all on its surroundings. Moreover, Miss Hopper, steeped, as she is, in Irish folklore, takes not the slightest interest in Home Rule, nor, indeed, in any so-called "topics of the day." The fairies 'woo her to dream land from the Icelandic sagas, which for three solid years held her enthralled. Her latest book of poems Is now nearly ready for publication and will be almost certain to achieve yet another success. A most Interesting and original personality.’[234]

In summary then, an examination of the printed work of these three poets in Australia we find a very similar picture to the United States. There is evidence of a clear and shared diaspora culture and one that draws on elements of culture at home but is also different to it. For example, there is an emphasis on certain nostalgic and idealised visions of the homeland, themes of exile and references to ancient myths and legends time and time again. Ireland is being constructed as a traditional, welcoming and magical ‘Emerald Isle’; a vision that would endure be exported across the world.

[233] ‘In the heart of ould Ireland’, *The Daily Telegraph,* 11th February 1899, p.6.
[234] Ibid.

Conclusion

This study has had as its aim the examination of the complex issues of culture, ethnic identity, and belonging in the multigenerational Irish American community at the turn of the twentieth century. Due to the circumstances of COVID-19 I have not been able to examine my sources in person, however, I hope that my conclusions, will go some way to understanding how those in this community choose to see themselves, what reminded them of home and how they defined was to be 'Irish'.

It is clear, and I agree with the general historical consensus that this was a formative period in the emergence of an Irish American identity. Arriving in their new homes, with the Great Famine close in living experience and memory, the Irish were a deeply rural people armed 'with a local identity based on kinship networks in rural villages'.[235] On arrival, they were faced with a completely new living environment and had to carve out their place as a respected ethnic group, at a time of significant immigration and rising Nativism. Relatively quickly, their provincialism was thrown off in favour of being simply 'Irish' and everything that it meant, indeed, the Irish were here to stay and return rates were among the lowest of any immigrant group. As Conzens et al tell us in their study on the ethnicity 'Once ethnicity had been established as a category in American social thought, each contingent of newcomers had to negotiate its particular place within that social order.' [236] They view ethnicity not as 'a "collective fiction," but rather a process of construction or invention which incorporates, adapts, amplifies pre-existing, communal solidarities, cultural attributes, and historical memories.' In contrast to earlier assimilation theories, the ethnic

[235] Barrett, *The Irish Way* p. 6.
[236] Conzens et al, *The Invention of Ethnicity*, (p.6).

groups themselves were active in this creation and constantly recreated how they saw themselves.[237] I would argue that while there was collective invention there was also a level of collective fiction whereby an idealised Ireland became a touchstone for comfort as well as identity.

I have been able to find evidence of the striking centrality of nostalgia and an idealised, romantic view of Ireland, it's landscapes, people and culture. Like all good stories these were based on strong elements of the truth but, with distance and time, negative memories of home had evaporated, and what was left was a distilled and concentrated idyllic vision of home. Any negativity we find in these visions is concentrated around the pain of exile or the oppression of British rule. Essentially, I would argue these visions acted as a salve to the first generation who dealt first-hand with feelings of loss, longing and homesickness. For the second generation and beyond, these unthreatening images provided an easily accessible shorthand, a positive vision of what it was to be 'Irish' and an understanding of where one had come from.

As the second and third generations began to define where they had come from, they chose a vision which was easy to visualise, connect with and be comforted by. A positive vision of a utopian homeland from which they had been exiled and which would welcome them home with open arms. Indeed, I agree with Williams and his argument that these visions were expressions of a symbolic ethnicity, serving their purpose in providing an identity but ultimately lacking in complexity and substance. In his words 'The Emerald Isle provided an uncomplicated stable 'homeland' for those who had not been born in Ireland

[237] Conzens et al, The Invention of Ethnicity, (p.4-5).

and had little inclination to visit it, yet needed something more than the vast, grimy, industrial cities to call "home"'.

It is my view is that this popular culture was much more enduring and accessible to all, than the endeavours of The Gaelic League and *The Gael* to promote the Irish language. It had after all been paradoxically the English language which had opened up opportunities to the Irish in America and which provided them with an advantage, however small. English was practical and spoken all around them – Gaelic in contrast was on the wane and difficult for second and third generations who had no knowledge of it, to learn. It is clear that *The Gael* struggled and eventually it folded in 1904, its efforts to educate fellow Irishmen and women in the Irish language and the nature of modern Ireland had not wholly succeeded. It would be the lower brow, more accessible popular stories or retellings of ancient myths (in stark contrast to *The Gael's* practical and factual approach) that would endure. When constructing their own Irish American identity, the second and third generation had clearly made a choice about what to hold onto and what to let go of.

I aimed to take a transnational view in this study, and I have been pleased to find transnational links between the US and Australia. The popular literature being printed and read in Irish communities in the United States was in many cases same as those in America, remarkable in an age where post was slow, and the use of the telegraph was still relatively new. These links prove that throughout the diaspora, and over thousands of miles there was a real exchange of thought, ideas and a process of identity formation taking place centred around a shared vision of an imagined homeland. Through extending my study to Australia I have been able to show that alongside many other transnational connections between diaspora locations, this form of symbolic ethnicity was also evident, and indeed continues to endure in the present day.

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