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'SEAS MAY DIVIDE'

IRISH MIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND
AS PORTRAYED IN PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE,
1840-1937

VOL. 1

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**'Seas May Divide':
Irish Migration to New Zealand
as Portrayed in Personal Correspondence,
1840-1937**

In Two Volumes

Vol. 1

Angela Hannah McCarthy

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy

at Trinity College, Dublin

Department of Modern History

2000

1840-1937
as Portrayed in Personal Correspondence
Irish Migration to New Zealand
Genealogy Division



Thesis
5959.1

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy
at Trinity College, Dublin
Department of Modern History
2000

Summary

This thesis is entirely my own work and has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university. Permission to consult this thesis is withheld until 1 September 2002.

Angela McCarthy

Angela McCarthy

Summary

This thesis examines the profound influence of the family involvement in Irish migration to New Zealand as portrayed in the personal correspondence exchanged between the two countries during the period 1840 to 1937. It is divided into two volumes. Volume One contains two parts. Part One utilises a range of genealogical and local history sources to provide biographical profiles of the writers and recipients of the correspondence. Various motives and outcomes of migration are analysed and the nature of the relationship between migrants and non-migrants is assessed. Though no model of migration can fully capture the diversity of the migration process, a focus on the family's involvement was adopted as the most appropriate framework within which to assess the purposive activity of migrants and non-migrants in the process of relocation and adaptation.

The second part of Volume One utilises the letters to illuminate a number of historical debates surrounding the Irish diaspora, social patterns in New Zealand, and the migration process generally. These debates are analysed in chapters covering the importance of correspondence, the voyage out, kin and neighbourhood networks, comparisons between Ireland and New Zealand, and issues of identity, faith, and politics. The study provides no support in an Irish-New Zealand context for Miller's exile motif and Fairburn's atomisation thesis. Though the study contradicts Miller's claim that Catholics gave greater priority to family considerations than their Protestant counterparts, it does indicate that Catholics were more prone to discuss conflicts within their intimate networks.

Given the international dimension of migration, contrasts are made throughout with previous editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence. While the letters to and from the Irish in New Zealand share several similarities with correspondence emanating elsewhere, this thesis reveals that in many respects Irish-New Zealand correspondence was distinctive. Significant contrasts with Irish-Australian correspondence include criticism of kin and

neighbours in Ireland, penetrating impressions of Irish and colonial political matters, elaborate accounts of death, obsession with money and inheritance issues, extensive reports on marriages, engaging discussions of male-female relations, and substantial accounts of the negative aspects of alcohol. Among similarities is an absence of sectarian conflict, many reports of return to Ireland, the importance of home, few expressions of loneliness, and harmony among neighbours and kin at destination.

Volume Two contains complete transcripts of the 207 letters utilised in this study, and a thematic index.

Acknowledgements

In preparing this account of Irish migration to New Zealand, I have benefited from the advice, encouragement, and assistance of several people. I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Professor David Fitzpatrick, whose evocative edition of Irish-Australian correspondence inspired this study. Dr. Malcolm Campbell and Dr. Lyndon Fraser read drafts at various stages and made valuable suggestions.

Several institutions generously waived their fees and provided immense assistance that greatly facilitated this study. I am therefore happy to acknowledge the Central Registry Office, New Zealand, for allowing me access to their birth, death, and marriage records (especially Brian Clarke, Hilary Sharland, and John Rowland); the University of Auckland Library (Cathie Hutchinson); Auckland Catholic Diocese Archives (Fr. Bruce Bolland); the Irish Valuation Office; and Limerick Archives (Dr. Chris O'Mahony). I am also grateful for the assistance provided by Walter Guttery of the New Zealand Defence Force; Alex Ward, archivist of the Grand Lodge of Ireland; S J Cooper, Grand Lodge of New Zealand Freemasons; B J Logan, Jill McIvor, and Mervyn Patton of the Ulster New Zealand Trust; and Roderick Milne, PP Otaki. In addition, I would like to thank the staff at National Archives Ireland, National Library Ireland, Representative Church Body Library, Dublin, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, National Archives Auckland and Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, and the Auckland Public Library.

For assistance in various ways I would also like to thank John Bassett, Alasdair Galbraith, Richard Herbert, Ray Dobson, Dominic Ryan, Séan Brosnahan, Jim Herlihy, Mary Ryan, Annette McKee, Jasmine Rogers, Ian Cameron, John Hewstone, Amanda Pike, Vida Zoricich, Debra-Jean Williams and Nigel Williams, and Lance Gore.

My deepest appreciation is to the descendants of the writers and recipients at the heart of this study who generously shared their letters and knowledge. I therefore wish to

thank Ann Gilmore Adams, Ned Andrews, Beverley Baird, Tom Bell, Reg Brown and Rene Brown, Br. Philip Carroll, OFM, Ginny Dow, Orma Fairweather, Alice Gemming, Sandra Gilpin, Catherine Habes, Jennifer Hardiman, Richard Herbert, Garry Lambert, Patrick Lambert and Helen Lambert, Jenny Langford, Suzanne Lisson, John Martin, Donald Murphy, Tom Murphy, Molly O’Dwyer, Margaret O’Neil, Juann Ryan, and Gary Walsh.

Finally, this thesis could not have been completed without the encouragement of my kin in Ireland, and the many sacrifices and support of my parents and grandmother.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Part One: Profiles

Chapter 1: “I Have Your Blessing”: Profiles of Families in Conflict 30
 Chapter 2: “A Letter to the Fatherless”: Profiles of Widows and Orphans 71
 Chapter 3: “The Assembly Together”: Profiles of Ecclesiastical Hierarchies 116

Part Two: Images

Chapter 4: “Very Perfection of a Letter-writer”: The Importance of Correspondence 175
 Chapter 5: “See I am Old”: The Youngest Old 189
 Chapter 6: “Bonds of Fellowship”: Migration Imagery 198
 Chapter 7: “Swarming Like the Old Country”: Comparing Ireland and New Zealand 241
 Chapter 8: “Now I have Your Country”: Profiles, Religion, and Irish Identity 251

Conclusion 321

Bibliography 326

Contents

VOLUME ONE

Summary	iii
Acknowledgements	v
List of Illustrations	x
List of Tables	xiii
Abbreviations	xiv
Editorial Notes	xv
Introduction	1

Part One Profiles

Chapter 1 ‘I Have You to Blame’: Profiles of Families in Conflict	30
Chapter 2 ‘A Father to the Fatherless’: Profiles of Widows and Orphans	71
Chapter 3 ‘Live Agreeably Together’: Profiles of Harmonious Households	118

Part Two Themes

Chapter 4 ‘Very Perfection of a Letter Writer’: The Importance of Correspondence	165
Chapter 5 ‘Seas May Divide’: The Voyage Out	180
Chapter 6 ‘Bands of Fellowship’: Migration Networks	198
Chapter 7 ‘Something Like the Old Country’: Comparing Ireland and New Zealand	241
Chapter 8 ‘Never Denie Your Country’: Politics, Religion, and Irish Identity	281
Conclusion	322
Bibliography	326

VOLUME TWO

Letters of Families in Conflict	1
Lysaght (Reg Brown, Upper Kedron, Queensland, Australia)	2
O'Neill (Peter O'Sullivan, Belfast)	13
Quinn (PRONI)	17
Keane (Gary Walsh, Suedergellersen, Germany)	24
Lambert (Beverley Baird, Newtownabbey, and Garry Lambert, Auckland)	42
McSparron (PRONI)	50
Gilmer (Juann Ryan, Birkenhead, Auckland)	58
Letters of Orphans and Widows	62
McClelland (PRONI)	63
Dwyer (Molly O'Dwyer, Papatoetoe, Auckland)	69
Colgan (Richard Herbert, Wellington)	71
Sullivan (Catherine Habes, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA)	83
Kilpatrick (PRONI, and Alan Kilpatrick, Gisborne)	85
Macready (PRONI)	110
McClure (PRONI)	119
Strong (Ginny Dow, Nelson)	126
Rea (PRONI)	138
Carroll (Philip Carroll, Mangere Bridge, Auckland)	139

Letters of Harmonious Households	200
McIlrath (Jenny Langford, Karori, Wellington, and Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)	201
Flanagan (Donald Murphy, Termonfeckin, County Louth)	261
McCullough (Sandra Gilpin, Comber, Newtownards, County Down)	282
Gilmore (PRONI, Ulster New Zealand Trust, and Alice Gemming, Te Puke)	291
Bell (Tom Bell, Bangor, County Down)	309
Cardwell (PRONI)	311
Armstrong (PRONI)	315
McKelvey (PRONI)	327
Hughes (Jennifer Hardiman, Miramar)	334
Thematic Index	378

List of Illustrations

Fig 1	Irish origins of emigrant correspondents	23
Fig 2	New Zealand destinations of emigrant correspondents	26
Fig 3	‘I have three fine sons and one little Girl’: The family of Agnes and Michael Lambert, with Michael’s daughter from his first marriage, circa 1877	56
Fig 4	‘I hope all my brothers & their wives & families are quite well’: Hamilton, Henry, Samuel, Robert, and John Gilmer, circa 1870s	63
Fig 5	‘Never forget to let me hear from you’: Cornelius O’Dwyer Junior	76
Fig 6	‘I send you all my Blessing’: James O’Dwyer and his wife	76
Fig 7	‘I trust you & your husband got it all settled before this time’: Rose and Charles Gamble, circa 1889	80
Fig 8	‘Willie lets us live in this house rent free’: David and Margaret Kilpatrick at Newton Road, Auckland, circa 1900	91
Fig 9	‘I did not know myself’: Philip Carroll, circa 1918	110
Fig 10	‘Mother is absolutely wonderful’: Annie Gleeson	110
Fig 11	‘So prim and precise’: Nancy Gleeson	110
Fig 12	‘Me that Has not shaved this last two years’: Hamilton McIlrath, circa 1866	119
Fig 13	‘I know no difference on myself’: James McIlrath, mid-1860s	119
Fig 14	‘Grayer looking than I expected’: John McIlrath	119
Fig 15	‘Looking very fresh’: Jane McIlrath, circa 1875	119
Fig 16	‘We have not forgotten you’: Michael Flanagan	126
Fig 17	‘Very perfection of a letter writer’: Richard Flanagan	126
Fig 18	‘He got to cross if I laughed at any of the sailors’: John Gilmore with his family, circa 1890	136

Fig 19	‘Reconciled to my lot’: Alice Gilmore, circa 1925	136
Fig 20	‘Always on the improving hand’: Andrew Gilmore, circa 1878	136
Fig 21	‘We ought to go in together as partners’: Robert Gilmore Junior and his wife	136
Fig 22	‘As comfortable as circumstances will admit’: Robert Gilmore Senior, circa 1880	136
Fig 23	‘I hope you get them as regular from me’: James O’Neill’s letter, 1863	166
Fig 24	‘On sea again’: Hamilton McIlrath’s passage receipt for his voyage from Australia to New Zealand on the <i>Mary Ann Wilson</i> , December 1861	184
Fig 25	‘Eat nothing till on board the Donald McKay last night’: <i>The Donald McKay</i> at anchor	187
Fig 26	‘The then call upon the passengers who have not been to sea before and shave them and give them a bath’: Crossing the Line Ceremony	192
Fig 27	‘The desired haven’: Arriving at Lyttelton, circa 1878	196
Fig 28	‘You and I will have a honeymoon’: Philip and Nina Carroll’s wedding day, 16 December 1919	226
Fig 29	‘We are all well and Getting on pretty well’: Hamilton and Eliza McIlrath with two of their children	227
Fig 30	‘Greatly admired by everyone who sees them’: The Carroll Family, circa 1924	227
Fig 31	‘As fortunate in business as the old firm’: Morrow, Bassett and Co., Christchurch	255
Fig 32	‘I am so glad that your husband is getting on well’: Charles Gamble’s blacksmith business, East Taieri, Otago	255

Fig 33	‘You shall again breath the air of your <u>Native Home’s</u> ’: The McIlrath home, Balloo, County Down	270
Fig 34	‘A splendid likeness of us even to the house, horse and dog’: Emily, Edith, Jim, Eliza, Olive, and Frank McIlrath at Thorndale, Springfield, Canterbury, 1901	271
Fig 35	‘As well off as ever’: The Gamble home, East Taeiri, Otago	273
Fig 36	‘We hope it will do what you want’: Declaration confirming David Kilpatrick’s date of birth for pension requirements, 1899	290
Fig 37	‘Those misguided people the Fenians are not without sympathisers in your part of the world’: Mock funeral procession, Hokitika, 1868	292
Fig 38	‘You will see by the want of the finger the woman is a widow’: Photograph sent to the McIlraths in Balloo, County Down, 1866	300

List of Tables

Table 1	Comparisons Between Editions of Correspondence	16
Table 2	The Provincial Origins of New Zealand's Nineteenth-Century Irish Population	21
Table 3	The County Origins of New Zealand's Irish Population	22
Table 4	Top Ten County Origins of Irish Migrants to New Zealand and Australia	23
Table 5	Annual Valuation of Correspondents	24
Table 6	Items Exchanged Between Ireland and New Zealand	174
Table 7	Occurrence of Encouragement Versus Discouragement	205
Table 8	Occurrences of the Word 'Home' in Irish-New Zealand and Irish-Australian Correspondence	233
Table 9	Uses of the Word 'Home' in Irish-New Zealand Correspondence	235
Table 10	Number of Passages Citing Return Migration	236
Table 11	Denominations in Ireland and New Zealand in 1861	308

Abbreviations

ACDA	Auckland Catholic Diocese Archives
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
HCP	House of Commons, Papers
IVO	Irish Valuation Office, Dublin
NAA	National Archives, Auckland
NAC	National Archives, Christchurch
NAD	National Archives, Dunedin
NAI	National Archives, Ireland
NAW	National Archives, Wellington
NLI	National Library of Ireland, Dublin
PP	Parish Priest
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast
RCBL	Representative Church Body Library, Dublin

Editorial Notes

Each correspondent's letters are contained in Volume 2 of this thesis. Citations in the body of this thesis are indicated with a reference such as Ar 1a. This example refers to John Armstrong's first letter. The alphabetical reference is a direction to the paragraph in the letter where the reference occurs.

Spelling and grammar remain unaltered though sentence and paragraph breaks have been incorporated. Editorial excisions have been kept to a minimum but are as follows:

Clarifications:	thos are too mats [<i>those are two mates</i>]
Authentic oddities:	untill; in <i>in</i> .
Illegible words:	[<i>word illegible</i>]
Illegible words with suggestion:	[? <i>favour</i>]
Elements lost through mutilation:	marr[ied]
Words deleted or omitted:	[<i>erased: to</i>] [<i>omitted: to</i>]

Introduction

Within migration studies, conflict surrounds the causes and consequences of mobility. Studies utilising statistical data have made sweeping conclusions, leaving the motives and outcomes of the individuals involved in the process unilluminated. In particular, statistical approaches leave unexplored the critical influence of the family at origin and destination in shaping migration outcomes. Moreover, studies based on figures cannot investigate the nature of relationships among migrants and between migrants and non-migrants. Furthermore, statistical analysis is unable to explain reasons for non-migration and the extent of repeat and reverse migration. The personal letter, in conjunction with genealogical sources, offers insight into such issues. Private correspondence also reveals the diversity of the individual experience.

Use of the personal letter within Irish diaspora studies has produced divergent interpretations of the Irish migrant experience in America and Australia.¹ Whereas the Irish in America have been viewed as involuntary, dysfunctional exiles, the Irish in Australia have been presented as adaptable, voluntary migrants. It is within this debate that this thesis, which explores individual experiences of migration as represented in the personal letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand during the period 1840 to 1937, is located. It builds upon the pioneering use of Irish-New Zealand letters by Donald

¹ Patrick O'Farrell, Letters from Irish Australia, 1825-1929 (Sydney, 1984); Kerby A. Miller, Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America (New York, 1985); David Fitzpatrick, Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia (Ithaca, N. Y., 1994).

Akenson and Trevor Parkhill² to examine debates in the Irish diaspora, interpretations of social patterns in New Zealand, and larger migration issues. It undertakes this within an international, comparative context based on several editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence.³

In examining Irish migration to New Zealand, this thesis focuses on the role of the family in the migration process. This approach has been adopted as renewed interest in social networks has resurrected interest in the part played by kin at origin and destination in the process of relocation and adaptation.⁴ How significant was the family involvement in Irish migration to New Zealand? Though the immediate focus of this study is on the family, wider networks based on friendship, neighbourhood, and community are also incorporated. These networks, which could be exploitative as well as facilitative, tied

² D. H. Akenson, 'Reading the Texts of Rural Immigrants: Letters from the Irish in Australia, New Zealand, and North America', in Donald H. Akenson (ed.), Canadian Papers in Rural History, vol. 7 (Ontario, 1990), pp. 387-406; Trevor Parkhill, "'Prospects of this New Colony": Letters of Ulster Emigrants to New Zealand 1840-1900', in Familia, vol. 2, no. 5 (1989), pp. 38-42. Patrick O'Farrell has also utilised extracts from his family's correspondence in Vanished Kingdoms: Irish in Australia and New Zealand, a Personal Excursion (Kensington, 1990).

³ This study makes comparative use of the following accounts of non-Irish correspondence: Charlotte Erickson, Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America (London, 1972); Walter D. Kamphoefner, Wolfgang Helbich, and Ulrike Sommer (eds.), News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home (Ithaca, N. Y., 1991; 1st German edn. 1988); Herbert J. Brinks, Dutch American Voices: Letters from the United States, 1850-1930 (Ithaca, N. Y., 1995); Frances Porter and Charlotte Macdonald (eds.), 'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates': The Unsettled Lives of Women in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand as Revealed to Sisters, Family, and Friends (Auckland, 1996); Rollo Arnold, The Farthest Promised Land: English Villagers, New Zealand Immigrants of the 1870s (Wellington, 1981).

⁴ See Robert L. Bach and Lisa A. Schraml, 'Migration, Crisis, and Theoretical Conflict', in International Migration Review, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 328; Monica Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks In International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas', in International Migration Review, vol. 23, no. 3, p. 639; and Gordon F. De Jong and Robert W. Gardner, 'Introduction and Overview', in Gordon F. De Jong and Robert W. Gardner (eds.), Migration Decision Making: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Microlevel Studies in Developed and Developing Countries (New York, 1981), p. 6.

migrants and non-migrants together. In surveying the role of kin and neighbourhood networks in Irish migration to New Zealand, this study considers to what extent individuals were constrained or enabled by this collective involvement in migration and assesses how this participation influenced the depiction of relationships in the correspondence. Were alliances or conflicts more readily conveyed? The study also considers a range of migration outcomes. How prevalent was return and repeat migration? What explanations exist for non-migration? How widespread were alliances based on an Irish heritage? Was migration portrayed as a positive experience or a negative undertaking in which atomisation and loneliness prevailed? The study also considers whether Catholic and Protestant accounts differed.

The first part of this Introduction examines the extent to which these issues have been examined in existing studies of Irish and non-Irish correspondence, the literature on the Irish in New Zealand, and migration theory. A brief discussion of sources and methodology follows before the characteristics of the sample utilised in this study are outlined in conjunction with what is known about overall Irish migration to New Zealand.

Locating Irish migration within a comparative context has attracted few proponents, the notable exceptions being Donald Akenson and Malcolm Campbell.⁵ Yet as Donald Akenson has indicated, comparison offers much to the diaspora experience:

⁵ Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Toronto, 1993). Campbell's comparative work includes 'Exploring Comparative History: The Irish in Australia and the United States', in Rebecca Pelan, Noel Quirke, and Mark Finnane (eds.), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Presented at the Seventh Irish-Australian Conference, July 1993* (Darlinghurst, 1994), pp. 342-54, and 'Irish Nationalism and Immigrant Assimilation: Comparing the United States and Australia', in *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2, December 1996, pp. 24-43. Additionally, Campbell is currently completing a comparative study of Australia and the United States tentatively titled *Ireland's New Worlds: The United States and Australia, 1815-1922*. David Noel Doyle has also compared the Australian and American experience. See D. N. Doyle, 'The Irish in Australia and the United States: Some Comparisons, 1800-1939', in *Irish Economic and Social History*, vol. 16, 1989, pp. 73-94.

Because the story for each segment of the diaspora-Irish (those that migrated to Australia, North America, or elsewhere) implies to a considerable extent an historical depiction of the Irish homeland, the several histories of the Irish in their scattered new homelands cannot be independent of each other. If one New World history sees the Irish homeland as producing economically handicapped, lachrymose exiles and another one depicts the same homeland as producing aggressive and at least competent pioneers, something is wildly out of kilter.⁶

The dominant interpretation of Irish migrants as debilitated exiles appears in Kerby Miller's *Emigrants and Exiles*. Utilising extracts from more than 5,000 letters and memoirs, in addition to poems, songs, and folklore, Miller portrays the Irish in America 'not as voluntary, ambitious emigrants but as involuntary, nonresponsible "exiles," compelled to leave home by forces beyond individual control'. Miller likewise contends that this passivity extended to migrants unconsciously following established chains of migration. According to Miller, this abdication of responsibility arose from 'a distinctive Irish worldview' which compelled migrants to perceive emigration as exile. It was this worldview that deprecated 'innovation, initiative, and the assumption or attribution of personal responsibility'.⁷ In addition, Miller alleges that Catholics 'retained attitudes towards family and community at marked variance from those displayed by their more individualistic Protestant countrymen'.⁸

Miller has further claimed that Irish migrants to America regarded their emigration as exile due to 'overt British oppression' though he also acknowledges changing economic conditions, social structures, and contemporary culture patterns as causes of post-Famine emigration.⁹ Patrick O'Farrell's assessment of Irish-Australian migrants, based largely on the letters of Ulster Protestants, acknowledges the role of assisted passages and the lure of gold in the decision to migrate but states that most Irish migrated to Australia because of

⁶ Akenson, 'Reading the Texts', p. 390.

⁷ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pp. 556, 516, 429.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 273.

⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 427, 358.

an established network of relations and friends.¹⁰ The most substantial synthesis of motives for migration based on migrant correspondence, however, appears in Charlotte Erickson's account of English and Scottish correspondence. Having divided her profiles according to agricultural, industrial, and professional, commercial, and clerical migrants, Erickson concludes that 'distaste for commercial life, desire for independence, love of leisure, resistance to family dispersal and faith in subsistence farming' were motives found among all groups.¹¹ Studies of German and Dutch correspondence from the United States by Kamphoefner and Brinks allude to religious and political reasons for migration but both editors stress the dominance of the economic motive.¹² Few editors, however, have considered the reasons for non-migration.

Despite reinforcing the dominant economic explanations for migration, the importance of family and neighbourhood networks in America is also acknowledged. Kamphoefner's edition of German migrant letters from America highlights the 'prominent role played by the "personal network" in the United States: neighbors, friends, people from the same hometown or the vicinity.'¹³ Dutch migrants in America also 'lived out their lives with few sustained relationships outside their ethnic sub cultures.'¹⁴ Though Erickson claims that English and Scottish migrants adapted without the assistance of formal ethnic institutions, they did associate with other migrants from a shared ethnic background.¹⁵

As well as highlighting extensive interaction among migrants, editors have also alluded to the relationships among migrants and between correspondents and recipients.

¹⁰ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 7.

¹¹ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 29.

¹² Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 2; Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, p. 14.

¹³ Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 31.

¹⁴ Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, p. 24.

¹⁵ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, pp. 67, 70.

Conflict within families is evident on a small scale in Dutch and German sequences but less so in Erickson's edition. However, Erickson does indicate that embittered personal relationships were notable in 'series where friendship was relied upon as the network of migration.' In addition, family disagreement in English and Scottish households occasionally spurred commercial and professional migrants.¹⁶ Donald Akenson, in his pioneering survey of Irish-New Zealand letters, emphasised the strong kin attachments evident in the correspondence and the strains associated with these 'global networks of communication'.¹⁷ In his edition of Irish-Australian correspondence, David Fitzpatrick has also noted that 'Harmony among emigrant siblings or kinsfolk, though devoutly desired, was fragile in a world where private and group interests were often at odds', but he also observes that 'the prevalent image of family life in these letters is one of harmony and co-operation rather than acrimony.'¹⁸ Miller and O'Farrell have likewise drawn conclusions about the nature of kin relationships. Both share a perception of Irish emigration as an escape from 'parental repression' and 'the tyranny of the old place'.¹⁹

Apart from David Fitzpatrick, however, no editor has extensively examined perceptions of place of origin though several have provided diverse interpretations of the response of migrants to their destination. According to Miller, the Irish in America adapted to 'American life in ways which were often alienating and sometimes dysfunctional'. The migrants considered America 'startlingly different' from Ireland and expressed 'a pervasive dissatisfaction with urban-industrial life in their adopted country'.²⁰ By contrast, Patrick O'Farrell's study of Irish-Australian correspondence, based largely on

¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 244, 393.

¹⁷ Akenson, 'Reading the Texts', p. 398.

¹⁸ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 594, 550.

¹⁹ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 483; O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 8.

²⁰ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pp. 4, 516, 502.

the letters of Ulster Protestants, claimed that the Irish positively experienced and endured difficulties encountered in Australia, supposedly due to ‘a disposition of acceptance’.²¹ Fitzpatrick also acknowledged that while Australia was viewed as coarse in comparison to Ireland’s civility, ‘grievance and disappointment played little part.’²² Dutch correspondents, meanwhile, placed greater emphasis on the benefits of America while German correspondents presented America in negative and positive terms.²³ Likewise, English and Scottish correspondents stressed differences rather than similarities between origin and destination.²⁴

Several editors of migrant correspondence have stressed the loneliness and homesickness endured by migrants. Though loneliness and homesickness were only occasionally mentioned by Dutch and German correspondents in America, English, Scottish, and Irish correspondents in America frequently expressed their isolation and longing for home. Erickson, for instance, found that loneliness could be ‘quite intense’ particularly among agricultural migrants. She observes, though, that homesickness was conveyed as ‘a sense of loss of family and friends family places and particular pleasures, rather than in terms of national patriotism.’²⁵ Miller indicates that ‘Acute homesickness pervaded the letters and journals of most post-Famine emigrants’.²⁶ Likewise, O’Farrell asserts the Irish ‘brought their kinship mentality to Australia, where it gradually crumbled and fell apart, declining into a residual social atomism marked by separation, isolation, loneliness and eventual alienation of society’s individual parts.’²⁷ Porter and Macdonald,

²¹ O’Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 7.

²² Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 609, 608.

²³ Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, p. 104; Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 31.

²⁴ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 64.

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 64, 69.

²⁶ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 512.

²⁷ O’Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 6.

in their edition of female correspondence from New Zealand, have also argued that migration was ‘inherently destabilising’ and that ‘family ties were to be shrugged off, or were no longer there ... It was a place to establish new connections.’²⁸ In contrast with O’Farrell’s ‘disposition of acceptance’, the hardships encountered by females in New Zealand were not ‘borne with stoicism or cheerfulness. Their spirits were squashed, diminished, sapped, and their suffering and pain, real.’²⁹ In alleging that there was a ‘lack of society’³⁰, Porter and Macdonald echo Miles Fairburn’s portrayal of New Zealand’s social organisation as ‘gravely deficient’.³¹ According to Fairburn, ‘The scantiness of kinship ties deprived colonists of a natural base for the development of community ties’ and resulted in pervasive loneliness.³²

In contrast with Fairburn’s claims, the historiography of the Irish in New Zealand provides little proof of atomised individuals beset with loneliness. This is particularly apparent in several studies of communities of Irish settlers at Katikati, Christchurch, and Pukekohe. Lyndon Fraser’s investigation of the Irish Catholic community in Christchurch has shown that these migrants were linked by acquaintance and kinship ties which ‘played a vital adaptive role in the immigrant experience’. These associations facilitated the development of ethnic organisations revolving around the Catholic church which further aided adjustment.³³ A study of Auckland’s Catholic lay societies has also claimed that

²⁸ Porter and Macdonald, *‘My Hand Will Write’*, pp. 3, 386-7.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 5.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6.

³¹ Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900* (Auckland, 1989), p. 11.

³² *Ibid*, pp. 192-3.

³³ Lyndon Fraser, *To Tara Via Holyhead: Irish Catholic Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century Christchurch* (Auckland, 1997), pp. 49, 51.

such associations enabled the successful adaptation of Irish settlers in the city.³⁴ As with Fraser's investigation of Irish Catholics in Christchurch, Galbraith's study of Irish Protestant settlers at Pukekohe has identified extensive family and neighbourhood ties. The establishment there of an Orange Lodge also aided the adjustment of these settlers.³⁵ As Richard Davis has commented, Irish Protestants 'needed fraternal associations to help them adjust to their new environment'.³⁶ Moyes's study of Orangeism in the North Island has affirmed the largely fraternal nature of the Orange Lodge before the influx of non-Irish Protestant members transformed it into a substantially anti-Catholic organisation.³⁷ By contrast, the Orange Lodge in the Ulster Protestant settlement at Katikati shed its sectarianism.³⁸ Though never numerically strong, the Orange Order and Hibernians provided a fraternal element for New Zealand's Irish population. Nonetheless, sectarian disturbances did occur as Brosnahan's analysis of the riots at Timaru and Christchurch on 26 December 1879 reveals.³⁹

Included in the literature on the Irish in New Zealand are several profiles of individual migrants. For instance, Anna Rogers supplies numerous biographies of Irish migrants in *A Lucky Landing* while Gabrielle Fortune discusses several members of

³⁴ Rachael Partington, 'Faith and Nationality: Catholic Lay Societies and Irish Immigrant Adaptation to Auckland Society, 1870-1910' (MA Research Essay, University of Auckland, 1993), p. 1.

³⁵ Alasdair Galbraith, 'New Zealand's "Invisible" Irish: Irish Protestants in the North Island of New Zealand, 1840-1900' (MA, University of Auckland, 1998), p. 150.

³⁶ Richard P. Davis, *Irish Issues in New Zealand Politics, 1868-1922* (Dunedin, 1974), p. 51.

³⁷ T. A. Moyes, 'The Sash Their Fathers Wore: A History of Orangeism in the North Island of New Zealand, 1868-1900' (MA Research Essay, University of Auckland, 1994), p. 56.

³⁸ Jasmine Rebecca Rogers, 'A Little Corner of Ulster in New Zealand: The Katikati Special Settlement, 1875-1900' (MA Research Essay, University of Auckland, 1998), p. 59.

³⁹ Seán G. Brosnahan, "'The Battle of the Borough" and the "Saige O Timaru": Sectarian Riot in Colonial Canterbury', in *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1994, pp. 41-59.

Auckland's prosperous Irish community.⁴⁰ The Irish Catholic élite in the diocese of Dunedin also forms the basis of Cadogan's study.⁴¹ An investigation of Auckland's single Irish females incorporates a case study of the Milne sisters and reproduces extracts from the correspondence of the Sisters of Mercy at Auckland.⁴² In all these cases, the Irish background is generally unexamined. By contrast, Alasdair Galbraith's profiles of eight Irish Protestants in Auckland gives greater consideration to their Irish heritage.⁴³

Though scholarship on the Irish in New Zealand is steadily growing, there is a notable lacuna concerning both the role of kin and neighbourhood networks at both origin and destination in the migration process and the depiction of network relationships. This study attempts to bridge the 'salt-water curtain'⁴⁴ by focussing on the family's involvement in the migration process. It does not, however, echo Miller's contention that migrants followed passively in established migration chains. Instead, they actively and purposefully chose which chains to follow.

This issue of individual agency has also been a cause of dispute among migration theorists. Rather than focussing on individual movers, many theorists have sought to explain migration in sweeping terms according to economic, sociological, psychological,

⁴⁰ Anna Rogers has primarily reproduced extracts from the six volumes of the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* in *A Lucky Landing: The Story of the Irish in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1996). Gabrielle A. Fortune's study of 'Hugh Coolahan and the Prosperous Irish: Auckland, 1840-1870' (MA, University of Auckland, 1997) includes discussion of Hugh Coolahan, Patrick Donovan, Edward Mahoney, Patrick Darby, Patrick Dignan, David Sheehan, and John Campbell.

⁴¹ Bernard Francis Cadogan, 'Lace Curtain Catholics: The Catholic Bourgeoisie of the Diocese of Dunedin' (BA Hons., University of Otago, 1984).

⁴² Siobhan McKimney, "'A Thorough Irish Female": Aspects of the Lives of Single Irish Born Women in Auckland, 1850-1880' (MA, University of Auckland, 1997).

⁴³ These individuals were John Ballance, John McKinney, William Ferguson Massey, James Dilworth, Edward William Stafford, William Hobson, James Edward Fitzgerald, and George Grey. See chapter 2 in Galbraith, 'New Zealand's "Invisible" Irish'.

⁴⁴ This phrase was coined by Frank Thistlethwaite in his essay 'Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', in Herbert Moller (ed.), *Population Movements in Modern European History* (New York, 1964), p. 74.

or geographical factors. The economic factor, dominant among these explanations, was proffered as long ago as the late nineteenth century. In attempting to establish the 'laws' of migration, Ravenstein argued:

Bad or oppressive laws, heavy taxation, an unattractive climate, uncongenial social surroundings, and even compulsion (slave trade, transportation), all have produced and are producing currents of migration, but none of these currents can compare in volume with that which arises from the desire inherent in most men to "better" themselves in material respects.⁴⁵

Response to Ravenstein's 'laws' immediately pitted economic against non-economic motives with one critic observing that 'very often a spirit of adventure had quite as much to do with the migration as the mere desire for more bread and butter'.⁴⁶ A subsequent general theory advanced by Lee in 1966 included 'a set of factors at origin and destination, a set of intervening obstacles, and a series of personal factors'.⁴⁷ Lee's theory utilised a push-pull perspective for internal migration in which both origin and destination contained negative and positive factors that either attracted or repelled an intending migrant.

Geographers, demographers, economists, psychologists, and sociologists have continued to proffer numerous explanations for migration, embracing a range of economic and non-economic factors.⁴⁸ Though generally stressing a disciplinary emphasis, most theorists recognise that multiple motives spur migration. Several attempts have also been made to bridge the impasse between approaches with a focus on the individual as opposed

⁴⁵ These issues are summarised in E. G. Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, vol. 52 (London, 1889), pp. 286-7.

⁴⁶ Mr A. K. Donald's comments appear in 'Discussion of Mr. Ravenstein's Paper', in *Ibid*, p. 304.

⁴⁷ Everett S. Lee, 'A Theory of Migration', in J. A. Jackson (ed.), *Migration* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 284.

⁴⁸ See, for instance, John A. Jackson, *Migration* (London and New York, 1986); G. J. Lewis, *Human Migration: A Geographical Perspective* (London and Canberra, 1982); W. A. V. Clark, *Human Migration* (London, 1986).

to those with an emphasis on structural forces. Though a focus on the household was one such attempt to rectify this issue, critics have indicated that collective and individual considerations remain distinct and that the household is simply another constraining structural element.⁴⁹ A central problem remains then as to whether individuals acquiesce to collective interests or assert their individual rights. In addition, if migration is a collective undertaking, do individuals undertake their relocation willingly and do subsequent communications reveal the relations between the mobile and immobile to be harmonious or hostile? Furthermore, do individual strategies permanently mirror the collective?

Despite a multitude of explanations for migration, few theories have considered the reasons for immobility. However, just as the presence of friends and family abroad has been cited as a conducive element in the migration process, the maintenance of this network at the point of origin can deter migration or stimulate the desire to return. Theorists have also indicated that some individuals may have been averse to taking risks or been wary of discrimination at the point of arrival. Or they may have accumulated a wealth of local knowledge that they could only have obtained by being immobile.⁵⁰

Return migration is also often overlooked in migration studies. Reverse movement can, however, take place due to obligations or because of a parent's illness or death. Other returnees are unlucky while some may have been disappointed. The successful have also ventured back.

Regardless of the reasons for return migration, reverse mobility does raise the question of whether migration is a positive or negative undertaking. Consideration of this

⁴⁹ Bach and Schraml, 'Migration, Crisis and Theoretical Conflict', p. 329.

⁵⁰ These explanations are made by Peter A. Fischer, Reiner Martin, and Thomas Straubhaar, 'Should I Stay or Should I Go?', in Tomas Hammar, Grete Brockmann, Kristof Tomas, and Thomas Faist (eds.), International Migration: Immobility and Development: Multidisciplinary Perspectives (Oxford, 1997), pp. 80, 82, 76.

issue by theorists has ranged from considering the impact of migration on places of origin and destination to the impact on migrants and non-migrants.

Sources And Method

This study utilises migration theory as the framework to analyse the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. Though it might be argued that letters cannot be taken as accurate given that correspondents sought to reassure recipients, the strong network element involved in Irish migration inevitably meant that the writer's true condition would be learned. Letters are therefore largely reliable and can also be used to supply information about those who did not write or who were illiterate. They provide, as Patrick O'Farrell has described, 'an intimate insight into what the migrant actually thought and felt.'⁵¹

Regrettably, only a few thousand letters have survived in relation to the millions of letters that were exchanged throughout all parts of the Irish diaspora. The hazards of fire, flood, and dampness, presumably destroyed many letters while the fragility of letters also meant that many were easily torn, lost, or discarded. More significantly, the preservation instincts, or lack thereof, of subsequent generations has also influenced the survival of personal correspondence. Letters that have escaped routine housekeeping tasks or sold for the sake of a stamp have therefore been deliberately preserved, possibly for genealogical or historical interest. Other letters have perhaps survived largely by accident, discovered decades later by curious family historians.

Given the mechanisms by which letters have endured, those letters that have survived are exceptional, and therefore unlikely to be representative of all the letters sent

⁵¹ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 3.

throughout the Irish diaspora. Nor can the surviving letters be presented as a representative sample of letter writers or participants in the migration process. Nonetheless, personal letters remain an essential source for discovering the diverse responses of migrant and non-migrant correspondents to migration.

The letters utilised in this study were located in public repositories and through appeals in newspapers, radio, and the Internet. They were then transcribed and edited and personal details of the writers and recipients sought. Of the letters obtained from public repositories, attempts were made to contact descendants. In one case this resulted in the discovery of correspondence sent in response. These connections also brought forth oral testimony and a range of supplementary photographs and documents.

To reconstruct the biographical and local detail pertinent to each migrant and letter writer, this study utilised a range of sources in Ireland and New Zealand.⁵² In Ireland, the major sources consulted were the civil records at the Registry Office, and parish registers held at the National Library of Ireland, Representative Church Body Library, and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Additional biographical material was obtained from the original family census schedules carried out in 1901 and 1911 as well as from the brief summaries in the annual calendars of wills and, occasionally, original wills. Land holdings were traced through the Tithe Applotment Books, Primary Valuation, the revision books, and the field and house books.

Information from marriage and death certificates in New Zealand was greatly facilitated by access to the Registry Office records with supplementary information obtained from church holdings. Records of probates and administration are indexed and

⁵² Useful genealogical guides include John Grenham, *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors: the Complete Guide* (Dublin, 1992) and Anne Bromell, *Tracing Family History in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1996; revised and updated edn.).

lodged in local offices of the National Archives. The six volumes of the Cyclopedia of New Zealand revealed additional information about some migrants. While indexes of assisted passenger arrivals are held at National Archives in Wellington, unassisted passengers were more difficult to trace although indexing projects are helping to counteract this situation. The Internet proved especially useful in tracing Irish migrants who voyaged initially to Australia. Newspapers provided details of the voyages undertaken and these were examined along with funeral and obituary notices. Landholders were traced in the 1882 Freeholders List while directories and electoral rolls provided details of residence. In both countries, biographical details were supplemented by a range of studies to place the writers and their comments in context.

Following transcription of the letters, a thematic index was compiled and several major themes identified for analysis including ‘the relative importance of religious as against political affiliations, responses to other races, and the significance of ethnic networks of “Irish” neighbours overseas.’⁵³ In addition, the themes of home, loneliness, and the impact of migration, among other factors, were also selected for analysis. Comparisons between other editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence also promised elucidation of whether or not Irish-New Zealand correspondence was distinctive.

The texts selected for this comparative exercise provide sufficient family background with substantial reproductions from the letters. As all emanated from migrants to America, they can be utilised to assess whether they mirrored or diverged from Miller’s conclusions of the Irish experience. They include Kamphoefner’s edition of German correspondence, Erickson’s edition of English and Scottish letters, and Brink’s collection

⁵³ David Fitzpatrick, “‘That beloved country, that no place else resembles’”: Connotations of Irishness in Irish-Australasian Letters, 1841-1915’, in Irish Historical Studies, vol. 27, 1991, fn. 108, p. 349.

of Dutch letters. The major characteristics of these editions are outlined in Table 1. Though no comparable collection of letters from New Zealand incorporates lengthy biographical profiles with substantial reproduction of texts, a collection of nineteenth-century female writings edited by Porter and Macdonald, and a study of English rural villagers by Rollo Arnold are occasionally referred to.

Table 1 Comparisons Between Editions of Correspondence

	Erickson	Kamphoefner	Brinks	Fitzpatrick	McCarthy
No. of letters	233	362	278	111	207
No. of sequences	25	20	23	14	26
No. of male sequences	21	18	22	11	18
No. of female sequences	4	2	1	3	8
Decade of heaviest writing	30s, 40s, 70s	50s, 80s	50s, 90s	50s, 60s	60s, 70s, 80s
Decade of heaviest migration	30s, 40s	50s, 80s	50s, 70s	50s, 60s	60s, 70s, 80s

The decision to follow Fitzpatrick's approach in terms of its structure (divided into profile and thematic sections), its utilisation of letters exchanged in both directions, the full reproduction of these texts, and the provision of a comprehensive thematic index was taken to aid comparisons with other editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence. As Baily has observed, 'If migration history is to generate more comprehensive and sophisticated explanations, migration historians must frame their research in such a way that it can be useful to others in making comparisons'.⁵⁴

Consequently, this study has not adopted the approach of editors who have provided extracts or omitted sections of letters. Erickson, for instance, 'omitted references to letters, to health, and messages from other immigrants and to other persons, once the network of friends and acquaintances of the immigrant has been established ... [and] cut

⁵⁴ Samuel L. Baily, 'Cross-Cultural Comparison and the Writing of Migration History: Some Thoughts on How to Study Italians in the New World', in Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (ed.), *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics* (New York and Oxford, 1990), p. 247.

most accounts of ocean voyages, most lists of American prices and some rather shallow descriptions. This material is not without interest, but is not central to the themes of this book'⁵⁵ Likewise, Kamphoefner occasionally excised references to 'long lists of prices and verbose comments about the weather, ritualized pious reflections, detailed descriptions of delays in mail delivery, instructions with regard to drafts of money, as well as endless lists of persons'.⁵⁶ Yet all these excisions are essential to this study. Not only do they permit comparative analysis but as David Fitzpatrick has stressed in his study of Irish-Australian correspondence, 'Assessment of the significance of form and language, as well as content, is impossible in the absence of faithful and uncondensed transcriptions of letters.'⁵⁷

The Sample

This thesis is based on 207 letters in 26 sequences exchanged between 1840 and 1937. Of these 207 letters, 100 were sent to New Zealand, 102 were sent to Ireland, and five were sent between migrants in New Zealand.⁵⁸ The sequences vary from one to 38 letters with five sequences incorporating letters sent in both directions.⁵⁹ Several sequences therefore have more than one correspondent and overall there are 54 writers (34 male, 20 female). Female letters, however, are severely under-represented with only 53 letters composed by women.

⁵⁵ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 9.

⁵⁶ Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 46.

⁵⁷ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 23.

⁵⁸ The letters sent from Ireland include two letters from the United States, ten from Britain, three before the migrant departed, and two from ship. The letters sent from New Zealand include one to London, one from ship to Ireland, ten before embarkation, and two from Australia. The five letters sent between migrants are included in order to get, according to E. R. R. Green, 'a more complete impression of the emigrant experience.' See E. R. R. Green, 'Ulster Emigrants' Letters', in E. R. R. Green (ed.), *Essays in Scotch-Irish History* (Belfast, 1992; 1st edn. 1969), p. 88.

⁵⁹ McIlrath, Gilmer, Flanagan, Kilpatrick, and Lambert.

Though editors have acknowledged the significance of incorporating sequences spanning several years, the paucity of letters by Catholics and females has warranted the inclusion of several individual letters in this study. It is helpful that those individual letters included a wealth of information that allowed the correspondents' backgrounds to be reconstructed. In addition, letters were selected for this study if they elucidated some, if not all, of the themes under consideration. This therefore warranted the inclusion of migrants from three counties that supplied only a small amount of Irish migrants to New Zealand.

Though neither the letter writers nor the migrants included in this study can be considered representative of Irish migration to New Zealand, an attempt was made to reflect the provincial origins, age at migration, date of emigration, and place of settlement of Irish migrants in New Zealand. The religious and gender focus, biased towards Protestants and males, does not, however, reflect the characteristics of Irish settlers in New Zealand as outlined by Donald Akenson. Among the distinctive features of New Zealand's Irish migrant stream identified by Akenson are the later arrival of Irish migrants in New Zealand, spanning the 1860s to 1880s; the absence of Famine migrants; the influence of assisted and nominated migration instigated by the colonial government; and the dominance of single males (approximately 40 per cent during the 1870s and 1880s).⁶⁰

What were the characteristics of the migrants in this study?

Of the 26 principal migrants in this study⁶¹, nineteen were male and seven female, a proportion that is unrepresentative of the gender element of Irish migration to New Zealand

⁶⁰ Akenson, 'Reading the Texts', pp. 391-2. See also Donald Harman Akenson, *Half the World From Home: Perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand, 1860-1950* (Wellington, 1990).

⁶¹ The principal migrants from sequences with more than one migrant are James McIlrath, John Gilmore, Michael Flanagan, Samuel Gilmer, William Quinn, and James Moreland McClure.

(of which females composed 34 per cent of the Irish migrant stream in 1871 and 46 per cent in 1891). Their female compatriots in Australia, meanwhile, formed approximately 50 per cent of the Irish contingent there.⁶²

The religious composition of the Irish migrants in this study, nine Catholics and seventeen Protestants, is also unrepresentative, for Donald Akenson has estimated that approximately three-quarters of New Zealand's Irish ethnic population was Catholic.⁶³ He reached this estimate by projecting the entire multi-generational Irish ethnic group in New Zealand from the available census data relating to the first-generation Irish migrants and used Catholicism as a proxy for the Irish and Irish-descended Catholic population. Because the Irish migrant generation and entire ethnic group had similar proportions of Catholics between 1880 and 1950, figures for the entire Irish multi-generational group can be used to shed light on the religious affiliation of the migrant generation. By contrast with Akenson's data, which indicates that Irish Protestants formed one-fifth to one-quarter of the entire Irish ethnic group, several studies using sources relating to the Irish-born population in New Zealand have suggested that Irish Protestants may have contributed a greater proportion of the Irish migrant stream, perhaps as high as two-fifths.⁶⁴ Such studies, however, are non-random, localised, unreliable, or confined to the period before 1900. Akenson's estimated figures for determining the Catholic and Protestant proportions

⁶² See Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, fn. 22, p. 13.

⁶³ Akenson, *Half The World*, Table 20, p. 66.

⁶⁴ Galbraith, 'New Zealand's "Invisible" Irish', p. 61. Galbraith reaches this figure based on several studies including his estimate of an Irish Protestant component in Auckland of 43.67% based on a non-random sample of 426 Irish entries in the Auckland Hospital Register of Patients from 1889–1891. In Canterbury, meanwhile, the marriage certificates of 897 Irish males revealed that 60.5% were Protestant. See Keith Pickens, 'Canterbury, 1851-1881: Demography and Mobility, a Comparative Study' (PhD, Washington University, 1976), p. 192. Heather Webber, on the other hand, estimated an Irish Protestant component of 40.70% based on 1,000 death certificates. See Heather J. Webber, 'Emigration: Ireland to New Zealand, 1850-1900, a Demographic Study', in Hylton Tucker (ed.), *GRINZ Yearbook 1995* (Lower Hutt, 1995), p. 25.

of New Zealand's multi-generational Irish population therefore remain the most valuable for they are national and cover everybody in the census.

Though the migrants in this study do not represent the religious affiliation of New Zealand's Irish migrants on a statistical level, such representation is not essential in this study. As the following chapters reveal, Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants in New Zealand shared similar preoccupations and there was little to separate them on matters of concern in their letters. This study therefore endorses Akenson's claim that only 'small differences' separated Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants.⁶⁵

In addition to a strong Irish Protestant representation in this study, fifteen of this study's seventeen Protestant migrants originated from Ulster. This divergence reflects the disproportionate amount of Ulster Protestant migrants in New Zealand. Along with Ulster, Munster was also a significant supplier of New Zealand's Irish migrants and Table 2 indicates this characteristic. Canterbury, in particular, derived more than half its Irish migrants from Ulster and presumably accounts for the province's strong Protestant component as reflected in the numerical strength of migrants from Antrim and Down (see Table 3). Such divergence suggests that Irish migrants from predominantly Protestant counties were favoured in Canterbury above their Catholic counterparts and may also have been accorded preference in other regions. The divergence may also reflect differing emigration practices of the colonial provinces or the presence in Ulster of six of Ireland's eight emigration agents.⁶⁶ Given the strong Munster and Ulster representation in New Zealand, this study gives priority to the correspondence sent to and from these provinces. Munster, however, is under-represented.

⁶⁵ Donald Harman Akenson, Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1922, an International Perspective (Kingston, 1988).

⁶⁶ Davis, Irish Issues, p. 29.

**Table 2 The Provincial Origins of New Zealand's
Nineteenth-Century Irish Population (%)**

	Akenson (NZ-wide) 1876-90	Brosnahan (Otago and Southland) 1872-88	Webber (NZ-wide) 1850-1900	Silcock (Canterbury) 1855-76	Pickens (Canterbury) 1851-81
Ulster	35.84	40.46	33.2	53.3	53.2
Munster	45.64	40.04	26.4	27.3	20.8
Leinster	9.72	7.06	10.5	10.8	17.3
Connaught	8.8	12.44	6.9	9.6	8.8

Sources: Akenson, *Half The World From Home*, Table 22, pp. 70-1; Seán G. Brosnahan, 'The Greening of Otago: Irish [Catholic] Immigration to Otago and Southland 1840-1888', in Norma J. Bethune (ed.), *Work 'n' Pastimes: 150 Years of Pain and Pleasure, Labour and Leisure* (Dunedin, 1998), Table 1, p. 62; Webber, 'Emigration: Ireland to New Zealand, 1850-1900, a Demographic Study' in Hylton Tucker (ed.), *GRINZ Yearbook 1995* (Lower Hutt, 1995), p. 25; R. H. Silcock, 'Immigration into Canterbury under the Provincial Government' (MA, University of Canterbury, 1964), Tables 7 and 8; Pickens, 'Canterbury, 1851-1881: Demography and Mobility, a Comparative Study' (PhD, Washington University, 1976), Table 1:50, p. 222. *Notes:* Akenson's figures are based on the Irish Registrar-General's figures for 15,394 Irish residents leaving Ireland with the intention of settling permanently in New Zealand between 1876-90. Brosnahan's figures are based on a sample of 7,907 assisted Irish migrants who arrived in Otago and Southland between 1872-88. For Webber, refer Table 2. Silcock's figures are based on 5,134 migrants arriving in Canterbury between 1855-76. Pickens's figures are based on the places of birth of Canterbury's population at the Registrar-General's office in conjunction with biographies contained in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 3 (Christchurch, 1903).

Analysis of the county origins of Irish migrants in New Zealand (Table 3)

illuminates the diverse characteristics of various recipient regions. Akenson's nationwide sample shows the dominance of Clare, Antrim, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, and Cork. Clare, however, rates poorly as a supplier of migrants to Otago, Southland, and Canterbury, though Antrim and Kerry rate moderately well in these provinces. Otago's Irish, however, were predominantly from Cork with Londonderry and Galway fairly well represented. Canterbury, on the other hand, contained a stronger Tyrone presence and a substantial representation from Down. The link between the colony's provinces with certain counties in Ireland suggests the vital importance of kin and neighbourhood networks in directing migrants to destinations favoured by pioneering migrants.

Table 3 The County Origins of New Zealand's Irish Population (%)

	Akenson (NZ-wide) 1876-90	Brosnahan (Otago and Southland) 1872-88	Pickens (Canterbury) 1851-81	Silcock (Canterbury) 1855-76
<i>ULSTER</i>	35.84	40.46	53.2	52.2
Antrim	10.22	10.86	8.8	8.1
Armagh	2.68	2.72	8.8	7.5
Cavan	2.58	1.75	2.5	2.9
Down	4.84	3.34	16.6	13.6
Donegal	1.87	5.25	2.9	4.5
Fermanagh	1.71	1.26	2.5	2.2
Londonderry	5.48	8.38	3.2	3.3
Monaghan	1.61	1.14	1.5	1.4
Tyrone	4.85	5.75	6.4	8.7
<i>MUNSTER</i>	45.64	40.04	20.8	27.3
Clare	10.93	3.33	2.9	1.8
Cork	7.58	13.94	3.7	4.4
Kerry	8.50	6.23	5.7	11.3
Limerick	8.13	8.18	2.9	2.5
Tipperary	7.92	4.48	4.1	6.0
Waterford	2.58	3.88	1.5	1.3
<i>CONNAUGHT</i>	8.8	12.44	8.8	9.5
Galway	4.83	8.09	5.8	6.7
Leitrim	0.57	0.46	0.3	0.4
Mayo	0.65	1.54	1.3	0.9
Roscommon	2.10	1.11	1.1	1.1
Sligo	0.65	1.24	0.3	0.4
<i>LEINSTER</i>	9.72	7.06	17.3	10.8
Carlow	0.51	0.42	1.7	1.2
Dublin	2.17	1.59	5.3	1.8
Kildare	0.36	0.16	0.8	0.2
Kilkenny	2.15	1.39	0.1	0.8
Kings	0.82	0.52	1.9	1.6
Longford	0.50	0.27	0.5	0.5
Louth	0.11	0.13	0.1	0.4
Meath	0.63	0.33	0.8	0.2
Queens	0.56	0.27	1.5	1.3
Westmeath	0.66	0.82	0.4	0.4
Wexford	0.62	0.77	0.9	0.8
Wicklow	0.63	0.39	3.3	1.6

Notes: See Table 2. Regrettably, Webber did not supply the county origins of her sample.

In this study, Antrim and Down, the two counties with overwhelmingly predominant Protestant populations (75.2 per cent and 67.5 per cent respectively in 1861), supplied eleven migrants while two were natives of Londonderry, and one each departed from Armagh, Tyrone, and Monaghan.⁶⁸ Figure 1 also shows that of the Catholic migrants in this study, four were from Limerick, two from Tipperary, one from Waterford, and one from Louth. Only three of this study's 26 primary migrants came from counties that were not significant suppliers of migrants to New Zealand: Louth, Monaghan, and Sligo. Though sharing with Australia a prevalence of migrants from Clare, Tipperary, and Limerick, New Zealand had more migrants from Munster and north-east Ulster whereas Australia had greater Leinster and south Ulster representation (see Table 4).⁶⁹

Table 4 Top Ten County Origins of Irish Migrants to New Zealand and Australia

New Zealand	Australia
Clare	Clare
Antrim	Tipperary
Kerry	Limerick
Limerick	Kilkenny
Cork	Kings
Tipperary	Fermanagh
Londonderry	Cavan
Tyrone	Wicklow
Down	Westmeath
Galway	Carlow

Sources: New Zealand order is based on Akenson, *Half the World From Home*, Table 22, pp. 70-1; Australian origins is based on Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, Figure 5, p. 15.

Despite the large Ulster Protestant contingent in this study, these migrants were of moderate means (see Table 5). The median annual valuation and area of the households

⁶⁸ In 1861, Antrim's Catholic population was only 24.8% while Down's was 32.5%. Catholics in Londonderry, Armagh, Tyrone, and Monaghan provided 45.3%, 48.8%, 56.5%, and 73.4% of the county's population respectively.

⁶⁹ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 15-16

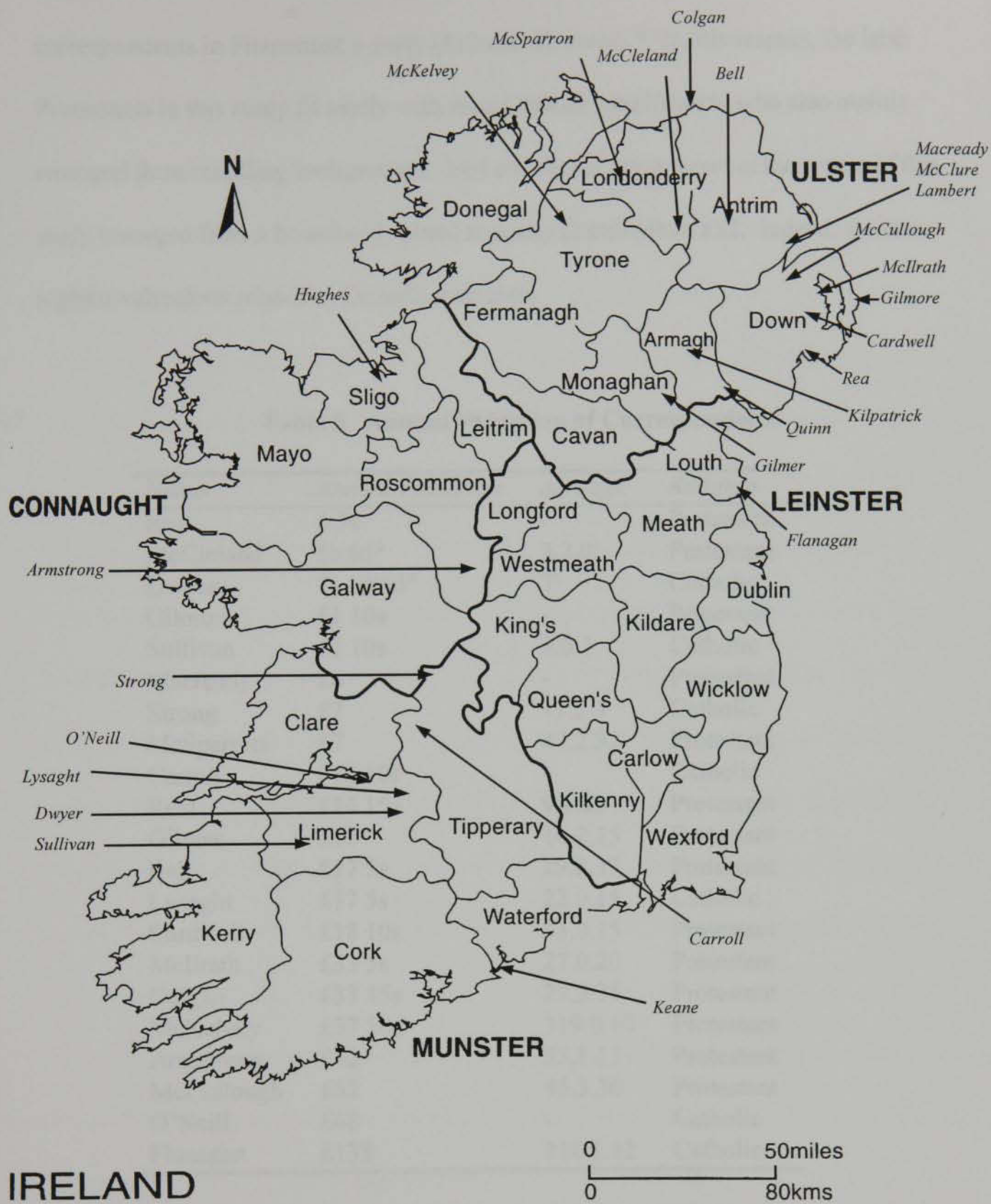


Fig 1 Irish origins of emigrant correspondents.

they emerged from was £16 and approximately 27 acres, slightly higher than the correspondents in Fitzpatrick's study (£12 and 22 acres).⁷⁰ In this respect, the Irish Protestants in this study fit nicely with their Catholic counterparts who also mainly emerged from middling backgrounds. Not one Protestant migrant at the centre of this study emerged from a household valued annually at more than £52. Indeed, the two highest valuations related to Catholic migrants.

Table 5 Annual Valuation of Correspondents

<i>Name</i>	<i>Annual Valuation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Religion</i>
Rea	0 5s	-	Protestant
McClelland	5s 6d ^a	3.2.0 ^b	Protestant
Dwyer	7s 10½d ^a	7 ^b	Catholic
Gilmore	£1 10s	-	Protestant
Sullivan	£1 10s	6.0.3	Catholic
Macready	£6	-	Protestant
Strong	£7	11.2.3	Catholic
McSparron	£7	47.2.32	Protestant
Carroll	£13 10s	-	Catholic
Reid	£14 15s	9.1.25	Protestant
Gilmer	£16	16.2.15	Protestant
Bell	£17 5s	29.2.33	Protestant
Lysaght	£17 5s	22.0.15	Catholic
Cardwell	£18 10s	33.0.15	Protestant
McIlrath	£33 5s	27.0.20	Protestant
Colgan	£33 15s	27.3.35	Protestant
McKelvey	£37 10s	319.0.10	Protestant
Armstrong	£42	33.1.17	Protestant
McCullough	£52	45.3.30	Protestant
O'Neill	£68	-	Catholic
Flanagan	£138	118.1.12	Catholic

Notes: The annual valuation for six correspondents has not been traced.

^a These values are taken from the Tithe Applotment Books.

^b Acres are Irish.

Sixteen migrants in this study were reared on farms between an acre and 319 acres.

The remainder were the children of a labourer, shopkeeper, publican, blacksmith,

⁷⁰ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 31.

coachmaker, constabulary officer, teacher (two), Church of Ireland minister, and doctor. Of those migrants who arrived as assisted migrants, their trades were listed as farm labourers and domestic servants. Once in the colony, however, they pursued diverse occupations. Four migrants were labourers and five were miners while skilled migrants included a carpenter and wheelwright. Two migrants pursued a navy and army career respectively while commercial migrants included an accountant, a storekeeper, and a hotelkeeper. One migrant was a doctor while three migrants chose to farm. The only female migrant who remained unmarried was a dressmaker.

These migrants made their voyages between 1840 and approximately 1920, with ten arriving during the peak period of assisted and nominated immigration, 1870-85.⁷¹ Known as the 'Vogel period' this influx, in conjunction with high colonial birth rates, swelled the colony's population to just over half a million people by 1886. At this time, the Irish-born were 18.5 per cent of the colony's foreign-born population. The 1860s were also a significant decade for Irish migration as at 12.8 per cent in 1867, they were the largest proportion of the population they would be at.⁷² Nine migrants in this study arrived during this decade. By contrast, the migrants in Fitzpatrick's study generally arrived in Australia between 1850 and 1865.⁷³

The age at emigration for the migrants in this study ranged between 16 and 45 with the median age for males 23 and females 25.⁷⁴ Of five migrants who were married prior to their arrival, two wed within days of embarkation while children accompanied the other

⁷¹ Assisted immigration to New Zealand is discussed by John Morris, 'The Assisted Immigrants to New Zealand, 1871-79: A Statistical Study' (MA, University of Auckland, 1973).

⁷² In 1867, the Irish were 12.8%.

⁷³ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 33.

⁷⁴ In 1876, the mean age of single Irish migrants was 22.5 for males and 22.4 for females. See Akenson, *Half the World From Home*, Table 11, p. 45.

three couples.⁷⁵ Eight migrants never married while the remainder married between one and nineteen years after arrival. Eight migrants found partners of Irish birth or descent while five married non-Irish partners.

Once in New Zealand, Irish migrants settled widely and evenly. In 1881 Westland had 16.1 per cent Irish, Auckland 12.1 per cent, Canterbury 11.1 per cent, and Hawkes Bay 9.6 per cent. The strong Scottish settlement of Otago had an Irish contingent of 9.2 per cent. As with this aggregate profile of Irish migration to New Zealand, the migrants in this study settled widely and evenly (see Figure 2). Nine selected the Auckland province, while five arrived in to Wellington. In the South Island, one each settled at Nelson and Southland, while three arrived at Canterbury, and five came to Otago. Several migrants remained mobile, with two moving from Wellington to Auckland, one from Wellington to Manawatu, one from Auckland to Tauranga, and one to the West Coast. Two migrants chose to depart permanently from New Zealand.

This thesis is divided into two volumes. Volume One contains two parts. Part One provides biographical profiles of the writers and recipients whose correspondence is utilised in this study. This part draws on a wide range of genealogical and local history sources to outline the life course of the correspondents. The chapters are grouped in three categories. The first chapter considers the letters where conflict is the dominant theme. Chapter 2 examines the letters composed by widows and orphans. The third chapter deals with the letters where relationships are predominantly harmonious. These chapters consider the role of kin in the migration process and explore the depiction of kin relationships.

⁷⁵ The marriages of Cornelius Dwyer, Catherine Sullivan, and Margaret Anne Kilpatrick took place approximately twenty, eighteen, and one year before emigration. They were accompanied by seven, five, and one offspring respectively.

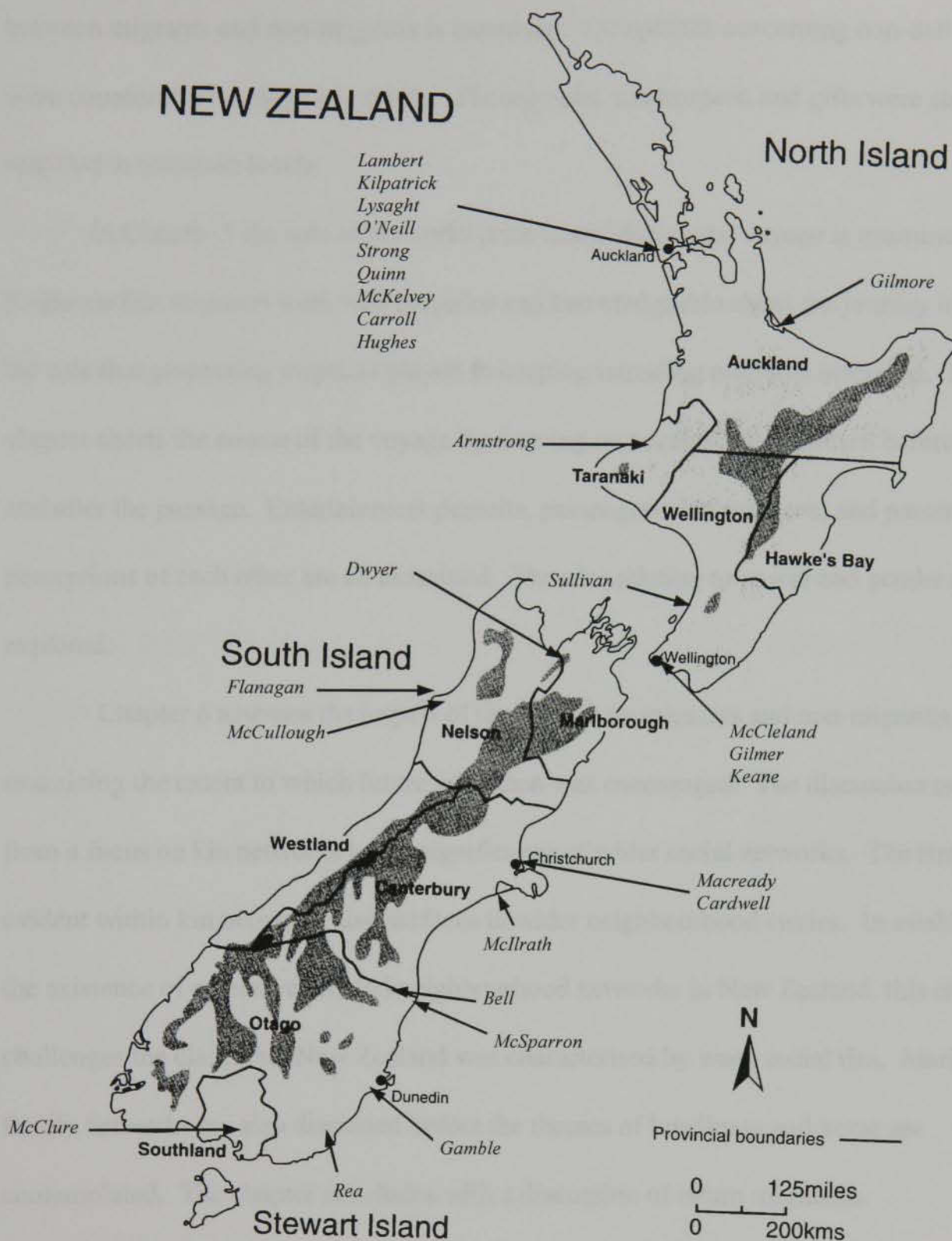


Fig 2 New Zealand destinations of emigrant correspondents.

Part Two, comprising five chapters, discusses various themes arising from the letters. In Chapter 4, the importance of personal correspondence in sustaining bonds between migrants and non-migrants is examined. Complaints concerning non-delivery were countered by a range of excuses. Photographs, newspapers, and gifts were also remitted to maintain bonds.

In Chapter 5 the role of networks prior to and during the voyage is examined. Evidence that migrants were well prepared and knowledgeable about the journey indicates the role that pioneering migrants played in keeping intending migrants informed. The chapter charts the course of the voyage by drawing on several letters written before, during, and after the passage. Entertainment pursuits, passenger-crew relations, and passenger perceptions of each other are all examined. Theories relating to power and gender are also explored.

Chapter 6 assesses the impact of the voyage on migrants and non-migrants, before examining the extent to which future migration was encouraged. The discussion moves from a focus on kin networks to the significance of wider social networks. The strains evident within kin networks also surfaces in wider neighbourhood circles. In establishing the existence of extensive kin and neighbourhood networks in New Zealand, this chapter challenges the claim that New Zealand was characterised by weak social ties. Marital and family networks are also discussed before the themes of loneliness and home are contemplated. The chapter concludes with a discussion of return migration.

Although reverse movement could provide non-migrants with direct, personal interpretations of life in New Zealand, letters were the more frequent source of information. Chapter 7 outlines the depictions of New Zealand in the letters, comparing these accounts with impressions of Irish society. Employment, farming, crops, food, prices, climate, and surroundings are all investigated. To what extent do these topics

illuminate motives for migrating or staying? The chapter deals throughout with the portrayals in both societies as positive or negative and the contrasts between them.

Chapter 8 begins with an examination of identity. Although Irish Protestants more readily expressed their Irish identity, both Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants provided examples of what they acknowledged to be Irish characteristics. The chapter then assesses the extent of political involvement by migrants and non-migrants. The correspondence indicates an intensely politically aware population though colonial correspondents were more focussed on colonial politics than Irish affairs. Religion also occupied those in Ireland more than migrant writers and also found voice in Protestant rather than Catholic letters.

In the concluding section, the value of a focus on the family in examining migration is assessed along with the significance of viewing Irish migration within a comparative context. How similar or different was Irish-New Zealand correspondence in comparison with other editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence?

Volume 2 contains transcripts, in full, of all the letters utilised in this study along with a thematic index to the collection of letters.

Part One:

Profiles

Chapter 1

‘I have you to blame’:

Families in Conflict

This chapter of seven profiles is grouped according to explicit examples of conflict contained in the correspondence. The letters received by Limerick migrant Edward Lysaght are replete with requests for his return to Ireland and his resistance to these family demands. This assertion of individual rights generated a lengthy complaint from Edward's father, seemingly the final letter received by Edward. Fellow Limerick native James O'Neill also expressed his indignation towards his allegedly autocratic father in a letter from Auckland. The letters from the Catholic Quinn brothers, originally from Newry, reveal discord among the migrant brothers, in contrast with the harmonious relationship of both with their Belfast-based brother. Sibling strife also brims in the letters of the Waterford Keanes with non-migrant correspondence replete with accusations concerning a sister's failure to fulfill her obligations. The Keane series is also significant for the signs of dissent prevalent among their immediate neighbours in Waterford. The letters of Agnes Lambert provide an illuminating, if harsh, allusion to the circumstances surrounding her departure and a warm reconciliation seventeen years later. County Londonderry native Oliver McSparron sent several short, cordial letters home before accusing his father of improper use of his funds. The final profile concerns the Gilmer brothers of County Monaghan. Though their letters indicate harmony among the brothers, their wider kin networks, at home and abroad, came under fierce scrutiny. The sequence is also particularly revealing for its insights reflecting the collective influence in the migration process.

'You lost by leaving him':

The Lysaght Correspondence, 1866-1873

In 1899 Edward and Maria Lysaght, in their late fifties, entered the Costley Home for the Aged Poor in Auckland due to 'doubtful earnings'.¹ Three years later, the home was described as 'beautifully situated on thirteen acres of volcanic soil, and is surrounded by undulating and charming scenery'.² The interior was less impressive. An official inspection of the Home in 1903 found that 'many inmates were in a lousy state, vermin literally dropping off them ... The Commissioners themselves noted that even fresh linen appeared half washed, that inmates' clothing and bedding were thin and dirty, and that food was served up cold and inadequately cooked.'³ In such insanitary surroundings, it is hardly surprising that both Edward and Maria died that year.

Edward Lysaght's appeals for financial assistance from Auckland, approximately thirty years before his death, and the requests from his father and brother that he return to Limerick instead, shape this sequence of eight letters sent from Doon between 1866 and 1873.⁴ William, Edward's brother, wrote four letters and also penned two of the three letters dictated by his father Edmund.⁵ A letter from Edward, composed on a return visit to Ireland, also survives. Though younger than Edward, William's tone was authoritative and challenging while their domineering father demanded filial obedience. Edward's letter,

¹ Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board Applications for Relief, 22 April 1899, YCAB A493/63, p. 193, in NAA. Their surname appears as Lysaight.

² *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2 (Christchurch, 1902), p. 191.

³ Margaret Tennant, *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1989) p. 153.

⁴ Reg Brown of Upper Kedron, Queensland, kindly provided copies of the letters while Ned Andrews, Lower Hutt, and Orma Fairweather, Dunedin, provided genealogical information. I am grateful to Professor Fitzpatrick for bringing this collection to my attention.

⁵ The names 'Edmund' and 'Edward' were used interchangeably for both father and son in a variety of records, but for the purposes of this profile 'Edmund' is applied to Lysaght senior.

meanwhile, reveals him to be a determined man with deep affection for his colonial family. The Lysaght series is particularly revealing for highlighting the collision between individual and collective interests as well as illuminating a range of other obligations relating to inheritance and marriage practices.

Edward Lysaght was born in about 1840.⁶ His father Edmund occupied a house and 22 acres of land valued at £17 5s per annum at will⁷ at Clogher, 'a stony place', in the civil parish of Doon.⁸ Edmund's generally 'clayey arable'⁹ land, the largest holding in Clogher, fetched the second highest valuation of the townland's ten householders. Around 1847 Edmund's holdings were consolidated, a practice considered 'advantageous to the property and to the occupier left upon the land, as he has been placed in a more comfortable position'.¹⁰ Three years after the Primary Valuation in 1847, it was recommended that the 'P^h of Doon which is generally mountain land & let low - 3^s per £ ought to be taken from Sheckleton's valuⁿ of this P^h as I think he was rather sharp on that kind of land & as it fell greatly in value these latter years.'¹¹ The recommendation was upheld by the Superintendent, J B Greene Esq.

The Lysaght household, consisting of Edmund, his wife Mary Hayes, and their three children, Edward, William, and Ellen provided five of the 38 people inhabiting

⁶ Due to the incomplete Catholic parish registers for Doon and Cappamore, the baptisms of Edward and his sister have not been traced. However, the baptism of William Lysaght appears in the parish registers for Doon on 27 April 1847.

⁷ Tenure Book in NAI, 6.0352.

⁸ Edmund's parents may have been Michael Lysaght and Catherine Matthew of Lissowen. This speculation is based on the residence of William Lysaght also at Clogher, presumably Edmund's brother, who named his first-born son and daughter Michael and Catherine. Parish registers for Doon also show Terence and James Lysaght at Clogher. A Lysaght family tree contains no details of this branch of the family. See MacLysaght Miscellany, GO 527, Genealogical Office, Dublin.

⁹ Valuation Field Book in IVO.

¹⁰ Devon Commission, testimony 614, pp. 723-7 (Q19), in HCP, 1845 [Cd 616], xx.

¹¹ Duffy's recommendation on 19 November 1850 is contained in the Rent Book of Coonagh in NAI, 5.3713.

Clogher's six houses in 1851 and 1861. Ten years later the population had fallen to 21. Among those whose departure during the 1860s contributed to this decrease was Edward Lysaght who, on 4 November 1862, was among 365 passengers sailing from Gravesend for Auckland on the *Gertrude*.¹² The ship was the fourth vessel chartered to bring non-conformist settlers to the colony as part of the Albertland Settlement Scheme established in 1861.¹³ On the evening of 9 February 1863, after a journey of 97 days, the *Gertrude* came 'into port in a very cleanly and creditable condition in every respect'.¹⁴ However, poor organisation meant that many did not continue on to Port Albert but remained in Auckland instead. Edward elected to stay in Auckland and commenced work as a sawyer.

Edward Lysaght's motives for migration remain elusive but declining opportunities in Limerick and assistance to the colony in the form of the Albertland Settlement Scheme, in which paying migrants received land in the colony, possibly influenced his decision.¹⁵ Although it was a retrospective comment, William accused Edward in 1869 that 'You chose to take your chances in Newzealand and left us - and therefore lost all right to anything we had. I stuck to my father at both sides of the world and gained by doing so while you lost by leaving him' (2h). William's remarks reveal that both brothers made conscious, deliberate decisions. Initially, however, it appears that Edward's migration was a collective strategy for in May 1864 Edward's parents, brother William, and aunt Rosanna Hayes, arrived in the colony on board the *Statesman* which sailed from Gravesend on 1

¹² He is returned as 'Edmond' on the ship's passenger list and 'Edmund' on his marriage certificate but in other records is listed as 'Edward'.

¹³ So named in memory of the consort of Queen Victoria. The scheme was the closest Auckland came to having immigration of a distinctive character. See Sir Henry Brett and Henry Hook, *The Albertlanders: Brave Pioneers of the Sixties* (Christchurch, 1979).

¹⁴ *Daily Southern Cross*, 11 February 1863, p. 3.

¹⁵ He is probably the 'Edmund Lysart' who held 40 acres of land at Whangarei valued at £20 in 1882.

January 1864.¹⁶ Commanded by Captain Frederick Marshall and owned by George Marshall, the vessel pulled in to Nelson due to a short supply of water before proceeding to Auckland.¹⁷ Despite a ‘weary protracted voyage’, the vessel came ‘in to port in a clean and creditable condition’.¹⁸ The Lysaghts seemingly made the acquaintance of James Ryan and Bridget Harrigan¹⁹ during the voyage for both are mentioned in the letters (3c). The year of the Lysaghts’ arrival, 1864, saw Auckland’s population reach 42,122, almost double the population of the previous Census taken three years earlier.

A month before his family’s arrival, Edward Lysaght married Irishwoman Maria Callaghan at St Patrick’s Cathedral in Auckland.²⁰ Their union on 14 April 1864 was witnessed by James O’Neill, subject of the following profile.²¹ Edward’s friendship with James probably developed due to the recent arrival of both men, their Limerick origin, and their Catholicism.

William Lysaght, his parents, and aunt stayed only a short time in New Zealand for by mid-1865 they were settling on land at Pallasbeg in Doon parish. As the Lysaghts were returning, emigration was continuing from Limerick. According to William, ‘There are a great number leaving this country for Australia and other places. In fact very few people are here now’ (1e). William’s sister Ellen, with Catherine and Patrick Lysaght, possibly cousins, were among those departing Doon. They arrived in Auckland in February 1865 on board the *Ernestina*.

¹⁶ The Valuation Revision Books at IVO indicate that the land at Clogher was relinquished in 1864.

¹⁷ It was concluded that an enquiry should be held as all vessels were obliged to have a 150-day supply of water. See *New Zealand Herald*, 7 May 1864, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 3.

¹⁹ The passenger list returns her surname as ‘Hourigan’, *ibid*, p. 3.

²⁰ Maria’s death certificate indicates that she was born in Ireland in about 1838.

²¹ The other witness, Margaret Hobbs, was mentioned in the Lysaght letters. James O’Neill and Maria’s sister, Margaret Callaghan, sponsored the Lysaght’s first child, William, born on 13 October 1865.

The first surviving letter in the Lysaght series was sent to Edward in 1866. It contained an announcement from William that ‘We have taken 42 acres of M^r Atkinsons land about a week ago. We have all the College Land he had’ (1c).²² Edmund Lysaght’s holding in the townland of Knocknacarriga, which contained the residence for the Anglican clergy of Doon,²³ was valued at £28 in 1869. When Edmund took occupancy, it was the third largest holding but with the second highest valuation. He also held land in the neighbouring townlands of Gortnagarde and Ballycoshown valued annually at £1 and £12 respectively.²⁴

The letters reveal that the Lysaghts carried out tillage and livestock farming. Their herd of twelve cows at Pallasbeg increased to twenty upon relocation to Knocknacarriga (1h). Four years after this move, several cows and pigs worth £50 died. Landholders of between 30 and 50 acres in the Coonagh barony also had a significant interest in pigs and may have suffered similar losses in 1870 as Edmund did (3b). Despite the reliance on livestock, crops remained vital but were subjected to the vagaries of the climate. As 1872 drew to a close, Edmund complained, ‘This was a wet and a bad year here. It is continually raining. We have no potatoes and other crops were equally bad’ (7c). The Agricultural Statistics reveal that, besides potatoes, farmers such as the Lysaghts probably had a significant barley crop.²⁵

²² Thomas Atkinson died in 1865. The College Land refers to the Governors of Erasmus Smiths Schools who were the immediate lessors.

²³ The Glebe was reputedly built in 1808 by Revd. Richard Chadwick at the expense of £700. The townland of Knocknacarriga remained in the parish of Doon until 1973 at which time it became part of the Cappamore parish. See Cappamore Historical Society, Cappamore: A Parish History (Middleton, 1992), p. 173.

²⁴ Possibly he is the Edward Lysaght holding land at Gortavalla South which was transferred in 1866.

²⁵ Agricultural Statistics of Ireland for the year 1871, pp. 497, 596, in HCP, 1873 [C. 762], lxix.

Though William boasted that ‘I can mow pretty well now’ (2e), he also depicted himself as a sickly soul: ‘I am strong and healthy looking as ever but only in appearance so that which constitutes life is wasting slowly but surely away’ (4b). Consequently, he steered clear of marriage as ‘Anything in that line would put me out of the world in a short time’ (4c). Despite his protests, on 12 May 1871 at Limerick’s Catholic Cathedral, 24-year-old William Lysaght married Mary Crowe, ‘a young woman without fortune’ (5b). Mary’s father William, a blacksmith, was dead.²⁶ William Lysaght’s union with Mary Crowe infuriated Edmund who undoubtedly harboured prospects of his son marrying a woman with substantial assets. In a challenge to his father, William threatened to emigrate to America. Despite Edmund’s initial fury, ‘He cooled down in a little’ (5b) and the newly weds went to live with him. Prior to his marriage William had claimed that ‘Our name must not run out here ... and it is with regret I say that there is no chance of my lifting a few young Lysaghts’ (2b). His remark proved incorrect as the couple produced at least six children between 1872 and 1884. William’s concern for the family name may have been influenced by the murder of his cousin, ‘the only one of our name ever taken so short. Never mind the time is fast appro[*a*]ching when those cursed fellows will be wiped out’ (2c). Without knowledge of where and in what circumstances William’s cousin was murdered,²⁷ it is difficult to confirm just who ‘those cursed fellows’ were.

Four months after his marriage, William commented somewhat less dramatically on his mother’s ‘happy and contented death’ at 60 years of age (5a). He boasted that the funeral was characterised by ‘20 gallons of Whiskey. Kept up the old style’ (5d). Suffering from bronchitis for about five months, Mary Lysaght was attended by the Sisters

²⁶ William Crowe, a widowed labourer, died 24 March 1866 of inflammation of the bowels.

²⁷ No mention of this murder appears in Irish civil registers or the Return of Outrages between 1863-70. Likewise, New Zealand death indexes do not record such an entry.

of Mercy from 'the beautiful convent now in Doon in Father Hickeys place. He left all his money to them and to some Monks who have now finished their buildings in Doon' (5a).²⁸

The letters indicate that Edward Lysaght repeatedly sought financial assistance from his father and brother. Possibly, it was knowledge of Edmund's relocation to Knocknacarriga that sparked Edward's request for aid as the holding was twice the size and value of the Clogher land. Although Edward's father initially promised him £150, this offer was subsequently withdrawn. Several reasons, including debt and loss of livestock, were offered by Edmund as an excuse (3b). Edmund also dismissed Edward's suggestion that the land be partitioned: 'As for dividing this farm tis not be thought of. Neither would it be allowed' (3b). William also contributed to the debate. He claimed that Edward 'would spend it in a few months and then be as bad as ever' (4a). Ultimately, Edmund and William sought Edward's return though William claimed that such action was 'speaking against my own interest' (2b, 2g).

By 1872, his patience exhausted, his 'disagreeable' letters having no effect, and frustrated at being 'put off from time to time', Edward Lysaght returned to Limerick to 'take something handsome back with me' (2g, 5b, 6d). During his return visit Edward fulfilled a variety of obligations which included contacting relatives of Irish migrants in Auckland (6c). Even though Edward gained substantial financial support from his return, it culminated in a public display of violence between Edward and William. As Edmund rued, 'when you came home you gave me the greatest scandel and beat your brother in *in* presence of the publick' (8c). This incident clearly agitated Edmund who declared, 'As it was the will of our Saviour to bless me with to [*two*] sons I was not blessed by them and I

²⁸ Patrick Hickey, who died 25 July 1864, left his farm and money for the establishment of a Christian Brothers School founded in 1874 and also a convent in 1865. See Dún Bleisce: A History (Doon, 1990), p. 169, and the Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1864 [345], in NAI.

cant see what they have done for them selves. The took there own advice and as the done so let them have the benifit of it' (8b). Consequently, Edmund indicated that neither son would 'handle one pound of my industry untill my departing in this world' (8d). He decided that 'If I have anything worth while when I am dying I will manage it as I can see which of the two of ye are deserving of it' (8d). Despite the threat, Edmund transferred his various holdings at Knocknacarriga, Gortnagarde, and Ballycoshown to William in 1884. Twelve years later, at 82 years of age, Edmund Lysaght died.²⁹ Although the land at Ballycoshown was relinquished in 1890, the Gortnagarde holding was kept on until 1906. However, William has not been traced in the 1901 Census for Doon and his subsequent life has so far evaded detection.

Edward Lysaght's short visit to Limerick in 1872 had dividends of £150 plus his return passage on board the *City of Auckland* which left East India Docks on 29 May 1872 with 242 Government immigrants. When it docked in the colony 88 days later it was termed 'the fastest passage of the season'. Though no passengers died, the chief officer fell overboard and failed to recover after being lifted back on board.³⁰ The year prior to the vessel's arrival, Auckland's population had reached 62,335 of which the Irish-born contributed 14.12 per cent.

Between 1865 and 1880, Edward and Maria 'lifted' seven children, two of whom died young. The Lysaghts lived at Durham Street, their continuous residence until a few years before their death. The parish records reveal Edward's kinship ties with his sister Ellen and his presumed cousins Patrick and Catherine Lysaght, as well as county connections with the O'Neills. Edward is returned as a labourer throughout his life although in 1891 when his pregnant daughter Mary Anne sought relief from the Auckland

²⁹ His death on 9 March 1896 is registered as Edward Lysaght.

³⁰ New Zealand Herald, 4 September 1872, p. 4.

Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, she stated that he was a sumper on the wharf.³¹ Her application also indicates that the domestic discord so prevalent in Edward's relations with his kin in Ireland appears to also have emerged in Auckland with Mary Anne alleging that her mother, Maria, was a 'Drunken old Prostitute'.³² In addition, dissension disrupted Edward's wider network. As William contemplated, 'there must be some mistake between yourself and Patsy Lysaght if he reacted as you said' (4f). William reserved particularly scathing comments for Patrick and Catherine: 'Is it not an awful shame to say that Patsy or Kitty dont write. The three of them have their mother working for Her living now in her old age. If they had the least shame in them they would not allow such a thing' (2i). In condemning the failure of Patrick and Catherine to perform their filial duty, William was also highlighting his own adherence to such obligations.

William's prediction that the money would only sustain Edward for a short time (2b) proved accurate. Following a period of financial instability, Edward and Maria entered the Costley Home where Edward, 'beloved husband of Maria Lysaght, and only brother of Mrs P. Bartley',³³ died on 3 April 1903 aged 63. Just seven months later, at 65 years of age, Maria passed away. She was buried beside Edward at Waikumete Cemetery. Two years later Edward's sister Ellen Bartley, suffering from diabetes, died aged 61.

The Lysaght sequence indicates that although Edward's migration appears to have been the first stage in a collective undertaking, he asserted his individual rights in refusing to return to Limerick. How did the experience of fellow Limerick native James O'Neill compare?

³¹ The phrase probably indicates that Edward worked in a sump in which seawater was collected for the extraction of salt rather than working on a cess-pool.

³² Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board Applications for Relief, 7 December 1891, YCAB A493/65, p. 804, in NAA.

³³ Auckland Star, 4 April 1903, p. 8.

'I hope this winter will send him where he can light his pipe

with the top of his finger':

The O'Neill Correspondence, 1863

As with Edward Lysaght, James O'Neill arrived in Auckland in the early 1860s and his sole surviving letter, sent to his brother Thomas, also reveals household dissension: 'I got a letter from Patt. He complains how he is treated by his father but I dont wonder at it from the treatment I got after spending my whole life I might say, in doing everything that I possibly could for the ruffian. I hope this winter will send him where he can light his pipe with the top of his finger' (1m).³⁴ James's letter also indicates that his sister Theresa was troublesome. As he informed Thomas, 'The youngster is getting to be a good girl ... We called her Theresa so if she takes after her aunt I suppose she will be a saucy customer' (1b). James also expressed his sorrow 'that Theresa is going on in such a way as Patt complains' (1n). Besides documenting household havoc in Limerick, James's letter relates details of conflict between Maori and colonial forces. His meticulously inscribed letter also provides a thoughtful, reflective account of conditions in Auckland and reveals James to be a responsible, ambitious man.

James O'Neill was born in about 1822, probably at Broad Street in the parish of St. John's, to James O'Neill and Bridget Kennedy.³⁵ Approximately twenty years later, the family moved to Brunswick Street in Prior's Land in the parish of St. Michael's.³⁶ James

³⁴ The original letter was kindly provided by Peter O'Sullivan, Belfast, and is now in my possession.

³⁵ Baptisms between 1798-1825 and marriages between 1798-1821 are missing from St. John's parish registers. Consequently, the marriage of James and Bridget and the baptisms of their children Thomas, James, and Patrick are not listed. However, the surviving records list the remaining children of this couple. The Tithe Applotment Book for St. John's is not deposited.

³⁶ Brunswick Street is now Sarsfield Street. See Gerry Joyce, *Limerick City Street Names* (Limerick, 1995), p. 19.

O'Neill Senior promptly converted the building, originally the Stein Distillery, into a coach factory and built a new house beside it.³⁷ Valued annually at £80 in the mid-1850s, the property's value declined until it rated only half that amount in 1862. 'This locality is decreasing in importance and value', explained the surveyor. A notation made four years later indicated that the premises was 'A large badly lighted concern & not all used.'³⁸

Apart from renting his coach factory premises, James O'Neill Senior was the immediate lessor of several other neighbouring properties. A house over the coach factory, containing '8 small rooms and bad Kitchens', proved difficult to rent. In 1856 the Valuer noted that it 'has never been occupied nor quite finished yet. He cannot get a Tenant for it.' Two years later, O'Neill complained that the high valuation prevented him from leasing the premises. The property eventually passed to Isabella Sherlock in 1864 and James became the tenant. Another house over part of the coach factory remained vacant while the dilapidated condition of a store and kiln was reflected in its valuation which fell from £8 to £5.³⁹ Presumably James was commenting on the combined holdings when he remarked from Auckland that 'If the place in Brunswick S¹ was here they would be at least £4,000, a year got out of it' (1j).

James O'Neill Senior died in 1867 at 72 years of age. He was buried at Mount St. Laurence Cemetery and his personal estate was valued for probate at between £3,000 and £4,000.⁴⁰ His wife, Bridget, had died in 1865 after a year's illness aged 76. Thomas

³⁷ James O'Neill appears in the 1844 rate book for St. Michael's Parish. Comparison with an earlier rate book suggests that his coach factory was converted from the Stein Distillery as the preceding and subsequent entries in both rate books are the same.

³⁸ These descriptions and valuations are in the Valuation Revision Books at IVO.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ James O'Neill's death is not registered in the civil records. I am therefore grateful to Dr. Chris O'Mahony, former director of the Limerick Archives, who provided me with details of James's death (4 May 1867) based on the burial records of Mount St. Laurence which are computerised at Limerick Archives. See Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1867 [345], in NAI.

appears to have benefited from James's will for in 1870 he replaced Isabella Sherlock as immediate lessor of the various properties in Brunswick Street which remained in Thomas's possession until 1901. Despite this, the family has not been traced in Census schedules.

Though family disharmony possibly spurred James's departure to New Zealand in 1862, as an accomplished wheelwright he may also have migrated in search of greater employment opportunities. That economic considerations were important is suggested by his several references to employment in the colony. His selection of Auckland may have arisen due to war in America and the bait of free colonial land grants for in 1882 James was returned as occupier of 180 acres of land at Whangarei valued at £280.

Whatever his motives, in August 1862 James, with his newly acquired wife Bridget Ryan of Pallasbeg⁴¹, sailed from Liverpool on the White Star ship *Shalimar* which was making its second voyage to New Zealand under the command of Commander Harley. The ship arrived in Auckland via Melbourne on 20 December 1862. The O'Neills, along with James and Eliza Kennedy (possibly relatives), were among the 106 second and third class passengers. Their arrival generated a positive colonial response: 'We are glad to find that so many desirable immigrants have arrived at this particular time, when labour is in such demand.'⁴²

At the time of the O'Neills' arrival, Auckland was virtually a garrison town where imperial and colonial troops awaited orders to launch a military campaign against the Maori in the Waikato region, south of the town. This military character had characterised the town since the mid-1840s when 2,500 soldiers were despatched to Auckland.

⁴¹ Bridget was possibly the daughter of Patrick Ryan and Mary Kiely and baptised 1 November 1835. Pallasbeg is in the parish of Tuogh, County Limerick.

⁴² Daily Southern Cross, 22 December 1862, p. 3.

Comprised of several hundred Fencibles, the contingent was assisted to the country between 1847 and 1849 both as settlers and as a defence force. Many of these soldiers and their families originated from Ireland⁴³ which gave Auckland a distinctive Irish character. Indeed, ten years prior to the O'Neills' arrival, natives of Ireland accounted for 31 per cent of Auckland's population.⁴⁴ In common with other adult males in Auckland, James O'Neill underwent compulsory enlistment and was most probably in the Second Class of Militia comprised of business and tradespeople. He was trained and then posted on 'night duty one night each week and not to be sent out of the town' (1c).

Composed eight months after his arrival, James's letter indicates that he readily found work. However, the constant stream of migrants, coupled with the threat of a Maori attack, was not entirely conducive to James's plans. He therefore awaited the end of the conflict when 'it will be easier for me to get a place to do some business for myself' (1j). He was confident of his own ability: 'If I had a place fit for it I know I would do as well as others' (1j).

The letter gives little indication of the social network James O'Neill moved in but Limerick connections did generate comment. As such, his general remarks on the conflict at Rangiriri and Meremere was followed by specific mention that 'Lieut Murphy 12th Reg^t that was killed is from about Clarina. He might be a son of the coroners. Cap^t Mercer artillery was in Lim^k along time. They prevented him giving orders. A ball cut the tongue

⁴³ It is estimated that just under 65% were Irish. See E. D. MacFarlan, Military Pensioners in Auckland: A Reappraisal of the Royal New Zealand Fencibles (MA, University of Auckland, 1981), p. 44.

⁴⁴ Natives of Ireland provided 2,871 of Auckland's total population of 8,840. See C. G. F. Simkin (ed.), Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period, 1840-1852 (Auckland, 1954), Table 4, p. 12.

out of him and broke his jaw' (1g).⁴⁵ However, the New Zealand Gazette, published on the day of James's composition, revealed that Mercer's wound was 'Dangerous (since dead).'⁴⁶ James also struck up an acquaintance with fellow Limerick native Edward Lysaght and witnessed Edward's marriage in April 1864. James was also godfather to one of Edward's children as was Patrick O'Neill, possibly James's brother. And, when Edward Lysaght voyaged back to Limerick in 1872, he wrote home requesting that his wife 'tell Bridget O'Neill that I / have seen her father and mother. They are well' (Ly 6c).

The life histories of James's siblings remain unknown though possibly his brothers Patrick and Thomas voyaged to the colony for they appear as godfathers at the baptisms of his children. They may have been lured by James's positive portrayal of conditions for coachsmiths and painters (1l). James remained wary, however, about Patrick's drinking habits: 'If Patt had not constant work in Lim^k I am shure he would do well here provided he would keep from drink' (1l).

Alcohol and the threat of a Maori attack were not the only dangers in Auckland. Fire also posed a menace due to Auckland's many wooden buildings (1d). Children were also susceptible to disease and illness and when James O'Neill, 'carpenter', died as a result of chronic disorder of the kidney and bladder at 72 years of age on 14 April 1893 at Costley Street, only six of his offspring were alive. The loss of 'his 8 infant children' is

⁴⁵ James Belich notes that 'the 12th, whose part in the battle is rarely referred to by historians, suffered higher proportionate losses than any other unit involved.' See James Belich, The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict (Auckland, 1998; 1st edn. 1986), p. 149.

⁴⁶ New Zealand Gazette, 30 November 1863, p. 515. Mercer's brother, Capt. A. H. H. Mercer, published books maligning General Cameron. See the biography of Cameron in W. H. Oliver (ed.), New Zealand Dictionary of Biography, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1990), p. 66.

recorded on the O'Neill tombstone at Symonds Street Cemetery.⁴⁷ Upon his death, James left 100 acres of land at Whangarei to Mary Sheehan with the remainder of his estate to be divided between 'my wife Bridget and all my children by her.'⁴⁸

Bridget O'Neill lived on for a further 25 years until her death at 81 years of age on 4 October 1918. Her will, made only six weeks before, left her estate valued at just under £400 to her son James. As Bridget was 'incapable through illness of writing her name' she made her mark. Her bequests may have been contested, for following Bridget's death her daughter Theresa Lanigan provided an affidavit affirming that her mother was in 'full possession of her mental facilities ... and that she had full knowledge of the contents.'⁴⁹

Despite a shared Catholic Limerick origin, emigration at approximately the same time, settlement in Auckland, and household disharmony, James O'Neill prospered while fellow Limerick expatriate Edward Lysaght languished as a labourer. This contrast in colonial careers is replicated by the experience of the Catholic Quinn brothers from Newry.

'He dos not reconise mee as a Brother':

The Quinn Correspondence, 1903-1906

'They had come half way around the globe, only to be worlds apart' is Donald Akenson's perceptive summary of William and Patrick Quinn's migration.⁵⁰ The five

⁴⁷ Work on the Southern Motorway claimed two-thirds of the Catholic cemetery and by 1968 approximately 4,100 graves had been disinterred. Memorials erected in the Catholic and Anglican sections of the cemetery record the marked graves disturbed during the works. Fortunately, the O'Neill headstone survived and now lies flat, encased in cement, with half a dozen other surviving stones.

⁴⁸ The Will of James O'Neill, 1418, in NAA, BBAE 1569.

⁴⁹ The Will of Bridget O'Neill and Affidavit of Theresa Lanigan, 12499, in NAA, BBAE 1569. No duty was payable on estates valued at under £500.

⁵⁰ Akenson, 'Reading the Texts', p. 397.

letters sent by the brothers from New Zealand⁵¹ not only depict the strain between them but reveal the vastly divergent scale of their progress in the colony. Whereas younger brother William Quinn achieved substantial financial success, his older gumdigging brother barely made a living. Their surviving letters from New Zealand, legible but with irregular spelling, were composed when the brothers were in their sixties.

Patrick Quinn was baptised in the Catholic parish of Newry in March 1836⁵², the oldest child of Bernard Quinn and Eliza Cunningham who had married in the parish ten months earlier. William, their third child, was born four years later while John Quinn, the major recipient of their letters, was born in 1843. A further two children were born in the parish before the family relocated to Bessbrook in County Armagh prior to 1852. Once there, two more children were born. Unfortunately, the family has not been traced in the landholding records.

Eighteen-year-old William Quinn arrived in Auckland in 1859 on the *Whirlwind* which was making its one and only voyage to the colony. The barque carried 40 saloon passengers and 200 immigrants who availed of its 'splendid accommodation'.⁵³ Three years later on 28 June 1863, William's brother Patrick, aged 27, arrived on board the *War Spirit*. The journey was relatively uneventful except for the death of a German 'during a fearful gale of wind'. As the ship lurched, hen-coops and pig-pens fell on the unfortunate migrant causing fatal injuries.⁵⁴

⁵¹ The Quinn letters are in PRONI, T 1552/1-14. The letters sent from New Zealand are item numbers 10-14.

⁵² In his application for his pension, Patrick's date of birth is given as 24 June 1834. See Record Book, Old Age Pension Claim Register, BADC ACC 497/63, Claim No. 101, in NAA.

⁵³ Brett, *White Wings*, vol. 2, p. 158.

⁵⁴ *Daily Southern Cross*, 29 June 1863, p. 3.

Little is known of the colonial careers of the Quinns but surviving letters sent in the 1890s from William in Australia to his mother 'living with strangers' at 37 Cyprus Street, Falls Road, in Belfast, indicates that he made several trips across the Tasman Sea.⁵⁵ By 1903 he was back in New Zealand, probably for medical reasons. As he told Patrick in 1905, 'I had to lave australia as it was too hot for my Leg. The Doctors said I had better go to a colder country' (2b). As a result of his injury, William claimed to 'walk with a stick but very lame' (4b). His brother Patrick had also suffered a leg injury for in 1882 he spent over a month in hospital due to a wounded leg.⁵⁶

In contrast with William's repeated migrations across the Tasman Sea, Patrick was a gumdigger, allegedly 'the last refuge of the waster and the failure', in Dargaville which, during the period of the correspondence, was the second largest urban settlement in Northland.⁵⁷ Gumdigging, a method to collect gum (or resin) from the kauri tree to produce high quality varnish, provided a form of social security for the elderly before and after the introduction of the pension. Patrick Quinn certainly endorses this as in 1900, when the extractive gum industry peaked, he applied for and was granted a pension of £18.⁵⁸ Three years later he admitted that 'onley for the pension I wood bee verry badley of' (1b).

⁵⁵ Patrick O'Farrell briefly discusses William Quinn's Australian career in Letters from Irish Australia, pp. 54-5.

⁵⁶ Auckland Provincial Hospital Admission and Discharge Book, 1870-86, vol. 1-2, ZAAP A475/2, p. 191, in NAA.

⁵⁷ Alan Mulgan, 'Literature and Landscape in New Zealand', in New Zealand Geographer, vol. 2, no. 1, April 1946, p. 198; Colin P. D. Regan, 'The Distribution and Character of the Population of Northland 1874, 1906, and 1926: Three Essays in Historical Population Geography' (MA, University of New Zealand, 1959), p. 55.

⁵⁸ Patrick's claim was received on 27 March 1900 and his pension certificate was granted eight months later. See Record Book, Old Age Pension Claim Register, BADC ACC 497/63, in NAA. The Minute Book Old Age Pension, BADC ACC A497/64, p. 101, contains references as to Patrick's character, considered good, and confirmation of his age. The Old Age Pension Certificate Register, BADC ACC 497/67, p. 1, records Patrick's death.

Patrick's brother William reinforced the significance of the pension in a letter home in 1906 claiming that Patrick 'is doing very well. He gets 10 shillings per week old age pension. He can live well on it as food is cheap' (4b). The pension was restricted to the destitute so long as such destitution had not arisen from the recipient's behaviour. Such a stipulation undoubtedly generated William's terse communications surrounding Patrick's drinking habits. As such, when their nephew Robert Jenkins voyaged to the colony, William considered that he should avoid visiting Patrick as this visit might lead to a drinking binge which could affect Patrick's pension rights.

William's disapproval of Patrick's drinking habits appears to have been the reason for the brothers' emotional distance from each other. In 1903 Patrick complained that 'William never writes to mee But I heard he was in Auckland. He dos not Reconise mee as a Brother' (1d). Patrick therefore urged John to 'Writte soon and let mee know if William is in Auckland' (1e). Two years later Patrick made contact with William and received a courteous response in which William mentioned 'I might come and see you if my Leg gets better' (2c). Five months later, in January 1906, a clearly aggrieved Patrick Quinn told John in Belfast of William's plans, 'But he hassent com nor has he answered my letter. I dont know what to think of it' (3a).

William and Patrick Quinn's letters give only a fleeting glimpse into their social networks. Acquaintances of William's enquired after Patrick and John, while Patrick referred to meeting Edwin Mitchelson⁵⁹ (2c, 4b). Patrick also met Fr. Marcus McGrath:

⁵⁹ In addition to being a mill-owner and timber-merchant at Dargaville, Mitchelson was a former member of the House of Representatives and a Minister for Public Works. See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2 (Christchurch, 1902), pp. 108, 624-5.

‘Wee had a roman Catholick Priest here a month or 6 weeks befor Christmas the rev Father Maggrah. He is on a mission. He is from Deerry in the North of Ireland’ (3e).⁶⁰

Unlike Patrick, William had accumulated a significant amount of money and sent frequent remittances home. From Auckland in 1906, for instance, William sent £110 back to his family in Ireland. The money was undoubtedly welcomed by his brother John Quinn who resided at 130 Leeson Street, Belfast, with his wife and eight children ranging in age from two to nineteen years. Though at times unemployed, in 1901 John was a flax dresser and inhabited a second class house with four rooms and two front windows. The district was overwhelmingly Catholic and predominantly female. His sister Lizzie, meanwhile, was living in a predominantly Presbyterian area at Station Road in Larne, County Antrim. She had married monumental sculptor Alexander Jenkins and resided in a second class house with six rooms and five front windows. The loss of a son in 1894 was viewed by William as a blow as ‘he was just getting to be useful’.⁶¹ Seven years later the Jenkins’s 13-year-old son Robert, a stone cutter, was probably assisting Alexander before following in the footsteps of his uncles to New Zealand. From Auckland in 1907, William Quinn reported that Robert was ‘in constent work and getting good wages’ (5d).

Despite William’s warnings, Robert Jenkins did make contact with Patrick for when Patrick Quinn, ‘bushman’, died at 73 years of age⁶² on 29 September 1909 Robert

⁶⁰ Fr. Marcus McGrath was one of several Redemptorist Fathers travelling throughout New Zealand giving missions in parishes, schools, and other Church institutions around Wellington and Northland. After a period in Ballarat he returned to New Zealand and died in 1920 at the Wellington monastery in Oriental Bay. I am grateful to Fr. Bruce Bolland, ACDA, for this information which appears in P. B. Kearney, *‘Plentiful Redemption’: The Redemptorists in New Zealand, 1883-1983* (Auckland, 1997).

⁶¹ William Quinn (Perth) to his sister Eliza Jenkins (Larne), 27 May 1895, in PRONI, T 1552/4.

⁶² His death certificate cites his age as 74.

was the informant. Patrick appears to have died penniless and without ever, it seems, having been reconciled with his more affluent brother.

Unlike another nephew whom William Quinn criticised for addressing 'his letters in such a un business like manner' (5c), Robert Jenkins was considered by his uncle to be 'a very good boy' (5d). Robert seemingly remained on good terms with his uncle for when William Cunningham Quinn died on 15 April 1916, Robert was one of the beneficiaries. Aged 75, William left a substantial estate valued at between £5,000 and £6,000. His original will, dated 9 December 1915, bequeathed £100 plus 'my watches watch chains and personal clothing' to his nephew Robert Sullivan Jenkins. The remainder was to be sold with the proceeds going to John Quinn or his children at Belfast. In March 1916, however, a codicil was added that increased Robert's receipt to £200 and left £25 each to the Little Sisters of the Poor and the Superioress of St Mary's Convent. Another £25 was left to the Catholic Bishop 'for benefit of such poor orphan or destitute children attending the school established at the "Pa Farm" at Hillsborough Onehunga.' A further £25 was to be remitted to the Revd. Fr. Paul Francis Kehoe, parish priest of Cloughbawn, Clonroche, County Wexford 'for the purpose of saying Masses for the repose of my soul.'⁶³

Two days after his death, William Cunningham Quinn was buried at Waikumete Cemetery.⁶⁴ His headstone provides a lasting testimony to his date of arrival in Auckland and his place and date of birth.

⁶³ The Will of William Cunningham Quinn, 10628, in NAA, BBAE 1569.

⁶⁴ William Quinn's grave is in Area 3, Block 5, Lot 99a.

'No use for me to be depending on ye':

The Keane Correspondence, 1886-1921

As with the Quinn brothers, two members of the Keane family, Mary and Bridget, elected to settle in New Zealand. Mary received eleven letters between 1886 and 1921 from her siblings in Waterford, London, and Chicago.⁶⁵ Her sister Kate penned seven flourishing letters while brothers Maurice and John penned two each. The Keane letters depict the dispersal of the Keane family throughout the world and the haphazard attempts to maintain sibling solidarity. They also contain signs of serious kin and neighbourhood strain with the later letters noteworthy for their discussion of conflict in Ireland and World War I. Whereas Maurice emerges as a reprimanding brother, John appears burdened. In contrast with her brothers, Kate is a bubbling correspondent.

At Ferry Point, looking across the bay towards Youghal, is the resting place of Matthew Keane, his wife Mary Anne Bayley, and three of their adult children. As recounted at the time of her father James's death in 1902, Kate Keane noted, 'They are buried in the churchyards at Ferry Point & theres no more room in the family vault' (5c). In 1833 Matthew Keane, James's grandfather, was returned as a substantial occupier of approximately 26 Irish acres at Shanacoole in the Clashmore civil parish. According to Lewis, the parish was divided between tillage and pastoral pursuits.⁶⁶ By approximately 1847 Matthew was the immediate lessor to several tenants.⁶⁷ Following Matthew's death in 1860, the Shanacoole holdings passed to his son James Everard Keane. His holding was valued at £9 per annum until 1872 at which time he was returned as the occupier of 44 acres worth £21 15s annually.

⁶⁵ Gary Walsh, Suedergellersen, Germany, kindly provided copies of the Keane letters.

⁶⁶ Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, vol. 1 (London, 1837), p. 337.

⁶⁷ Valuation Field Book (1847) in NAI, OL. 4. 3361.

Though nine children of Matthew Keane's have been identified from the combined Catholic registers for Clashmore and Kinsalebeg, it is unknown which son was the father of James Keane, father of the correspondents in this profile. The parentage of Johanna Curran⁶⁸, wife of James Keane, seems more certain. She was probably the daughter baptised in 1832 to John Curran and Margaret Kiely of Dungarvan. This couple had at least two further children: Laurence (1839) and Michael (1842). According to Kate Keane, her mother Johanna was born in 'the biggest farmhouse in the old parish' of Dungarvan (5d).

On 25 July 1858, James Keane and Johanna Curran married and six months later their first child, Mary Anne, was baptised. At that time, the family was resident at Ballinamultina in the civil parish of Clashmore. Johanna's father John may have been the John 'Curreen' occupying 106 acres at Ballinamultina in 1833 which received a tithe composition of £12 14s 1d.⁶⁹ James and Johanna Keane had two further children while resident at Ballinamultina, John and Bridget, born in 1860 and 1863, but by the time of Maurice's baptism in 1866, the family was living at Shanacoole. James Keane was probably a landless labourer working for his uncle.

On 23 August 1883 Bridget Keane, a 20-year-old housemaid, sailed to Otago on the *British Queen* at a cost of £20.⁷⁰ The arrival of her sister Mary has not been confirmed but it is possible that she arrived in 1879.⁷¹ Irrespective of her arrival, Mary was in the colony to witness Bridget's marriage at Dunedin on 14 November 1884 to Michael Harty, a native of Kerry. From Waterford, Maurice sought details of Bridget's spouse 'for there are many

⁶⁸ The surname was also rendered as Curreen.

⁶⁹ Tithe Applotment Book for Clashmore, NAI.

⁷⁰ IM 15/444, in NAW.

⁷¹ Mary may have been the 22-year-old general servant who arrived on board the *Invercargill* on 29 September 1879. See IM 15/357 at NAW. Alternatively, she may have paid her own passage to the colony.

heartys around here' (3a). Two and a half years later at Wellington, Mary married Walter Neville Victor Walsh. Bridget and Mary's departure from Shanacoole contributed to the townland's population loss of 10.8 per cent between 1881 and 1891, a decline slightly lower than the overall parish decline of 14.2 per cent. The Irish populations of Otago and Wellington in 1886 were 8.4 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively.

Maurice Keane's first two surviving letters to Mary placed several demands on his migrant sister, emphasising kin obligations. Mary was urged to assist their ailing mother, supply passages to James and John, and remit money for Maurice to purchase attire. Maurice threatened to 'forget you as my sister' if Mary refused to 'do something for us now' (3e). John also wrote to Mary requesting her to nominate him for a passage to New Zealand, send him a passage for America, or buy tools to allow him to work in Ireland 'but don't put your self out of the way for me' (2d). America was also the destination of Bridget Connell who, according to John, emigrated to America to prevent her brother's marriage (2e). Maurice, on the other hand, indicated that she 'is gone to try & do for her father & family in a foreign land' (3c).

While the motives for Mary and Bridget's migration remain unknown, economic factors presumably played a role. Indeed, Maurice's request for the provision of John's passage was due to there being 'no work for him here' (1c). In addition, John's dalliance with a neighbour offended Maurice who claimed that John was 'a really show amongst the neighbours' (1c). He warned Mary to keep this information to herself for if John found out 'He might take & marry her at once then in order to vex us' (3e). Maurice was even more critical of his neighbours. He claimed that Kate Doyle 'is My biggest enemy & so are all the Doyles for I cant bear the sight of any of them' (3d) and 'Kate Hartnett & sister are my biggest enemies also. Every one hate them' (3f). His sister Kate could also be critical for

following her father's funeral in 1902, she brazenly declared, 'as you are aware we loathe any Keane except Fathers uncle James & his children' (5c).

James Keane died on 15 August 1902 at the Ballyheeny Workhouse⁷² from a tumour of the kidney. Kate consoled Mary by reporting that 'He was very happy & glad to die for he suffered great pain from kidney disease only 3 months ailing' (5b). James Keane was buried at Clashmore and Kate emphasised the large attendance at the funeral: 'rich & poor flocked to our Fathers funeral. People marvelled at the funeral. It was about 2 miles in length' (5c). Johanna Keane had 'Died suddenly by the Visitation of God'⁷³ on 20 May 1889 and was 'buried with her own people' in Dungarvan Churchyard (5d). Kate lovingly recalled her mother as 'certainly very handsome but since we have not a photo we must picture her dear old good face in our memories' (5b).

With Mary and Bridget in New Zealand, and brothers John and James in America, Kate Keane had sought work in London and found employment as a lady's maid. She contemplated joining John in America but elected to remain in London. Her choice appears to be a sound one for when John wrote to Mary from Chicago in 1910, after 25 years silence, he was critical of America as a place for raising children: 'This is a hard Country to raise children in. As soon as they come of age they have no more use for their Parents' (7b). One of his three children, Johanna, married a Protestant and the union caused ructions in the household. As Kate regretfully informed Mary, 'I dont think her mother's side are too good to her as when she married her Father was poisoned against her by those relatives' (11c). Kate endeavoured to bridge the divide between John and his

⁷² For a discussion of the workhouse in County Waterford see Christine Kinealy, 'The Workhouse System in County Waterford, 1838-1923', in William Nolan and Thomas P. Power (eds.), *Waterford History and Society* (Dublin, 1992), pp. 579-96.

⁷³ This remark appears on her death certificate.

daughter and philosophically mused, 'Our time on earth is but short & why not live in unity & at peace with every body' (8d).

Such words were replicated in 1918 when Kate mourned, 'It is a shame to think this war should be prolonged & homes made desolate' (10b). Both the households of Mary and Bridget were disrupted by the conflict with sons from both families enlisted in the army. Kate, who was married with three sons, expressed relief that they were too young to serve. Her husband, William Regan, worked at the Wimpole Street Post Office. Kate displayed concern for the education of her three sons and proudly boasted of their achievements (11b). She expressed a desire to take them on a trip to Ireland 'if there is peace on the land' (11e). Kate also reflected on events in Ireland in 1921 that disrupted the countryside, discussed in detail in Chapter 8. She rued, 'we are all making a mess of things but hope for brighter days' (11g). The letter is the last in the series. Though the fate of John, Maurice, and James Keane is unknown, Kate died in 1937.

On 1 November 1932 Mary Anne Walsh, 'A very old and highly respected resident of Petone', died 'after a long illness ... She was a charming old lady and by her straightforward and affable disposition won the trust and esteem of a host of friends. She was ever ready to help those in distress, and took a keen interest in the advancement and welfare of the town. She lived a good and useful life, and many today will regret her death.' As with her father, Mary's funeral 'was largely attended, the service at the graveside being most impressive.'⁷⁴ Bridget Harty died on 3 September 1937. She had twelve children alive at the time of her death ranging in age from 29 to 51 years. Bridget was buried two days later at the Southern Cemetery, Dunedin.

⁷⁴ Mary's obituary was kindly supplied by Gary Walsh.

*'I have Been an outcaste from you all':**The Lambert Correspondence, 1877-1925*

On 27 January 1860, eighteen-year-old Agnes Evelyn McNeice, single and pregnant, departed Liverpool on board the White Star line vessel the *Red Jacket*. The ship called at Melbourne before continuing on to Auckland where it was acclaimed as 'the finest merchant vessel which has ever come into New Zealand waters.'⁷⁵ Within five weeks of her arrival on 17 May, Agnes gave birth to a son whom she named James Francis Ferguson. According to family lore the father was a cousin of Agnes's. The circumstances of her departure, recollected seventeen years later, highlights the harshness of her enforced migration: 'I have Been an outcaste from you all But I forgive him that was the cause of it all as my father ought to have forgiven me' (1b).⁷⁶ Agnes's remark is not only the most forthright allusion to a personal event that sparked migration but it also illuminates the harsher aspects of family decision-making.

Agnes sent five letters from Auckland to her kin in County Antrim. Her half-sister Susan and Susan's daughter Alice were the recipients. Agnes probably penned the second and third letter while her husband Michael presumably wrote the first, more legible, letter. Other writers, including Agnes's daughter, penned the last two letters. Agnes also received one letter from her sister Isabella McNeice in Belfast. The letters sent by Agnes from Auckland to Antrim present an unfavourable depiction of colonial life. She emerges as a discouraged, troubled woman, with the circumstances of her departure, early widowhood, and absence of kinsfolk, presumably adding to her disenchantment.

⁷⁵ *Southern Cross*, 18 May 1860, p. 3.

⁷⁶ Copies of the Lambert letters and family photographs were kindly provided by Beverley Baird, Newtownabbey, County Antrim. A letter sent from Isabella McNeice to Agnes was kindly provided by Garry Lambert, Auckland, who also assisted with the background of Michael Augustus Lambert. Patrick and Helen Lambert, Warkworth, Auckland, also assisted with family information.



Fig 3 'I have three fine sons and one little Girl': The family of Agnes and Michael Lambert, with Michael's daughter from his first marriage, circa 1877 (Beverley Baird).

Irish and New Zealand sources reveal little of Agnes's background except that she was born in Belfast in 1842 and had sisters Mary, Margaret, and Isabella, all of whom apparently remained in Ireland. The recipient of Agnes's letters was her half-sister Susan Johnson, allegedly born at Parkgate. When Susan married John Jenkins in the Muckamore Presbyterian Church in 1851, her father was recorded as Bunting Johnson and her residence was Rathmore. According to family lore, John Jenkins worked on the Loughanmore estate at Dunadry. It is therefore possible that Agnes's parents were Thomas McNeice and Agnes Kilpatrick of Dunadry whose daughter Isabella Margaret was christened in the parish in 1844. The Johnson-McNeice link may therefore have resulted from Johnson's widow and Agnes's father marrying. Dunadry and Rathmore were townlands in the civil parish of Grange of Nilteen as was half the town of Parkgate; the other half being in the parish of Donegore. The proprietor of Parkgate Village was William Ferguson. In addition, the parish contained several mills and Isabella McNeice's letter from Belfast indicates that she worked in a mill.⁷⁷

Following her arrival in Auckland, Agnes McNeice became a live-in housekeeper for Michael Augustus Lambert, his wife, and their children. A native of Kilkenny, Michael had served with the 40th Regiment and had voyaged to New Zealand in 1859 following his discharge in Australia. After a brief stint as a policeman in Auckland, he became a carrier. In 1861 Michael's wife Isabella succumbed to consumption and on 12 October 1862 Agnes and Michael married at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Michael adopted Agnes's son James and during the next fourteen years the couple produced five children and adopted a son.

Agnes's first letter home in 1877 suggests an harmonious relationship with Michael's daughters from his first marriage: 'My oldest daughters are *are* all married and

⁷⁷ This information appears in Angélique Day, Patrick McWilliams, and Lisa English, Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland, vol. 35 (Belfast, 1996), pp. 102-3.

doing well. I have three fine sons and one little Girl. My husband is verry kind to me and keeps me well and the Girls are verry kind to me thank God for it' (1d). She despaired, however, that she had so quickly been forgotten: 'I dare say you have all forgotten me before now But if you thought half as much of me as I do about you you would have wrote Before now to know if I were dead or alive' (1b). Agnes also expressed remorse about her relationship with her father: 'My poor father is [*erased: I*] dead I know for I have Been dreaming about him so much. I Broke his heart But I hope he forgave me before he died' (1c). Despite Agnes's premonitions, her father was still alive, though time had seemingly mellowed him. As Isabella elatedly told Agnes, 'I cannot explain to you the joy & grief he experienced when he heard from you. He says he will die contented since he knows yoa are still alive' (2b). In forwarding Agnes's letter to her sisters in Belfast, Susan had seemingly followed Agnes's request to 'See all my sisters and tell them how glad I would Be to hear one word from any of them' (1c).

In December 1877 Michael Lambert was admitted to the Auckland Provincial Hospital where he was treated for contusion and discharged in February 1878.⁷⁸ Three years later he was dead. Thirty-five-year-old Agnes was compelled, as a widow with four children under fourteen years of age, to apply to the Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board due to 'want of employment'.⁷⁹ Confronted with financial instability, Agnes actively sought aid and in 1888 the St Vincent de Paul Society heard that she 'required assistance towards paying her rent ... and also some assistance towards starting a shop.'⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Auckland Provincial Hospital Admission and Discharge Book, A475/2, p. 108, in NAA.

⁷⁹ Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, A493/65, p. 241, in NAA.

⁸⁰ Minutes of St Vincent de Paul Society, cited in S. C. MacPherson, "'A Ready Made Nucleus of Degradation and Disorder'? A Religious and Social History of the Catholic Church and Community in Auckland, 1870-1910' (MA, University of Auckland, 1987), p. 27.

Two years later from Devonport, Agnes gloomily admitted, 'I am not Doing verry well at present as I am Doing nothing now as Bionus is very Bad and I have lost a Deal of noney' (4a). She also confessed to being lonely and sought family reunion: 'How I woud like some of you out here with me But I Dere say none of you woud come here. You are all to tighter and I am forgotten so I must live and Die alone' (4a). By 1900, possibly earlier, Agnes was back in Auckland City carrying out domestic duties and in January 1906 she spent fifteen days in hospital with chronic bronchitis.⁸¹

Though observing that New Zealand 'is a good country' Agnes warned that it 'is not much of a place unless you have plenty of money' (1c, 1d). Her struggle and loneliness probably stimulated her to contemplate returning to Ireland. As she speculated in 1890, 'I am think of caoming home soun as I can' (4b). Thirty-five years later Agnes recalled, 'I was leaving for Ireland some years ago - had my passage booked and luggage aboard but at the last minute had my things taken off and came ashore but now I wish I had gone after all' (6d).

Agnes's sister Susan, meanwhile, had produced seven children between 1851 and 1868. At the time of the 1901 Census, Susan and her husband John Jenkins, both in their seventies, were living with their 40-year-old daughter Agnes, a linen warper, at Millquarter in the Grange of Ballyscullion parish, County Antrim. The house, with its perishable roof and walls, was rated fourth-class. Susan died in 1908 and in 1911 her daughter Alice and Alice's husband David McMeekin occupied the house. Residing with them was their 17-year-old son, David's aunt, Alice's brother John, and a 20-year-old boarder.

In 1924 Agnes wrote home again only to learn from Alice McMeekin that 'all my sisters have passed away and I am the only one left' (6a). Although her last letter was

⁸¹ Auckland Provincial Hospital Admissions and Discharge Book, A539/1, p. 69, in NAA.

written from her daughter's residence at Wanganui in 1925, Agnes lived out her days in Auckland. On 27 June 1926 at Auckland Hospital, 84-year-old Agnes Evelyn Lambert died. She was buried alongside her husband Michael in the Symonds Street Cemetery.

'All is not gold that glitters':

The McSparron Correspondence, 1860-1882

Unlike the preceding profiles, there appears to be no hint of discord, at least initially, in Oliver McSparron's letters.⁸² By 1882, however, Oliver forcefully reminded his father that 'when I left home I left twentyfive pounds with you for a certain purpose. You did not put it to that use but wrongfully converted it to your own use. You never even offered to send it to me. I now claim payment of the same wi[t]h ten per cent compound interest added' (7a).

Oliver McSparron sent six letters from New Zealand to County Londonderry that have survived. They assert his own interests in electing to remain in the colony rather than succumb to his father's repeated demands that he return to Umrycam. In addition, the account of his voyage to Australia is included in this thesis.

Archibald McSparron, Oliver's father, may originally have held land at Feeney for in 1826 Archibald and John McSparron are recorded as occupiers of 25 Irish acres which fetched a tithe composition of £2 8s 8d. By the time of the Primary Valuation, however, Archibald farmed nearly 50 acres of land at Umrycam, 'the crooked, or curved ridge', in

⁸² Oliver McSparron's six letters from New Zealand are lodged in PRONI, T 2743/2/1-6. The collection also contains letters sent by Oliver from Australia.

the civil parish of Banagher.⁸³ Though Archibald's combined holdings were valued annually at £7, his property fetched the eighth highest valuation among approximately 40 holdings in the townland.

Born in approximately 1836,⁸⁴ Oliver McSparron departed from Liverpool on 9 November 1859 on the *White Star*. He was accompanied by 20-year-old William Little and 24-year-old Denis McCloskey.⁸⁵ Their emigration took place during a decade of substantial population decline for Umrycam lost 16.8 per cent of its population between 1851 and 1861. County Londonderry, on the other hand, experienced a decline of only 4.07 per cent. Following a 70-day passage, the *White Star* arrived in Australia on 24 January 1860. Initially, Oliver made his way to his maternal uncle, William Oliver. On 10 September 1861, Oliver's uncle informed home readers that Oliver was voyaging 'for the new gold country. He had with him my Brotherinlaw and to others'.⁸⁶ A horse, cart, and three months provisions accompanied the voyagers to New Zealand. By 1862, when William Oliver wrote again to his niece Margaret, he could report that the group supplied provisions at the goldfields.⁸⁷ The 1861 Census for Otago recorded that the province's

⁸³ Alfred Moore Munn, Notes on the Place Names of the Parishes and Townlands of the County of Londonderry (Cookstown, 1925), p. 77. Two companies, the Fishmongers and the Skinners, obtained the Banagher parish land with Umrycam within the Fishmongers allotment. See Philip Donnelly, The Parish of Banagher (Coleraine and Ballycastle, 1996), p. 41.

⁸⁴ Oliver's year of birth is taken from the age he provided (23) upon arrival in Australia. Only two children of Archibald McSparron appear in the Presbyterian registers for Banagher parish: Mary Jane (1841) and Elizabeth (1851).

⁸⁵ Though Oliver's letter only names his companions as William and Denis, William Little is mentioned in his letters from New Zealand. William 'McCloskey' appears the most likely of all passengers named William on the *White Star* given the prevalence of the McCluskey surname at Umrycam. Oliver is recorded as 'Oliver Sparron', aged 23. See Index to Inward Passenger Lists, British and Foreign Ports, Public Record Office Victoria, Code B, Fiche 172, Page 011, on line at www.cohsoft.com.au/cgi-bin/db/ship.pl.

⁸⁶ William Oliver (Geelong) to Archibald McSparron (Umrycam), September 1861, in PRONI, T 2743/1/8.

⁸⁷ William Oliver (Geelong) to Margaret McSparron (Umrycam), 23 May 1862, in PRONI, T 2743/1/9.

population of 27,163 was predominantly male (21,161). A decade later, the population had doubled with natives of Ireland providing 9.2 per cent of Otago's population.

Oliver McSparron remained remarkably mobile, venturing to numerous goldfields in the Otago province. As McCaskill has remarked of such mobility, 'Not only did the miners and prospectors move from field to field, but complete sections of the goldfields community moved. Traders, publicans, even police officers and government servants'.⁸⁸ By 1865 Oliver had sold the horses and wagon and was thereafter engaged in seasonal employment. In May 1869 he was a goldminer: 'I have alway[s] had a great wish to try my luck at the gold digging' (4b). He jested that 'next time I write I will be telling you about turning up the Gold by the Hundredweight or perhaps by the ton but whether little or much I will be satisfied with it as all is not gold that glitters' (4e). His following letter revealed that he was once more with horses and drays 'and am at government contracts' (5b).

Oliver McSparron's letters suggest that his perception of migration was a positive experience: 'I am in a country that pleases me and I [can] do much better here' (3b). His father, however, consistently urged his return to Umrycam but Oliver just as repeatedly rebuffed these requests. As he explained in 1869, 'I think I could not stop if I went home. I could not content my self for any length of time' (4c). By 1880 debts also prevented his return: 'You need not expect to see me home before twelve months as there is money owing to me that I cannot get at present' (6a). Though Oliver remained in the colony, he reported on the return of William Little (4d).

⁸⁸ Murray McCaskill, 'The South Island Goldfields in the 1860s: Some Geographical Aspects', in Murray McCaskill (ed.), Land and Livelihood: Geographical Essays in Honour of George Jobberns (Christchurch, 1962), p. 146.

As with Edward Lysaght, Oliver McSparron not only maintained his individual rights but the relationship between father and son appears to have collapsed over a financial dispute. In 1883, the year after Oliver sent his terse letter home demanding his money, Archibald McSparron died at the age of 72. Archibald had been living at Flanders, Dungiven, where his daughter and son-in-law are recorded as occupying a second-class house in 1901. Archibald's estate was valued for administration at £259 10s and granted to his son William almost a decade later.⁸⁹ Oliver McSparron died a single man at Titipua, Mataura, on 13 February 1900 aged approximately 64 years.⁹⁰

'If I heard the brat I would make mince meat of him':

The Gilmer Correspondence, 1886

Two letters exchanged between members of the Gilmer family in New Zealand and Monaghan survive from 1886.⁹¹ Samuel Gilmer wrote from Wellington to his brother William in Monaghan while William wrote to another colonial based brother, Robert, the same year. In all, five Gilmer brothers elected to settle in New Zealand and although William also had colonial experience he apparently lived out his days in Monaghan. The letters, though indicative of harmony between the brothers, reveal serious dissension among wider kin networks. They also supply an insight into the decision making process, combining a range of personal and structural factors as well as the influence of previous migrants. Samuel emerges as a helpful figure, supplying advice and information but preferring his younger brother to make the final decision. William, however, appears

⁸⁹ The effects were granted in 1891. Indices of Wills and Administration for 1891 [103], in NAI.

⁹⁰ His death certificate records his age as 60.

⁹¹ Copies of the Gilmer letters were kindly provided by Juann Ryan, Birkenhead, Auckland. The spelling of Gilmer appears in records as Gilmor and Gilmore.

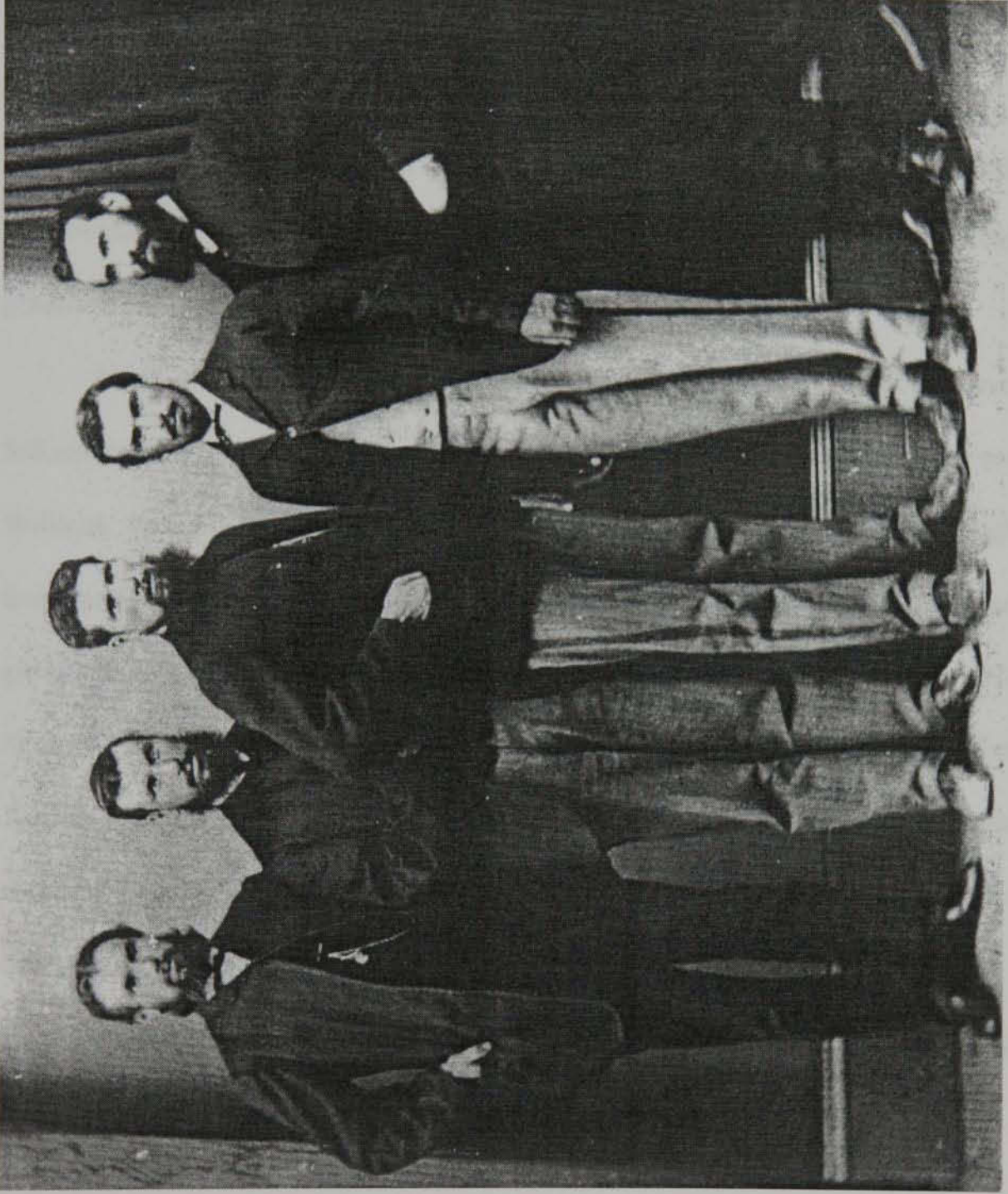


Fig 4 'I hope all my brothers & their wives & families are quite well': Hamilton, Henry, Samuel, Robert, and John Gilmer, circa 1870s (Nelson Museum).

cautious, dependent on the counsel proffered by his siblings. In words, at least, he displayed a vigorous style in condemning those critical of his brothers.

James, Hamilton, Henry, Samuel, Robert, and John Gilmer were born between 1834 and 1845 to Hugh Gilmer and Margaret Dorothy (Dolly) Hamilton.⁹² When the Tithe Applotment Books were compiled, brothers Hugh and Thomas Gilmer were returned as holding just over 13 acres of land at Mullaghanee in the civil parish of Clontibret, County Monaghan. Both the size of their holding and their annual rent of £20 were the highest in the townland. Just prior to 1860 when the Primary Valuation was conducted, Hugh's 16 acres fetched a valuation of £16 at Mullaghanee.

Hugh, the son of James Gilmer, married for a second time in 1846 to Anne Smith following the death of his first wife Margaret. This second union produced one son, William. Possibly this remarriage stimulated the emigration of all but one of Hugh's sons from his first marriage. According to a biography of Hamilton Gilmer, he voyaged to the goldfields in Victoria, Australia, in approximately 1860 before continuing on to New Zealand.⁹³ He is probably the 22-year-old Hamilton 'Gilmour' who arrived in Victoria in January 1861 on the *Blue Jacket*, accompanied by Hugh Gilmour, aged 29.⁹⁴ Hamilton's maternal uncle John Hamilton also settled in New Zealand as did all of Hamilton's brothers except James and William.

During the decade of Hamilton's birth, the Poor Inquiry observed that emigration was generally undertaken by 'spirited industrious people who are in comfortable

⁹² The Church of Ireland parish registers for Clontibret do not survive. However, the baptism of Henry in May 1839 appears in the Church of Ireland registers for Muckno parish.

⁹³ See G. H. Scholefield (ed.), *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1940), p. 299, and the obituary of Hamilton Gilmer in *New Zealand Herald*, 27 June 1919, p. 3.

⁹⁴ Index to Inward Passenger Lists, British and Foreign Ports, PRO Victoria, Code B, Fiche 186, Page 003, on line at www.cohsoft.com.au/cgi-bin/db/ship.pl.

circumstances, and who have been in more comfortable circumstances, but who, owing to high rents and taxes, are unable to hold their respectability in the neighbourhood.’⁹⁵

Approximately a quarter of a century later, when Hamilton Gilmer voyaged to the colonies, he could presumably be considered representative of a similar stereotype. During the decade that Hamilton departed Mullaghane, the townland’s population declined by 18.6 per cent whereas the corresponding county decline was only 10.82 per cent.

Following a period goldmining at Gabriel’s Gully, the Gilmers followed the gold rush to the West Coast. By 1866 Samuel, Henry, and Hamilton Gilmer were hotel proprietors, having presumably obtained their hotel apprenticeship from their uncle.⁹⁶ Five years later, Hamilton returned to Monaghan and married his cousin Elizabeth Hamilton. The couple then returned to Wellington on the *Nevada* via San Francisco and Auckland, eventually arriving on 12 October 1871. By 1882 the brothers were making substantial gains in the colony. Samuel’s Wellington property was valued at £1,800 while brother Robert in Nelson owned land worth half that amount. At Totara Flat, Henry’s farm fetched a value of £2,148.

William Gilmer had also spent time in New Zealand and in 1886 he was again contemplating emigration from Monaghan though his destination was undecided. As Samuel cheekily queried, ‘As for you going to new south wales is new zealand not large enough for you. I would have thought it was but I suppose really you have not yet decided which will be your lot. But I can imagine all there is to be done on a few acres of Irish soil is not much after all said and done. Would you not have been better here only for your

⁹⁵ Testimony of Revd. John Arnold in Poor Inquiry, appendix F, p. 797, in HCP, 1836 [38] xxxiii.

⁹⁶ Ian Cameron, Peter Sydor, and John Hewstone are compiling the professional history of the Gilmers in The Hotel That Sam Built: The Story of Samuel Gilmer and The Royal Oak Hotel, Cuba St, Wellington, N. Z., unpublished manuscript supplied by the authors.

health' (1a). Samuel then recommended that if 'health better and no encumbrance that Greymouth should suit you well but please yourself. You should be the best judge of those matters. You are now away more than twelve months' (1c).

During the period that he was in New Zealand, William nominated the passages of his cousins Abigail and Robert Gilmer who arrived in Wellington on the *Ionic* on 20 January 1885.⁹⁷ Despite this assistance, the letters document troubled relations between the cousins. William, for instance, disclosed his disappointment that cousin Robert 'never wrote me a line, & all I did for him' (2c). Samuel, on the other hand, expressed his displeasure with Abigail whom he had employed for 'her intention was to do as little as possible' (1d). She then worked with Henry before working for Sam Hill. Samuel soberly conceded, 'strangers might suit her best' (1d). They obviously did for Abigail and Sam Hill married! The criticism directed at Abigail was seemingly mutual for William told Robert that Abigail 'gave Sam & Mary an awful name also Henry & wife' (2c). William also expressed indignation that his migrant brothers were being maligned in Monaghan: 'James is a right scoundrel; he gave a very bad acct. of you all after he came home ... if I heard the brat I w^d make mince meat of him' (2g).

Conditions in Ireland also dissatisfied William. As he bitterly complained to Robert, 'Ireland is a very miserable place. We have not had more than 2 or 3 dry days at once all this summer. Harvest is ripe & no dry weather to cut it. The potato crop is a failure. Things are looking very bad indeed' (2b). Official reports confirmed that in Monaghan in 1886, 'The yield of the potato and oats crop is far short of what it was last year. This is owing to the late spring, too much rain during the summer, and a want of ripening in the autumn. The heavy rain of last month had the effect of diminishing the oat

⁹⁷ Abigail, general servant, was 22 and Robert, joiner, was 26. See IM 15/470 in NAW.

crop considerably, and damaging the potato crop.’⁹⁸ These conditions provoked William to meditate on his future: ‘I’ll have to do something else than farming in Ireland, working & spending money for nothing’ (2d). He also considered that ‘If I had only middling health I w^d not stop long in Ireland, altho, I’ve fair health lately. If I thought my wife could get a situation as teacher, I w^d very soon leave here’ (2b). To assist his brother, Samuel instructed, ‘let me know if I am to send you another remittance to Ireland’ (1c). Besides receiving assistance, William also gave it. His uncle Thomas was one beneficiary: ‘Only I assisted them here they w^d be turned out’ (2e).

In contrast with William’s plight in Monaghan, the Gilmer brothers in New Zealand continued to prosper. In the 1890s Samuel’s hotel, the Royal Oak, was acclaimed as ‘one of the finest in the City of Wellington, and its proprietor, Mr Gilmer, is exceedingly popular.’⁹⁹ Inevitably, not everyone shared this view for in 1906 Samuel appeared in court to give evidence against Francis Waddell who had assaulted him. Sam with his ‘index finger, wrapped in a blue rag’ and his face ‘battle-scarred’ was asked if Waddell ‘had the chisel in his hand when he attacked him. Mr Gilmer said yes. Waddell had denied this, and here put in the remark that if he had had the chisel, Mr. Gilmer wouldn’t be there to give evidence.’¹⁰⁰ Waddell was found guilty of assault and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment with hard labour.

Hamilton Gilmer, meanwhile, was a member of the Legislative Council between 1907 and 1914. He died on 25 June 1919 and was buried at Bolton Street Cemetery. He left his three sons and two daughters an estate valued at under a staggering £300,000, of which the duty was not to exceed 15 per cent. According to his will, Hamilton bequeathed

⁹⁸ Tables showing the Extent in Statute Acres and the Produces of the Crops for the year 1886, p. 121, in HCP, 1886 [Cd. 4902], lxxi.

⁹⁹ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1897), p. 665.

¹⁰⁰ *New Zealand Free Lance*, 24 March 1906, p. 3b.

‘all my household furniture plate plated articles linen china books pictures statuary jewelry stores motor cars and all other articles of household domestic or personal use or ornament’ to his wife plus an annuity of £400. His daughter Dolly Ziele was to receive an annuity of £150 and his brother John in Westport was to receive 30 shillings per week. The Children’s Ward of Wellington Public Hospital received £100 and St Peters Anglican Church gained an annual sum of £100 for ten years. The remainder of the estate was to be divided between his five children.¹⁰¹

Samuel Gilmer, ‘one of the best known old-identities in the Dominion’,¹⁰² died at the age of 83 on 14 January 1925 at the Royal Oak Hotel, Cuba Street, in Wellington. Indeed, the Dominion claimed that ‘There are few men who possess a longer acquaintance with the city, and have been enabled to see its growth and development over such an extended period of time’. Samuel had been a keen participant of the Wellington Racing Club where he ‘took a keen interest in local events connected with the turf’.¹⁰³ Samuel Gilmer was buried at Karori and left an estate valued at half that of his brother Hamilton. His clothing, adornment, watches, jewellery, and trinkets were left to his daughter with various relatives receiving other legacies.¹⁰⁴

Little is known of the progress of William Gilmer. The Valuation Revision Books indicate that he obtained the land at Mullaghanee in 1877 but that it was transferred to James in 1882. Following William’s decision to remain in Monaghan the land was again transferred to him until 1895 when it passed to his wife Mary Anne who held the land until 1924. However, no Gilmer appears in the 1901 and 1911 Census for Mullaghanee.

¹⁰¹ The Will of Hamilton Gilmer, 1919/27056, in NAW, AAOM 6029.

¹⁰² Obituary of Samuel Gilmer in New Zealand Herald, 16 January 1925, p. 10.

¹⁰³ Obituary of Samuel Gilmer in Dominion, 15 January 1925, p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ The Will of Samuel Gilmer, 1925/P36375, in NAW, AAOM 6029. Samuel’s estate, valued at more than £100,000, fetched an estate duty of 20%.

Although it is not known to what extent Hugh Gilmer's remarriage disrupted the family organisation, the following profiles explore a range of households in which one or both parents had died prior to the migrant's departure.

This chapter has revealed that conflict among kin networks both predated and followed migration. The letters of James O'Neill and Agnes Lambert hint at collisions with fathers prior to their departures while the profiles of Edward Lysaght and Oliver McSparron reveal that opposition finally exploded several years after migration when both refused to adhere to family demands that they return to Ireland. Such assertion of individual rights reveals that individuals were not passive pawns in their family's collective strategies. Sibling strife appears in the Lysaght, O'Neill, Quinn, and Keane sequences while the Gilmer letters illuminate dissent among wider kin. The prevalence of such conflict may have been a motive for many of these migrants to depart Ireland. Few correspondents offered reasons for their departure, though Agnes Lambert did allude to her pregnancy. The Keane sequence also indicates that work opportunities in Waterford were limited. The Gilmer sequence is also valuable for various considerations involved in the migration decision making process including William's health, his dissatisfaction with conditions in Ireland, and the failure of his wife to obtain a teaching post.

The motives for non-migration are less clear but for William Lysaght, his ties to his father were too strong to break and he realised the advantages of remaining loyal. Obligations to her father may also have prevented Isabella McNeice from voyaging abroad. The reasons for William Gilmer's resolution to remain in Ireland are shrouded in mystery given his denunciation of conditions and his prior experience of colonial life. Perhaps his health took precedence. The sequences indicate, however, that both migrants and non-migrants made deliberate decisions to go or stay.

In the case of Edward Lysaght, Agnes Lambert, and Patrick Quinn, migration entailed hardship. But the choices made to remain in New Zealand suggest that they preferred settlement abroad. James O'Neill and Oliver McSparron conveyed positive depictions of the colony while the achievements of William Quinn and the Gilmer brothers suggest positive elements also. All but Agnes Lambert appear to have been surrounded by ethnic networks based on kin and neighbourhood.

The extent of return migration is also highly evident in these profiles. Edward Lysaght's parents, brother, and aunt returned permanently to Ireland, as did William Gilmer. Edward Lysaght and Hamilton Gilmer undertook temporary excursions. Acquaintances of Oliver McSparron and the Gilmers also returned to Ireland from New Zealand. Both Agnes Lambert and Kate Keane, meanwhile, contemplated returning while the Lysaght and McSparron sequences indicate the repeated requests for their return.

Contemplation of migration from Ireland to other destinations is also apparent. Movement to Australia features in the Lysaght, Quinn, and Gilmer sequences while the Keane series illuminates the dispersal of kin and neighbours to England and North America.

Chapter 2

‘A Father to the Fatherless’:

Widows and Orphans

A significant proportion of letters incorporated in this study were sent to or from widows and orphans. This chapter commences with the profiles of four widowed correspondents whose letters were all predominantly harmonious. Elizabeth McClelland of County Londonderry sent two letters to her daughter Ann in the 1840s, the earliest letters utilised in this study. Limerick woman Hanora Dwyer wrote to her son Cornelius while Catherine Colgan in Antrim penned several letters to her children in Otago. Catherine Sullivan wrote to her brother-in-law in County Limerick to inform him of her recently widowed status. The Kilpatrick sequence also contains the letters of widows and orphans along with several other letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. The primary correspondent, Margaret Kilpatrick, had experienced the death of her father at an early age. Several migrants lost both parents prior to their emigration including Bessie Macready, the McClure brothers, and Daniel Strong. The Macready and Strong sequences convey strength of feeling between separated cousins while the McClure series highlights brotherly warmth towards non-migrant sisters. The chapter concludes with profiles of two male correspondents, Hugh Rea of County Down and Philip Carroll of County Tipperary, both of whom lost their father at a relatively young age. Only the Carroll and Strong sequence give any hint of discordant kin relationships.

'In a strange land amongst strangers':

The McClelland Correspondence, 1840-1

Elizabeth McClelland dictated two letters from County Londonderry to her daughter Ann that have survived.¹ Her scribe was Samuel Detty who 'has put himself to this trouble to write this' (1h). The earliest letters in this study, the writing style is florid and carefully crafted. Nevertheless, Elizabeth's tone was clearly that of a concerned mother. The letters are intriguing for their passionate expressions of the impact of departure, reliance on faith, and requests that Ann encourage further migration.

Ann McClelland was born in about 1820, the daughter of John and Elizabeth McClelland of Dunronan in the civil parish of Desertlynn, County Londonderry. The family occupied just over three Irish acres of third and fourth-class land which fetched a tithe composition of 5s 6d in 1828. Five years later, the people of the parish of Desertlynn were described as 'an intelligent, moral and industrious race, very honest and peaceable.'²

In 1836, four years prior to Ann's departure, the Poor Inquiry revealed that 'emigration has been considerable, principally, I might say exclusively, Protestant, and several of a respectable class.'³ As most emigration from the parish was to North America and England, Ann's decision to voyage to New Zealand was an uncommon selection and is the earliest migration featured in this study. John McClelland had died prior to his daughter's departure and Elizabeth hoped that 'the god of all Grace ... may be a Father to the Fatherless the strangers shield and the orphans stay' (1k).

¹ The McClelland letters are in PRONI, T 3034/1-2.

² Angélique Day and Patrick McWilliams (eds.), *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland*, vol. 31 (Belfast, 1995), p. 47

³ Testimony of Revd. John Bratt Hewett in Poor Inquiry, appendix F, p. 790, in HCP, 1836 [38], xxxiii.

Ann McClelland departed Liverpool on 3 March 1840 on the *Martha Ridgway*. She was one of 17 single women among 279 passengers voyaging to Port Nicholson (now Wellington). Ann's response to her departure is unknown, but her mother movingly wrote of 'the deepest heartfelt sorrow and distress of mind & bodey that it is possible for one of my age & constitution to bear. I suffered after you went away grieving night & day about you. I hoped that you would have perhaps ruid & changed your mind when you would goe to Liverpool but alas to my sorrow you went on leaving me to grieve your absence' (1a). Elizabeth also alleged that other family members mourned Ann's absence: 'Sister Mary grieves day & Night'; Eliza Jane 'frequently talks about you & cries'; 'Sarah is grieved about you'; and Jane 'longs most earnestly to hear from you' (1c). Seemingly, Ann voyaged with others from the district for as Elizabeth informed, 'We got no word from either you or your ship meats but one letter written when Eight day out at sea' (1f). Six births and five deaths occurred before the vessel arrived on 8 July 1840.⁴

Accounts circulating in Ireland 'reported that that place is a wicked place and little or no clergey or publick worship' (1i). Consequently, Elizabeth McClelland implored Ann to attend to her religious duties: 'You I trust are in a strange land amongst strangers but you have not a strange God to come to' (1g). Despite her concern about conditions in New Zealand, Elizabeth McClelland requested information from Ann to judge the colony's potential for the emigration of Ann's siblings. She therefore sought details of the 'customs and maners of the people the Climate produce trade laws & prospects of this new Coloney' (1i). She wanted to know 'if it be srubery or Mountain or what kind of people formerly

⁴ Passenger lists of early Wellington arrivals are contained in Louis E. Ward, *Early Wellington* (Wellington, 1928). The *Martha Ridgway* passengers are listed on p. 54. Ann is returned as 25 years of age.

inhabited it and if you ever see them' (2g). Ann was urged to 'look & enquire minutely into the case both where you are and also other places that we may know how to act' (1d).

Upon receiving news of Ann's safe arrival, Elizabeth McClelland stated 'if you be not content let me know and we will assist in sending money to fetch you home' (2b).

Ann's faith seems to have sustained her for her mother expressed delight 'that your mind was cheered in that strange place with religion' (2c). Indeed, Ann may be one of the chief collectors for the local Presbyterian church.⁵ Ann was furthermore urged to rely on the Bible: 'Make it your constant companion' (1j). Three years after her arrival, Ann found a constant companion in the form of Johann August Heldt, a cabinetmaker from Hanover in Germany.⁶

Heldt had arrived in the colony on 10 February 1841 on the barque *Jane* from Valparaiso in Chile where he had been goldmining.⁷ Following their marriage the couple returned there and two children, Elizabeth and Jane, were born at Valparaiso in 1844 and 1846 respectively.⁸ During their time in Valparaiso, the Heldts had frequently attended church and received a character reference from the chaplain prior to their departure in 1847.⁹ That year the family voyaged to Ireland via Liverpool on the *Equator*. Their journey was paid by 'Eight Ounces & three quartis of Gold'.¹⁰ They settled in a house worth £13 10s annually in the High Street at Moneymore¹¹ in the parish of Artrea where a further seven children were born. Moneymore, 'the great bog'¹² was considered in 1853 as

⁵ Ann is noted as Miss McLellan. See Ward, *Early Wellington*, p. 262.

⁶ The wedding took place in the Scotch Church on 18 July 1843. Ann is recorded as Anna McClelland of East Meath.

⁷ The passage cost £30 for steerage. PRONI, T 3034/3.

⁸ Their baptisms are noted in PRONI, T 3034/4.

⁹ See PRONI, T 3034/6.

¹⁰ Master of Brig *Equator*, 10 March 1847, PRONI, T 3034/8.

¹¹ He is returned as Jean A. Heldt and the property was leased from the Worshipful Company of Drapers.

¹² Munn, *Notes on the Place Names*, p. 126.

‘well built and pleasantly situated on a slope, with rising ground in the distance; it is approached by good roads and footpaths, well maintained, and is ornamented by several handsome buildings ... It (contained) about 1,000 inhabitants. The Principal street (was) wide and regular, and the whole (bore) such an air of neatness and good arrangement, so seldom seen in an Irish town, as to make Moneymore strikingly attractive.’¹³

By 1858 the Heldts were contemplating their return to New Zealand. Robert Greer, the New Zealand Emigration Agent at Newry, advised Johann that ‘vessels sail to Auckland every month. You will get 40 acres - your wives 40, and every Childs to 18 years of age 20 acres each’.¹⁴ Johann paid the fare and obtained recommendations from several prominent acquaintances including Robert Peel Dawson. His testimonial noted that ‘we not only consider him a first rate workman, but a person of the most upright & exemplary character, both in his public and private life, and we can recommend him to the patronage of any Gentleman with whom he may come in contact.’¹⁵

On 4 July 1859 the Heldts secured berths on the *Mermaid*, a White Star Line clipper. Greer advised that ‘when you arrive in Auckland, go direct to the land office and don’t allow any broker or other person to obtrude officious services on you.’¹⁶ The vessel sailed from Merseyside on 11 July 1859 with Ann and Johann, their seven surviving children, and 19-year-old Cambel Ditty on board.¹⁷ An account of the voyage was maintained by fellow passenger James Qualtrough who reported on Monday 26 September that ‘On Saturday night a child died belonging to Mr. Heldt, a German by nation, and, I

¹³ Report of Mr Robert Forster, The Land Surveyor of the Company Appointed to Visit the Company’s Estate in Ireland, Dated 29th October, 1853, as cited in James Stevens Curl, The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-1914 (Chichester, 1986), p. 224.

¹⁴ PRONI, T 3034/11A.

¹⁵ PRONI, T 3034/12.

¹⁶ PRONI, T 3034/14.

¹⁷ They are returned as Hellatt on the passenger list.

believe, a good man.’¹⁸ This child must have been born during the voyage as all the children who embarked are returned as having arrived in Auckland on 19 October 1859 after a 111-day passage. The vessel, it was claimed, ‘brings a considerable accession to our population, and as far as appearances go of a desirable class’.¹⁹

Little is known of the Heldts lives in New Zealand but Ann worked in a milliner’s shop in Queen Street, Auckland, before fire destroyed the premises. The family then spent a period goldmining at Thames before returning to Auckland. Their son Frederick ‘learned his trade with his father, a well known cabinetmaker’.²⁰ Ann Heldt died at 67 years of age on 6 December 1887 having suffered from bronchitis for three years. As Donald Akenson has commented, Ann’s ‘emigration was not a passive experience to be born stoically, but an active and energetic strategy for getting on in the world.’²¹

‘No consolation more than to hear from you’:

The Dwyer Correspondence, 1846

Hanora Dwyer wrote one letter from Dromkeen, County Limerick, to her son Cornelius (or Connor) Dwyer that has survived.²² The letter, the earliest composed by a Catholic in this study, outlines family news at home and abroad, and is noteworthy for its reference to the pending potato famine. It is also revealing for news of other migrants abroad.

¹⁸ A transcript of James Qualtrough’s diary is reproduced in Elizabeth A. Barlow, A Quota of Qualtroughs: Early Settlers to New Zealand from the Isle of Man (Matamata, 1984), pp. 31-40.

¹⁹ The New-Zealander Extra, 19 October 1859, p. 1.

²⁰ Cyclopedia of New Zealand, vol. 6 (Christchurch, 1902), p. 98.

²¹ Akenson, ‘Reading the Texts’, pp. 395-6.

²² Molly O’Dwyer, Papatoetoe, Auckland, kindly supplied a copy of the letter. Information was also obtained from Dan Murphy, Blenheim.



Fig 5 'Never forget to let me hear from you': Cornelius O'Dwyer Junior (Cyclopedia of New Zealand).



Fig 6 'I send you all my Blessing': James O'Dwyer and his wife (Cyclopedia of New Zealand).

Cornelius Dwyer was born in about 1800. Unfortunately, records for the Catholic parish of Killeely only commence in 1815 so it has not been possible to construct Cornelius's family background. However, two Dwyers, John and Connor, held land at Dromkeen in the civil parish of Grean at the time of the Tithe Valuation in 1832. Connor occupied seven acres of second and third class land which fetched a tithe composition of 7s 10½d while John's nine acres entailed a payment of 13s 2d. John, who married Hanora Cooney in 1816, was most likely Cornelius's brother. Cornelius wed Mary Cooney and between 1824 and 1840 they produced at least six children who appear in the baptism registers for Killeely, though at least another two children are known to belong to the couple.

At half past five on the evening of 2 September 1842, the *Prince of Wales* departed Gravesend with Captain Alexander Alexander at the helm. Availing of a free passage were Cornelius Dwyer, a 45-year-old agricultural labourer, his wife Mary 34, and their children Margaret 17, John 15, William 14, Patrick 12, Cornelius 10, Peter 8, and James 3.²³ They were among 170 steerage passengers who endured a 110-day journey, finally arriving at Nelson on 22 December 1842.²⁴ Though the motives for the Dwyers migration is unknown, the family travelled to New Zealand as part of the New Zealand Company settlement scheme in which free passages were provided for suitable migrants. Overall, the New Zealand Company and the companies developed from it, founded six settlements between 1840 and 1850, bringing approximately 12,000 settlers to the country.²⁵ Though

²³ New Zealand Company Emigration Lists, 1841-1842, Part 2, Repro 4, in NAW.

²⁴ The Nelson Examiner, and New Zealand Chronicle, 24 December 1842.

²⁵ The six settlements were Wellington, Nelson, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Dunedin, and Christchurch.

young married couples without children were preferred, many emigrants, including the Dwyers, did not meet this stipulation.²⁶

At some stage the Dwyers were joined by Margaret Spelman whose father Jeremiah added a note to the end of Hanora's letter: 'Dear Connor I send you and family my best love & affection and Especially to my Daughter Margret. I am going to leave this Country. I sold this place for £80 to W^m Meehan' (1i). Jeremiah Spelman is listed in the Tithe Applotment Book as occupier of just over an Irish acre of second class land at Dromkeen North.²⁷

By 1846 only one-quarter of the original settler population at Nelson remained. The Dwyers were probably among many labouring families who combined squatting with cultivation for an 1845 Census indicates that Cornelius and John Dwyer were labourers with two and a half acres of cultivated land with two acres for wheat.²⁸ Hanora's letter also indicates that Cornelius's sons were working at a nearby flax mill (1e).

In Limerick in 1846, Hanora Dwyer observed that 'There is a great failure in the Potatoes here in general through the whole Kingdom' (1g). At the same time, a returned migrant 'came in great splendour' (1b) while other acquaintances in Montreal reassured Hanora 'never to want during my life that they will always send me relief'(1c). Her comment may have been a reminder to Cornelius for maintenance or possibly to reassure him that she was comfortable.

At some stage the Dwyers moved to Waimea East, probably to cultivate the land for it was here in 1848 that Cornelius O'Dwyer died of consumption at 48 years of age.

²⁶ See Patricia Burns, *Fatal Success: A History of the New Zealand Company* (Auckland, 1989), p. 191.

²⁷ Jeremiah Spelman and Cornelius Dwyer also appear in the parish registers as sponsors of each other's children.

²⁸ Nelson Census for 1845, SSD 3/1, p. 87, in NAW.

That year, Waimea East's Irish population consisted of eleven males and five females who formed 2.77 per cent of the area's total population of 577.²⁹

The following year, 1849, the Nelson Census reported that Mrs 'Dwire' was a tenant in an earth dwelling with a thatch roof inhabited by six males and two females. Her nine and a half cleared and cultivated acres held five acres of wheat, two acres of potatoes, and two and a half acres of barley. Her livestock consisted of twenty-one cattle, thirteen goats, and nine pigs.³⁰

If the Dwyers (who eventually changed their surname to O'Dwyer) migrated to provide better opportunities for their children, then their aims were successful. Both Cornelius and James O'Dwyer were mentioned in the Cyclopedia of New Zealand as farmers at Spring Creek, considered 'one of the largest and wealthiest agricultural and sheepfarming areas in the province'.³¹ Cornelius had purchased 200 acres of land there in 1855 while James's farm comprised 150 acres 'all level, well-cleared, and nearly all under cultivation'.³² At the time of the Return of the Freeholders in 1882, Cornelius's 150 acres was valued at £1,600 while the 300 acres owned by Patrick and James fetched a valuation of £2,600. Peter held 310 acres valued at £2,800.

In April 1874, Mary O'Dwyer, aged 73, died of natural decay. The fate of her mother-in-law Hanora Dwyer is unknown.

²⁹ Simkin (ed.), Statistics of New Zealand, Table 5, p. 13.

³⁰ Nelson Census for 1849, SSD 3/2, Mic. Z689Z, p. 75, in NAW.

³¹ Cyclopedia of New Zealand, vol. 5, p. 373.

³² *Ibid*, p. 375.

'Till we meet again, where there will be no parting':

The Colgan Correspondence, 1893-1901

Unlike the letters from other widows in this study, Catherine Colgan had remarried when she commenced her correspondence with her children in New Zealand.³³ She sent seven letters from Antrim to her daughter Rose and sent her son Johnny one. Religious extracts pepper the letters which depict the declining health of Catherine who was in her sixties during the decade that she sent her letters. Her main motivation was to encourage Johnny's return.

Rose and Johnny McMullan were two of the seven children born to Catherine McCaughan and her first husband, Zachariah McMullan, whom she married at the Church of Ireland in Dunseverick on 28 July 1858. Catherine, 24 years of age, was the daughter of Hector McCaughan and Peggy McMullan of Drumnagee in the civil parish of Ballintoy who occupied a house, offices, and more than 30 acres of land worth £20 15s. In the same townland, Zachariah McMullan held under 13 acres worth £11 5s. He also occupied jointly with his brother James just over 27 acres of house, offices, and land valued at £31 15s annually at a place known locally as Bridgend in the townland of Ballynastraid. Evidence given to the Ordnance Survey in 1830 by John McMullan, probably Zachariah's father, revealed that an ancient pagan altar and two forts rested on the land.³⁴ This may also be the same John McMullan who appears at Ballynastraid in the 1803 agricultural census for County Antrim.³⁵

³³ Photocopies of the Colgan letters were kindly supplied by Richard Herbert, Wellington.

³⁴ See Angélique Day, Patrick McWilliams, and Noírin Dobson (eds.), *Ordnance Survey of Ireland*, vol. 24 (Belfast, 1994), pp. 20-1.

³⁵ 1803 Agricultural Census for County Antrim, OP/153/103 (3), in NAI. The townland appears as Ballaughnastraid.



Fig 7 'I trust you & your husband got it all settled before this time': Rose and Charles Gamble, circa 1889 (Richard Herbert).

On 30 September 1873 Zachariah McMullan died at the age of 54 and was buried in the Dunseverick Parish church in the village of Lisnagunogue, west of Bridgend.³⁶ His personal estate was valued for administration at between £450 and £600³⁷ and in 1878 the Valuation Revision Books record that his holdings at Ballynastraid and Drumnagee were occupied jointly by John and James McMullan, probably his brothers. Some four years after Zachariah's death, his widow Catherine married Charles Colgan at the Ballycastle Wesleyan Chapel and relocated to Charles's farm at Tonduff in the neighbouring parish of Billy. As with her first husband, Zachariah, there was a fifteen-year age difference between Catherine and Charles. Their union delivered one child who had died by the time of the 1901 Census. The marriage may have led to Catherine's conversion to Wesleyanism for her extracts from the Bible are mainly from the Gospels.³⁸

In 1882, approximately five years after Catherine's remarriage, her son Zachariah emigrated to New Zealand, seemingly following in the footsteps of his maternal uncles who had arrived in the preceding decade.³⁹ Upon arrival, Zachariah promptly set about nominating other members of his family. His sisters Rose and Catherine travelled together aboard the *Tongariro* which sailed from London on 1 August 1885 and arrived at Port Chalmers on 16 September 1885. Both were returned as general servants with Catherine aged 18 and Rose 13, a somewhat puzzling feature as Rose was born in 1866 (18) and Catherine born in approximately 1870 (15). They voyaged at a cost of £15 to the

³⁶ Zachariah McMullan's headstone proclaims "Here am I for thou callest me" but contains conflicting details. His date of death reads 30 Nov 1873 and his age 53. I am grateful to Nevin Taggart, Antrim, for this information.

³⁷ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1874 [125], in NAI.

³⁸ In his profile of Fife in *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 416, David Fitzpatrick has indicated that Wesleyans drew their linguistic inspiration mainly from the Gospels and Epistles. Catherine quoted Luke 11-10, Luke 21-36, and Matt 28-20.

³⁹ Hector McCaughan emigrated in about 1872 and was followed by his brother John in 1879.

Government and were among 71 Irish migrants out of a total complement of 154 passengers.⁴⁰ Another brother James emigrated later that year while the youngest brother, Hector, remained with Catherine but suffered from poor health.

Chain migration also featured in the family of Charles Gamble⁴¹ whom Rose married in 1889 at East Taieri. Charles's brother William emigrated in 1879 aboard the *Invercargill*, the ship which brought Rose's uncle, John McCaughan, to the colony. William Gamble was followed by his siblings Mary, Charles, Margaret, John, and Andrew over a period of 45 years. The Gambles were natives of Croaghmore, a townland located between the towns of Bushmills and Ballycastle.

Upon her marriage to Charles on 14 June 1889 at the East Taieri Presbyterian Church, Rose settled at Riccarton where Charles had established a blacksmith and coachbuilding business. A year later the property was added to and in 1892 another section was purchased. Catherine was 'glad that your husband is getting on so well, & has so many men working for him' (1e). At some stage during 1893, however, financial unrest caused Charles to mortgage his home to his brother William while the blacksmith properties were mortgaged to a blacksmith Arthur Poole. Catherine discovered the situation from Charles's mother who 'showed a great deal of kindness' and 'bestowed me a beautiful gold ring' (2a). Charles later built an iron shed and operated as a straw dealer with his brother William until 1912 when he is once again returned as a blacksmith.

Charles and Rose Gamble had six daughters between 1891 and 1902. Daughters also prevailed in the families of Rose's siblings in New Zealand. Seemingly Rose

⁴⁰ IM 15/475 at NAW.

⁴¹ For information on the Gamble family see Richard Herbert, The Gamble Family of East Taieri: A Brief Account of the Family's Origins at Croaghmore, in Antrim, Northern Ireland, Their Emigration and Settlement at East Taieri, in Otago, New Zealand, in the 1880's, and of the Reunion held 6-7th April 1996 (Dunedin, 1996).

expressed concern that there was only one son among the extended family prompting Catherine's reassurance, 'My Dear you need not think he will be the only son amongst you for Aunt Haughey had 6 daughters & 7 sons' (3g). Catherine also expressed delight that Rose was living near her sister Kate (1e).

Johnny McMullan also resided in the vicinity but was constantly implored to return to Antrim to farm the land he occupied after his father's death. As Catherine told Rose, 'I would be so glad that he would come home to his own farm' and believed 'he would be far better in his own home' (3b, 5b). Perhaps in an effort to lure him home Catherine reported favourably on farming conditions in Antrim: 'never was such good crops on it as this year' (3b). When that tactic failed to lure Johnny home, Catherine reported that 'his places is going down' (6b). Though it is unknown if Johnny McMullan returned to Antrim, the Colgan letters report the return to Antrim from New Zealand of an acquaintance who 'told me he went to see you all' (3d). The sequence also indicates the presence of friends and family in Scotland and America (1f, 8d). One such acquaintance sent home money for her father care of the local minister, the Revd. William Matchette,⁴² 'and he gives it to him as he needs it' (7f).

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, Catherine Colgan reported on the precarious nature of farming. In October 1897 she claimed, 'We had very good crops this year. Only the potatoes & turnips are a poor crops owing to much rain' (3e). Official reports also observed that the weather in October was 'strangely genial and fine' with 'quietness and mildness' characterising the beginning and end of the month.⁴³ By February

⁴² Revd. William Matchette (c. 1859-1922) was rector at Ballintoy from 1888 until 1916.

⁴³ Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, with detailed report on agriculture, for 1897, p. 434, in HCP, 1898 [C. 8885], cii.

1899, however, 'We had a very stormy winter as far as come. We have got no ploughing done yet' (5a).

In 1901, at 59 years of age, Catherine's brother Hector McCaughan committed suicide by hanging himself. Catherine received the news of his death and hoped 'he is better off not in this weary world' (7e). Only one further letter from Catherine to Rose survives for on 29 March 1903 Rose Gamble died after contracting scarlet fever. She was just 36 years of age. Charles Gamble remarried in May 1905 and had a further five children.

Meanwhile, the 1911 Census revealed that Charles Colgan was 93 years of age and Catherine Colgan 76. They resided in a third class house with two rooms, two front windows, imperishable walls, and a perishable roof. They had been married 36 years and one child had been born though no longer living. In August 1911 Catherine Colgan died and her effects of £84 were granted to David Hill for administration.⁴⁴ It is unknown if Johnny McMullan ever returned to Antrim but until 1919 he appears in the electoral rolls as a labourer at East Taieri.

'He left me everything':

The Sullivan Correspondence, 1905

Catherine Sullivan had just been widowed when she wrote from Foxton, Manawatu, to her brother-in-law at Ballingarry in County Limerick.⁴⁵ Her letter supplies several comparisons between the two countries. In addition, Catherine provides insights

⁴⁴ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1911 [104], in NAI.

⁴⁵ A copy of the letter was kindly provided by Catherine Habes, Cincinnati, Ohio. I am also grateful to Suzanne Lisson, Canada, who provided some information about Mary Sullivan.

into marriage and inheritance practices and reveals that she was still emotionally connected with her neighbourhood after more than thirty years residence in New Zealand.

Catherine Riordan was apparently born on 17 March 1831⁴⁶ to Patrick Riordan and Mary Brown. Though her family's holding has not been identified in either the Tithe Applotment Books or Griffith's Valuation, more information is available about her husband John Sullivan whom she married on 17 November 1855.

John Sullivan was born about 1829, either the first or second born child of Cornelius Sullivan and Mary Lynch who had married on 17 July 1827 at the Catholic Church in Ballingarry.⁴⁷ Although no baptismal records survive for the offspring of Cornelius and Mary, at least three siblings of John are verifiable from Catherine's letter.⁴⁸ Possibly, there were at least two more sons, Patrick and Michael.⁴⁹

John Sullivan was raised in a house measuring 34 feet long by 16.6 feet wide and 6 feet high.⁵⁰ The house, located in the townland of Common, was rented from Patrick Casey for 10 shillings per annum. Quite possibly it was one of many 'Wretched mud hovels, with scarcely anything deserving the name of furniture. Both bedsteads and

⁴⁶ The Ballingarry baptismal registers do not commence until 1849. This date of birth is taken from the Will of Catherine Sullivan, 1917/39, in NAW, AAOY W3298.

⁴⁷ When John Sullivan died in 1904 his age was 75. Given the accuracy of other personal details on his death certificate, it is assumed that his date of birth was approximately 1829.

⁴⁸ Marriage records between 1825 and 1836 survive as do baptisms between 1825 and 1828.

⁴⁹ This assumption is based on Patrick Sullivan taking over the holdings of John and James Sullivan and sponsoring Thomas's first-born child, John. The Valuation Revision Books indicate that his holdings were transferred to Margaret Sullivan in 1899 suggesting that Patrick probably died before Catherine's 1905 letter to Ballingarry. The 1901 Census for Common shows a widowed Margaret Sullivan aged 56 with two children, James and Elizabeth. Michael Sullivan witnessed John's marriage to Catherine Riordan and some of his sons were Thomas, John, James, and Con.

⁵⁰ Valuation House Book (1849) in NAI, 5.1223/25.

bedding generally of the worst description, and many lie on straw on the cold ground.’⁵¹

Cornelius also held six acres of ‘heathy green pasture’ and arable land for an annual rent of £1.⁵² According to the Poor Inquiry testimonies, land was often provided to the inhabitants of Ballingarry parish in exchange for labour ‘the people ... being happy to secure the daily potato at all events.’⁵³

Both the civil parish of Ballingarry and the townland of Common were therefore hit hard when the potato failed. Common’s population declined by almost 200 people (26 per cent) between 1841 and 1851, while the county as a whole decreased by 28 per cent. Despite this decrease, the Sullivans remained in the townland where two of Cornelius’s sons, John and James, were returned as occupiers of land in the Primary Valuation. James held just over 14 acres of property described as ‘coarse mountain pasture, also better pasture, also arable’.⁵⁴ The land, outhouses, and a house measuring 40 feet long by 15 feet wide and 6.6 feet high fetched an annual valuation of £2.⁵⁵ Both the valuation of his older brother John’s estate and the size of John’s house were half that of James’s holding.⁵⁶ By 1864, James’s property passed to John and three years later both holdings were in the possession of Patrick Sullivan.

Though James and Thomas (and, for a time, John) could sustain a living near their place of birth, their sister Mary chose to emigrate to Connecticut in the United States in

⁵¹ Evidence of Revd. Thomas Gibbings in Poor Inquiry, appendix F, p. 650, in HCP, 1836 [38], xxxiii.

⁵² Valuation Field Book (1851) in IVO.

⁵³ Evidence of Revd. Thomas Gibbings in Poor Inquiry, appendix F, p. 650, in HCP, 1836 [38], xxxiii. See also the testimony of George Massy, Esq. and Revd. C. J. McCarthy, pp. 649-50.

⁵⁴ Valuation Field Book (1851) in IVO.

⁵⁵ Valuation House Book (1849) in NAI, 5.1223/25.

⁵⁶ John’s house was 21 feet long by 14 feet wide and with a ceiling of only 5.6 feet. This plus his ‘coarse mountain pasture’ and arable land was valued at £1. See Valuation House Book (1849) in NAI, 5.1223/25.

1869.⁵⁷ The Sullivans, however, did not select the United States when they departed Ballingarry in 1874. Instead, they were among 232 government immigrants who voyaged to New Zealand. While it appears that the Sullivan family migration was a collective undertaking, spurred on by the settlement in New Zealand of their daughter Mary two years earlier, their move was also facilitated by the colonial government at a cost of £65 at a time when couples with families, especially daughters, were encouraged to the colony.

The Sullivan family departed Gravesend on the *Wennington* under the command of Captain McAvoy on 21 January 1874. The three deaths that occurred during the voyage were countered by 10 births (including a son to the Sullivans).⁵⁸ After a passage of 124 days the *Wennington* arrived at Wellington on 25 May 1874. The Immigration Officers ‘found the immigrants to be a healthy lot of people free from organic disease of any kind.’ Although smoking and gambling initially appeared in the single men’s compartment, ‘In the married compartment the besetting sin was washing and keeping wet clothes below and such like.’⁵⁹ Also on board was Daniel Riordan (presumably Catherine’s brother) and his family⁶⁰ and Edward and Ellen Brown (possibly Catherine’s uncle). The local reaction to the arrival of the *Wennington* proved highly favourable: ‘We want people, and are only too glad to see them coming, for their arrival is sure to prove advantageous to themselves as well as to those amongst whom they have come to dwell. There’s room enough for all.’⁶¹

⁵⁷ Common’s population fell from 464 in 1851 to 331 in 1861 and to 253 in 1871.

⁵⁸ Their son was born 29 April 1874. The funeral of a female migrant who died during the vessel’s approach to port provoked an outcry due ‘to the conduct of a drunken undertaker.’ See Immigration Officer’s Report in IM 5/4/8 85, NAW.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ This assumption is likely given that Daniel’s children were Mary, aged 7, and Patrick, aged 2, named after their paternal grandparents.

⁶¹ *Evening Post*, 26 May 1874, p. 2.

The Sullivans settled at Foxton, Manawatu, renowned for its flax industry and known colloquially as the town of 'flax, fires and fleas'.⁶² Foxton underwent booms in 1869, 1888, and 1898 but also experienced declines according to the market prices of flax fibre.⁶³ John was consistently returned as a labourer in various directories through the years and was probably also subjected to the fortunes of the flax trade.

The town's population in the year the Sullivans arrived was 291, with a slight male majority. In September the following year, Mary married Lambton Carter, their union the earliest marriage entry in the Otaki registers. Thirty years later Catherine informed Tom of the Irish matches that three of her daughters entered (1c). Given that the Manawatu province only had 296 Irish natives out of a total population of 4,850 in 1878, the ability of the Sullivan daughters to find an Irish-born spouse is perhaps indicative of an established ethnic network. That Foxton contained 89 Catholics out of a population of 200 in 1887 certainly enhanced their chances.⁶⁴

Catherine Sullivan also mentioned that Annie's husband was a Protestant, 'a good a husband as ever woman got', due in part, possibly, to his recent inheritance of £1100 (1c).⁶⁵ As for the first-born son Con, his first wife died and 'Con only lived 13 months after his second marriage' (1d), dying on 19 March 1902. Con left instructions that his estate be divided between his children and his widow, so long as she did not remarry (1d). This

⁶² H. G. Boniface, 'Foxton: Its Site and Changing Function' (MA, University of New Zealand, 1947). For an account of employment in the flax industry based on the diary of James Cox, an itinerant labourer, see Miles Fairburn, *Nearly Out of Heart and Hope: The Puzzle of a Colonial Labourer's Diary* (Auckland, 1995).

⁶³ In 1888 the price fetched over £35 per ton and the following year 50 mills produced 12,000 tons of fibre. By October 1890 only six mills were operating. See A. N. (Tony) Hunt, *Foxton 1888-1988: The First 100 Years* (Levin, 1987), pp. 112-15.

⁶⁴ Archbishop Redwood, 'Sketch of Work of Catholic Church in Wellington Diocese 1887', cited in Edward C. Murphy, *St. Mary's Church Foxton, 1881-1981* (Foxton, 1982), p. 4.

⁶⁵ Roderick Milne, PP of Otaki, kindly informed me that Annie's husband was Watsen Hansen.

proviso was probably to ensure that his children would not lose their inheritance should his widow wed again. John, on the other hand, left all his possessions to Catherine (1b). Such glimpses of inheritance procedures indicate the obligations and responsibilities to kin.

Catherine not only provided information about her offspring but requested of Thomas 'Let me know how many children you have now' (1i). Though six children of Thomas Sullivan and Mary Kelly were baptised between 1868 and 1881, only three resided in the family's third class house at Ballingarry in 1901. These included Thomas's 32-year-old daughter Minnie, a domestic servant, and his two labouring sons, Patrick 27 and Cornelius 20, all illiterate. Thomas, also, was unable to read or write although both he and his wife could converse in Irish and English. It is likely that Mary read aloud the letters they received but could not compose a reply.

Meanwhile, James had been uprooted: 'Dear Tom let me know where Jimie is. We had two letters from his son ... He said his father was living in Howards-town' (1f). James was indeed at Howardstown South, near Ballingarry, in the civil parish of Bruree, having resided there since 1897.⁶⁶ Although living there in 1901 with his wife Bridget and son James, by 1911 Thomas was a 76-year-old widower with his 34-year-old daughter Ellen for company.⁶⁷ Both were literate and their second class house contained two rooms, two front windows, a piggery and a fowl house.

Catherine also requested information about Mary Sullivan and her husband Michael Shea in the United States,⁶⁸ as well as making enquiries that extended beyond the immediate family. She urged Tom to 'Remember me to all the neighbours and give my love to Aunty Kief and M^{rs} Maher' (1i). She also sought information about the postmaster.

⁶⁶ Valuation Revision Books in IVO.

⁶⁷ In the previous Census of 1901, James had returned himself as 60 years old.

⁶⁸ Mary married Michael Shea in 1873.

In addition, she asked Tom to 'let me know is Father Enwright in Ballangarry or where is he. We had a missioner here a Father O'Donall who said he was in Ballangarry' (1f).⁶⁹

When John Sullivan 'died a happy death; just as you would put the candle out' at 75 years of age on 6 April 1904, his widow Catherine delayed almost a year before informing John's brother in Ballingarry. 'I had no time to write before now', she explained to Thomas (1b). Although John 'told me to sell out and sit down for the rest of my life' Catherine was adamant that she would remain on the farm, milking four cows with Con's eldest son for company (1e). However, three years before her death on 22 February 1917 at 86 years of age, Catherine had relocated to live with her daughter Margaret and son-in-law Michael Spelman at Raumai, Palmerston North. She left an estate valued at under £100 to Margaret.⁷⁰ Catherine Sullivan's obituary in the Manawatu Daily Times proclaimed her as 'one of the pioneers of the Foxton district ... well known and highly respected throughout the Manawatu.'⁷¹ Catherine was buried two days after her death beside her husband at Foxton.⁷²

⁶⁹ Henry O'Donnell carried out missions in New Zealand from approximately 1902 until 1914 at which time he was posted to the Philippines. He died in Dublin in 1925. I am grateful to Fr. Bruce Bolland, ACDA, for this information which appears in Kearney, 'Plentiful Redemption'.

⁷⁰ The Will of Catherine Sullivan. No estate duty was levied on estates valued at under £500.

⁷¹ Manawatu Daily Times, 24 February 1917, p. 4.

⁷² Catherine is in Plot 20a Block II RC while John is in Plot 20 Block II RC.

'The master is not greater than his servant here':

The Kilpatrick Correspondence, 1862-1916

The Kilpatrick sequence is unique in this study for its extensive exchange of letters spanning the years 1862 to 1916.⁷³ Margaret Kilpatrick sent six letters from Auckland and received nine letters from a range of correspondents including her widowed mother, brothers, her husband's siblings, and friends in Armagh. The sequence provides intriguing depictions of male-female interaction and highlights the growing opportunities for young women who remained in Ireland. The central colonial recipient and writer, Margaret Kilpatrick, was a woman of strong religious fervour as were many of her correspondents in Armagh.

In July 1897, 60-year-old Margaret Kilpatrick recalled that she was 22 years of age 'when God called me out of darkness into light, in the midst of the great revival of 1859'. The event took place on 5 July 1859 in the first Presbyterian Church at Keady under Dr. Carson's ministry. 'I was trying to lead some to God', Margaret later wrote, 'when an old woman came & put her hand on my shoulder & said to me have you found Christ, yourself? At that point, Margaret claimed to have heard Christ's voice and 'I cried for mercie & the first thing I knew was I was standing on my feet singing the 103 Ps'. Following the event, 'I became fearless, & I spoke to everyone about their souls, & held prayer meetings every where'. She noted that two brothers were also saved that day while two others had been saved beforehand. As such 'dear Mother was rejoycing in God with all her house'.⁷⁴

⁷³ Margaret Anne Kilpatrick's letters are lodged at PRONI, D 3014/3/3/1-3 and D 3014/3/4/1-3. The letters sent to Margaret Anne Kilpatrick from Ireland were kindly provided by Alan Kilpatrick, Gisborne.

⁷⁴ This document was kindly provided by Alan Kilpatrick.

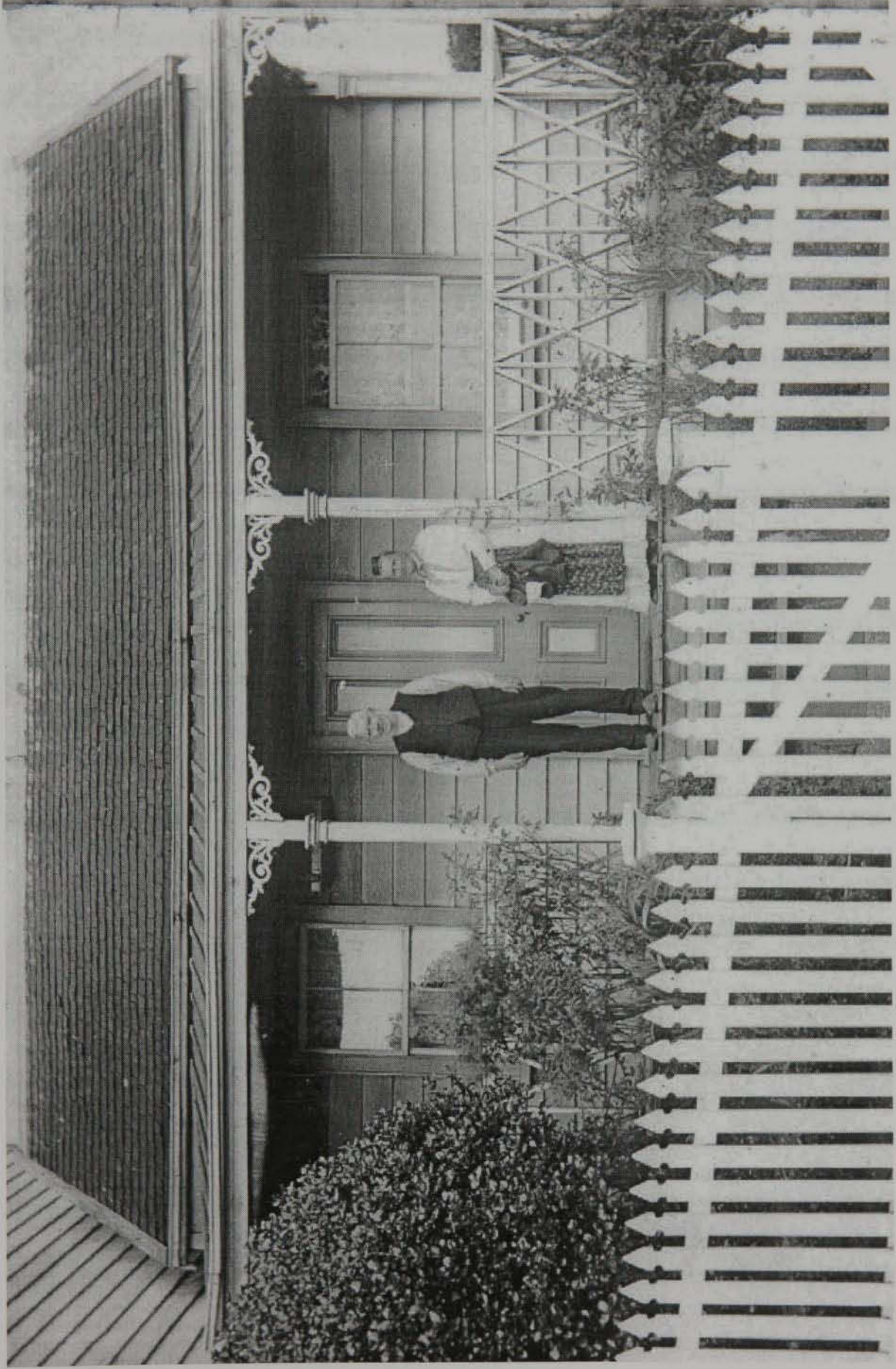


Fig 8 'Willie lets us live in this house rent free': David and Margaret Kilpatrick at Newton Road, Auckland, circa 1900
(Alan Kilpatrick).

On 19 February 1861, almost two years after being saved, Margaret Anne Reid married David Kilpatrick at the Third Presbyterian Church in Armagh. Born in 1832 to William Kilpatrick and Elizabeth Lyons, David was a native of Ballyards. William Kilpatrick, David's father, does not appear as a landholder at Ballyards. However, William Kilpatrick's father was probably John Kilpatrick whose property was valued at £44 10s. Seemingly, David did not share his wife's religious fervour for in 1880 Margaret's brother Joseph requested her to 'Let me know in your next if David has yet accepted Gods greatest Gift. "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners"' (9g). Margaret, on the other hand, continued her affinity with Psalm 103 (13a, 14j), was a regular parishioner at the old Wellesley Street Church in Auckland, and a leader of the Young Women's Bible Class.

Margaret was the youngest daughter of Robert Reid, the schoolmaster at Balleer in the parish of Lisnadill between 1819 and 1838. A son of Robert Reid of Drumgaw, Robert claimed to have arrived at Balleer school in a state of 'extreme poverty'.⁷⁵ In 1822 he married Margaret Carroll and they had three children: Martha Jane, Eleanor, and Thomas Ebenezer. Margaret died in 1826 and three years later Robert married Mary Anne Waddle. The couple produced five children including Margaret Anne, their last child, who was born on 5 July 1837.

The Tithe Applotment Book for 1832 lists Robert Reid as occupier of just over five Irish acres of second and third class land subject to a 5s 1½d composition. Five years later the family moved to a new house which was 34 feet long and 21 feet wide and 6 feet high.⁷⁶ At the time of the Primary Valuation the house was worth £5 10s annually. With

⁷⁵ Joyce M. H. Reid (ed.), *An Introduction to the Balleer School Copy Book of Letters* (Belfast, 1977), p. 44.

⁷⁶ Valuation Field Book (1864), in PRONI, VAL 2B/2/10A.

land worth £9 5s added, the total annual valuation of the Reid holding was £14 15s. The landholder at this time was Mary Anne Reid for Robert had died prematurely in 1838. A notation in the family Bible claimed that ‘He lived respected and died lamented by all who knew him, having discharged the arduous task of instructing youth for the space of nineteen years in the Balleer School with great efficiency. His motto was the end of all education is to be wiser and better. Religious instruction was his principle aim’.⁷⁷ Robert Reid was buried at the Church of Ireland graveyard in Lisnadill.

The premature death of Robert Reid in 1838 must have caused significant hardship for the family. His eldest daughters, Martha Jane and Eleanor, settled in Canada from where Martha Jane expressed her desire to have Margaret join her: ‘I wish R. John would marry and let you come to me. It is time he was. He is 28 I think by this.’⁷⁸ Instead, Margaret, with her husband and young son William, voyaged to New Zealand. The decision aggrieved Martha Jane who bitterly queried of her brother Thomas, ‘What freak could possess David Kilpatrick to start for N. Z. If he wished to make money faster, he might have tried Canada, or some place within the bounds of Christendom but to start on a 10 months voyage, speculating, what an idea, and only think I don’t know yet what Kilpatricks they are’.⁷⁹

Margaret, David, and William Kilpatrick set sail on 4 July 1862 from Gravesend on board the *Indian Empire* to Auckland. Captain Black whose ‘gentlemanly and kind conduct ... was highly spoken of’ commanded the vessel.⁸⁰ The Kilpatricks were among 257 passengers which included the Massey family, William Erskine, and members of the

⁷⁷ Reid (ed.), *An Introduction*, pp. xi-xii.

⁷⁸ Martha Jane Wilson (Canada) to Margaret Anne Kilpatrick (Armagh), 17 March 1862. Transcript at PRONI, T 2466/1, p. 12.

⁷⁹ Martha Jane Wilson (Canada) to Thomas E. Reid (Armagh), 15 December 1862, in PRONI, D 3014/2/16.

⁸⁰ *Daily Southern Cross*, 21 October 1862, p. 2.

Bassett family.⁸¹ Three births and five deaths, including a sailor killed by a fall to the deck, occurred before the ship arrived on 20 October. The Kilpatricks' departure took place during a decade that saw Balleer's population decline by 22 per cent while Ballyards lost 12 per cent. This depopulation was reflected in Mary Anne Reid's letter to her daughter in 1863 which documented 'a great many that is going to Queens land this week' (Ki 2b). A year later, Elizabeth Walker informed Margaret Kilpatrick of her son's emigration to Australia 'in consequence of bad health brought on by standing on a flagged floor' (4d). Elizabeth Walker also reported on another son in Trinidad and the departure of two acquaintances to America (4i). The primacy of America as a destination was further outlined in 1880 when Sophy Lang reported on the settlement of many Armagh acquaintances there (7g).

Upon arrival in Auckland, the Kilpatricks settled at Otahuhu from where Margaret sent the first of her surviving six letters. As Martha Jane later recollected, 'she writes such a nice clean letter, not like mine'.⁸² Margaret Kilpatrick's first letter home suggests that the idea of a paradise in the Pacific may have been an added ingredient in the migration of her family. She asked her brother Thomas 'to go out to Mama and read her this. Tell her she dreamed a very straight dream about this place. The green hill, the great mountain, the sea below, and the Valley beyond it. All is just as she told me. Tell her I am far better than ever I expected I would be' (1e). On the other hand, the vision may have been the means for Margaret Anne's mother to reassure her daughter about the migration or even placate

⁸¹ The Massey family voyaged to the colony ahead of their son William Ferguson Massey, Prime Minister of New Zealand (1912-1925), who had remained in Ireland to complete his studies. The Bassett family migration is discussed by John Bassett, 'Family Migration to New Zealand: A Case Study of the Bassett Family of Ballygawley, Downpatrick, Co Down', in *Familia*, vol. 2, no. 5, 1989, pp. 13-17.

⁸² Martha Jane Wilson (Canada) to her brother Thomas E. Reid (Armagh), 25 February 1913. Transcript in PRONI, T 2466/1, p. 50.

her own fears about her daughter's emigration to a destination far from home. Whatever explanation is applied, the letters indicate that dreams were characteristic of the Reid family (2c, 3c, 4b, 8c).

In Auckland, David found employment as a blacksmith with Mr. Wallace through the assistance of Revd. Mackey. Margaret claimed that 'David and I are exce[lling] many who came with us' (1a) and later asserted that 'There never was a tradesman like him in this city. Every body said so, & it was true' (14e). The Kilpatricks had three more children in New Zealand: Maria, Elizabeth, and Robert. The letters reveal little about the family although David's illnesses caused concern with George Reid wishing to know 'what means you have of earning bread' (5a).

From Ireland in 1863, Margaret's mother Mary Anne Reid claimed to be 'tottering fast down the hill of life' although another correspondent the following year revealed she was 'the same bustling little lady attending to every thing' (2a, 4c). In 1870 George Reid admitted 'Mama looks older but has wonderful health' (5b). Seven years later, Mary Anne Reid died at 76 years. She was warmly remembered for 'her gay agreeable manner and her funny jokes' (7b). It was seemingly a characteristic shared by George who admitted to being 'fond of fun ... and can enjoy a joke as well as ever' (8b).

Sophy Lang indicated that Mary Anne Reid's place in the community was taken up by Joseph's wife Sarah, 'a decent respectable's man's Daughter. She pleases me very well. She has an agreeable manner and a first rate house-keeper. She is very industrious and attends to her man and her domestic affairs properly' (7c). Joseph Reid also admitted, 'I have got an agreeable partner in life' (9b). When Joseph died in 1895, Margaret commiserated, 'It will be a struggle for her, unless she is a good maneger' (14k). The 1901 census schedule indicated that Sarah Reid lived in the house with her two young sons John aged 10 and Thomas 7. Ten years later, only her 28-year-old daughter lived with her. The

second class house had four rooms and five front windows as well as seven out-houses including a stable, cow house, calf house, piggery, fowl house, barn, and potato house. It was, Sarah claimed fifteen years later, 'a good home and very comfortable' (15b). Also alive in 1911 were David Kilpatrick's brothers, John and Robert. John was 79 years of age and sharing his second class house, with its four rooms and six front windows, with a 50-year-old female servant. Robert and his wife Sarah Jane, both in their sixties, also occupied a second class house at Ballyards. They had only married since the previous census as in 1901 Robert was living with his sister Elizabeth and nephew David.

On 23 March 1905, David Kilpatrick died at Newton Road, Auckland, and was buried at Symonds Street Cemetery with his daughter Elizabeth. The headstone proclaimed 'In loving memory of David Kilpatrick who died March 23rd 1905 aged 73 years also of his daughter Elizabeth Lyons.' Death struck again, more tragically, in October 1906 when Margaret's youngest son, Robert Ebenezer Reid Kilpatrick, died. As Martha informed Thomas, 'I think it is about 3 yrs since he got hurt by a piece of timber, falling on his back. He was idle I think about a year, then tried to work, but eventually he had to give it up. He has been in some place that we would call a hospital but was not gaining so Willie went for him. He lived only 7 days after he got home. She says everything was done for him that man could do, but all to no purpose. She writes he has gone to Jesus, so she has not to fret as those who have no hope. He was 33 yrs old, and unmarried.'⁸³

Martha's letters reveal that Margaret settled with 'her daughter who lives in Dunedin on the other side, or end of the island but the extreme difference in the weather hindered her it was so very cold and Mary's husband was so very very kind to her. They

⁸³ Martha Jane Wilson (Canada) to Thomas E. Reid (Armagh), 13 January 1907. Typed transcript at PRONI, T 2466/1.

are well off have a large furniture ware-house.⁸⁴ Some time later Margaret moved to live with her son William in Gisborne. It was here on 2 January 1922 that Margaret Anne Kilpatrick died at 84 years of age. Her obituary heralded her 'broad Christian sympathies' and observed that she was 'Motherly, kind, and of deep personal piety'.⁸⁵

'Often longed for the old home & friends':

The Macready Correspondence, 1878-1881

Unlike the previous profiles, Bessie Macready had experienced the death of both parents prior to her emigration to New Zealand. The recipients of Bessie Macready's three letters have not been identified but it is probable that 'Cousin William' was William Main of Ballooley in County Down.⁸⁶ William occupied the land with his wife Eliza and brother James Main who is mentioned in the letters. Though only three of Bessie Macready's letters survive, they reveal her to be a well-educated, optimistic, and determined woman. Written in a flourishing style, the letters cover topics as diverse as the voyage, colonial conditions, and Bessie's ambitions.

Bessie Macready was born in Belfast in approximately 1842 to Hugh and Jane Macready.⁸⁷ Her father Hugh, a teacher, occupied a house worth £6 annually at 143 Agnes Street, St Ann's Ward, in the Shankill parish of Belfast. Bessie had at least three siblings, two of whom died in their twenties while the family was still resident at Agnes Street. Shortly after 1870, the family moved to 20 Pine Street and it was here, on 28 March 1874, that Hugh Macready died at 70 years of age. Two years later Bessie's 26-year-old brother

⁸⁴ Martha Jane Wilson (Canada) to Thomas E. Reid (Armagh), 25 February 1913. Typed transcript at PRONI, T 2466/1, p. 50.

⁸⁵ *New Zealand Baptist*, March 1922, p. 43. Kindly provided by Alan Kilpatrick.

⁸⁶ Bessie Macready's letters are lodged at PRONI, D 1757/2/4-6, along with material relating to the Martin family.

⁸⁷ Bessie's father's name is incorrectly recorded as 'Charles' on her death certificate.

Charles, a lithographic artist, was dead. He left an estate valued for administration at between £100 and £200 to his mother.⁸⁸ The following year 64-year-old Jane Macready died leaving Bessie the sole executrix of an estate valued at under £200.⁸⁹ With no immediate family, and with money at her disposal, Bessie emigrated to the colony as a cabin class passenger in 1878 on board 'Messrs Shaw, Savill and Co's favourite ship', the *Pleiades*, commanded by Captain Setten. Following a voyage of 79 days, the ship arrived at Port Lyttelton on 11 March.

Bessie Macready's first letter home in 1878 provided a vivid depiction of the journey. She claimed that 'the roaring of the wind, the rattling of things all around us The creaking of the timbers and dashing of the sea against the ships side was enough to strike terror into a stout heart' (1g). The newspaper report of the storms was less lively merely noting that 'The passage with the exception of two heavy gales, has been a very fine one'.⁹⁰ Possibly the relief following arrival generated Bessie's sigh, 'I have travelled over about fifteen thousand miles of water and at last got to the desired haven' (1a).

Bessie Macready initially settled with her aunts at Governor's Bay, approximately thirteen miles from Christchurch.⁹¹ The district was hilly and Bessie expressed her surprise 'at the way in which Aunt Bessy can run up the hills' (1c). She admitted to her cousins that Governor's Bay was not a place for progressing rapidly and consequently she took charge of a shop in Lyttelton. Bessie remained there 'a year and a half and many a weary time I spent there, business dull, long hours, and innumerable little trials ... However I was gaining something and that enabled me to bear up in prospect of a happier future' (3c).

⁸⁸ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1876 [131], in NAI.

⁸⁹ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1877 [407], in NAI. The range was the same as 1876.

⁹⁰ *Lyttelton Times*, 12 March 1878.

⁹¹ Regrettably, the identity of Bessie's aunts has not been established.

That future involved taking charge of a villa in Christchurch while the owner, Thomas Mollett⁹², took a trip to England. Bessie took delight in cataloguing the household's silver service and claimed that 'I occupy the best rooms just as a member of the family' (3e). She furthermore confided, 'I have got a nice girl for a servant and am attended to like a lady' (3e). Bessie probably only remained a year at the Mollett residence for she regularly appears in the electoral rolls and street directories as Bessie Macready, dressmaker, Governor's Bay. In 1881, three years after Bessie's arrival, the population of Governor's Bay reached 184. The wider borough of Lyttelton had a population of 4,127 of which 6 per cent were natives of Ireland.

Bessie Macready's letters are intriguing for their descriptions of colonial life. Writing to her cousin William, a farmer, Bessie modestly claimed 'it is not quite in my line' but proceeded to tell William about 'very fine fat cows' and sheep 'quite as woolly and quite as nice to eat' (2a, 2e). She revealed that wheat, wool, oats, and preserved meat were sent back to England and also described the unsuccessful experiment of sending cheese back (2c). Colonial food, accommodation, and clothing were also discussed (2f). Bessie Macready clearly savoured Canterbury's climate which she considered 'very well suited to my constitution' (3a). She admitted, however, that 'I have had many, very, very weary days and often longed for the old home & friends' (3a).

Bessie inquired after her cousin James, his wife, and their two daughters. In the census schedule for 1901 James Main returned himself as a 77-year-old farmer. His wife Harriet was 68 and their daughter Christiana was 33. All could read and write as could their 24-year-old Catholic female domestic servant. The farm had a stable, cow house,

⁹² A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand, October 1882 records Mollett as freeholder of land in Christchurch worth £11,500.

piggery, fowl house, and barn. When James died four years later, he left an estate worth £465 8s 4d.⁹³

'Recluse Dies' is how the Lyttelton Times announced Bessie's death in October 1926. Her grocer, who called every Friday, discovered the 82-year-old. An inquest concluded that Bessie Macready, 'of a singular disposition', died on or about 12 October. She was buried at Governor's Bay five days later.

'We are getting on slowly but steadily thank God':

The McClure Correspondence, 1860-1865

As with Bessie Macready, James Moreland and [Alexander] Gordon McClure had lost both parents when they elected to voyage to New Zealand in 1860. The brothers sent five letters back to their sisters in Belfast, including three prior to and during the passage.⁹⁴ The letters give a rare insight into planning procedures and reflect the brothers' hope that the family would be reunited.

James and Gordon were the sons of George McClure of Newtownbreda and his wife Prudence Harrison of Dromore in County Down. James was born in 1824⁹⁵ and Gordon was christened at the Church of Ireland in Newtownbreda on 17 October 1831. Another brother, William George, also emigrated to New Zealand while their four sisters, the recipients of their letters, remained in Ireland.

⁹³ The Will of James Main is in PRONI, D 1757/1/7.

⁹⁴ The McClure letters are in PRONI, D 1746/5/1-2 and D 1746/3/1-3. I am also grateful for information provided by Jim McClure, Christchurch.

⁹⁵ James's year of birth is calculated from his death certificate.

In 1823 George McClure was admitted to the Royal College of Surgeons, London.⁹⁶ Ten years later he was returned in the House Book for the village of Newtownbreda as the occupier of a house measuring 56.6 feet long, by 16 feet high, and 20.6 feet wide. The property also contained a scullery, car house, and stable.⁹⁷ George McClure was frequently absent due to his employment as a surgeon on vessels transporting convicts to the colonies. Prior to the commencement of one such trip in 1838, George instructed his children on a range of issues: ‘There is no such word in the English language as Dada, but there is one which answers better which you must be aware of - Papa - continue to be good & obedient children until I return. I don’t much admire the part of the Town where you have allocated yourselves. Dont take it for more than a year, however, I leave this matter for your own reputation ... attend regularly to Divine worship & do not omit your prayers, night & morning, & God will bless & protect you in the absence of your affectionate father.’⁹⁸

In 1847 Prudence McClure died and two years later George reputedly died in Paris attending to the administration of the estate of his brother-in-law, William Harrison. William Harrison had died in 1848 and George’s children received their recently deceased mother’s share in trust (£30,000).⁹⁹ This substantial sum included some American bonds which James discussed in his 1865 letter (5g). The brothers also borrowed from this amount to finance their emigration. As Gordon revealed, ‘it has taken an immense sum £1500 to fit us out’ (2b).

The McClure migration to New Zealand, although undertaken by James and Gordon, appears to have been a collective undertaking with both brothers conveying to

⁹⁶ George was admitted to the Royal College of Surgeons, London, on 5 September 1823. His certificate is in PRONI, D 1746/1A/2.

⁹⁷ Valuation House Book (1833), in PRONI, VAL 1B/332.

⁹⁸ Transcription of a letter dated 13 April 1838 from George McClure to his children, in PRONI, D 1746/2/3.

⁹⁹ PRONI, D 1746/6/1.

their sisters the belief that they would all reunite. James revealed that ‘no doubt we shall meet at a future day’ while Gordon remarked, ‘I hope you will enjoy yourselves till I come back which will be in about 2 years when I expect you will all come out with me & settle’ (1b, 2a). James himself may have been spurred to the colony for health reasons for he had been a long-standing sufferer of asthma.¹⁰⁰ The brothers, along with James’s newly acquired wife Emily Humphreys, ‘the orphan Daughter of a Solicitor’ (1a), departed London on board the *Evening Star* on 4 July 1860.

The *Evening Star* arrived in Otago on 13 October 1860 and the McClures initially settled at Invercargill. It seems likely that their brother, William George, his wife Lydia, and their children were already in the colony as in 1861 James and Gordon helped William build his house while they awaited their land grant. Gordon told his sisters that ‘He is going to reside in this town & has every prospect of succeeding in his profession’ (4b). William McClure was the first superintendent at the Southland Hospital between 1861 and 1865 but left his wife and family to settle in Australia. In stark contrast with the amicable marriage of James, William and his wife ‘were a most unhappy pair’ (5e). James told his sisters that ‘He is a rol[l]ing stone, but his wife has much to blame for what has happened to him’ (5e).

Following the approval of their land grant, James and Gordon McClure relocated to Ryal Bush in Southland, twelve miles by road from Invercargill. James described their house as ‘comfortable & is the best in the neighborhood’ (5c). James’s letter to his sisters in 1865 revealed that colonial living was beset by difficulties: ‘The changes in this Colony are very sudden. Men one year apparently realizing fortunes & the next loosing everything’ (5b). Despite this, James remained cheerfully optimistic: ‘in a year or two all will be bright again’ (5b).

¹⁰⁰ See his obituary in *Southland Times*, 20 January 1875, p. 2.

Apart from his farming interests in Southland, James McClure chased a political career. Despite being beaten for a seat in the Provincial Council, he decided to stand for the House of Representatives in 1865. As he optimistically told his sisters, 'I consider I have a good chance to be returned, but will let you know the result of the election which promises to be sharply contested as I oppose one of the big wigs' (5f). His quest failed but in 1867 James was elected to the Provincial Council for the Southland Province.

James Moreland McClure died at 50 years of age on 17 January 1875. The Southland Times heralded his 'extensive knowledge' and 'fine taste in polite literature'. He was allegedly a man 'who, in private life, won general esteem; but, in public affairs, he was noted as being a pleasant discursive speaker, with a facile, almost poetical mastery of language, rather than as a peculiarly practical man of business, with an arithmetical cast of intellect'.¹⁰¹ Emily McClure was granted the Letters of Administration to his estate valued at under £165.¹⁰² The fate of James's brothers remains unknown though it is thought that Gordon drowned at sea.

'Toiling for your bread among strangers':

The Strong Correspondence, 1883-1905

The twin themes of death and reconciliation permeate the seven letters that Daniel Strong received from his cousins in County Tipperary.¹⁰³ John Strong wrote the first two and last two letters while his brother Martin wrote the third and fifth letters and their sister Lizzie penned the fourth. Daniel's cousins, grieved that he could not make a home at Lehinch in north Tipperary, still urged him to return if New Zealand failed to meet his

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Administration of James McClure's estate, 9071/317, in NAD, WO 019.

¹⁰³ Photocopies of the Strong letters were kindly provided by Ginny Dow, Nelson.

expectations. Unlike the Gilmer series, the Strong sequence indicates strong affection between cousins at home and abroad. The sequence also conveys the satisfaction of the Strongs in remaining in Ireland.

In 1838 Samuel Lewis remarked that the scenery in the parish of Lorrha 'is pleasingly diversified and derives much interest from the venerable ruins of the abbey and friary.'¹⁰⁴ Indeed, Lorrha Abbey looms large in the Strong sequence. When Daniel Strong prepared to depart Dublin in 1883, his cousin John declared, 'may god and the blessed virgin watch over and protect you. May they guide your steps back again to holy Ireland to mingle your clay with your father's in the old spot under the shadow of Lorrha Abbey' (2h). Daniel's aunt Bridget and his cousin William were also buried at Lorrha Abbey. As John informed Daniel in 1905, 'that old woman loved you as her own son But tall weeds now grow over her grave under the shadow of Lorrha's old Abbey where also poor Will sleeps death's long sleep' (6b). Daniel's own siblings had met premature deaths and in 1905 John told Daniel of his visit to their graves in Dublin: 'As I stood by that simp[le] cross near their resting place how their faces and forms came back to my memory and I was nearly blinded by tears' (6i).

John Strong was born in 1852, the eldest child of Denis Strong whose father John Strong occupied just over 53 acres valued annually at £30, the second highest valuation in the townland of Lehinch in the civil parish of Lorrha.¹⁰⁵ The house in which Denis and his five siblings were raised measured 63 feet long by 19.6 feet wide and 6.9 feet high.¹⁰⁶ In 1856, the property came into Denis's possession following the death of his father. Denis

¹⁰⁴ Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 311.

¹⁰⁵ He is recorded in the Tithe Applotment Books in 1824 as occupier of 30 Irish acres fetching a tithe composition of £1 17s 7d.

¹⁰⁶ Valuation House Book (1846) in NAI, 5.1796.

Strong and his wife Bridget Kennedy produced a further six children: Margaret 1853, Patrick 1857, Denis 1860, Elizabeth 1863, Patrick 1865, and Martin 1868.

Meanwhile, Denis's brother William had married Mary Ryan in February 1849 and they had six children, including Daniel who was born in 1859. Tragedy struck in 1864 when William died, leaving a personal estate valued at between £800 and £1,000.¹⁰⁷ His assets included a public house at the Ferry that Daniel was due to inherit. However, family lore indicates that mismanagement led to the pub being sold.¹⁰⁸ The letters are replete with recriminations about this event. Lizzie pronounced, 'It would be the joy of our hearts to see you where you had a right to be' while Martin hoped 'to see your name planted there yet' (4c, 3d). Some of the blame was directed at their sister Margaret who Martin claimed 'was a foolish girl and I suppose helped to leave who is in your place at the Ferry there' (3d).

Despite the situation, Daniel's cousins consistently reminded him that a home awaited him in Ireland. At the outset of his departure in 1883, John warmly reassured, 'you will be more than welcome back here to live your lifetime in this humble home' and 'you have a home in Ireland while one of us lives' (1b, 2b). Seemingly, Daniel had relatives in New Zealand for John asked him to 'Remember me to all my relations' (6k). The letters also mention the Hayes, Maginnis, and Carroll families in New Zealand (3h, 3i, 5d, 6e, 7b). Friends and relatives in England, America, and South Africa were also mentioned (3g, 1f, 6d).

More than a decade after Daniel's departure, Martin requested Daniel 'to make up your mind and face dear old Ireland once more where I will have a lump of a fine

¹⁰⁷ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1865 [134], in NAI. The range for 1865 was £800-£1000 with duty of £22.

¹⁰⁸ Joyce Elaine Strong (compiler), *History of the Stronge Family* (1972), privately circulated.

Connaught damsel to be your better half for the remainder of your days' (3n). Daniel, however, remained in New Zealand. Almost two decades after his departure, 43-year-old Daniel Strong married Mary Theresa Mulkere, the 34-year-old Indian-born daughter of Irish parents. Following the wedding at the Catholic church in Onehunga on 29 November 1902, the couple moved to Selwyn Road in Howick where their four children were born. Daniel pursued his trade as a carpenter and was elected to the Roads Board for the local council. Presumably it was this news that John responded to in 1905: 'Thanks for the newspaper. It let me know you have succeeded in a foreign land' (6a).

The Strongs in Tipperary also continued to progress through life. As Martin informed Daniel in 1895, 'You know yourself when you were leaving we had very little to stand upon only able to live decently. Well now today if you look back over those number of years we done a lot. We bought land to the amount of £500 and gave Margaret a fortune of two hundred pounds' (3e). Six years later, at the time of the 1901 Census, Margaret was the only member of the family married. Patrick, Denis, Elizabeth, and Martin, ranging in age from 41 to 33, occupied the second class house while John, single at 49 years of age, was a publican.¹⁰⁹ By the following year, John had married his cousin Ellen Kennedy and Martin had also married. In 1905, Daniel received the news of Lizzie's marriage to Joe Carroll (6c). Daniel also received extensive news about neighbours in Ireland (3b, 3c, 4d, 5c, 6d, 6k).

At the time of the 1911 Census only Patrick and Denis remained in the family home with two elderly servants. The house had imperishable walls, an imperishable roof, five rooms, and five front windows. Its outhouses included a stable, cow house, calf house,

¹⁰⁹ The ages given by the Strongs in both the 1901 and 1911 Census sharply contradict the ages as determined from the Lorrha parish registers.

piggery, boiling house, and barn. John was residing with his wife, three children, and two servants in a second class house with five rooms and four front windows.

Patrick Stronge died at Lehinch on 15 November 1949.¹¹⁰ In January 1954 his assets of £10 were granted to his son Patrick Stronge.¹¹¹ Martin Stronge died 9 June 1955, seven days after his wife Kathleen. Martin's estate, valued at £650, was granted to Bernard Stronge.¹¹² In his will, made in March 1954, Martin made extensive bequests to his grandchildren including shares in the Connacht Tribune Publishing Company and all his property. Martin's cousin Daniel, meanwhile, had died at Auckland on 17 June 1951 at 91 years of age. His will, made four years earlier, left his estate valued at £2880 to his wife.¹¹³ Mary Strong lived on until May 1955 when she died aged 87.

'Not forgetting Dear old Ireland':

The Rea Correspondence, 1905

Hugh Rea was born on 8 December 1844 at Scrib, near Seaforde, in the civil parish of Loughinisland, County Down, to William Rea and Catherine Newell. He was christened three days later in the Presbyterian Church at Clough. His father was most likely a son of Hugh Rea, born in 1805, who in 1828 held three acres of second class land at Scrib.¹¹⁴ Hugh sent his sole surviving letter to his brother William who was born in 1850.¹¹⁵ It

¹¹⁰ Joyce Stronge suggests that Martin Strong added the 'e' to his surname to differentiate himself from either his uncles or from Protestants of the same surname in the area. Alternatively, the practice might be due to his baptismal entry which records his surname with an 'e'.

¹¹¹ Wills and Administrations for 1954, P.R. 225, in NAI.

¹¹² Wills and Administrations for 1955, P.R. 2455, in NAI.

¹¹³ The Will of Daniel Strong, 1471/51, in NAA, BBAE 1570.

¹¹⁴ William Rea was baptised 4 July 1805.

¹¹⁵ The Rea letter is in PRONI, D 965/1. It is incorrectly indexed as being to his brother-in-law William McCance.

seems likely that soon after William's birth William the Elder died, for the Primary Valuation records Catherine Rea at Ardtanagh as occupier of a house valued annually at five shillings. Eliza, the first born child, was also residing here when she married Robert Gracey in 1864. By 1877 the house had passed out of Rea hands.

Hugh probably laboured locally before his decision to emigrate at almost thirty years of age. By 1881 the townland of Ardtanagh had lost 33 per cent of the population compared with ten years earlier. Hugh's relocation took place during a time when the colonial government was providing free passages, and assisted immigration peaked the year he travelled. Hugh Rea sailed on 2 May 1874, at a cost of £14 10s to the Government, on the Albion Company ship *Peter Denney*. The 85-day passage from port to port brought 374 passengers of which 365 were free or nominated immigrants. Hugh was one of 24 Irish males from a total Irish complement of 46. Following the ship's arrival on 26 July 1874 at Port Chalmers, the Otago Daily Times proclaimed that the passengers 'looked well and strong'.¹¹⁶ That year, no less than 53 ships docked at Port Chalmers, each vessel bringing between 300 and 450 migrants. 'All the intending settlers arriving were of a sturdy class, and assisted to lay the foundations of this young country', claimed Henry Brett.¹¹⁷ Of Otago's population of 85,113 in 1874, its Irish component was 8.2 per cent.

Little is known of Hugh Rea but he laboured in the colony and held property at Clinton, 'the centre of a very extensive district devoted to agriculture and pasturage'.¹¹⁸ In 1905 Hugh attempted to sell but 'I cant Sell at the price I want for it' (1a). His reason for selling appears to have been due to his contemplation of returning to Ireland. Hugh

¹¹⁶ The Irish outnumbered the nine Scottish migrants but provided a small share in comparison to the 204 English migrants. See the description of the passage in Otago Daily Times, 27 July 1874, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ Brett, White Wings, vol. 1, pp. 153-4.

¹¹⁸ Cyclopedia of New Zealand, vol. 4 (Christchurch, 1905), p. 750.

complained about the transient nature of colonial employment and revealed, 'I know that there are Hundreds of people in this country that came Here 20 and 30 years ago and if they could pay their passage to their native country they would go tomorrow' (1b). Hugh sought information from William about 'what rent is charged for the labourer's cottage in Ireland and how much land is in with the cottage and what wages is paid in Ireland per day or per week and how many hours you work in each day' (1b). Clearly, New Zealand had not met Hugh's expectations.

Hugh Rea's brother William has not been traced in the landholding records. Their sister Elizabeth, on the other hand, married William McCance in 1878 following the death of her first husband. William McCance was the son of John McCance of Scrib who occupied land worth £5 15s. William obtained part of this holding and by 1902 Elizabeth was occupier of just over two acres of land worth £2 15s. She probably had the holding the year before as the 1901 Census only records 56-year-old widow Elizabeth McCance residing with her 19-year-old son William and 11-year-old grandson Matthew McReynolds. The third class house had imperishable walls, a perishable roof, two rooms, and two front windows. Its nine outhouses included a stable, cow house, calf house, piggery, fowl house, boiling house, barn, potato house, and coal house.

On 11 July 1916, 71-year-old Hugh Rea died at Clinton from obstruction of the bowels. The Otago Witness recorded the death of 'Hughie Ray ... a resident of many years standing. He was a very handy man with tools, and his services were always in demand with people of the town and district. He was a very clever exponent of the violin and mouth organ, and spent much of his time in company with these cherished instruments.'¹¹⁹ Hugh's will stipulated that his effects were to be divided between his brother William and

¹¹⁹ Otago Witness, 19 July 1916, p. 27.

sister Elizabeth.¹²⁰ The following year Elizabeth received £58 11s 5d from the Dunedin law firm, Duncan and McGregor.¹²¹ A Clinton correspondent also informed her that Hugh ‘will be greatly missed by a number of friends and especially by the children in the township with whom he was a general favourite.’¹²²

Though Hugh Rea never returned to Ireland, the following profile documents the return visit of Philip Carroll to Tipperary in 1925.

‘Meetings are lovely but partings are rotten’:

The Carroll Correspondence, 1921-1925

In 1925 Philip Joseph Carroll returned to Tipperary from Auckland. During this return visit, in which he was absent for eight months, he sent 23 letters to his wife Nina that have survived.¹²³ The letters reveal him to be a devoted father, humorous husband, tender son, and gentle brother. Despite his debilitating health, Philip Carroll provided extensive, engaging depictions of Ireland’s people and places. Given the poor state of his health, Philip commented regularly on Ireland’s climate and its impact on his wellbeing. Irish politics and money also featured prominently as did his recreational pursuits. A letter sent by Philip to his cousin Tess in 1921 is also included.

Annie Carroll, Philip’s mother, was born in 1860, the ninth child of Daniel Carroll and Mary Anne Burke. Daniel Carroll was a substantial landholder of more than 100 acres at Ballincurra in Rilnaneave civil parish worth £51 15s annually. When the farm was

¹²⁰ The Will of Hugh Rea, 3712, in NAD, D239/166.

¹²¹ Duncan and McGregor (Dunedin) to Mrs Elizabeth McCance (Scrib), 23 May 1917, in PRONI, D 963/3.

¹²² Letter to Mrs McCance (Seaforde) from an unknown correspondent (Clinton), 10 July 1916, in PRONI, D 965/2.

¹²³ The Carroll letters were kindly provided by Br. Philip Carroll, OFM, Auckland.



Fig 9 'I did not know myself': Philip Carroll, circa 1918 (Br. Philip Carroll).



Fig 10 'Mother is absolutely wonderful': Annie Gleeson (Br. Philip Carroll).



Fig 11 'So prim and precise': Nancy Gleeson (Br. Philip Carroll).

placed for sale by auction in 1912, it was described as 'excellent grazing and tillage land ... well fenced and sheltered and watered ... with rich fattening and cropping qualities'.¹²⁴ The two-storey house contained four bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, pantry, parlour, and a servant's room. Its outhouses included a barn, dairy, and housing for horses, cows, pigs, and fowl.

On 1 March 1881 at the Catholic church in Templederry, Annie married 24-year-old Thomas Joseph Carroll, the son of Philip Carroll, merchant, and Mary Anne Boland. Thomas was a shopkeeper at Borrisoleigh but following his marriage to Annie they moved to Castle Street in Nenagh where Thomas occupied property worth £13 10s. It was here in 1886 and 1888 that the couple's two children, Mary Anne and Philip Joseph, were born. In May 1889, almost nine months after Philip's birth, Thomas Carroll died at just 32 years of age. His effects of £130 were granted to Annie for administration.¹²⁵ Annie remarried nine months later and with her new husband, John Gleeson, bore two further children. The 1901 Census schedule shows the family as resident at Queens Street in a second class house with seven rooms and five front windows. John Gleeson was returned as a 57-year-old draper's assistant, nineteen years older than his wife. Mary and Philip Carroll were 14 and 12 years old respectively while Annie and John Gleeson were aged 10 and 8. Later that year, Philip's 15-year-old sister Mary Anne died and his half-brother John Joseph died the year after at 9 years of age.

The family is recorded as having departed the holding in 1902 and six years later John Gleeson is recorded as occupier of a house at 9 Wolfe Tone Terrace. By 1912 he held a house and yard worth £3 10s per annum at 5 Wolfe Tone Terrace. Only John and Annie, 73 and 44 years of age respectively, along with a 21-year-old female boarder, occupied the

¹²⁴ *Nenagh News*, March 1912. Provided by Br. Carroll.

¹²⁵ *Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1889* [61], in NAI.

four roomed house in 1911. Annie's father Daniel, meanwhile, had died at 84 years of age in 1896. He was remembered as 'an extremely popular man, his urbane, genial and courteous manner making him greatly respected'.¹²⁶ The Ballincurra land passed to his widowed daughter-in-law Bridget who sold the holding in 1912. That same year Philip Carroll sailed for New Zealand. Previously he had worked as a cleric at the Kingstown railway station. Philip arrived in Auckland on 1 January 1913 and according to family lore had emigrated for health reasons.

Philip Carroll worked as an accountant for Andrew M. Patterson in Auckland. He resided at 5 City Road and several letters spanning the years 1918 to 1919 document his blooming relationship with [Bridget] Nina Ryan. Following a period of courtship, Philip confessed his love. Though Nina initially professed the same feelings, she later recanted. A dejected Philip, signing his letter 'Your brokenhearted Phil', criticised Nina's actions: 'Did you want to lead me on to a certain point and then drop me and break me and so make my life miserable. If so, you succeeded only too well.'¹²⁷ Despite the setback, the relationship resumed though in May 1919 Philip expressed concern 'that people told you they wondered how you could marry me as I was so thin and delicate'. However, he refused to take such comments 'lying down' and was 'absolutely sick and tired of others interfering in my affairs'.¹²⁸ Philip reported, 'I am an admirer of brown eyes as you say, but brown eyes alone are soon got tired of. There is something else, which I cannot describe, required to produce real love. For the life of me I cannot tell you what it is but I can tell you that so far as I am concerned you possess it'.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ *Nenagh News*, c. 12 February 1896. Supplied by Br. Carroll.

¹²⁷ Philip Carroll to Nina Ryan, 8 September 1918.

¹²⁸ Philip Carroll to Nina Ryan, 29 May 1919.

¹²⁹ Philip Carroll to Nina Ryan, November 1919.

On 16 December 1919 at St. Patrick's Cathedral, 29-year-old Philip married 23-year-old Nina Ryan. Nina was born in Gisborne in 1896 to Thomas Ryan, a native of Limerick, and Bridget Donnelly, the daughter of a Fencible. Between 1921 and 1924 Philip and Nina had three children: Eileen, Maureen, and Philip.

The date of Philip's stepfather's death is unknown but the property at Wolfe Tone Street was transferred to Annie's name in 1921. In April 1925 Philip decided to return to Nenagh. He travelled by train from Auckland to Wellington and took the steamer *Arawa*. His second letter reported comprehensively on the return of fellow passengers (3c) discussed at length in chapter 6. The voyage took them via Pitcairn Island and the Panama Canal. Along with several passengers, Philip visited Colon a 'city which is mostly composed of niggers, Chinese & Japanese with a fair sprinkling of Yanks' (4c). After arrival at Southampton, Philip took the train to London where he connected with a ship bound for Dublin. He met several acquaintances in the Irish capital before taking the train to Nenagh. After four days at home Philip was 'deluged with applications and invitations from friends and relations' (5e). Generally, such neighbourhood networks were depicted as harmonious. Philip mentioned that 'The hospitality is wonderful. Every friend seems to vie with one another in doing me a good turn' (6k).

Though these networks could occasionally be discordant, Philip's negative statements concerning relationships were largely confined to his immediate family. Upon his sister Nance's return from Liverpool, Philip reported on the relationship between his mother and sister: 'She tries hard to order Mother about but Mother is well able to stand up for her rights' (6h). Nance, however, read his comments 'and as a result there has been hell to pay in our house this afternoon' (6l). His relationship with Nance had, however, improved by the next letter and he offered to 'withdraw everything nasty I said about

Nance' (8e). Philip excused Nance's behaviour by claiming that 'Mother is getting old now and is sometimes rather hard to get on with' (8e).

Not surprisingly, Philip Carroll's letters document his health on a regular basis. In July he reassured Nina that he was 'feeling fit as a fiddle' and figured 'There must be something in the native air alright' (11b). His comments about the Irish weather veered along with his health. Some days it was 'oppressively hot'; other days 'damp cold' (8d, 11b).

Philip was regularly kept abreast of news in New Zealand by newspapers. He learned of Prime Minister William Ferguson Massey's death (6e) and the grisly Mouat murder. According to Philip, it 'is turning out an awfully gruesome case. If Mouat did it he is very cool about it and covered his tracks pretty well' (9c). The case revolved around the disappearance of Ellen Mouat in February 1925 and her husband Frederick's claim that she had committed suicide. Following the discovery of 31 human bone fragments, Mouat was charged with his wife's murder. At his first trial the jury failed to reach a conclusion though he was later committed of manslaughter.¹³⁰ Philip also learned the latest about his friends and family who assisted his wife and children during this absence. Among these was Fr. Colgan¹³¹ who 'is good alright and if necessary I know he will help you' (9d).

Philip Carroll's letters also document his warmth for his wife and his family discussed more fully in Chapter 6. His separation generated substantial discussion about 'home' which was New Zealand: 'The hospitality & friendship is as good as ever but I want to go home to New Zealand to see my small wife and large family once again' (19b). His later melancholy may have stemmed from his final medical examination. Apparently

¹³⁰ Details of the Mouat case are contained in Barry Thomson and Robert Neilson, *Sharing the Challenge: A Social and Pictorial History of the Christchurch Police District* (Christchurch, 1989), p. 223.

¹³¹ Fr. George Colgan (1892-1972) was parish priest of Avondale from 1922 until 1940.

Philip was told that ‘the disease was very far advanced and the chance of a cure were very remote’. As such, ‘My sole ambition after that report was to get back to my wife and family in New Zealand before I died’.¹³² Departing at approximately the same time as Philip, but to America, was a friend whose career in the railways was stagnant as ‘prospects of promotion at the present time are nil’ (24b).

Philip Carroll left Tilbury Dock on 17 October 1925. His voyage on the RMS *Ormonde* took him through the Suez Canal as he figured the ‘journey would be less monotonous’ and would provide him with the chance to see several Australian cities. Upon arrival in Australia, Philip underwent fierce scrutiny due to skipping a medical parade. He admitted he was suffering from Bright’s Disease but refused a medical examination as he did not want to learn ‘that I had contracted some other disease ... that would only tend to make my short span of life more miserable’. He eventually sailed to Auckland on the *Maunganui* and arrived 8 December 1925.

Philip Carroll survived for another seven months, dying on 15 July 1926, the day after his wife’s birthday. He was 37-years-old. His daughter Maureen died six weeks later. Nina Carroll remarried in 1945 and lived out her days on a farm until her death on 28 July 1955. In Tipperary, Annie Gleeson died on 26 May 1931 and her estate was valued for probate at £1,149 4s 9d.¹³³ Her will, made five days before her death, bequeathed £50 to the Nenagh Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and £50 to three priests for masses. The remainder of her estate was bequeathed to Nance who died in 1965.

¹³² This document was kindly made available by Br. Carroll.

¹³³ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1931 [149], in NAI.

The letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand discussed in this chapter illuminate strong bonds between migrants and non-migrants. Such warmth is also evident in the depictions of kin and neighbourhood networks at home and abroad, though some signs of dissent in Ireland appear in the Strong and Carroll sequences. Indeed, neighbourhood was a major theme in letters from both Ireland and New Zealand. Though Ann McClelland, the Dwyers, Margaret Kilpatrick, the McClure brothers, Hugh Rea, and Philip Carroll were evidently without wider kin networks in New Zealand, wider neighbourhood contacts are evident in all but the McClure series.

Though no correspondent in this chapter stated their motive for migration, the disruption that death posed to households is one possible factor. In the case of Philip Carroll, however, his poor health was evidently both the cause of his initial emigration from Ireland and his eventual return there. Poor health also spurred the migration of an acquaintance of the Strongs to New Zealand and the son of Elizabeth Walker to Australia. Daniel Strong's emigration, meanwhile, may in part have resulted from his failure to inherit his father's property.

Few explicit reasons are offered for non-migration though the age of elderly correspondents is one factor. However, the positive depiction of Irish society in the Kilpatrick, Strong, and Carroll sequences illuminate prosperity, contentment, and harmony. Disgruntlement with the Irish climate and poor health figure in some letters, but mainly from elderly or ill correspondents.

Representations of New Zealand were also largely positive. Only Hugh Rea appears dissatisfied enough to have contemplated returning to Ireland. Return migration was undertaken by Philip Carroll and Ann McClelland but both eventually returned to New Zealand. The Dwyer and Carroll sequences also document several examples of migrants

returning to Ireland from America. Catherine Colgan, meanwhile, consistently sought her son's return while the Strongs also longed for reconciliation with their cousin in Ireland.

The letters also reveal the presence of acquaintances in Australia, America, Canada, Scotland, Trinidad, and South Africa.

Chapter 3

‘Live Agreeably Together’:

Harmonious Households

In contrast with the explicit revelations of conflict expressed in Chapter 1, the harmony invoked in this chapter is generally implicit. Though largely unexpressed, the amicability of the relationships in this chapter is given additional support by the length of many of the sequences. Sibling migration features in several profiles. Both the McIlrath and Flanagan brothers emigrated initially to Australia before proceeding to goldfields in New Zealand. Whereas the Unitarian McIlraths from County Down spent the remainder of their lives in Canterbury, the Catholic Flanagans from County Louth relocated to America. Both sequences are revealing for their insights into the extent of return migration and the social networks that surrounded them. David McCullough also pursued his fortune on the goldfield and his six letters to County Down give a glimpse of the precarious nature of this pursuit. As with the McIlraths and David McCullough, the Gilmores were also Unitarians from County Down. John and Alice Gilmore voyaged together in 1876 to join their brother Andrew who had settled at Tauranga two years earlier. The sequence contains several contrasts between Ireland and New Zealand and is noteworthy for the outright encouragement directed at their brother in Ireland to join them. The experiences of Ulster Presbyterian migrants, William Cardwell and David Bell, follow. Again, their letters attest to the extent of sibling migration. William’s brother followed him to Christchurch while David joined two of his brothers in Otago. The section concludes with an examination of three Church of Ireland correspondents: John Armstrong, Alexander McKelvey, and Robert Hughes. Their letters provide illuminating insight into the political issues in both

countries and their occupations. All the sequences except the Hughes series were predominantly sent from New Zealand.

'Friends is Friends whatever intervene':

The McIlrath Correspondence, 1860-1907

The correspondence of James and Hamilton McIlrath, incorporating thirty-nine letters, is the most extensive collection of surviving correspondence sent from New Zealand to Ireland so far located.¹ James McIlrath² composed twenty-three letters while his brother Hamilton sent fourteen letters from Canterbury to County Down. In addition, a letter sent by their father from Ireland in 1862 also survives.³ The sequence, spanning 47 years, charts the impressions of the brothers from their early twenties until their sixties. Both James and Hamilton emerge as confident, conversational, and curious correspondents. Their accounts provide enthusiastic, vivid descriptions of Canterbury and outline many contrasts between colonial and Irish society. Whereas older brother James conveyed a degree of self-assurance and independent thinking, Hamilton was more self-deprecating. The letters provide ample support for Montgomery's analysis of Ulster

¹ Copies of James and Hamilton McIlrath's original letters were kindly provided by Jenny Langford, Wellington, who also supplied much of the genealogical detail upon which this profile is based. A transcript of the series is also held at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, MS-Papers-5061. I would like to thank the preserver of the original letters, who wishes to remain anonymous, for showing me the correspondence and other items of interest. In addition, letters from James and Hamilton's children also survive. The entire series of McIlrath letters from first and second generation correspondents is currently being prepared for publication by the Killyleagh Family History Society.

² In later years the New Zealand branch adopted the spelling McIlraith while the Irish branch became McIlwrath. Early spelling occasionally rendered the name as McLwrath.

³ This letter is in the Hazel Edith Conway Papers relating to the McIlrath family, ARC1993.45, Manuscripts Department, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.



Fig 12 'Me that Has not shaved this last two years': Hamilton McIlrath, circa 1866 (Jenny Langford).

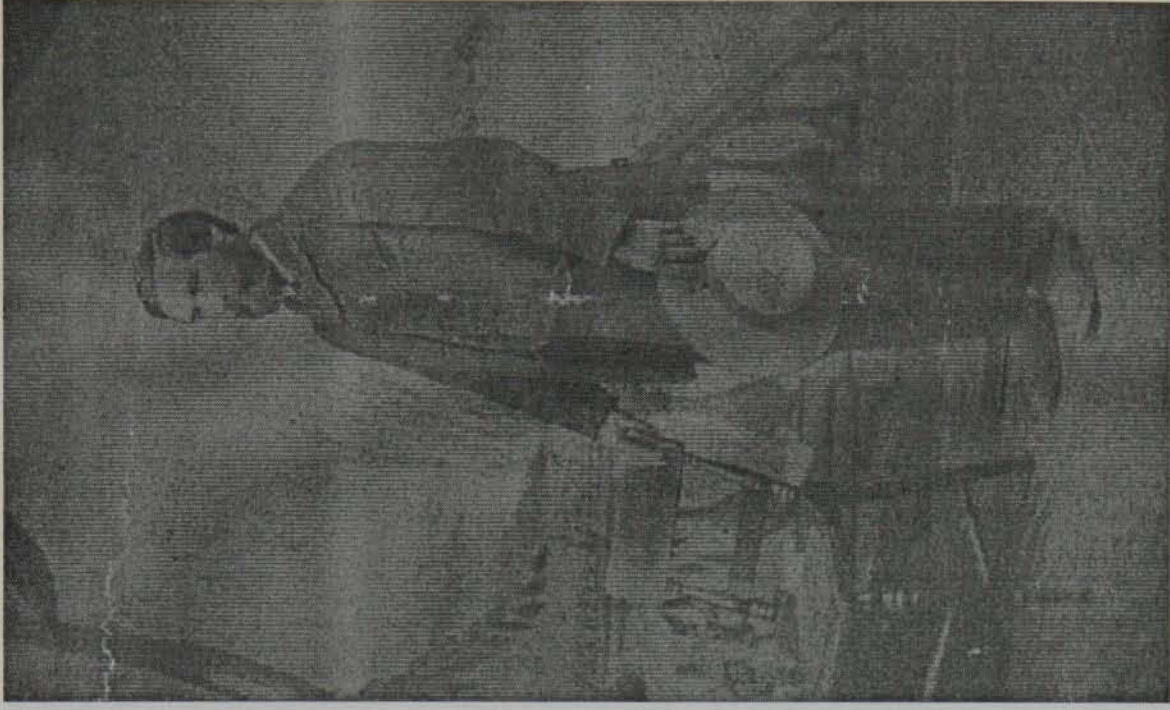


Fig 13 'I know no difference on myself': James McIlrath, mid-1860s (Jenny Langford).

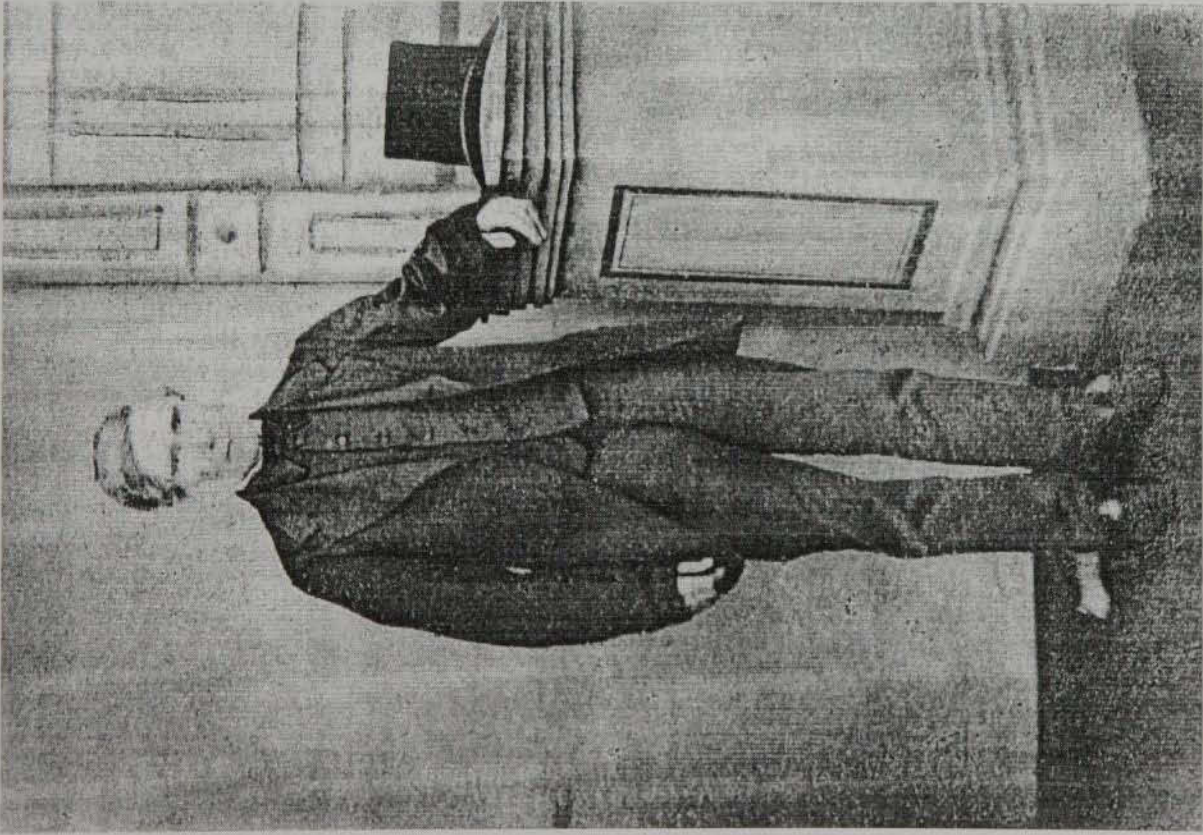


Fig 14 'Grayer looking than I expected': John McIlrath
(Jenny Langford).



Fig 15 'Looking very fresh': Jane McIlrath, circa 1875
(Jenny Langford).

emigrant letters in which double letters are missing in spellings such as ‘opertunity’, and ‘acount’.⁴

On 6 December 1834 John McIlrath, son of David McIlrath of Ballyminstra, married William Logan’s daughter Jane of Tollynagee in the Presbyterian Church at Killinchy, County Down. The couple settled on just over 27 acres of land at Balloo worth £32 25s annually, the fifth highest valuation in the townland. Five children born between 1835 and 1845 were raised on the farm. The eldest son William, along with fourth and fifth sons John and Robert, remained in Balloo. James and Hamilton, second and third sons respectively, elected to emigrate. Though a retrospective comment, Hamilton indicated eight years after his emigration that ‘Times seems to be getting better at home since we left’ (14b). Apart from conditions at home, James and Hamilton were probably also enticed to emigrate by reports from the Australian goldfields.

James and Hamilton McIlrath, 24 and 21 years of age respectively, together with their friend William Martin of Newtownards⁵ made an initial sixteen hour voyage from Belfast to Liverpool. Upon arrival in Liverpool, they made their way to the *Donald McKay* and obtained provisions for the voyage (1c). The ‘famed and favourite Clipper’ was advertised as ‘One of the fastest, and most commodious ships in the World’.⁶ Following government inspection, the *Donald McKay* set sail on 8 December 1860. The brothers were among ‘whole families young and old of every creed contry and clime’ (2c).

⁴ Michael Montgomery, ‘The Linguistic Value of Ulster Emigrant Letters’, in *Ulster Folklife* vol. 41 (1995), p. 32.

⁵ These ages were given by the McIlraths upon arrival in Australia. Their surname was returned as ‘McGrath’. See Index to Inward Passenger Lists, British and Foreign Ports, PRO Victoria, Code B, Fiche 188, Page 007, on line at www.cohsoft.com.au/cgi-bin/db/ship.pl. William Martin was recorded as 38 years of age.

⁶ The advertisement containing this proclamation appeared in the *Belfast Newsletter* on 6 November 1860. Completed in 1855, the *Donald McKay* was the last ship specifically commissioned by Baines and Company. See Michael K. Stammers, *The Passage Makers* (Brighton, 1978), p. 332.

The 94-day passage was marked by various events including attempted seductions, murder, and possible suicide, discussed further in Chapter 5. An outbreak of smallpox meant that upon arrival in Australia on 12 March 1861, the ship was quarantined at Port Phillip where it was ‘smoked, tared and painted’ (3b). The situation obviously irked James who exclaimed, ‘All this for the sake of 17 persons out of nearly 600’ (1b).

In September, after only a few months in Australia, James McIlrath departed for the Otago gold diggings in New Zealand. He was followed three months later by Hamilton and William James Alexander who crossed the Tasman Sea in steerage class on board the *Mary Ann Wilson*.⁷ After some months at the diggings, the onset of winter forced the men to seek alternative employment. James found work as a manager on a dairy station 40 miles from Christchurch where Hamilton indicated he had ‘Little to do but ride out and run in wild Heifers’. James grew stout, weighing in at ‘11 stones and A half without his coat’. William James Alexander was faring just as well: ‘He says he has got nothing to do for his £70 per anum but milk the cows and drink the milk.’ As for Hamilton, he found work with a wholesale wine and spirit merchant at Rangiora: ‘I drive out grog and beer and sometimes I plough’ (5c).

These favourable impressions of colonial life were penned in response to a letter from John McIlrath sent two years after their departure. In his letter John McIlrath expressed hope that ‘the time is not far distant when rolling Seas shall no more divide us and when You shall again breath the air of your Native Home’s’ (4f). That the McIlrath migration appears to have been a temporary sojourn is further documented in a letter sent home by James in 1869. He noted that ‘You say you expect us Home in a few years’ and

⁷ Hamilton’s passage receipt is contained in the Hazel Edith Conway Papers relating to the McIlrath family, ARC1993.45, in the Manuscripts Department, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

remarked, 'I intend to come sometime' (15b). Three years later he pondered, 'I thought to have seen you all before this time' (17b). Indeed, the theme of return migration is a significant feature in the McIlrath correspondence. The brothers were not only encouraged to return, but their letters reflect their own contemplation of the idea (14a, 15b, 18f, 19a) as well as charting the instances of migrants who did return to Ireland (10d, 15c, 25e).

Rather than return, James and Hamilton elected to purchase land in Canterbury. Hamilton enthusiastically informed home readers that 'You can get as much Land as you Like here free of everything for ever for £2 an acre' (5c). Consequently, the brothers purchased 100 acres of land at Lakeside in the Ellesmere District in 1863. Five years later James bought out Hamilton's share for £350 (15b) and Hamilton purchased land 40 miles away at Thorndale Farm, Springfield. By 1882 Hamilton's 167 acres were valued at £1314 while James's 167 acres were valued at £3340.

A large network of migrants from Killinchy surrounded James and Hamilton McIlrath in Canterbury. Several acquaintances were mentioned including the favoured friend of James, William James Alexander, 'a young man the longer I know I think the more of' (6i). When meeting with his circle of Irish expatriates to reminisce about Ireland James mused, 'We almost felt as if we were roaming over Irish soil again and forgot for the time that there is distance Between' (26a). A cousin of James and Hamilton, Robert McIlrath, was also in the colony 'but like others of the name has his own way so I believe he would do a thing sooner by letting him alone than coaxing' (13f). Wider networks included those encountered on the goldfields: 'We saw almost all the boys from Killinchy' (5d) Hamilton announced in 1862. At a horse racing event four years later James enthused, 'You would be surprised to find how many of the Killinchy people was there' (10b).

Despite this extensive expatriate network, James was initially struck with the isolation of Canterbury: 'I have been here six months and I have not seen 20 different

persons since but we are never less alone than when alone. I feel as happy as a King' (6f). It was a theme he returned to the following year when he claimed that the more 'lonesom place or the wilder the scene I take the most delight' (7c). Possibly such periods of isolation stimulated his reflections on spiritual matters in which he was clearly an independent thinker: 'I used to have some queer notions about religion and you will not be surprised if the are queer still (such as no personal Devil yet Devils many). I have Nature in Her truest form and Revelation for my guide and with god for friend and Father I may be little worse than many who like the Parsons Horce find their way to the Church gate but there they leave their religion behind and if far from Church be near grace' (6g). Ministers and their sermons were also examined. In 1873 James revealed, 'I for one can scarcely swallow all He says' (18c), a comment reiterated in 1875 (23c). James confessed, 'It is a bold assertion for I unlearned to make ... but consience must be obeyed' (23c). So assured was James in his beliefs that Hamilton reported in 1878 that the Presbyterian minister would not baptise James's 'last child on acount of him not conforming to their rules' (28d).

James's reflections extended to his contemplation of marriage. He admitted, 'I am headstrong enough but to do what cannot be undone again I confess I am too much of the coward' (10e). Yet by 1868 it is obvious that his cryptic musings were focussed on marriage: 'Perhaps you all know what I am takeing into most serious consideration soon to prove whe[*erased: a*]ther I am so faint Hearted as my actions leads many as well as myself to believe. I see no earthly reason why not but I humbly confess I doubt my courage' (13d). The following year, 'tired living on a Farm by myself', James wrote home to advise of his marriage to Agnes Mathews (15b, 15a). Hamilton reiterated James's hesitancy to marry: 'As for myself I dont think I will ever be able to make up my mind. Marriage is a very serious thought' (12e). The following year Hamilton claimed, 'I intend if I am well

and keep clear of the weman to go home' (14a). Four years later on 9 August 1872 he married Eliza Atkinson.

Following their marriages, the letters sent by James and Hamilton McIlrath frequently reported family news. The brothers also received updates about their families in Ireland. Upon learning that his nephew was named after him, Hamilton hoped 'that boy Hamilton may grow to be a better man than ever his uncle has been' (12e). In 1873 he was 'heartly ashamed of myself' for not writing more often (19c). Reflecting on conditions in the colony and his own progress, Hamilton would often change the topic of discussion by claiming 'what interest us here would be of no interest to you as you would know nothing of the people or local news' (28f). In mentioning his own achievements he decided 'enough of this. I might write a Great deal about people and things here which you not knowing them might not interest you' (30d). Hamilton's modesty contrasts with James who, though more forthcoming with his achievements, was not boastful. In 1872 he stated, 'It may be presumptous in me but excuse me, that is, to make yourselves as easy as possible about us. No doubt it is natural on your parts to be anxious about us but we are well and has done well' (17c). The next year James confessed, 'When one settles down on a place where it never was occupied before and Fences off His Fields Builds House plants Trees makes garden and so on you feel proud at least I do of what I have done' (18e).

The departure of James and Hamilton McIlrath from Ireland did not diminish their congenial relationship with their non-migrant brothers. Upon receiving a family photograph from his brother William, Hamilton quipped, 'I dare say you are both proud enough of your looks alreedy' (28c). James also teased his newly married brother John by claiming in astonishment, 'this the quiet John ... how in all the world he put the question is beyond my poor conception. The M^{rs} only knows for I dont' (10e). Hamilton's response to John's marriage was similar: 'When I heard that John was married it took me right flat

aback. I thought he always said beggar the weman. However I like his pluck' (12e). He advised Robert to 'court a hurricane but not be in [*erased: ?two*] too much hurry marreying' (12e).

Three years later, in 1870, Robert was dead. His demise prompted James to reflect, 'Death so sudden and its victim so young I hope will be a warning to each and all of us so to live the remainder of our lives that we may be prepared to Die ... One thing is certin that Die we must sooner or later and that every Day bring us nearer that awful and solemn event' (16b). Fifteen years later John McIlrath was dead at 73 years of age. James offered his mother the consolation that 'as our parents has been a Credit to their Family so I flatter myself that their Family is a credit to them' (31b). Six years later, 85-year-old Jane McIlrath was also dead.

By the time of the 1901 Census in Ireland, 65-year-old William McIlrath was still on the home farm on the Saintfield Road, Balloo. He lived with his wife Sarah and their four children ranging in age from 31 to 15. The house had five rooms, nine front windows, imperishable walls, and a perishable roof. The farm's nine outhouses included a stable, coach house, two cow houses, a dairy, a piggery, a fowl house, and a barn. Ten years later only two of their adult children and an 18-year-old male servant lived with them. Of eight children born, six were still alive. Meanwhile, at Carrickmannon in 1911 John McIlrath, aged 67, occupied a three-roomed house with six front windows with his wife and 44-year-old daughter Mary. William McIlrath lived on until 1922 and John died three years later. Whereas William's estate was valued for probate at £109, John's estate was £33.⁸

As the McIlrath correspondence crept to a close, signs of ageing and ill health appeared. James was affected by a bad arm, weak knee, poor eyesight, and the death of his

⁸ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1923 and 1925 [741], in PRONI.

wife. In 1892 he mourned, 'We have had our spring time and summer and now in the Autumn of *of* Life let us endeavour to *to* Clothe ourselves in a suitable raiment for the fast approaching Winter of Life' (34b).

When James McIlrath died intestate at 63 years of age on 26 July 1901 from apoplexy, he left property valued at £312 10s 10d.⁹ He was buried at the Ellesmere Public Cemetery. Hamilton died on 24 July 1915 aged 75. His will, made the month before, was valued at between £9,000 and £10,000 with an estate duty of 5 per cent.¹⁰ His daughter Emily informed cousins in Balloo that 'Altho' our father was of a quiet disposition, and didn't go out much among people, great respect was shown to him by the very large funeral he had.'¹¹ Hamilton was buried at Springfield.

'As fresh in our memories as when you went away':

The Flanagan Correspondence, 1867-1871

The Flanagan letters to and from New Zealand form part of a voluminous sequence of letters that includes correspondence between the Flanagans and their acquaintances in Ireland, England, Australia, and America.¹² Fourteen letters sent to, from, or within New Zealand are incorporated in this thesis. They include eight letters sent to Michael and Patrick Flanagan in New Zealand from their uncle, brothers, and the mother of a deceased West Coast acquaintance; one letter sent from Michael to his brother Richard residing in

⁹ Letters of Administration of James McIlrath, 4214/1901, in NAC 171.

¹⁰ The Will of Hamilton McIlrath, 8682/1915, in NAC 171.

¹¹ Emily McIlrath (Canterbury) to her cousins (Down), 12 August 1915.

¹² Copies of the original letters were kindly provided by Donald Murphy, Termonfeckin, County Louth. I am grateful to Professor Fitzpatrick for bringing this collection to my attention. A complete transcript of the entire sequence can be found in Fr. John Murphy and Donald Murphy (eds.), The Flanagan Letters 1864-1909: A Transcript of the Correspondence of the Flanagan Family of Tobertoby, Termonfeckin, Drogheda, Co. Louth (1997). Background information was greatly facilitated by Donald Murphy, The Flanagans of Tobertoby, Co. Louth (1989). Both accounts are privately circulated.

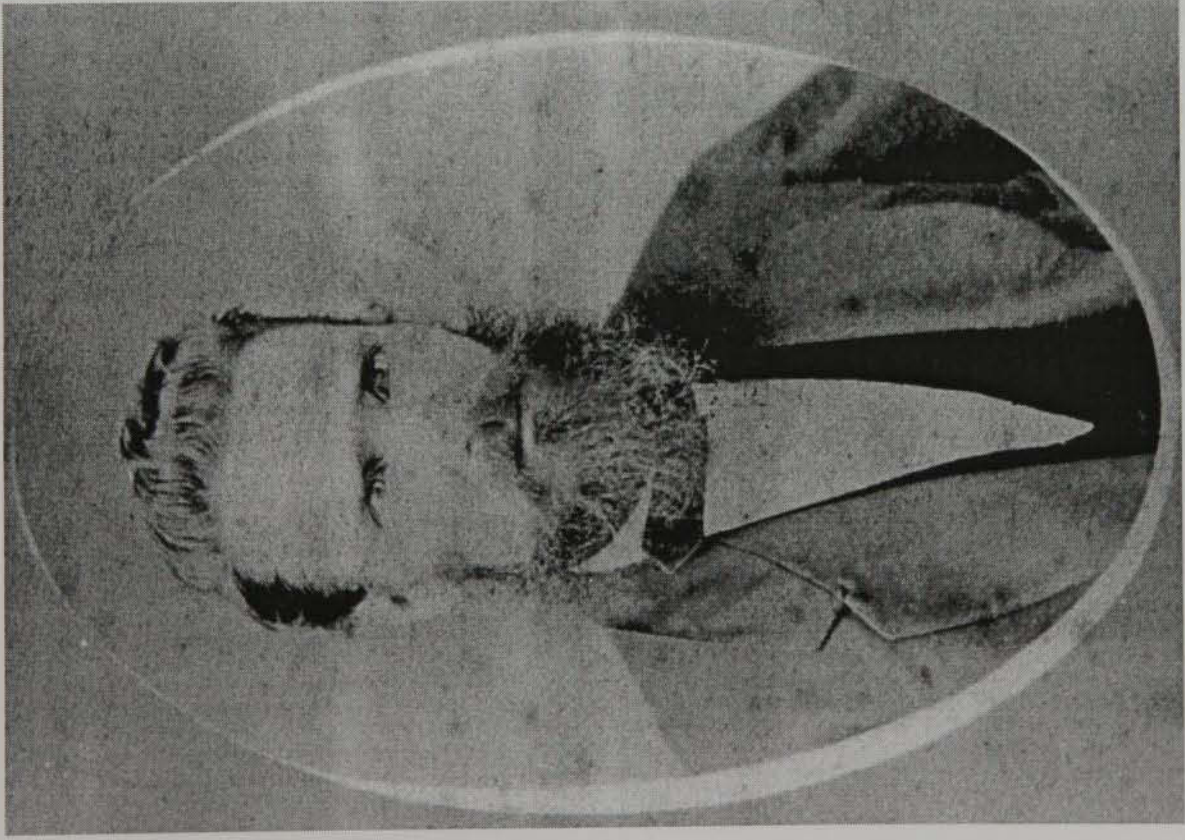


Fig 16 'We have not forgotten you': Michael Flanagan (Donald Murphy).

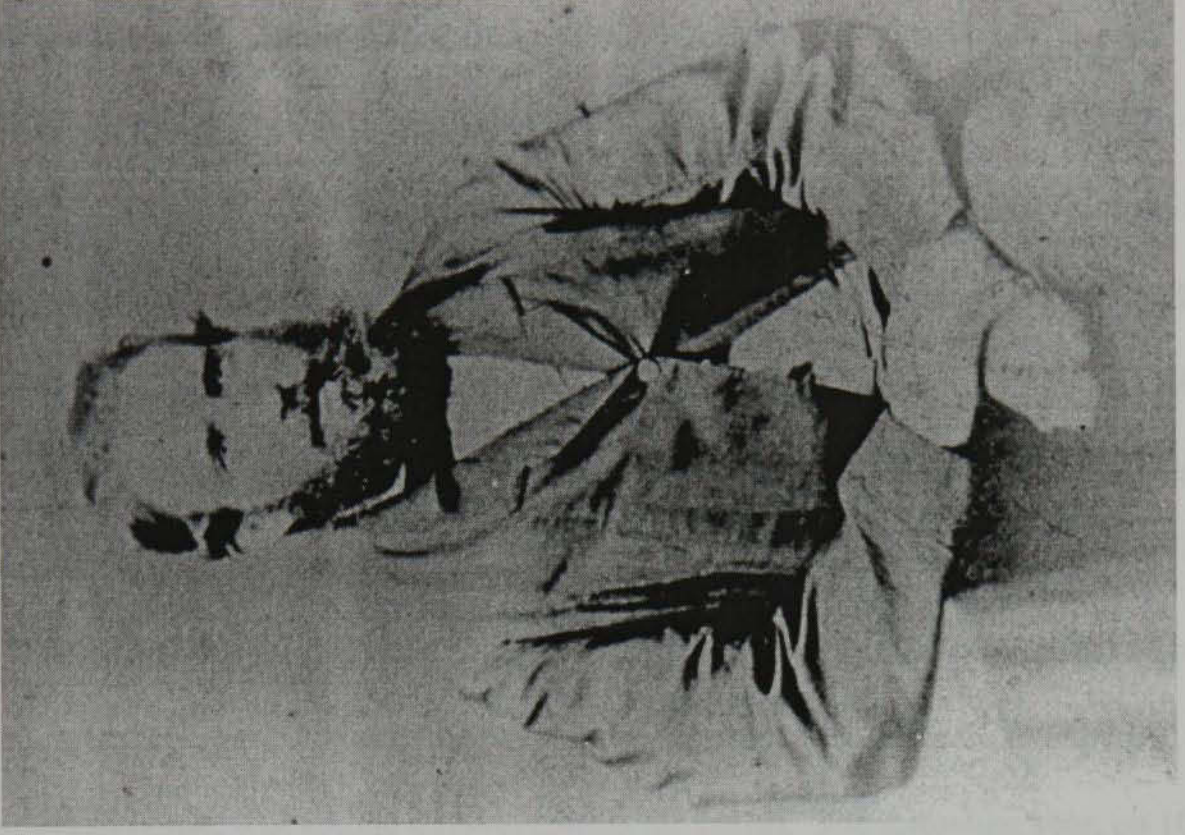


Fig 17 'Very perfection of a letter writer': Richard Flanagan (Donald Murphy).

London; and five letters sent by Patrick within New Zealand. The letters sent from and within New Zealand offer a revealing insight into goldmining on the West Coast and Coromandel and the social networks attached to these districts. Networks also predominate in the letters sent to New Zealand.

Patrick and Michael Flanagan, born in 1834 and 1839 respectively, were two of John Flanagan and Anne Maguire's eight children. John was the son of Patrick Flanagan who occupied a 28 acre property at Tobertoby¹³ in the parish of Termonfeckin which fetched an annual valuation of £31 in 1856. Patrick also held property at Balfeddock valued at £107 per annum.

Between the 1851 and 1861 Census, Termonfeckin's population fell 17 percent. Richard Flanagan, who went to London in 1856 to commence work as a clerk at the Custom house, was among those departing the parish. The following year, on 10 July, Patrick Flanagan, the grandfather of Michael and Patrick, 'Paid Patrick and Michael going to Australia £14.'¹⁴ Patrick and Michael Flanagan travelled first to Liverpool and on 15 July 1857 sailed for Melbourne on the *Oliver Lang*. Returned as Pat and 'John', labourers of 24 and 21 years of age respectively, they arrived on 16 October.¹⁵ As with the McIlraths, the Flanagan migration was probably spurred in part by the lure of the Australian goldfields. They also travelled with an acquaintance; in their case 22-year-old Pat Mooney.

Letters from the Flanagans in Australia indicate that Michael and Patrick went their separate ways though both reunited and elected to voyage to the goldfields in New Zealand in the mid-1860s. By April 1865, they had settled at Hokitika on the West Coast. Michael

¹³ The townland was actually called Duffstown but Tobertoby is used in this profile.

¹⁴ Farm Account Book 1841-1862 cited in Murphy, *The Flanagans of Tobertoby*, p. 30.

¹⁵ Unassisted passengers to Victoria, fiche 130, PRO Laverton. I am grateful to Professor Fitzpatrick for this information.

and Patrick spent most of their time in the Grey district where camps generally lodged from 100 to 500 men. Several large rushes in 1866 ensured 'continual and sustained excitement' during a year in which gold valued at over £2,000,000 was produced on the Coast.¹⁶ In early 1867 the brothers moved to Charleston, a town of 'calico and canvas'¹⁷, and by November that year the Coast's population peaked at 29,000. In his memoirs, the Catholic priest Binsfield proclaimed 'that the Irish miners in Westland in those days came from the well to do classes at home ... Most of them were sons of well to do farmers. What an intelligent lot of men they are.'¹⁸

Though Michael Flanagan was disillusioned with 'the dreary monotony of a life in this climate' (2a), he claimed that Patrick was 'one of the very few upon whom the climate or the hardships to be endured in this vagabond life seems to have no effect' (2c). However, Patrick also grew dissatisfied with the colony, particularly after an acquaintance encouraged him to relocate to the Thames goldfields (7f). Indeed, the Flanagan series is revealing for its discussion of the social networks within which Patrick and Michael moved. Patrick frequently indicated meeting people he knew including natives from Termonfeckin such as Peter Greene, which prompted Richard's response, 'a very decent fellow and I am sure it must be very pleasant to have one near you from your own neighbourhood at home' (10b).

Patrick went to Grahamstown in 1869 and revealed, 'There are very few claims getting gold, but the extraordinary richness of those few keep the excitement up and the large sums invested by capitalists from other colonies is the stream that keeps the mill going'

¹⁶ Philip Ross May, *The West Coast Gold Rushes* (Christchurch, 1967; 1st edn. 1962), pp. 178, 208.

¹⁷ Irwin Faris, *Charleston: Its Rise and Decline* (Wellington, 1941), p. 24.

¹⁸ Cited in Neil Patrick Vaney, 'The Dual Tradition: Irish Catholics and French Priests in New Zealand, the West Coast Experience, 1865-1910' (MA, University of Canterbury, 1976), pp. 29-30.

(6b). He admitted that ‘Most people have a good oppinion of it but I think they are dazled’

(6b). As such, Patrick headed for the Coromandel ‘it being the newest place on account of the rush that took place about the time we left there’ (6c). By the end of the year, Patrick wearily told Michael, ‘I now more than ever regret my coming here as I would be clear of the debt by this time’ (8b). Patrick conveyed his desire to join their brother Nicholas in California but admitted, ‘I should lik to leave every thing clear behind’ (8b). He therefore asked Michael to obtain money owing to him: ‘It is very hard to go away without paying one debts and so much owing to us one should ask it very blunt in a case like the present’ (8b).

Michael Flanagan was also requested to secure the money of an acquaintance, Patrick Kirk, who was killed at Charleston on 16 November 1869. The deceased man’s mother, Bridget Kirk, revealed from Clogher Head, ‘i would feell most thankful to you if you get *get* the money’ (11d). She reported that the Kirk family ‘got am account on the argus about the 5 of february about this occurence and the called him Peter Kirk but you must think we got a fright by it’ (11b). The Drogheda Argus newspaper noted that Kirk ‘was killed during a free fight in the street at Charleston ... It is supposed that he was killed by a blow on the head from a stone thrown at random. One man was seen in the crowd hitting right and left with stones in his fist. He was not arrested, but two of the ringleaders named O’Brien and McLoughlin have been.’¹⁹ Colonial reports indicate that a brawl had erupted between O’Brien and an Englishman named Cullen. Following Cullen’s escape, ‘One man was most conspicuous in the crowd carrying a large stone in each hand, striking at everything, and everybody at random’. Kirk, killed in the commotion, was allegedly ‘a

¹⁹ The Drogheda Argus and Leinster Journal, 5 February 1870, p. 8. Patrick was incorrectly named as Peter Kirk.

stalwart but very quiet man'.²⁰ Following an inquest, Henry Michael O'Brien, Patrick O'Sullivan, and John McLoughlin were committed for trial at Nelson and friends of the accused established a fund for their defence.²¹ William Cullen gave evidence at the trial claiming that 'O'Brien came up and accused me of having insulted him, and then struck me.' During the affray that followed, Kirk was knocked down. Witnesses testified that McLoughlin and another man had kicked him. According to the medical practitioner, Kirk had been knocked down by a blow to the eye and then 'received the fatal blow on the top of his head'. Death was 'almost instantaneous.'²² A verdict of guilty was found against McLoughlin who was sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour. O'Brien and O'Sullivan were found not guilty.²³

When Richard Flanagan in London received the news of Kirk's slaying he commiserated with Michael that 'It is sad and painful at all times to lose a friend, but when one whome we have loved is taken off by the hand of a murderer the blow is hard indeed. I quite agree with you in what you say of our own people. When good there are none better in the world. When bad none worse, if any indeed can equal them in wickedness' (13b). Richard had previously warned his brothers to avoid involvement with Fenian supporters: 'I see by the news that those misguided people, the Fenians, are not without sympathisers in your part of the world. I hope you will have sense enough to hold aloof from mixing up in any way with people who have anything to do with them' (3e).

Criticism of Irish networks was not confined to the colony. Fr. Richard Flanagan, Michael's uncle, conveyed his disappointment at the reaction of the Kirk family to Patrick's death. Upon their pronouncement that 'it was bad enough to lose himself but that

²⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 29 November 1869, p. 3.

²¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 11 December 1869, p. 5.

²² See *Nelson Evening Mail*, 2 December 1869.

²³ *Ibid*, 3 December 1869.

it would be too bad altogether to lose his money', Fr. Flanagan stated, 'It is a very thankless business to have to deal with some folk under such circumstances' (12f).

Occasionally, censure emerged from closer quarters. When Richard learned of Patrick's emigration to America he told Michael, 'I have fel[t] a good deal disappointed that you told nothing of your plans or arrangements for the future' (13c). Patrick had departed New Zealand for California in 1870 possibly lured by the positive portrayals provided by his 'steady and persevering' brother Nicholas (13d) who had settled in Ohio in 1864. Nicholas and his wife later joined Patrick in Napa Valley.

Michael Flanagan remained in New Zealand until June 1871 at which time he departed to California and became a farm manager for Judge John Stanley. That same year Richard married and the following year Fr. Richard retired and returned to live at Tobertoby. Richard Flanagan died in London in July 1878 while his 'uncle priest' died in April 1880. Ten years later, Michael was asked to return to Ireland due to the deaths of his brothers John and Peter. He acquiesced to his father's wishes and returned in 1890. Presumably, Michael ascertained at that stage that Kirk's money was still in New Zealand. Michael therefore wrote to the relevant authorities and was successful in obtaining money for the family 21 years after Kirk's death. As Patrick admiringly remarked, 'It must have been a big job to make a public administrator to disgorge after more than twenty years'.²⁴ In December 1891 John Flanagan died and by the time of the 1901 Census, 61-year-old Michael was living with his sister-in-law Bridget Flanagan, her children, and two servants at Tobertoby. The eight-roomed, second class house lodged nine inhabitants while the property's outhouses included a stable, cow house, calf house, dairy, piggery, and fowl house.

²⁴ Patrick Flanagan (Napa) to Michael Flanagan (Tobertoby), 16 August 1891, in Murphy and Murphy, *The Flanagan Letters*, p. 134.

Michael Flanagan died on 10 November 1904 and his personal estate was valued for administration at £417 3s 1d and granted to his sister Judith Garvey.²⁵ Eight years earlier Patrick had died in California. He had written to Michael nine days beforehand advising ‘a better brother you have been to me than I have been to y ... I hope between you an me there will be the best of feeling and that you will forgive me all the differences we ever had’.²⁶

‘I like this country its customs and its people’:

The McCullough Correspondence, 1875-1899

The five letters of West Coast goldminer David McCullough convey his contentment with colonial life, so much so that he resisted the repeated requests of his parents to return home to County Down.²⁷ Two of David’s letters were composed prior to his passage while the third gives a penetrating account of his voyage. His last two letters, composed more than twenty years after his third letter, reflect his involvement in West Coast goldmining. He emerges as a warm correspondent, preferring to hint at his return rather than disappoint his parents with his desire to remain in the colony.

David McCullough was born 1 September 1851, the eldest child of Samuel McCullough and Margaret Connery who had married on 15 November 1850 at Moneyreagh’s Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. Two daughters, Isabella and Elizabeth, followed in 1854 and 1861. The Presbyterian population of County Down was

²⁵ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1905 [81], in NAI.

²⁶ Patrick Flanagan (Napa) to Michael Flanagan (Tobertoby), 17 January 1896, in Murphy and Murphy, *The Flanagan Letters*, p. 144.

²⁷ Sandra Gilpin, Comber, Newtownards, County Down, kindly provided copies of the letters.

substantial with 41.9 per cent of the county's inhabitants returning themselves as Presbyterian in the 1871 Census.

Samuel McCullough of Ballycreelly in Comber parish was relatively prosperous for the Primary Valuation returned him as the occupier of 45 acres of land valued at £47 and a house worth £5 annually. His house was 47 feet long and 18 feet wide, with a 14 foot high ceiling.²⁸ Samuel's holding fetched the sixth highest valuation in the townland. At Moneyreagh, Samuel's brother Mathew had established himself on land worth £17 per annum and their younger sister Nancy had married John Smith in 1853 whose 26 acres were valued at £28. Nancy maintained contact with her emigrant nephew and in 1898 David asked his parents to 'Tell aunt Nancy to write to me' (5d).

Between 1871 and 1881 Ballycreelly's population barely changed whereas County Down's population declined by 10.5 per cent. It was during this decade that 24-year-old David McCullough, accompanied by Alexander Young, set sail for New Zealand. In January 1875 they voyaged to Fleetwood and then travelled by train to London. Once there, they obtained a certificate from the Agent-General in London approving their individual applications for a £20 land grant in the colony.²⁹

David shared the vessel's first class accommodation with twenty other passengers on the ship *Andrew Reid* and the description of his voyage is discussed in Chapter 5. The ship reached Dunedin on 19 May 1875 'after a very tedious and long voyage of 123 days from London' (3a). David quickly found lodging and employment. Both he and Alexander worked together as labourers (3k) before David obtained employment with the Albion Brewing and Malting Company (4b). Six months after his arrival he

²⁸ Valuation Field Book, in PRONI, VAL 2B/3/16A. Samuel was a tenant-at-will.

²⁹ According to the New Zealand Immigration Land Act, 1873, the grant was available to passengers aged between 18 and 60 years of age who paid their own passage. David and Alexander's grants are noted in IM 17/1, p. 20, at NAW.

enthusiastically exclaimed, 'I like this country its customs and its people. I have never regretted coming out as I have been in constant employment since I came' (4b). According to David, his travelling company, Alexander Young, echoed David's claims: 'He says he never was in better health or more contented in his life. He says he would not go home now at all' (Cu 4c). The following 23 years of David McCullough's life are not documented but by 1898 he was goldmining on the West Coast. The following year he revealed that 'There is any amount of men in Newzealand and Australia doing the same. The will go into any Country or through any hardship after Gold' (Cu 6d). He was also in frequent contact with newly arrived migrants from his immediate neighbourhood and from Down (4c, 4d, 5d).

In contrast with David who remained single, his sisters found secure partnerships in Moneyreagh. Isabella's choice, Robert Magill, was heartily approved of by David (5c). Robert's father, John Magill, leased a house, offices, yard, and garden worth £8. By 1901 Robert, Isabella, and Maggie lived in a second class house. The background of Lizzie's spouse, Moore Fisher, however, was unknown to David. In 1901 the couple and their two children were living at Ballymalady in a second class house. Also in a second class house in the area was Moore's mother, Mary Fisher, a 72-year-old widow who lived with four of her children.

In 1899, 48-year-old David McCullough received the combined news of his aunt's death and his parent's ailing health. The announcements were designed to lure David back to Moneyreagh but he resisted, although promising to 'try and be home in the inside of Twelve months' (6f). It appears that no further letters were received from David.

Less than two months after the letter was written, David's father died at 77 years of age and his personal estate was valued for probate at £258 14s. His will specified that the farm was to be his wife's and upon her death was to pass to David 'should he come home

from abroad inside two years from my wifes decease.’³⁰ Failing this, the land was to pass to Samuel McCullough’s grandson, James Fisher.

In 1901, Margaret and a servant, Jane McKay, occupied a house with four rooms, three front windows, imperishable walls, and an imperishable roof. The farm had six outhouses: a stable, a barn, a cart house, a cow house, a piggery, and a fowl house. Such was the property that David was expected to return and inherit. At 71 years of age, Margaret was returned as a farmer who could read and write. Three years later she was dead, aged 75, with a personal estate valued for probate at £361.9.2.³¹ Of this, £200 was left to her grandson James Fisher to inherit when he turned 21. He was also left farming implements, a wardrobe in the bedroom, an 8-day clock, six cushion chairs in the parlour, the parlour table, six kitchen chairs, the kitchen sofa, and an iron bedstead with bedding. The remainder was to be divided between Margaret’s two daughters.³² David never returned to take up the land.

Little is known of David McCullough’s remaining years in the colony although it appears that he continued his mining on the Coast. Some clues are available from his obituary which appeared in the Westport News. He was regarded him as ‘one of the real old pioneer gold fossickers of the district, he having worked at Waimangaroa, Denniston, Charleston and Addison’s districts at various times in search of the rich metal ... Old “Davey” as he was popularly known, was a fine character and highly respected in this district.’³³ David McCullough died at Waimangaroa on 17 December 1934 aged 83 and

³⁰ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1899 [457], in NAI. A copy of Samuel McCullough’s Will is in PRONI, MIC/15c/2/43.

³¹ Indices of Wills and Administration for 1904 [633], in NAI.

³² Margaret McCullough’s will was kindly provided by Sandra Gilpin.

³³ Westport News, 19 December 1934.

was buried at Orowaiti Cemetery. His funeral expenses of £4 10s were paid by the Buller Hospital and Charitable Aid Board and a headstone was 'erected by his admirers'.³⁴

'So hard to leave them in old age':

The Gilmore Series, 1874-1903

The Gilmore sequence incorporates thirteen letters sent by members of the Gilmore family from Tauranga to their immediate kin in County Down.³⁵ John Gilmore penned five letters and his brother Andrew composed six. Their sister Alice and John's daughter Lizzie each sent one letter. The series emphasises the collective aspect of their migration and their desire to be joined by their brother Robert. Though the communication with Robert appears amiable, there are indications that the relationship of the migrant Gilmores with their parents was occasionally discordant.

At the Greyabbey burial ground on the Ards Peninsula, Robert Gilmore erected a headstone 'to the memory of Hugh Gilmor late of Ballybrain who departed this life 3rd Aug 1835 aged 53 years. Also the remains of his wife Eliza Gilmor alias GIBSON who departed this life 19th October 1846 aged 62 years.'³⁶ Hugh and Eliza Gilmore were Robert's parents and the grandparents of Robert's children John, Andrew, and Alice Gilmore who settled in New Zealand in the mid-1870s.

³⁴ This information is contained in private correspondence in possession of Sandra Gilpin.

³⁵ The Gilmore letters are scattered in various locations. Six letters are lodged at PRONI, T 1611/2-7. Transcripts of letters not lodged at PRONI were kindly supplied by the Ulster New Zealand Trust and Noel Mitchel. Additionally, Alice Gilmore's letter was kindly made available by Alice Gemming, Te Puke. I am grateful to Alice Gemming and Ann Gilmore Adams, Ballywalter, County Down, for genealogical information.

³⁶ The transcription is contained in R. S. J. Clarke (ed.), *Gravestone Inscriptions: County Down*, vol. 12 (Belfast, 1974), p. 34.



Fig 18 'He got to cross if I laughed at any of the sailors': John Gilmore with his family, circa 1890 (Alice Gemming).

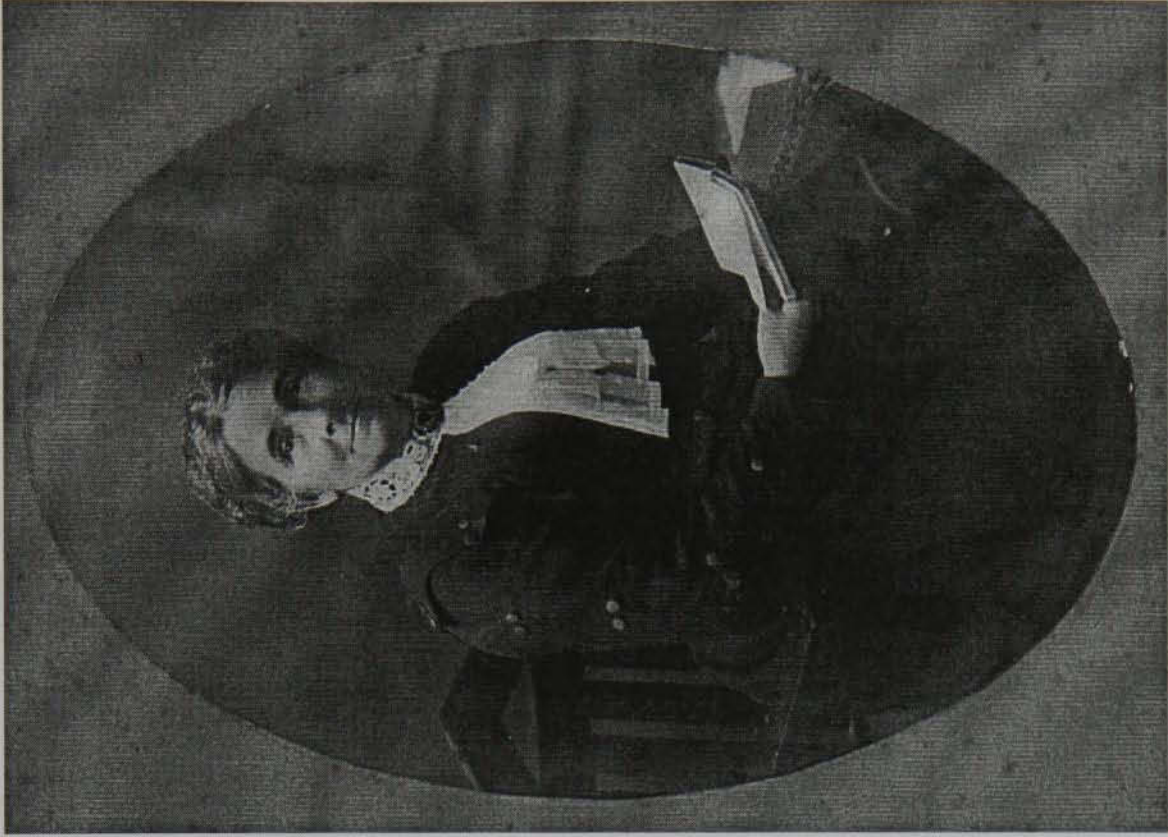


Fig 19 'Reconciled to my lot': Alice Gilmore, circa 1925 (Alice Gemming).

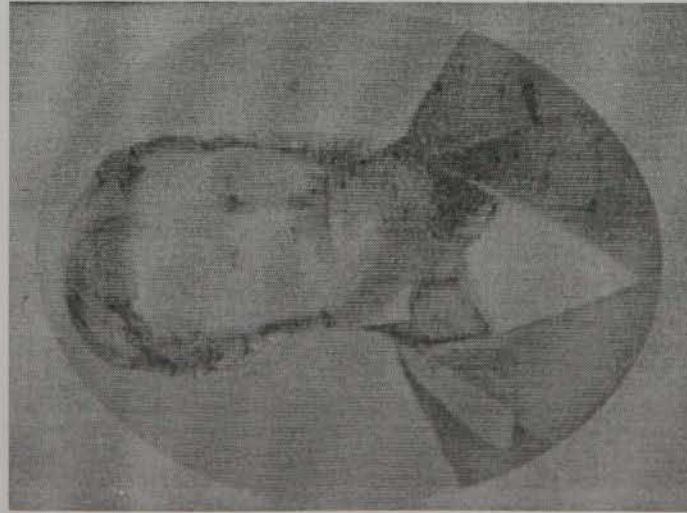


Fig 20 'Always on the improving hand': Andrew Gilmore, circa 1878 (Alice Gemming).



Fig 21 'We ought to go in together as partners': Robert Gilmore Junior and his wife (Ann Gilmore Adams).



Fig 22 'As comfortable as circumstances will admit': Robert Gilmore Senior, circa 1880 (Ann Gilmore Adams).

Robert, born in approximately 1811, married Letitia Bailie in about 1836. Their first child, Hugh, born in 1837, and two younger children, Letitia and James, joined the family grave in their youth. Robert, the second eldest son, was born on 22 May 1839, and he was followed by John, Andrew, and Alice in approximately 1844, 1847, and 1857. The family resided at Ballyhemlin, a townland in Ballyhalbert parish, where Robert, a blacksmith, had a house and forge valued annually at £1 10s. The Ordnance Survey considered the inhabitants of the parish ‘respectable and industrious’ but with ‘no decided cleanliness about them or their houses.’³⁷

John apparently taught before spending thirteen years at sea. Meanwhile, older brother Robert had occupied a house and forge at Echlinville.³⁸ In March 1874 Andrew emigrated from Belfast to New Zealand on the *Queen of Nations*, one of four ships that sailed direct to New Zealand from Belfast between 1874 and 1875.³⁹ Andrew was among a total of 3,039 County Down natives emigrating from Ireland in 1874 with 2,245 of those departing from Ulster.⁴⁰ Returned as a 25-year-old smith from County Down, Andrew Gilmore’s fare of £14 10s was paid by the colonial government. Of a total complement of 347 passengers, 332 were Irish with Tyrone strongly represented.⁴¹ Following the ship’s arrival at Auckland on 2 July 1874, the Immigration Officer noted the predominant North of Ireland origin of many passengers and added, ‘The ship and passengers presented a cleanly and orderly appearance, and indications of robust health were everywhere visible among the immigrants of both sexes’. The Officer summarised that ‘The immigrants by

³⁷ Day and McWilliams (eds.), *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland*, vol. 7 (Belfast, 1991), p. 6.

³⁸ The property’s annual valuation rose from £2 10s to £7 in 1877. Echlinville was later renamed Rubane.

³⁹ See Davis, *Irish Issues*, fn. 46, p. 43.

⁴⁰ Emigration from Irish Ports in the year 1874, pp. 538-40, in HCP, 1875 (Cd 1178), lxxix.

⁴¹ IM 15/118, in NAW.

this ship have proved to be a good selection, and in consequence, a large proportion of them met with ready engagements soon after coming on shore.⁴² Andrew moved south to Tauranga where he established a blacksmith business.

In 1876 Andrew was joined by John and Alice who voyaged on the SS *Bebington* with their fare of £16 each paid by the government. John and Alice Gilmore, a labourer and servant respectively, were recorded on the assisted passenger list as 28 and 18 years of age. They were among 135 Irish natives out of 272 passengers that made the voyage. The vessel, built in 1859, had made three voyages to New Zealand prior to 1876.⁴³ Its 1876 passage was later recollected by passengers 'as a very grim episode in their lives.'⁴⁴

When the SS *Bebington* departed Gravesend on 11 February, it collided the following night with another ship, causing it to dock for ten days at Portsmouth for repairs. Upon resuming its journey, the ship was struck by infection, caused perhaps by the delay at Portsmouth though foul weather may also have contributed. As the Despatching Officer alleged, 'nothing but gales of wind and heavy rains prevailed and that to the constant state of damp that consequently have existed is to be attributed the generation of the low fever and not to any defect in the ventilation of the ship.'⁴⁵ The sickness, combined with bad flour and no bread until Algoa Bay, added to passenger discontent. In addition, the Surgeon Superintendent documented the excessive rolling of the ship, bad baking accommodation, insufficient coal, and a condensor that ceased working in May.⁴⁶ It is not surprising that such conditions instigated a potential revolt provoking the Captain to claim,

⁴² IM 5/4/12 no. 124, in NAW.

⁴³ Brett, *White Wings*, vol. 1, p. 173.

⁴⁴ IM 15/263, NAW; Brett, *White Wings*, vol. 1, p. 173.

⁴⁵ Edward A. Smith, R.N Despatching Officer, London, 7 December 1876, to Sir William Tyrone Power, Agent General for New Zealand, in IM 5/4/21, NAW.

⁴⁶ William Russell, Surgeon Superintendent, 29 May 1876, to the Agent General for New Zealand, in IM 5/4/21, NAW.

‘The passengers as a body have been exceedingly troublesome, and I shall have occasion to prosecute several on our arrival in Auckland.’ Outbreaks of typhoid and measles meant that the ship and its passengers were quarantined at Motuihe Island for a month. Following the quarantine, Captain Holdich recommended that John Gilmore be paid £2 10s, being one month’s wages, for volunteering as a nurse during the height of the fever, while the ship’s surgeon was granted an extra £50.⁴⁷ Overall, seventy cases of fever and general ailments, ten births, and seventeen deaths characterised the voyage.

John Gilmore proceeded to Tauranga to join Andrew while Alice remained in Auckland until suitable accommodation could be found. Reporting to his parents, John compared Tauranga’s physical aspect with that of Ballyhalbert: ‘The principal street is along the shore as B. halbert [*Ballyhalbert*] - which is called the strand’ (6e). Another observer noted that ‘The township is rapidly taking shape and form. The main street is broad, level and clean; runs parallel with the river, and along the whole length, less than a mile, there is a goodly show of buildings, hotels, stores, shops, banks, offices and workshops; and running well into deep water there is a substantial wharf.’⁴⁸

John initially assisted Andrew but by 1882 was a grocer with property worth £440. He had also married in 1879 to Letitia Emerson. A year earlier, Andrew Gilmore had married Amy Prebble and in January 1878 Alice married County Antrim native, James Henry Fenton, a carrier with property valued at £510 and four acres worth £60. An acquaintance of Andrew’s, James Fenton was also a member of the local Masonic Lodge, Tauranga Lodge 462, of which Andrew was a founding member and to which John

⁴⁷ IM 5/4/21, NAW.

⁴⁸ E. E. Stanford, *The Natural Wonders of New Zealand* (London, 1881; 2nd edn.), cited in O. B. Carleton, ‘Urban Tauranga, 1950’ (MA, University of Auckland, 1951), p. 10.

affiliated himself in 1884.⁴⁹ Established in 1876 the lodge, unlike many New Zealand lodges, contained ‘a good proportion of Irish Freemasons recently arrived from their Motherland.’⁵⁰ Many of these were migrants from County Tyrone who voyaged to the colony as part of a settlement scheme organised by George Vesey Stewart.⁵¹

Both Andrew and John had joined the ‘Star of Ards’ lodge at Greyabbey in 1870 while Robert became affiliated in 1874.⁵² In 1878 Robert sought Andrew’s assistance for the lodge but Andrew ‘had to decline to be a subscriber as there are so many calls at present that it is taking us all our time to meet them’ (8a). Whether or not John was asked to assist is unknown. He did, however, contribute to the Irish Famine Relief Fund in 1880.⁵³

The settlement at Katikati meant that the district contained a substantial Irish population which in 1878 outnumbered natives from England.⁵⁴ There was no Unitarian church at Tauranga so the Gilmores worshipped at the Presbyterian church. They were probably half the six residents who returned themselves as Unitarians in the 1878 Census. The population was overwhelmingly Anglican with Presbyterians and Catholics matched relatively evenly.⁵⁵ Despite the Irish concentration in the area, the Gilmores made little

⁴⁹ See Deputy Grand Secretary Correspondence Files (462B) for ‘Return of Members’ from Lodge No. Tauranga 462 at Grand Lodge of Ireland, Freemasons’ Hall, Dublin.

⁵⁰ W. H. V. Taine, ‘Irish Freemasonry in New Zealand’, in R. E. Parkinson (ed.), *The Lodge of Research, No. CC., Ireland Transactions for the Years 1949-1957* (Dublin, 1959), p. 116.

⁵¹ Stewart (c. 1832-1920) is credited with bringing 4,000 emigrants to New Zealand in three stages: Carisbrooke Castle (1875) and the Lady Jocelyn (1878, 1881). See *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 2 (Wellington, 1993), p. 481.

⁵² I am grateful to Alex Ward, Archivist of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, for this information.

⁵³ The Fund was established to assist those effected by crop failures between 1879-80. I am grateful to Jasmine Rogers for this information.

⁵⁴ Tauranga’s Irish population in 1878 was 387 while the English component was 333.

⁵⁵ The Anglican population was 911 while Catholics and Presbyterians were 224 and 215 respectively.

discussion of their social network though several general comments were made about the Katitkati settlement (6f, 7d, 9b, 11h, 12a).

In a concerted effort to lure their remaining brother Robert and his family to New Zealand, Andrew claimed that ‘the family would get more civilised & I Believe Better connected’ (11b). He also suggested ‘that we might go in together as partners’ (11c). Andrew recognised, however, that Robert’s departure could not occur while their parents were alive. This may have been Robert’s excuse for remaining in Ireland. Indeed, he remained in Echlinville following the death of his parents. At the time of the 1901 Census, Robert’s family occupied a second class house with imperishable walls and roof, five rooms, and four front windows. The outhouses included a stable, cow house, calf house, and a forge. Their family were the only Unitarians among a population of 99, with a Catholic majority of 57. Ten years later the Census revealed that 34-year-old Hugh, a shop hand at Belfast, was living with his 66-year-old father and 64-year-old mother. Robert Gilmore died on 29 May 1917 aged 73 and he too joined the family resting place at Greyabbey. Robert’s personal estate was valued for administration at £723 12s 6d.⁵⁶ His wife Ann lived on for a further seven and a half years.

Setbacks and advances characterised the Gilmore lives in Tauranga. In the early morning of Monday 5 April 1880, Andrew’s house burned down and he escaped through a window.⁵⁷ Two years later Tauranga became a borough and in March that year Andrew was an unsuccessful candidate for the council elections.⁵⁸ John, on the other hand, was elected to a seat on the Tauranga Borough Council in 1894 and as the *Cyclopedia* professed, was ‘always to the fore in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the district, and

⁵⁶ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1917 [493], in NAI.

⁵⁷ I am grateful to Jasmine Rogers for this information.

⁵⁸ A. C. Bellamy (ed.), *Tauranga, 1882-1982* (Tauranga, 1982), p. 26.

has frequently been requested by the ratepayers to stand for election.⁵⁹ He also served for 35 years on the management committee of the Presbyterian Church.⁶⁰ On 1 June 1895 John was admitted to Auckland Hospital with chronic bursitis patella. He spent six days in hospital before he 'Left of own accord'.⁶¹

It was at the Auckland Hospital that Andrew died of intestinal obstruction on 10 March 1913.⁶² His second wife, Eliza Hopkins, received all his goods, chattels, and monies from life policies. Despite the union producing two children, the marriage was an unhappy one and Andrew's trustees refused to carry out their duties on his estate valued at under £350.⁶³

John Gilmore was 77 years of age when he died on 21 July 1921. His obituary declared that 'He always took a keen and intelligent interest in all public affairs, and was noted for his independent views and actions.' John's funeral was attended by the mayor, councillors, and members of the local Masonic Lodge, and 'concluded with Masonic public grand honours. All the services were of an impressive nature and formed a fitting tribute of respect to one of the finest of pioneers, who by his courage and perseverance helped in a very material degree to make New Zealand - and this district in particular - a rich heritage for those who dwell here today.'⁶⁴ John left an estate valued at just under £5,500⁶⁵ with his four children the main beneficiaries. His will, dated 6 July 1917, left 120 acres to William and 200 acres 'with all live stock furniture implements and chattels' to Robert James. It

⁵⁹ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 396.

⁶⁰ See his obituary in *New Zealand Herald*, 22 July 1921, p. 6.

⁶¹ Register of Patients Auckland Hospital, A475/6, p. 76, NAA.

⁶² Register of Deaths Auckland Hospital, A475/8, p. 55, NAA. Andrew had been admitted 22 February 1913.

⁶³ The Will of Andrew Gilmore, 1925/36375, in NAW, AAOM 6029. No estate duty was payable on estates valued under £500.

⁶⁴ *Bay of Plenty Times*, 21 July 1921.

⁶⁵ The range for 1921 was exceeding £5000 and not exceeding £6000. Duty was set at $3\frac{2}{3}\%$.

was stipulated that a year after John's death Robert was to pay £400 to Mary and Elizabeth and £800 to John's wife. The remainder of the estate was left to John's wife and upon her death was to be transferred to Elizabeth.⁶⁶

Alice Fenton remained alive until 21 May 1934 when, at 76 years of age, she died at Te Puke. Her obituary noted that 'She was a woman of strong personality and could tell many interesting experiences of the early days.'⁶⁷ Five daughters and two sons survived her.

'Three Brothers to be Proud of':

The Bell Correspondence, 1886

David Bell's sole surviving letter from Otago was sent to his eldest brother John in County Antrim.⁶⁸ It contains conflicting interpretations of colonial life with David's disenchantment at odds with the alleged contentment of his brothers. Despite his divergent opinion, David's letter is full of admiration for his 'three Brothers to be Proud of' (1f).

David Bell was born on 14 March 1861 and christened at the Presbyterian church in the Connor parish on 29 March. He was the eighth child of John Bell and Elizabeth Gawn who produced eleven children between 1843 and 1867. David Bell's grandfather, also John, occupied 82 Irish acres at Barnice which fetched a tithe valuation of £1 12s 5½d in 1837. By the time of the Primary Valuation, the land was divided into thirds with David's grandfather, father, and James Bell, probably an uncle, the occupiers. Each held approximately 30 acres of land valued at £14 15s annually. David grew up in a house

⁶⁶ The Will of John Gilmore, 15029, in NAA, BBAE 1569. A codicil dated 31 October 1918 left life insurance monies to his wife and a further £100 to each of his daughters and remainder to wife from mortgage held over W. and L. Peters.

⁶⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, 23 May 1934, p. 12.

⁶⁸ The letter was kindly provided by Tom Bell, Bangor, County Down.

worth £2 10s annually. Jointly, the Bell land was the second largest holding but was valued higher than the largest holding. When James Bell died in approximately 1870 the holding reverted back to John Bell Senior. Upon his death in approximately 1880, John Junior, David's father, occupied the land. It was about this time that several Bell brothers made their voyages to New Zealand.

David's arrival in the colony is unknown but it probably occurred in the early to mid-1880s. Two of his brothers, Andrew and William, arrived the preceding decade while the youngest brother Robert arrived in 1883. Both David and Robert joined Andrew and William who farmed 50 acres of land worth £250 at Duntroon, 'the centre of a rich agricultural and pastoral district'.⁶⁹ The year of David's letters, 1886, Duntroon had a population of 200 while the county (Waitaki) was predominantly Presbyterian (53 per cent). Seven years earlier natives of Ireland supplied 13 per cent of Waitaki's population.

Though little is known of David Bell's life, his letter is important for its dissenting view of colonial conditions. This stemmed more from his dissatisfaction with landholding practices than an inability to obtain work. In particular, he concluded that the colony needed 'some sort of agitation such as was at home' (1c). He was critical of the 'good many idle people knocking about here ... a sort of larry good for nothing' (1b). As for farmers, they were 'pretty flash livers' and 'not worth a shilling' (1d). Having thoroughly denounced colonial life, David declared, 'I tell you the people at home may eat less mutton and pies, and earn less wages than the do here but if they only thought it they have a lot more comfort than is to be found in this country' (1e). He concluded that 'If it was not that I think it will do me good I would not be long in it' (1e). Seemingly, David only confided his negative opinion of the colony to John for he confessed, 'If Andy and Bob thought that

⁶⁹ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 4, p. 567.

this was my opinion about NZ they would be pretty mad at me' (1f). Unlike the other Ulster male Protestants in this study, Antrim born David Bell did not remain in the colony. Instead, he ventured to the United States.

In 1901 David's brother lived with his wife and a servant in a second class house with four rooms and five front windows. His parents, 81 and 79 years of age, lived with another brother, Thomas, his wife, and their two sons, and two servants in a second class house with imperishable walls and roof, seven rooms, and five front windows. Its ten outhouses included a stable, two cow houses, a dairy, piggery, fowl house, barn, potato house, and a shed. The population was overwhelmingly Presbyterian and male. Ten years later David's parents, John and Elizabeth Bell, were dead but John Junior and Thomas remained in the townland.

'Work for each others benefit':

The Cardwell Correspondence, 1879-80

William Cardwell sent two letters to County Down from Christchurch between 1879 and 1880 that have survived.⁷⁰ They are particularly revealing for the warm concern extended by the eldest brother, approaching 40 years of age, to younger siblings who were grappling with the recent demise of their parents.

William Cardwell, the eldest of Samuel and Jane Cardwell's six children, was born at Tonaghmore on 12 March 1845. His father's 33 acres of land in the Saintfield parish fetched an annual valuation of £18 10s. Prior to his emigration, William worked in Thomas Bassett's shop at Church Street, Downpatrick. Also working in the store was David Morrow who voyaged to New Zealand in the late 1860s. Morrow was joined by

⁷⁰ The Cardwell letters are in PRONI, T 1698/1-2.

Samuel Bassett and together they established a hardware and machinery business, Morrow Bassett and Company.⁷¹ When Samuel returned to Ireland in 1875, William accompanied him on the voyage back to New Zealand. During the decade Tonaghmore lost 30.6 percent of its population while the civil parish lost only half that amount.

William Cardwell and Samuel Bassett sailed on Wednesday 26 May 1875 on the clipper *Blairgowrie*, making her maiden voyage from London under the command of Captain Darke. They were among fourteen saloon passengers, supplemented with 430 government migrants.⁷² The passage took 83 days and the crew were ‘complimented on bringing so large a number of immigrants to our shores without casualty occurring.’⁷³ Three years after Cardwell’s arrival, Christchurch had an Irish population of 10 per cent.

William Cardwell became engaged by Bassett and Morrow as their accountant. His letters reveal the troubled nature of business in Christchurch at the time: ‘We are getting into a good many bad debts just now ourselves as some of the farmers who got Reapers and Binders from us have had to go bankrupt’ (1d). He also wryly remarked on the prevalence of fires destroying insured buildings: ‘I suppose houses that are not insured will not burn?’ William warned in both letters of trade being dull ‘on account of bad harvest and small prices for grain’ but considered the colony’s condition less severe than Ireland’s (1c, 1e). Possibly such negative depictions were to warn or discourage the migration of his brother John who contemplated voyaging to the colony following the death of both parents. His mother had died on 6 June 1877. Her funeral circular bore the text, ‘She looked well to the ways of her household, and ate not the bread of idleness.’⁷⁴

⁷¹ ‘Early History of the Bassett Family’, compiled by Ken Bassett from data received from Mrs W. Bassett, Richmond. This and other information on the Bassett family was supplied by John Bassett, Downpatrick, County Down.

⁷² 157 migrants were Irish.

⁷³ *Lyttelton Times*, 24 August 1875.

⁷⁴ This funeral circular, along with genealogical information, is in PRONI, T 1698/3.

Less than two years later Samuel was also dead and his personal estate was valued for administration at under £200.⁷⁵ The land was divided equally and occupied by brothers David and Samuel.

Having sought William's advice, John elected to emigrate and voyaged to the colony in June 1881. He maintained a diary of his voyage on board the 811 ton barque *City of Tanjore*.⁷⁶ John and his wife were in cabin class and won the approval of their fellow passengers, one of whom composed an alphabetical rhyme in which 'C stands for Cardwell a young couple we esteem'. Upon the vessel's arrival at Lyttelton on 2 October, John observed a steamer pulling up beside the ship, with his brother William among the passengers. John enthused, 'I was so glad to see him I could have cried with joy but shame would not let me do so.'

William Cardwell's responsibility to his siblings extended beyond his guidance to John; he also conveyed his willingness to assist as best he could in the administration of his parent's estate. He instructed his siblings to 'live agreeably together' and offered to help them reduce the outstanding debt (1f). He was particularly concerned that his siblings should not incur the wrath of those who were owed money. William reassured his brothers and siblings that 'if I have any privelege over the rest you can rest assured that I will take no advantage in any way' (1g). He conveyed relief that the neighbours had 'been so kind to them that are gone' and urged his siblings to 'fill their places to the best of your ability' (1h). Presumably they did so and at the time of the 1901 Census, William's brother Samuel and sisters Maggie, 'needle woman', and Eliza, 'maid of all works', lived in a second class house with imperishable walls and roof, two rooms, and three front windows.

⁷⁵ Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1880 [15], in NAI. Samuel died 20 February 1879.

⁷⁶ An account of his voyage is in PRONI, T 1698/4.

The property had seven outhouses including a stable, cow house, calf house, piggery, fowl house, barn, and potato house.

Meanwhile, William Cardwell's life had come to an abrupt and dramatic end when he drowned in the Avon River on 10 April 1888 at 43 years of age. Living with his brother and about to be married, William had been ill the week prior to his death. Having undergone 'a painful operation' he became 'very despondent'. John found William's body lying in five feet of water and contacted the police. No marks of violence were found and the inquest returned a verdict of 'found drowned'. William 'was of temperate habits, and much respected'.⁷⁷ William's will, made 21 May 1886, left his estate to John. At the time of his death, William had £163 in the bank, property worth £660, and a life assurance policy worth £522.⁷⁸ His creditors were owed £83 14s 2d. In contrast with his brother, John Cardwell lived on until 15 July 1942 when he died at Riccarton aged 88 years.

'The home accounts are cheering':

The Armstrong Correspondence, 1859-1865

John Armstrong's three surviving letters, sent to his sister Marian in Dublin, were composed between 1859 and 1865.⁷⁹ Through his articulate and vigorous writing style, occasionally crosshatched, John provided illuminating and detailed information about his involvement in the colonial army and events during the New Zealand Wars. The self-assurance displayed in his letters belied the fact that he was only in his twenties during the period of the correspondence. In order to interpret John's opinions, both his upbringing in Roscommon and his progress in New Zealand must be explored.

⁷⁷ *Press* (Christchurch), 11 April 1888, p. 5.

⁷⁸ The Will of William Cardwell, 1545/1888, in NAC, 171.

⁷⁹ The Armstrong letters are in PRONI, T 1978/1-3.

John Henry Armstrong was born at 'poor quiet Kiltoom' (1i), County Roscommon, on 17 May 1835, the second son and seventh child of John Armstrong and Catherine Lloyd who had married at Clifton Church in July 1825. John Armstrong Senior was the son of Captain Francis Armstrong of the Roscommon Militia, and Rebecca Waldron, whose parents had army connections.⁸⁰ John's wife, Catherine Lloyd, was the youngest daughter of John Yeadon Lloyd of Lissadown and Catherine Crofton whose father, Henry Crofton, was Chancellor of Ardfert.⁸¹ John Armstrong Senior entered Trinity College Dublin on 5 April 1819, aged 18, and following his study took up his first curacy at Kilegeffin in the parish of Elphin. His daughters Katherine and Rebecca were born at Kilegeffin while his remaining six children were born at Kiltoom following his appointment as vicar of Kiltoom and Camma in County Roscommon in 1828.

Armstrong Senior's move to Kiltoom was followed by additions and improvements to the Glebe House in the townland of Cloughans. He proposed that the 'said walls be built with brick or stone and with lime and sand and that the roof of said addition to House shall be of best foreign timber and covered with slates'. The entire house was then to be plastered and sealed. It was also noted that if sufficient funds remained, he intended to add to the kitchen and increase the garden.⁸² This was followed in 1839 with the construction of a new church.⁸³

In 1831, the combined parishes of Kiltoom and Camma had a small Protestant population of 1.6 per cent. Armstrong Senior became manager of a school at Feamore

⁸⁰ Rebecca's father was a Major in the 75th Regiment while her mother, Sarah, was a daughter of Captain Thomas Mainwaring.

⁸¹ The information relating to John Armstrong and Catherine Lloyd's lineage is taken from J. B. Leslie, *Biographical Index of the Clergy of the Church of Ireland*, and J. B. Leslie, *Elphin Biographical Succession List* (1934), p. 189. This contains a more substantial genealogical insert by Herbert Innes Law, great-grandson of John Armstrong.

⁸² Tithe Applotment Books, Parish of Kiltoom, NAI, Film 89, Tab 25/52, NAI.

⁸³ Miscellaneous Loose Papers 1826-1856, Kiltoom Parish, in RCBL, P394/27.

when it opened in 1837 and remained in charge until his death.⁸⁴ His son John, a self-proclaimed 'thoroughbred Paddy' (2j), therefore emerged from a strong Church of Ireland ecclesiastical and military heritage in a county that was predominantly Catholic.

According to his letters, John Armstrong Junior voyaged to New Zealand in 1851. He would have been sixteen years of age. Regrettably, the ship and date of his arrival has not been traced. John's first surviving letter, sent in 1859 from Crofton, an area north of Wellington, detailed his farm affairs. He was also involved in the militia in which his uncle, also John Yeadon Lloyd, was a Major. In February 1858 Major Lloyd 'offered to nominate for commissions, among a good many quite unassailable names, four or five that are received with a very mutinous spirit by a large party ... Armstrong has the misfortune to be the Major's nephew & is young & not very eligible ... Some of the nominations are certainly not judicious, and all would prefer a mature man to lead them *caeteris paribus*'.⁸⁵ Lloyd's nephew John was only 22-years-old at the time but despite the objections he was promoted. He settled at New Plymouth, a town colonised by six ships that had departed Devon and Cornwall between 1840 and 1842.⁸⁶

John Armstrong's letters are especially revealing for their discussions of the conflict between the imperial and colonial armed forces and the Maori, incorporated in more detail in the last chapter of this study. As background to the Taranaki conflict, a dispute between rival Maori factions in 1854 led to the stationing of troops from the 58th and 65th Regiments. A volunteer force was also raised with the first commissions to the

⁸⁴ William Gacquin, Roscommon Before the Famine: The Parishes of Kiltoom and Cam, 1749-1845 (Dublin, 1996), p. 51.

⁸⁵ G. H. Scholefield (ed.), The Richmond-Atkinson Papers, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1960), pp. 357-8.

⁸⁶ For an analysis of this settlement see Raewyn Dalziel, 'Emigration and Kinship: Migrants to New Plymouth, 1840-43', in New Zealand Journal of History, vol. 25, no. 2, 1991, pp. 112-28.

Taranaki Volunteer Rifles granted in February 1859. With the exhaustion of New Plymouth's soil in the 1850s, thoughts turned to nearby Waitara but the Maori inhabitants were not willing to part with the land. In 1859, 600 acres were purchased but European 'spirits might have been dampened somewhat had they foreseen the trouble and bloodshed it was to bring upon the settlement.'⁸⁷ The first civilian blood was spilled at Omata in March 1860 when five settlers were ambushed and killed. Following the incident, the Taranaki Volunteer Rifles were joined by 'some volunteers from the Omata stockade, under Lieutenant Armstrong, Militia, and Lieutenant McNaughten, R. A. with their assistance we drove the Natives out of sight into a straggling and slight line of cover'.⁸⁸

The resulting raids meant that John's land, one and a half miles from Omata, was one of several properties listed as being affected by the wars.⁸⁹ Though the unrest in Taranaki eased from March 1861 until May 1863, tensions remained in the militia. Dobbin has argued that a feeling of supremacy existed among the Volunteers as they were not conscripted as was the Militia force.⁹⁰

Feelings of supremacy were not confined to military factions. European settlers tended to echo the view of the Taranaki Herald which queried in February 1858, 'Are we, the sons of the greatest nation of the earth for ever to knuckle under to a parcel of savages?'⁹¹ Though John Armstrong was less derogatory in his comments, preferring to label the Maori opponents as 'rebels', he did concur 'that the perfect subjection of the

⁸⁷ Gail and Ron Lambert, An Illustrated History of Taranaki (Palmerston North, 1983), p. 39.

⁸⁸ W. J. Penn, The Taranaki Rifle Volunteers: A Corps with a History (New Plymouth, 1909), p. 16.

⁸⁹ W. I. Grayling, The War in Taranaki During the Years 1860-61 (New Plymouth, 1862), p. 108. Belich in The New Zealand Wars, p. 106, has indicated that around 200 Taranaki farms were destroyed or ruined by the end of the war.

⁹⁰ A. M. Dobbin, 'New Plymouth Society During the Taranaki Land Wars, 1859-69' (MA Research Essay, University of Auckland, 1977), p. 36.

⁹¹ Taranaki Herald, 13 February 1858, cited in Dobbin, 'New Plymouth Society', p. 16.

Maori race to our rule is the only means humanly speaking of effecting a permanent peace with them' (2g).

John also indicated that the local paper believed Tarananki's 'insignificance and surf would prove sufficient protection for her' (1f). It was a view echoed by new arrivals whose comments on the town's small size 'reinforced this feeling of insignificance', exacerbated by the town's physical isolation and infrequent communications.⁹²

In 1861 it was reported that 'Job Harrison (sergt) was struck off pay and rations (not discharged) because he has had the rheumatism *too long*. Priske has been struck off because he did not challenge the field officer when he was on sentry. Lieut Armstrong he gave leave for a month and directly he had started for Auckland he was struck off pay ... Now I quite think that non-effective men should not be rationed in the Militia but then they should be discharged in a proper manner and not by fits and starts when the commanding officer is a little out of sorts or cross with his officers'⁹³. John discussed the event and concluded, 'The injustice of the thing was so evident that some of the Senior Officers represented it at Auckland and after some little investigation the discarded parties were all reinstated and the Major I believe got a slight rap over the knuckles for having exceeded his authority' (2b). Eventually, the situation was resolved and John took command of the militia at Bell Block Stockade. Still, repercussions lingered: 'Things are much smoother now and tolerably bearable but we are to a certain extent still paying for our misdeeds by an amount of drill and an adherence to military forms in our regimental duties which in former times was never thought of' (2c).

In contrast with his depiction of military affairs, John Armstrong's letters reveal him to be a wistful, sentimental man when recollecting his past. On the tenth anniversary

⁹² Dobbin, 'New Plymouth Society', p. 17.

⁹³ Scholefield (ed.), *Richmond-Atkinson Papers*, vol. 1, p. 725.

of his departure from Kiltoom he mused, 'Had I known all that was to happen within that time my courage would have failed to a certainty on that memorable morning and perhaps I should not have been able to leave you all' (2i). Responding to his sister's reminiscences John remarked, 'One or two allusions you made to our old Kiltoom days almost made an old woman of me' (3a). Though well educated, he rued the limited opportunities for extending his knowledge: 'I often regret that I did not give my mind a little more up to it when it was unoccupied with other matters' (1j). John was also a caring father: 'We often think how badly children would fare if nature had not implanted a pretty large amount of affection in the hearts of their parents towards them' (3c). Besides assisting with his child's upbringing, John voiced his sense of fairness in relation to marriage practices: 'Is it fair of him to pass over so many and choose the youngest but one as I believe she is' (1c).

It is unknown if 29-year-old John Armstrong married the eldest Mace daughter when he and 21-year-old Emma Sarah Mace wed at St. Mary's Church, New Plymouth, in 1864. Though John's remaining life is largely undocumented, directories and electoral rolls indicate his permanent residence at Waitara. In 1882 his 130 acres fetched a valuation of £1,013. On 24 April 1915 John Henry Armstrong died from influenza and congestion of the lungs at 80 years of age. His will, made five months earlier, left his property to support his wife and, upon her death, stipulated that his three daughters each receive £100 with his two sons becoming residuary legatees. His estate was valued at between £500 and £1,000.⁹⁴

Just as John underwent disruption during the early years in the colony, so too did his family in Ireland. On 5 May 1853, just two years after John emigrated, his father died at 51 years of age. John Armstrong Senior was buried at Boyle and his widow went to

⁹⁴ The Will of John Henry Armstrong, 1915/1823, in NAW, ABAJ W4079. The estate duty for this range in 1915 was 1%.

reside at 39 Eccles Street in Dublin. She remained there until her death in 1873 when she was buried at Boyle with her husband. William, the youngest son, followed in his father's footsteps, obtaining a B. A. at Trinity College Dublin before becoming an Anglican minister.⁹⁵ Another brother, Francis, farmed. All the Armstrong daughters remained unmarried with John's letters indicating that Marian, at least, led a 'dissipated' lifestyle (1i).

Indeed, the letters suggest that intimate networks sustained Marian. Several names are mentioned including John's uncle, Revd. T. Lloyd, who was vicar at Kilglass Glebe, and Adair Crawford, possibly a cousin of the Armstrongs.⁹⁶ Adair, 'a genteel wastrel',⁹⁷ migrated to Australia where evidence suggests that John's impression of him as 'a fast young man' (2l) was valid. The Armstrong sequence also indicates the return to Ireland of family and friends from New Zealand and Australia. He queried, 'Could Richard not find employment in Australia that he made such a short stay there or has he a prospect of obtaining it at home' (1d). Another acquaintance returned to Ireland only to voyage once again to Australia prompting John to assume, 'Rebecca must be fond of Colonial life to be induced to go to Australia a second time' (2l). Additional information concerning a range of networks in Ireland suggests that John remained keenly attached to happenings in 'the old family circle' (2i).

In their latter years, both Marian and Louisa Armstrong lived at the Mageough Home for Aged Females on Cowper Road in Upper Rathmines. Founded in 1878, the Home provided 'for the habitations, support, and clothing of aged females professing the

⁹⁵ Biographical information about William Armstrong is contained in Henry B. Swanzy, *Succession Lists of the Diocese of Dromore* (Belfast, 1933), p. 237.

⁹⁶ Adair's father was Revd. Thomas Crawford of Drumcliffe, County Sligo, and John refers to Aunt Crawford in his letter.

⁹⁷ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 51.

Protestant faith, and of good character and sobriety.’⁹⁸ Although Marian, the recipient of John’s three letters, died at the Mageough Home, Dublin in 1912, she does not appear in the 1911 Census. However, 78-year-old Louisa Armstrong does. She died three years later in 1914 and her personal estate was valued for probate at £397 19s 7d and granted to Mary Grace Armstrong.⁹⁹

‘Not so decent as people at home’:

The McKelvey Correspondence, 1904-1913

Three letters sent by Alexander Neil McKelvey from Auckland to his parents in County Tyrone survive.¹⁰⁰ He gives an intriguing appraisal of the contrasts he perceived between Ireland and New Zealand’s masonic practices, work relationships, and mental health institutions. His calligraphy was clear and his style somewhat formal and courteous.

On 22 May 1866 at Draperstown Meeting House in the Parish of Ballinascreen in County Londonderry, Robert McKelvey, a 24-year-old farmer from Trinamadan, married Margaret Patterson Hanna, a 21-year-old spinster from Moydamlat. They settled at Trinamadan in Badoney Lower parish where Robert’s various holdings of more than 300 acres were valued annually at £35 10s. In 1874 he accumulated a further 62 acres worth £17 5s per annum. That same year, in September, his fifth child and third son, Alexander Neil, was born. Two months later, Alexander was christened at the Church of Ireland in Badoney Lower.

Alexander Neil McKelvey is the only professional Ulster male migrant at the heart of this study. He was a physician at the Richmond Hospital in Dublin between 1896 and

⁹⁸ *Thom’s Official Directory* (Dublin 1912), p. 1431.

⁹⁹ *Indices of Wills and Administrations for 1914* [735], in NAI.

¹⁰⁰ The McKelvey letters are in PRONI, D 1692/3/6-8.

1897 before being appointed Assistant Medical Officer at the District Asylum at Omagh. He remained there until 1902 and was later remembered as ‘a most efficient, hard working and popular officer.’¹⁰¹ Living at a second-class house at Trinamaden in 1901 was Alexander’s aunt Letitia McKelvey, his brother Thomas, and a servant. Ten years later the schedule showed 71-year-old Robert and 66-year-old Margaret living in the nine roomed house with five of their eleven children and Robert’s sister, Letitia.

As with the Gilmores, the McKelveys were Masons. Robert was a member of Lodge 332 Omagh before becoming a founding Secretary and Treasurer of Gortin Lodge 994. He was Worshipful Master of the Lodge in 1880 and 1907.¹⁰² His son Alexander was initiated on 27 February 1902, perhaps to ensure his progress in New Zealand where he ventured later that year. Once in the colony, he contemplated joining a Lodge but felt that ‘the Lodges accept too many questionable characters and Masonry is used too much for pushing business’ (1j). Despite this, he joined Auckland Lodge No. 87 on 22 October 1907.¹⁰³ He later became a master of the Auckland Lodge and a second principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter.¹⁰⁴ It also appears that Alexander’s father sought to enhance his son’s colonial career by offering to obtain ‘Lord Ranfurly’s interest’. Ranfurly, colonial governor and fifth Earl of Ranfurly, had his seat at Northland House, Dungannon, County Tyrone.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ This resolution was made on 16 January 1932 after learning of Alexander’s death. It is in PRONI, D 1692/4. Alexander was returned in the 1901 census schedule as 26 years of age. The Asylum was in the townland of Cranny in the Cappagh Parish.

¹⁰² I am grateful for this information to Alex Ward, Archivist of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. See also [A Short History of Gortin Masonic Lodge No. 994](#).

¹⁰³ Information provided by S. J. Cooper, Secretary, Grand Lodge of New Zealand Freemasons.

¹⁰⁴ [Auckland Star](#), 12 November 1931, p. 11.

¹⁰⁵ [Cyclopedia of New Zealand](#), vol. 2, pp. 10-12.

Prior to Alexander's emigration, Robert McKelvey received a note from Lord Abercorn advising that 'I have today forwarded a strong recommendation on your son's behalf to the Agent-General for New Zealand.'¹⁰⁶ Alexander voyaged to Wellington in 1902 on the SS *Papanui*. He shared a first-class saloon with two other passengers.¹⁰⁷ From Wellington, Alexander travelled to Auckland where he obtained employment at the Auckland Mental Asylum as Assistant Medical Superintendent. Two years after his arrival, Alexander informed his father that 'The Inspector complimented me on my work last time he was here. This does not happen so often here as at home, Heads of Depts. not being so considerate towards their subordinates as in Ireland. They spend too much time looking after their own interests but I always keep quiet and say nothing' (1e). He also observed that 'Criminal Lunatics are treated in the ordinary Asylums & not in Criminal Asylums as they are in England & Ireland' (1i).

In 1910 Alexander McKelvey was appointed Medical Superintendent of the Auckland Infirmary.¹⁰⁸ Three years later he commented on the waterfront strike and his response to the pickets: 'The strikers stopped the painters working at the Hospital, but my two painters refused to go on strike when the pickets came here. The pickets then threatened the painters & I complained to the Police Inspector who told me to "lay the pickets out" if they became violent' (3e).

During World War I, Alexander McKelvey was an Officer in the New Zealand Medical Corps in France and Belgium. His wife Muriel's father had been a lieutenant commissariat of the Transport Corps in India where Muriel Grace Mills had been born. She and Alexander had married in 1904, perhaps to enhance Alexander's career: 'I think I

¹⁰⁶ PRONI, D 1692/3/5.

¹⁰⁷ MIC T5371 SS 1/479, no. 25, in NAW.

¹⁰⁸ PRONI, D 1692/3/6-8.

will have a better chance of promotion now that I am married' (1c). Alexander also told his parents that his marriage ceremony had been performed by Revd. W. H. Wilson, 'Provincial Grand Chaplain of the English Const.' (1a).¹⁰⁹ The couple produced three children and Alexander proved himself an attentive father: 'I have to look after the two children on my ½ day off it Muriel wants to go to town' (2b).

On 30 May 1923 Alexander's father, Robert McKelvey, died at 84 years of age. His estate was valued for administration at £4,413 3s. About four years prior to his death, his land was transferred to his son Thomas. Alexander Neil McKelvey died at 57 years of age on 10 November 1931 at Auckland Hospital from a cerebral thrombosis. He was buried at St. Andrews Anglican Church in Epsom. His son Robert received £100 with the remainder of the estate to be held in trust by his son-in-law John Alexander McLeod, 'for the maintenance support education and advancement in life' of Alexander's son Thomas. His net personal estate was worth £2,272 17s 5d.¹¹⁰

'A paradise of joy, happiness & peace':

The Hughes Series, 1923-1937

Robert Hughes was just a few days short of his seventieth birthday when he sent the first of his twelve letters from Sligo to his son Thomas in Auckland.¹¹¹ Of all the sequences in this study, Robert Hughes's letters probably resembled, most accurately, his style of speech. He was often flattering, occasionally witty, and provided lengthy,

¹⁰⁹ Revd. W. H. Wilson was noted as 'an enthusiastic Freemason' in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 843.

¹¹⁰ The Will of Alexander Neil McKelvey, 821/31, in NAA, BBAE 1570.

¹¹¹ Copies of the original letters and genealogical information were kindly provided by Jennifer Hardiman, Miramar, Pamela Bates, Auckland, Joan Graham, Waiheke Island, and Gwenda Pakenham-Hughes, Nelson.

evocative accounts of public and private matters. A former constabulary officer, Robert emerges as a proud man and resilient in the face of adversity, particularly as his physical condition deteriorated. The theme of old age was continued when his wife Mary Jane continued the correspondence following Robert's death. Their daughter Harriette sent the final two letters.

Robert Hughes was born on 12 July 1853 at Newry, County Armagh. His father, also Robert, was a farmer. On 6 February 1873, 20-year-old Robert, standing at 5ft 7¼ inches, was appointed to the Royal Irish Constabulary on the recommendation of Inspector Warren.¹¹² Restrictions prevented his being stationed in his home county so Robert was transferred to County Mayo. Eight years later, on 6 May 1881, he married Mary Jane Pakenham whose parents were migrants from Pakenham Hall at Castlepollard, Westmeath.¹¹³

As restrictions also prevented police being based in the wife's home county, Robert was transferred two months after his marriage to County Sligo.¹¹⁴ On 1 April 1884, he was promoted to Acting Sergeant at Ballymote and exactly six months later his son Thomas William was born. Five years later, Robert was appointed sergeant but on 1 September 1891 he was demoted to constable. His record indicates that he received four serious punishments.¹¹⁵

¹¹² A microfilm copy of Robert Hughes's police record is in MFA 24/7 in NAI, with the original located at the Public Record Office, London, HO 184. I am grateful to Jim Herlihy for his advice in tracing Robert's career. For guidance in tracing members of the RIC, see Jim Herlihy's two publications The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Short History and Genealogical Guide with a Select List of Medal Awards and Casualties (Dublin, 1997) and The Royal Irish Constabulary: a Complete Alphabetical List of Officers and Men, 1816-1922 (Dublin, 1999).

¹¹³ Though family stories suggest that this Pakenham branch may have been related to the Earl of Longford, no conclusive proof has been obtained at this time.

¹¹⁴ The exact date was 10 July 1881.

¹¹⁵ He was fined, with a warning in the latter two instances, in 1875, 1892, and 1894.

At the time of the 1901 Census, Robert Hughes was a 47-year-old constable housed in the constabulary barracks in Easky town. Mary Jane and six of their children were among a total Church of Ireland population of eleven living at nearby Curraghnagap, an overwhelmingly Catholic townland. Thomas, age 16, was living with his maternal grandparents, Thomas and Maria Pakenham, and their two adult children in a second class house at Lagramuck in the Balla parish, County Mayo, where Thomas Pakenham was a gamekeeper.

On 2 June 1902, Thomas Hughes enlisted in the Navy serving initially on the *Black Prince*. In September the following year, his father Robert Hughes received his pension. It was probably at this time that the Hughes family moved to Ballynahowna, near Dromore West, in the civil parish of Kilmacshalgan. Here they occupied a second class house with five rooms and four front windows with a cow and fowl house. Only fourteen-year-old George and seven-year-old Harriet resided with the couple. Shortly after the surviving correspondence commenced, they moved to a 'large two storied house' opposite (3b). The rent was three times higher than their previous house but 'Your mother & I would feel it a bit strange in a mean house & low people around us' (5g). Infrequent mention was made of the dominant Catholic population¹¹⁶ in the area but during a period of sickness 'many a caller came ... with a drop of Poteen spirits saying I did not look too bad after my Confinement so you see the are not a bad lot after all. In fact all are nearly Republic back again in this area & Mayo' (8c).

Robert Hughes's letters contained frequent news of Thomas's siblings. Both sisters married as did his brother George. Another brother Jack served in the army in India. Robert often conveyed his concern for Jack's safety as in 1924: 'No word from poor Jack.

¹¹⁶ At Ballynahowna in 1901, Catholics supplied 73 of the townland's 84 residents.

I am going to look him up at the War Office. I am thinking would he have married a black woman' (6e). Two months later he mused 'strange thing is he knows where we live & why not he write' (8d). By 1928 Jack was back in Sligo '& is in great form. He is great Company & has us much delighted with all his travels' (12c).

Thomas Hughes had also travelled extensively. In April 1918 he had qualified as Master-at-Arms and in October 1920 was engaged by the New Zealand naval forces. Between March 1921 and June 1923 he was Master-at-Arms on the *Philomel* and then on the *Chatham*.¹¹⁷ In between this time, on 6 November 1922, Thomas married Dorothy Adelaide Daniel at the Holy Trinity Church, Devonport. Two years later, in September, he was mobilised.

Robert Hughes, meanwhile, pursued an active retirement in Sligo. He claimed that 'Sport first and work after has been my lot' (7c) and frequently mentioned his fishing pursuits. He was also a keen gardener: 'There is a nice frontage to the house neatly kept & all flowers. It is fully admitted I have even the agricultural instructor beaten' (4c). He claimed that 'My garden is a picture to look at. It is one blaze of Roses Orange Lillies & thousands of other varieties' (11b). Robert also laboured tirelessly on his bog: 'The saving & cutting of Turf is a most difficult job. I have built a hut on my bog so that I can take shelter from the torrent[*i*]al rains that come off the ox mountains. To hear the peals of thunder & flashes of lightening [*erased*: flash] darting here & ther[*e*] brings to mind the fierce battles faught between the National & Republican arms' (5b). Robert's frequent reports on the state of the country (2b, 2d, 3d, 5b, 7i, 10e) are discussed at length in Chapter 8.

¹¹⁷ Full details of Thomas's naval career are contained in his personnel file at the New Zealand Defence Force, Upper Hutt.

As a consequence of his labours, Robert's letters contain several complaints of his aches and pains: 'I have awful pains in my back & the calves of my legs at night but I think it is overwork and exertion that causes the most of it' (7k). A month before his death, Robert informed his son Thomas of the 'notable deaths' that had occurred during the year and remarked 'I am almost senior to any of them' (12f). On 12 April 1928 Robert Hughes died at Carrowpadden, Dromore West, and was buried at Easky Cemetery. Mary Jane Hughes received £70 from the constabulary force fund but feared it was not enough to live on. She continued the correspondence with Thomas, frequently complaining about her health and financial strain. Mary Jane was also more critical of her children than her husband. Jack, who had served in India, 'said he would work for no one so I see his words are coming to pass. If he remained in this country he would have to work' (16c). Mary Jane Hughes died on 6 July 1943, six years after the surviving correspondence ceased.

In January 1941 Thomas Hughes resurrected his role as Master-at-Arms on the *Philomel* and on 7 June 1944 was awarded the BEM for meritorious service. He died at Christchurch on 16 August 1968. His wife survived him until March 1971.

The correspondents in this chapter supplied overwhelmingly favourable indications of family harmony between migrants and non-migrants. Such harmony is also reflected in the positive portrayals of kin and neighbourhood networks in Ireland and New Zealand. The prevalence of the collective involvement in migration is also highly evident in this chapter. Except for twentieth-century voyagers, Alexander McKelvey and Thomas Hughes, all the migrants in this chapter made their journeys either with or to other migrants. This collective involvement meant that most sequences were replete with depictions of extensive social networks based on an Irish heritage.

Though no migrant correspondent referred to their motives for migration, gold probably enticed the McIlraths and Flanagans. The McIlraths also allude to poor economic conditions in Ireland at the time of their departure. David McCullough's favourable comment concerning colonial employment suggests that the inability to obtain work in Ireland may have stimulated his relocation. The most explicit reason for non-migration is evident in the Gilmore series which stipulates Robert Gilmore's obligations towards his elderly parents.

Overall, migrant correspondents depicted New Zealand in a favourable light though David Bell and the Flanagan brothers were critical of the colony and eventually sought contentment on other shores. Though only Michael Flanagan returned permanently to Ireland, both his brother and David Bell relocated to America. The return of acquaintances to Ireland features in the Flanagan, McIlrath, Armstrong, and Hughes sequences. Several of these reports indicate that disappointment with the colony prompted this reverse movement. Evidence also exists of repeat migration with those returning electing to depart Ireland again. The sequences also illuminate the worldwide dispersal of friends and family. Migrants in Australia appear in the McIlrath, Flanagan, Armstrong, and McCullough sequences while the Flanagan and Hughes series discuss migrants in America.

Part Two:

Themes

Chapter 4:

‘Very Perfection of a Letter Writer’:

An Overview of Irish-New Zealand Correspondence

According to David Fitzpatrick, letter writing was a consoling device designed to sustain family and neighbourhood ties. It was also the means by which decisions regarding migration or non-migration were made.¹ Miles Fairburn and Patrick O’Farrell, on the other hand, maintain that letter writing was a means of counteracting loneliness and isolation in colonial society.² However, as Chapter 6 will outline, loneliness was more frequently voiced by non-migrants than migrants. For many Irish-New Zealand correspondents, letter writing was a duty, or as James McIlrath termed it, a ‘pleasant duty’ (Il 17f). Some correspondents submitted to these collective obligations; other correspondents neglected, avoided, or refused to adhere to such demands. This chapter outlines the significance of the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. How were letters composed and transmitted? What responses did correspondents when mail failed to arrive? What other items, besides letters, did correspondents send and receive to maintain familial bonds?

The earliest letter in this study was sent in 1840 from Dunronan in County Londonderry to Wellington. Elizabeth McClelland informed her daughter Ann that Samuel Detty ‘has put himself to this trouble to write this’ (Cd 1h). Other correspondents were assisted with their composition including Thomas Hughes’s sister Harriet who advised that ‘George is giving me a hand to write this’ (Hu 19d). Most writers, however, penned their own letters. As John Keane announced from Waterford to his sister in Wellington, ‘I have

¹ David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 516.

² Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 201; Patrick O’Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 4.

taken my pen in hand to speak a few words to you' (Ke 7a). Philip Carroll referred twice to writing in the sunlight and expressed his amazement at 'sitting down at half past ten o'clock in broad daylight writing this letter' (Cl 6a, 18h, 5i). Composition of a letter could be a thoughtful enterprise or a rushed obligation. In Auckland, Agnes Lambert sat 'Down to rite fue lines to you after a long tize thinking about it' while George Reid, Margaret Kilpatrick's brother, confessed, 'I have neglected writing so long through simple carelessness that I am determined to run a hurried epistle through while I am in the humour' (La 4a; Ki 8e). Other writers sent a 'scribble' (Hu 2e; Ke 5f; St 2h).

Following composition of a letter, transmission followed. In the early days of mail delivery, the transmission time could take up to five months though this decreased with advancements. In 1876, for instance, the average delivery time fell to less than 45 days with the opening of the Pacific route. By contrast, the Suez-Brindis route took 55 days and the Suez-South route 65 days. The delivery timetable continued to improve and in 1893 mail from Auckland to London averaged 33 days.³ In 1902, however, the *Cyclopedia* for the Auckland province observed that 'Aucklanders are disgusted with a mail service which brings them English letters more than thirty-five days old'.⁴ Prior to the commencement of World War I the delivery time had fallen only slightly to 31 days.⁵

Within the colony, delivery times were hampered by the colony's physical terrain. Sea-routes initially proved to be the quickest and safest method of delivery before an overland route between Auckland and Wellington was established in the 1840s. Delivery

³ Howard Robinson, *A History of the Post Office in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1964), pp. 134, 137.

⁴ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2.

⁵ Robinson, *A History of the Post Office*, p. 188.

of spokes dressed there is 5 paid for turning a pair of stocks but I got
them turned for 4. if I can get a place to suit me I will see
and turn them myself Mackey did not take any bodies
from me the 5 months but I dont blame him he did not
mount them I sold him yet he was taken up with some
contracts for the Gov^t a lot of portable forges and other ^{things} he had
an order from some man to make beehool barrows and I made
them wheels and all, his brother is a timber man and they are
joined again, they were so before but they split, but there is not
a ship that comes but brings 1 or 2 wheelers or body makers but
no coach smiths or painters, since I came here a coach smith
would have £3 a week constant and latterly he looked for it
^{at least} £3.10. for 8 hours a day if Patt had not constant work in Lin-
colnshire he would do well here provided he would keep
from drink I got a letter from Patt he complains how he
is treated by his father but I dont wonder at it, from the
treatment I got after spending my whole life I might say in
doing everything that I possibly could for the ruffian I hope this
winter will send him where he can light his pipe with
the top of his finger, tell Patt not to do any wood work or any
thing but his own business, let Kirwan do jobbing as he is
paid for it and exert himself, I am sorry to hear that
Theresa is going in such a way as Patt complains, the
weather here is not so hot as it was this time last year
it was very busy and wet since beginning of Aug^r last
with a few days excepted and then was pretty hot now
I got 2 newspapers regular from you I hope you get them
as regular from me I sent one every mail but one since
I came here that was April last I sometimes send a second
to you or Dan Gleason by the supplementary mail if there
is anything particular about it, I got a bargain of 2 dozen
patent shovels, wrenches, bolts, washers complete, half 1¹/₂ ⁱⁿ set 1³/₈ ⁱⁿ
for £1.5. each come to £30. by taking the entire of them, as cheap as home

Fig 23 'I hope you get them as regular from me': James O'Neill's letter, 1863
(Angela McCarthy).

took two and a half weeks and was hindered by the fact that a maximum load of between 50 and 75 pounds was enforced, later reduced in the 1850s to 28 pounds.⁶

In 1840 letters from Great Britain could be sent for a penny if carried by a government ship while private vessels often charged 8d. By 1891 the standard postage rate fell to 2½d and in 1901 penny postage was introduced. Internal rates also fell to a penny.⁷ During World War I rates were raised to 1½d and to 2d in 1920. Three years later they had fallen back to the penny rate and despite another temporary rise during the depression years penny postage operated until after the commencement of World War II.⁸

As postal charges fluctuated with the weight of a letter, Elizabeth Walker claimed to Margaret Kilpatrick that ‘I think we are justified in sending double letters for the double postage’ (Ki 4h). Occasionally, recipients were obliged to pay extra for overweight or underpaid items. Andrew Gilmore, for instance, contacted his brother Robert in County Down about mail received from their parents. Andrew advised ‘If it could be done it would look much better if there were no deficiency postage nor fines for me to pay on their letter’ (Ge 8g).

Throughout the nineteenth century many correspondents entrusted their documents to fellow passengers. In 1840, for instance, Elizabeth McClelland revealed that her daughter ‘would have went with the bearer of this letter but she wished to wait for a letter from you’ (Cd 1d). The delivery of parcels was more frequently entrusted to migrants from the neighbourhood. Both the McIlraths and David McCullough received parcels from home brought by acquaintances (Il 10c, 13c, 27c, 28d; Cu 4e).

⁶ Ibid, pp. 56-8.

⁷ Ibid, pp. 165, 169-70.

⁸ Ibid, pp. 195, 200.

The length of time involved between transmitting a letter and awaiting a response was compounded by the fact that letters were frequently delayed or went astray. In cases where the mail could not be delivered, names were published and the recipients given six months to claim their post. If unclaimed, the mail was returned. To counteract postponements and missing mail, Elizabeth McClelland notified her daughter Ann in Wellington in 1841 that 'we intend sending you another in the course of a month or two and you will surely get some of them. You may rite in the same way to us and we will have a better chance of getting some of yours' (Cd 2d).

Almost two decades later the delivery situation remained haphazard. John Armstrong, awaiting a parcel from home, resignedly contemplated, 'I hope it will not go in search of the missing letter' (Ar 1d). In a later communication, Armstrong expressed concern that the mail failed to arrive when expected: 'The cause of the delay is not known but I hope it is nothing more serious than the breaking down of the mail steamer through its machinery getting out of order. I still look forward with interest to the arrival of the English Mail and it is no slight disappointment when it does not come in' (Ar 3b). An established correspondent, John Armstrong was alert to the expected arrival times of the mail: 'We look for English news & letters now in two months from the time they leave England but of course sailing vessels cannot be expected to be quite so expeditious especially those homeward bound' (Ar 1a).

West Coast goldminer Michael Flanagan, bewildered by the non-arrival of letters from Louth and London in 1867, pondered 'I cannot for the life of me think how your letters could have gone astray as they have done for we have written regularly to the post offices and although not being much in the neighbourhood of Hokitika we have been there several times during the last two years and have got no letters nor saw any advertised' (Fl 2b). The problems of the postal service also prevailed between England and Ireland. As

Fr. Flanagan advised his nephews in 1867, 'You need not be disappointed at not hearing from your friends at home. You see one of my own letters has miscarried and I have thro' the Dead letter, or Returning letter office, a letter that Rich^d wrote to you when at home here last September twelve months' (Fl 1b). From Waterford two decades later, John Keane explained to his sister Mary 'you spoke about writing so many letters home to Ireland. All the letters ever I read from ye was four two from Bridget & Two from Yourself' (Ke 2b). It is uncertain whether Mary continued to write frequently but her sister Kate issued several complaints about Mary's lack of communication (Ke 4a, 5a).

Mail could also go astray due to an incorrect or out-of-date address while, on occasion, migrants of the same name received mail. Two migrants, at least, had to inform those at home of this problem. Thus, Hamilton McIlrath informed his parents from Canterbury that 'When you write to James you must direct to James Logan M^cIlrath as there is another James M^cIlrath on the same station that has got all James's Letters and opened them'. David McCullough also had a namesake at Westport (Il 5e; Cu 5d). More simply, delayed mail could arise from carelessness. As Philip Carroll complained from Tipperary in 1925, 'The mails are indeed most erratic or has someone been carrying them around in their pocket again' (Cl 16a).

Problems with the delivery of mail created misunderstandings between correspondents which inevitably strained relationships. A friend of Margaret Kilpatrick's, for instance, had obviously received a testing letter from Margaret. In response she claimed 'believe me there never was a letter come from you to your mother but what I answered sooner or later and if you have written any since her death they have gone astray' (Ki 7a). In 1864 Oliver McSparron's uncle complained from Australia that Oliver had not answered his letters; five years later, Oliver claimed it took six months for a local letter to reach him when 'I ought to have had it in about six days. He said it was the third he had

sent me but I have never got them and indeed I have not even had a letter from Uncle William Oliver for better than a year although I have written him four times and I cannot understand it at all' (Sp 4d). Prior to arriving in New Zealand, Oliver McSparron rebuked his father for failing to maintain a regular communication with Oliver's uncle: 'I think you should think of writing to my Uncle a little oftener you have not sent but one letter to him since I came here and he says he thinks he will never hear from home any more when I go away and I think that if you are not able to buy two s[h]eet of note paper and two envelopes in a year it is time you were giving up housekeeping. As regards myself I have not had a letter this last seven now eight months.'⁹

Not all complaints concerning poor communication arose from the non-delivery of mail. Margaret Kilpatrick conveyed her husband's disappointment with his siblings for their neglect in writing: 'Though he does not write himself he thinks when I write that it should do. Now if you do not write, he says that he will neighter [*neither*] write himself nor will he let me write. We had a letter from Thomas this mail, and 3 papers, but when there is not a letter from Ballyards David is out of all paitiance' (Ki 3a). Subtle complaints were also echoed in the McIlrath correspondence. 'You Might write oftener. You have got more interesting news than I have', Hamilton McIlrath suggested (Il 8g).

Valid complaints of irregular communication inevitably generated excuses. From his Canterbury farm in 1872, eleven years after arriving in New Zealand, James McIlrath protested about a letter received from his family 'in which you seem to censure me very much for not writing more regular I admit the charge to a certin extent but on the other hand I cannot admit being so very negligent as by your letter it would appear. I had wrote to John just before I recieved yours otherwise I would have wrote to you sooner. As for

⁹ Oliver McSparron (Geelong) to Archibald McSparron (Umrycam), 8 September 1861, PRONI, T 2743/1/7.

Hamilton I have done all I could to persuade Him to write and if he has not done so the fault is not mine and he is very ungrat[e]ful indeed' (Il 17a). In the case of the McIlraths, Hamilton had the excuse that James would correspond regularly and inform those at home of his progress: 'Plea[s]e to ask father and Mother to forgive me for not writeing before for I am heartly ashamed of myself and shall not be guilty of the like again for it was not that the were out of my mind for month after month. I have been going to write this last three years and always put it off for I thought that James would let you know how I was and how I was getting on' (Il 19c). Even though James maintained a relatively regular correspondence with home, this obviously did not compensate his parents who preferred to hear directly from Hamilton. On occasion, the brothers did admit to 'negligence'.

Hamilton also confessed that 'I commence at once to answer a letter time wears on u[n]till I feel ashamed and then I think I will wait for another but no second came in this case' (Il 28g). Also in Canterbury, Bessie Macready admitted to her cousin William, 'I have for a long time thought of writing to you but was waiting for something to write about farming' (Ma 2a).

Occasionally, the absence of letters was symptomatic of illness and writers in Ireland often conveyed this excuse to explain their silence. Almost a year after receiving a letter in Limerick from his brother, William Lysaght asked for forgiveness 'for not answering a letter of yours that came here last October. I was not at home when it came here. I was in Dublin at the time in an Hospital' (Ly 5b). From Tipperary, John Strong regretted that his cousin Daniel 'must think I have forgotten you altogether when I have not replied to your two last letters. But the facts were at that time poor Will was sick' (St 5a). Catherine Colgan in Antrim also excused her lack of communication to the illness of herself and others, while Robert Hughes in Sligo confessed, 'I am not able to half answer it my hand is still & full of rh[e]umatism' (Co 1a, 6a; Hu 4b). Just as writers in Ireland

explained postponements in writing to illness, they were also more likely to assume that illness led to delays in receiving mail from New Zealand. William Gilmer, farming at Monaghan, claimed 'It is a very long time since I had a letter from you. I feel very anxious. I hope you are quite well' (Gr 2a). Oliver McSparron, on the other hand, attributed his failure to write to an accident: 'I would have written sooner but I got my hand crushed with a dray' (Sp 4f).

If some home readers chastised migrants for not writing, others invented their own explanations for the irregular communication. Richard Flanagan, for instance, mentioned that 'your long intervals of silence render us lonely' but he imagined that 'in your remote district and in the cares and anxieties of your daily occupation you often miss the opportunities of writing you had intended availing yourselves of' (Fl 10b, 3a). This was not only a device to console Richard but probably an attempt to cajole his goldmining brothers to write.

Misunderstandings were not the only response to the irregular exchange of correspondence. When Michael Flanagan received a letter from his brother Richard in London in 1867 he exclaimed, 'The receipt of yours of the 26th May was indeed an "event" and I might say about the most welcome epistle I have read for a long time. It is such a length of time since we saw your handwriting before and as you are the very perfection of a letter writer if anything could throw a little light upon or import a ray of hope to the dreary monotony of a life in this climate it would be a few words of encouragement or an assurance that *thier* were some in the world yet who were anxious to hear from us' (Fl 2a). From London in 1903, Kate Keane declared 'Words in writing fail to express my joy to receive a letter from you after all these years' (Ke 5a).

Several migrant correspondents emphasised the importance of letters to their acquaintances in the colony. 'If you ever see her Father or Mother tell them they must

write to her oftener as she is always looking for a letter from them' revealed James McIlrath about Maggie Auld (Il 26c). Margaret Kilpatrick also suggested to her recipients in Armagh that 'William Erskines people ought to write to him' (Ki 3d). In 1883, the year his cousin Daniel voyaged from Ireland, John Strong hoped 'you will never forget writing to me for I will be always anxious to hear how you are getting on and shall always rejoice in your success' (St 2f).

Probably no letter was awaited more than the first letter sent home following arrival in New Zealand for it conveyed news that the migrant had safely reached the colony. Relief certainly suffused Elizabeth McClelland's letter of 1841, composed virtually a year after her daughter's emigration: 'After a long times fretting and thinking long about you and wondering whether you were in the land of the living or not or if the sea had become your grave I recived your letter on the sixt of August Which give me and all the rest a great deal of joy to hear that you were well when you rote to us and that *that* you got safely over after so long a pasag and after the apeating dangers of the sea' (Cd 2a).

Despite the personalised nature of much correspondence, letters also entered the public domain for others to absorb in silence or read aloud. Margaret Kilpatrick wished her brother 'when you receive this to go out to Mama and read her this' (Ki 1e). Likewise, John Gilmore advised 'Let all have a reading who you think would wish' (Ge 7i). The public aspect of private correspondence demanded a degree of sensitivity on the part of those providing the letters to other readers. Consequently, when the Flanagan family in County Louth passed on Michael's letter to members of Pat Kirk's family, they 'blotted out a certain name' (Fl 12d). Prior to confirming that Pat Kirk was indeed murdered, Pat Flanagan mused: 'I think his Father's name was James. I am not certain. Is there no letters left after him that would tell that' (Fl 8a). Letters could therefore be significant in providing clues to a migrant's background when death occurred so far from home. Philip

Carroll, when writing to his wife from Tipperary, shrewdly put information to his wife on an extra sheet ‘In case you do not want to tell the relations everything’ (Cl 7a). There was little Kate Keane could do, however, when she received a censored letter from her nephew during the First World War (Ke 10a). Robert Hughes also noted the interference of a letter sent from his son: ‘Your letter was found open when it reached Dublin’ (Hu 6g).

Several correspondents sent letters alternately to various home readers. From Tauranga in 1878 Andrew Gilmore requested his brother to ‘Read this to the old people. I shall write next mail to themselves’ (Ge 8g). John Armstrong also practised alternating the recipient of his letters, probably so as not to repeat the same information and also to maintain a regular communication with his various family members. Sometimes he sent two or more letters home in the same envelope: ‘I have just finished a letter to Uncle John which I shall enclose with yours and which you are welcome to read before forwarding to him’ (Ar 2j). Three and a half years later he replied to his sister briefly through his mother (Ar 3a). James McIlrath also advised his parents that if they wrote every second letter to Hamilton ‘he would have a better chance of writing than waiting until I send them to Him’ (Il 6b). Letters were not the only item exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. Photographs, newspapers, miscellaneous items, and money frequently accompanied a letter, with photographs the most frequently exchanged item (see Table 7).

Table 6 Items Exchanged Between Ireland and New Zealand

	From Ireland	From New Zealand
Photographs	29	40
Newspapers	15	30
Gifts	15	11

Photographs sent, received, requested, and promised feature in seventeen sequences. The receipt of ‘likenesses’ generated much comment, some of it

complimentary, including Oliver McSparron's astonishment that he 'did not think I had so good looking a sister as she appears to be' (Sp 3c). Retired constabulary officer Robert Hughes in Sligo keenly admitted 'I love to dwell and look upon your beautiful faces and nice handsom forms' (Hu 1a). During his return to Tipperary in 1925, Philip Carroll extolled his pleasure of the positive response that circulation of his family's photographs generated: 'Everyone who sees them is raving about them' (Cl 5j). Other remarks were less flattering, the ageing process so obviously evident after years of being apart. As James McIlrath remarked upon receiving photographs from Killinchy fifteen years after his emigration: 'You Father I would not have known but I should have you Mother. Time does not seem to have changed you so much ... I enclose my own and M^{rs} and I suppose you will find that time has changed me much' (Il 23d). That same year, Hamilton McIlrath was rather more exuberant: 'Mother is looking very fresh. Father is grayer looking than I expected but is looking smart and well. I should know them both anywhere. For your own I Know very little difference since last I seen you. You wear your whiskers a bit larger and looks a little more of the swell. Your Misses is a fine looking woman. I dare say you are proud of her. The children are Remarkable pretty. Hamilton is nothing like me. He is to fair for that. Jane is a very nice shy looking girl. I think our Johnny resembles yours a good deal' (Il 22a). Upon receipt of a photo from home, Hamilton pronounced, 'You have realy a nice Family and for yourself and M^{rs} I wont say anything. I dare say you are both proud enough of your looks alreedy' (Il 28c). When Mrs McIlrath requested a photograph of her migrant sons, James responded, 'I spoke to Hamilton about mother wanting the likenesss but he said Mother said she wanted to see no rough faces and [*erased:* and] he could not send what he had not got a smoothe one' (Il 7e). The exchange of photographs helped maintain kinship ties as family members sought to remind themselves of the appearance of dearly departed kin.

It is also likely that the receipt of photographs brought back memories of days long since past. Kate Keane, for instance, urged her sister to send her a photo for the purposes of recollection: 'I have one of Bridget taken when she first went to New Zealand & a photo taken with her husband & children when John was a little one. He resembles his mother but I have not a single photo of you Mary. If you have an old photo do send me one just to remember you as I used to in the old days & one taken with the children. I am having some taken & will send you one' (Ke 10c). Upon seeing a photo of Mary's son, Kate enthusiastically claimed, 'I could at once recall your face Mary as I knew you at home, the same expression' (Ke 11f). Kate also saw similarities between her sons and Mary's: 'Every body here who has seen your Ernie's photo says Jim is exactly like his cousin Ernie' (Ke 10a). Indeed, several correspondents commented on resemblances. In Antrim Catherine Colgan received a photograph of her granddaughter which prompted her remark, 'Some ones says she looks like yourself' (Co 7b). Robert Hughes proudly declared that his grandson 'is a picture out of a thousand & to see how he sits for his Photo to be taken why as solid as any man. He is the most wonderful child of his age I have ever saw ... never saw the like of him at his age for beauty & strength he surpasses all'. Robert then mused, 'To distinguish as to which of the families he most resembles would be a hard test but to put it plainly he is just the picture of myself when I was his age' (Hu 8a).

In the absence of photographs, correspondents had to rely upon their memory. Kate Keane affectionately recollected her mother as 'certainly very handsome but since we have not a photo we must picture her dear old good face in our memories' (Ke 5b). Other correspondents provided descriptions of themselves. 'My Hair is getting white and my teeth are almost gone', reported John Strong 22 years after his cousin's departure (St 6j). Sophy Lang, Margaret Kilpatrick's friend, supplied Margaret with a description of Margaret's sister-in-law: 'she has Sandy hair a good skin and a very good agree[a]ble

countenance I think about your own height stout and well made' (Ki 7c). Sophy, on the other hand, portrayed herself as 'an old gray haired woman wears my specks but has as good health as ever I had' (Ki 7d). Contemplating his mother's physique, Philip Carroll believed that 'only that she has got a few more grey hairs she is looking as young and well as the day I left' (Cl 5d). As for his sister Nance, 'She has got very goodlooking. She is as tall as I am but twice as stout' (Cl 6h). Philip's cousin Maggie, meanwhile, 'is looking every bit as young as she looked when I left Ireland. She must be 76, if she is a day, and honestly she does not look 50. Her hair is still quite black. I do not know whether she dyes it or not' (Cl 10e). Other correspondents imagined how their kin looked. Hamilton McIlrath mused, 'I expect John will have as big A Mustaich now as Me that Has not shaved this Last two years' (Il 8f).

Apart from photographs, newspapers were also frequently exchanged. Of 26 sequences contained in this study, fourteen mentioned sending, receiving, or not receiving a newspaper. Occasionally, a paper's purpose was to publicly attest to a migrant's success such as that sent by Daniel Strong to his cousin who remarked, 'Thanks for the newspaper. It let me know you have succeeded in a foreign land' (St 6a). Mostly, however, a paper included commentary on public events that were discussed in greater depth than a migrant was either willing or able to remark upon. Thus Margaret Kilpatrick announced in 1862, 'There was a great election here but I will send you a paper so you will have the news' (Ki 1f). More than fifty years later, Alexander McKelvey informed, 'We had a pretty bad time here with the strike as you will see by the papers I send' (Ky 3e).

John Armstrong, on the other hand, provided some commentary to accompany the papers he sent, particularly when his own impressions diverged from that offered by the press: 'I hope the papers I send you will reach their destination as I shall leave you in a great measure to draw your own conclusions from them as to how near we may be to

peace. The “Southern Cross” gives a most disheartening account of the progress, or non progress, of affairs but I would not recommend you to take much notice of it’ (Ar 3e).

Although John Armstrong disagreed with the newspaper account, he did not judge the quality of the paper. Alexander McKelvey, on the other hand, quickly condemned colonial papers which he contrasted unfavourably with Irish publications: ‘I like the Daily Irish Times especially. It is a relief after the Dailies here. I am sending the N. Z. Herald with the notice of our marriage in it by this post. It is the best here & you will see it is a very scrappy publication not nearly so good as even the Derry papers’ (Ky 1h).

Only one other correspondent named an Irish paper. From Sligo Robert Hughes sent the Connaughtman. Only three other colonial papers apart from the Southern Cross and New Zealand Herald were named; they were the Lyttelton Times, Canterbury Times and the Press, the supplements of which James McIlrath sent to readers in Killinchy. These supplements contained ‘a summary of the news for the month in a conden[se]d form and only what I have read before’ (Il 31c).

In later years, postcards were also exchanged. Agnes Lambert promised views of New Zealand while Alexander McKelvey sent views of Auckland and Rotorua to Tyrone as well as receiving and requesting postcards from home (La 5c; Ky 2c, 3a, 3c).

While photographs and papers were frequently exchanged between family members in Ireland and New Zealand, miscellaneous items were also sent and received. Eight sequences feature references to such items, most of which were sent from Ireland. When James McIlrath received a book from home in 1875 he declared ‘I have not read anything since I left to please me like it (Bible excepted)’ (Il 24a). Another book, received two years later, ‘I esteem as a pearl above price’ (Il 27c). The following year Hamilton McIlrath’s family received a book, goblet, Bible, and ‘pretty socks’ (Il 28d). From Tipperary, Lizzie Strong sent her cousin Daniel a handkerchief ‘as a token love and

rememberance of the old times' while her brother Martin sought curiosities from Daniel (St 4f, 3l). Meanwhile, gumdigger Patrick Quinn received a Christmas box from his brother in Belfast while Catherine Colgan exchanged albums between Antrim and Otago (Qu 3d; Co 3d).

Besides receiving gifts from home, migrants also requested items. John Gilmore sought copies of the Freemans Journal and Unitarian books while his brother Andrew sent a money order to the Ards Peninsula to obtain farming implements from Ireland (Ge 7h, 12c). Only one migrant, Edward Lysaght, sent a gift home. The dismissive response from his father upon receipt of the watch is the last surviving letter of the series: 'I would lose £1 by repairing it and then it would be only worth £2 so you can see it was not worth much' (Ly 7b). Both migrants and non-migrants sent money, a feature that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Just as migrants fulfilled their collective obligations in maintaining contact through the exchange of letters, so too did they facilitate an intending migrant's preparation for the voyage. The following chapter outlines the extensive details correspondents in this study supplied concerning their voyage to New Zealand.

Chapter 5

'Seas may divide':

The Voyage Out

It seemed as if the Ships side would have been driven in by the force of the waves. The sound was like that of a cannon ball. Then when it broke over the ship the sound of the rushing waters and the shiver that went through the ship was alarming ... A heavy sea burst in a window breaking the frame work which was of Teak wood and carrying with it flower pots, mould, geraniums and broken glass. We were partly prepared for this yet we did not escape unscathed. I had to change my dress and two others had to undress and go to bed. A baby was in its cradle. It was wet through and its face covered with earth that had been washed from the flowers. One of the ladies was up to the ankles in water trying to ward it off from her Cabin and several of the gentlemen had shoes and stockings off assisting.

Bessie Macready's dramatic representation of her journey to Canterbury on the *Pleiades* in 1878 (Ma 1h, 1j) is one of several extant accounts of the voyage contained in the letters sent home by Irish migrants. Generally, extracts such as Bessie's have been utilised by historians to either highlight the perils of the passage or to provide a narrative technique to transport migrants from origin to destination.¹ Hassam, on the other hand, may have utilised such an extract from voyage diaries as evidence of the threat to the journey's stability and its narration.² O'Farrell, meanwhile, may have perceived the positive interaction between crew and passengers on the *Pleiades* as evidence of the ship being 'the

¹ David Murray Hastings makes this point in 'The Voyage Out: A Study in Power and Knowledge, 1870-1885' (MA, University of Auckland, 1998). There is no published work dealing specifically with accounts of voyages to New Zealand but an evocative depiction of the voyage is contained in Chapter 3 of Charlotte Macdonald's, *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand* (Wellington, 1990). See also Tony Simpson, *The Immigrants: The Great Migration from Britain to New Zealand, 1830-1890* (Auckland, 1997).

² Andrew Hassam makes this point in *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants* (Manchester, 1994), p. 105. See also his *No Privacy for Writing: Shipboard Diaries, 1852-1879* (Melbourne, 1995).

colony in microcosm'.³ This chapter, which charts the course of the voyage to New Zealand, assesses the claim that the passage was a precursor to breaking down the divisions between the classes and ethnic minorities. It also considers Hassam's gender model. More significantly, it highlights the collective involvement of kin and neighbours prior to and during the journey. Such informational networks ensured that migrants were equipped, physically and mentally, for the voyage.

These issues are examined through a careful reading of the extant accounts of the voyage contained in the letters of four cabin and six steerage passengers, only two of whom were Catholic.⁴ Edward Lysaght penned a brief note to his wife following his return to Ireland while Philip Carroll's three letters were sent prior to, during, and following arrival in Ireland. As for Protestant correspondents, the McClure brothers sent three letters prior to and during their passage. Bessie Macready's lengthy chronicle, meanwhile, appears to have been based on memory as does Oliver McSparron's account. The precise information contained in the letters of David McCullough, James McIlrath, and John and Alice Gilmore, suggests that their portrayals were based on shipboard journals that they maintained throughout the voyage. Despite the condensed versions of the voyage reproduced in their letters, which inevitably eliminated the more routine notations contained in their diaries, their accounts provide a compact and often riveting depiction of the journey. As such, these narratives cannot be discarded as they reveal various processes at work during the passage including migrant adjustments, interactions, and responses.

³ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 2.

⁴ Of the 69 voyage diaries analysed by Hastings, more than half were composed by steerage passengers. In contrast, steerage passengers composed only 30% of the surviving shipboard diaries that Hassam has read of voyages to Australia. See *No Privacy for Writing*, p. xvi.

Throughout this chapter comparisons are made with the representations of the voyage contained in Miller and O'Farrell's studies of Irish migrant correspondents and Brinks's collection of Dutch emigrant letters from America. Some contrasts are made with the German letters in Kamphoefner's collection but these have been hampered by many editorial excisions.⁵ Likewise, Erickson elected to eliminate the voyage accounts of English and Scottish migrants bound for America.⁶ Regrettably, Fitzpatrick's edition of Irish-Australian letters contains no lengthy depiction of the voyage and this absence has prompted his conclusion 'that the voyage was more exciting and alarming in imagination than in personal experience'.⁷ The survival of voyage accounts in this study suggests otherwise.

In 1879, William Cardwell learned of his brother's pending migration and sent back recommendations to Tonaghmore as requested: 'If he has not already left I would not advise him to bring along stock with him. It is true the most things you have to buy here are considered dearer than at home but on the other hand if you have too large a stock you generally wear them all till the one suit is no better than the other: this is my experience' (Ca 1b). Quite apart from specific advice, the letters reveal that extensive preparations and negotiations took place prior to the vessel's departure. The Gilmores, in particular, provided home readers with enlightening information including details of the ship and crew. From Belfast in 1874, Andrew Gilmore penned a brief letter to his brother on the Ards Peninsula in which he set out the details of his imminent migration: 'I was in the office today. The ship's name is Queen of Nations. New Zealand Government line

⁵ The voyages described in Arnold, *Farthest Promised Land*, and Porter and Macdonald (eds.), *My Hand Will Write*, are based on diaries rather than letters.

⁶ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 9.

⁷ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 526.

belonging to Stretcher & Co. Liverpool ... I do not know her registered tonnage but there are a certain tonnage that cannot be under. There are 299 passengers. The agents are not satisfied as yet whether we will be going to Larne by Rail or that the tugs that bring her up may come up for us' (Ge 1a, 1b). Two years later, when Andrew's brother John and sister Alice were at Gravesend preparing to embark as assisted passengers on the SS *Bebington*, John Gilmore announced, 'I and Alice are well and are to sail tonight I beli[e]ve - there are about 280 passengers as far as I can learn. This ship is 941 tons reg'd and is 13 years old - has made several voyages with passengers with great success. She is not an extreme but of a medium size and I beli[e]ve her to be a good ship in bad weather so far as my judgment goes and I think I ought to know something about it ... I made a mistake about the Capt name. It is not Scott. It is Holdich' (Ge 2a, 2b).

In common with John and Alice Gilmore, most Irish migrants travelling to New Zealand initially arrived in England and from there connected with a colonial bound vessel. David McCullough of Moneyreagh, for instance, arrived in London in 1875 where he obtained lodgings until the departure of his ship. As he later recounted, 'our time was pretty well occupied in London sightseeing and of these there were plenty' (Cu 3a). Fifty years later Philip Carroll also had to occupy his time until the departure of his vessel. To while away the hours, he saw Charlie Chaplin in 'The Pilgrim' and admitted to 'knocking around looking at the shops'. The delay in departure also incurred additional expense for accommodation: 'just had to fork out 14/= for four meals and a bed' (Cl 2c, 2b).

Financial concerns also preoccupied the McClures who voyaged from London to Otago in 1860. Several days before their departure, Gordon reassured his sisters in Belfast that 'All money matters are settled' (Ce 2b). His brother James also had serious issues to contemplate: 'We are all about to start for Newzealand in a few days and as you know I am not very strong. I think it as well to take a wife with me' (Ce 1a). James McClure then

provided details of his new bride. The practicality of his decision was evident some years later when Gordon wrote home from Southland informing that he would eventually return to find a bride ‘which can’t be done without in a place like this’ (Ce 4g). Aware of the voyage’s length, Gordon McClure resolved to spend the time fruitfully: ‘I am going to teach myself to draw on Board ship. I have bought the first 6 books on drawing & will endeavour to learn some[thin]g of Landscape’ (Ce 2d). Like the Gilmores, the McClures were preoccupied with practicalities prior to their ship’s departure. Their response to their impending migration reveals that their relocation was a well-organised operation.

County Down natives James and Hamilton McIlrath also emigrated in 1860.

Following the first stage of their journey from Belfast to Liverpool, they had to contend with disreputable characters operating at the port. Conscious of their tactics, James could reassure his parents, ‘The reports we heard of the lads in Liverpool was too true. The are a sore set but we watched the Boys. We carried out our own Boxes and 4 of us got a cart for 1-6 to carry our Boxes to the ship officer. We are clear of Liverpool with very little expenee’ (Il 1b). Such awareness contrasts with Miller’s assertion that ‘The Irish countryman’s relative poverty and ignorance made them especially vulnerable to the wiles of ticket agents, shippers, passage brokers, lodging-house keepers, porters or “runners”, shipmasters, and sailors.’⁸ James McIlrath also informed Killinchy readers of additional preparations for the voyage: ‘We got the bedding and tin ware at what we expected but ... we had nothing for tea pot’ (Il 1c). Prior to his departure in 1925, Philip Carroll intended purchasing a deck chair but could not find a suitable one (Cl 2c). He also indicated that a cabin mate ‘has his own teapot and ingredients’ (Cl 3b). Besides ensuring that vital supplies accompanied them, some migrants were outfitted with character references. As

⁸ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 253.

"MARY ANN WILSON"

PASSAGE RECEIPT.

No. 19

Melbourne, 18 December, 1861.

Received from the within-named parties the
Sum of *Five Pounds* *5/-* *Sy.*

IN FULL payment of *Steerage* passage in
the "MARY ANN WILSON," Captain Smith, hence to
OTAGO, New Zealand.

NAMES.	AGES.	ADULTS.
<i>Hamilton McIlrath</i>		

Passage Money paid in Full, £ *5.00*

MICHAELIS, BOYD & CO., Agents.

H. Michaelis

Fig 24 'On sea again': Hamilton McIlrath's passage receipt for his voyage from Australia to New Zealand on the *Mary Ann Wilson*, December 1861 (Canterbury Museum).

such, David McCullough thanked his aunt ‘for the trouble you are taking to get a letter from Mr Vance. I have got three already’ (Cu 2b). Tyrone medical doctor Alexander McKelvey also travelled to the colony with recommendations. Likewise, the son of an acquaintance of Margaret Kilpatrick’s voyaged to Australia with ‘letters of high introduction’ (Ki 4d). The arrangements made by Oliver McSparron prior to departing Londonderry for Australia are unknown but it is likely that he displayed the same careful consideration as revealed in his eventual migration to New Zealand in 1861. At that time, Oliver informed that he and three acquaintances ‘are taking a horse and dray with us and some stores to last us a few months at the diggings.’⁹ The range of preparations pursued by migrants indicates how well informed they were before the commencement of their voyage. Such organisation is suggestive of strong advisory networks based on the guidance of previous migrants.

Following a routine health inspection of the migrants and the ship’s supplies, the journey began though not all vessels made a satisfactory start. A day after the *Andrew Reid* departed London, David McCullough ‘saw a German brig run into by a barque and it sunk almost immediately but all hands were saved’ (Cu 3c). The *Andrew Reid* itself was ‘nearly run into by a three masted schooner. It was within a few inches of us’ (Cu 3d). When the *White Star* departed Liverpool in December 1859, Oliver McSparron revealed that ‘The tug boat towed us opposite to the shore of Cork where she was nearly run down by our vessel’ (Sp 1b). Less fortunate was the SS *Bebington*. It collided with another ship in the channel forcing it to call at Portsmouth for repairs.

More commonly, the commencement of the voyage generated complaints about seasickness which was universally recounted in all editions of correspondence in which

⁹ Oliver McSparron (Geelong) to his father (Umrycam), 8 September 1861, PRONI, T 2743/1/7.

details of the journey appeared. Although James McIlrath claimed, 'I was not the least afraid the waves dashing over the deck', he did reveal that 'Hamilton was the first of us three. He and William vomited time about and both together. I went to seeing some water for them and after drinking myself vomited directly but was shortly better' (Il 1a). James McClure's bride, Emily, 'was ill with seasickness about a month' (Ce 3c). Other correspondents, however, attested to their sea legs (Ce 3a; Ma 1k). Alice Gilmore, for instance, claimed 'I never was sea sick nor no other sickness not even a headacke' (Ge 5d). The inclement weather meant that David McCullough's ship 'lost several sails the sea coming over her sides and filling our Cabins with water 3 or 4 inches deep' (Cu 3d).

Chaos characterised the outset of the voyage as passengers jostled for space. Steerage class passengers were allocated bunks in compartments that were divided into three: for single men, single women, and married couples with young children. A curtain provided what little privacy there was. Conditions in steerage were cramped and stifling as Alice Gilmore discovered in 1876: 'There was only two side hatches & no portholes in our compart & 54 people' (Ge 5d). Philip Carroll's voyage in third class in 1925, however, involved sharing a cabin with just three other passengers. Cabin class migrants, on the other hand, voyaged in greater comfort, with more space and privacy. David McCullough's journey in first class on the *Andrew Reid* was with 'only 20 passangers on board and we got on very comfortable together' (Cu 3b). His cabin consisted of 'an old Gentleman a[nd] a youth steward his wife and three children' (Cu 3j).

According to Hassam, cabins came to acquire connotations of 'home' in that the cabin was a feminine domestic space in which males were subservient to the dominant female role of housekeeper.¹⁰ The letters sent by Irish passengers following their voyage to

¹⁰ Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, p. 63.

New Zealand give little indication of such gender divisions. Mess routines, for example, were quickly established and male passengers participated in these. James McIlrath observed in 1860 that ‘We will be put into Messes from four to eight each in his turn to be butler for a week. There has been nothing yet but confusion every one running for their own. Imagine about three Hundred running to one door as soon as the Bell is rung for who can be first but after this one will go for each mess’ (Il 2b). On board the SS *Bebington* in 1876, Alice Gilmore’s compartment consisted of six messes though ‘The wer 8 only in the mess I was in’ (Ge 5e). A year earlier, David McCullough informed relatives in Moneyreagh that ‘We had to get our meals and provisions served out once a week’ (Cu 3c). Typically, this consisted of dry goods while hot drinks and meals were collected each day. James McIlrath, voyaging on the *Donald McKay*, noted that ‘there is plenty of allowance plenty of flesh meat to dinner and potatoes but the are all broken and the skins on them which is caused by being boiled in a boiler and lifted out with a small shovel’ (Il 2a). Edward Lysaght’s return journey in 1872, on the other hand, ‘was very poor in the line of provisions’ while in 1925, when Philip Carroll returned to Ireland, he considered the food ‘pretty good and plenty of it’ (Ly 6b; Cl 3d). The provision of food, though, seems not to have preoccupied Irish correspondents to the extent that it did Dutch and German writers who voyaged to America.¹¹

Hassam has also claimed that the representation of home at sea was maintained by the segregation of the sexes.¹² Certainly, a variety of regulations were enforced to restrict male-female interaction but such separation did not reflect ‘home’ on land where men and

¹¹ Food appears in seven letters of Dutch migrants and four times in German letters. See Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, pp. 30, 110, 150, 156, 246, 386, 412; Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, pp. 339-40, 409-10, 545. The voyage diaries in Hastings, ‘The Voyage Out’, however, reveals the importance of food for migrants travelling to New Zealand. See p. 104.

¹² Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, pp. 63, 69.

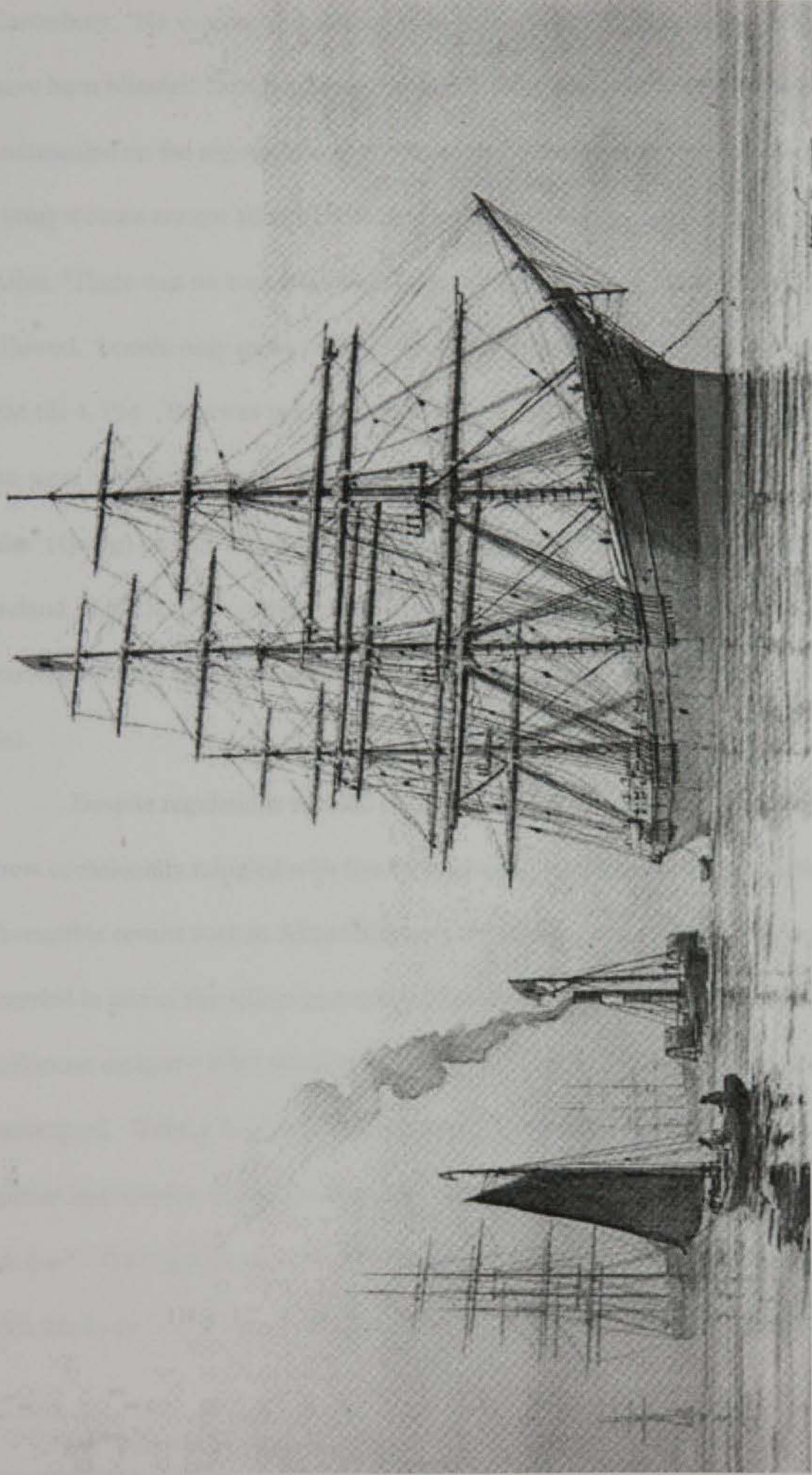


Fig 25 'Eat nothing till on board the Donald McKay last night': The *Donald McKay* at anchor (The Passage Makers).

women interacted freely. As Hamilton McIlrath later reported of his bachelor life in Canterbury, 'No woman in the house to trouble us' (II 8b). Seemingly, his voyage would have been blissful! Several commentators, including both John and Alice Gilmore, commented on the segregation of the sexes. 'Alice and I do not get speaking much as the young women are not allowed with anybody else', revealed John (Ge 2b). According to Alice, 'There was no communication between male & female at least there was none allowed. I could only speak to Jonny twice a week that was Monday & Tuesday from 3.30 PM till 4. PM. That was not much & sometimes not at all for the would not believe that we were brother & sister. The often told me in our compartment that I had run off with him' (Ge 5g). Rules were somewhat more relaxed by the time Philip Carroll returned to Ireland in 1925. During the vessel's passage through the tropics, male and female passengers slept on deck though 'Ladies on the port side. Gents on the starboard side' (CI 4a).

Despite regulations enacted to keep male and female passengers segregated, the crew occasionally mingled with female migrants.¹³ Sometimes the interaction produced favourable results such as Alice Gilmore's observation that a fellow migrant 'is to be married to one of the sailors in Auckland in a few days' (Ge 5d). The behaviour of some sailors on emigrant ships was less savoury and involved sexual harassment of female passengers. Writing to his parents in County Down in 1861, James McIlrath described the gallant intervention of a fellow passenger in defending female honour on board the *Donald McKay*: 'That night a sailor would kiss two girls by force. A man interfered. The sailor took his knife and said he would have his life on the spot if not he would before he reached

¹³ Few accounts of passenger-crew interaction appear in Brinks's study while existing accounts from Germans have been excised. A voyage diary reproduced in Macdonald and Porter's edition also highlights female ingenuity in attempting to communicate with the crew and other male passengers despite restrictions. See 'My Hand Will Write', pp. 71-6.

Melbourne. The man met him the next morning. He struck the sailor and put the pipe he was smoking down his throat. He died in a few hours' (Il 3e). David McCullough also reported on disputes between crew and passengers: 'one of the men drew his knife to the first Officer but was kept quiet after' (Cu 3g). In his analysis of 69 voyage diaries maintained during the passage to New Zealand, David Hastings has indicated that the crew could threaten and humiliate passengers.¹⁴ Yet favourable interactions could also occur. Edward Lysaght, for instance, struck up such an alliance with the cook on his ship and instructed his wife: 'If the cook should get back before me do anything you can for him as he is a very decent man' (Ly 6b). Alice Gilmore also observed that 'The superintendent of ours was a French lady & in general the are good cooks' (Ge 5e).

The separation of the classes during the voyage has provoked commentators such as Don Charlwood to conclude that 'life on board ship mirrored the class structure of Britain.'¹⁵ Undoubtedly there were divisions between and among the classes yet O'Farrell has claimed that 'The circumstances of being thrown together, largely haphazard, into a packed makeshift community, exposed to common experiences and dangers for three to four months, did much to break down, before arrival in the colonies, the rigid religious and social divisions of the homeland.'¹⁶ Few Irish-New Zealand letters exist to test O'Farrell's assertion but Alice Gilmore's account of her fellow steerage passengers confirms Hassam's contention that occasionally 'regional and religious divisions were reinforced rather than dissolved.'¹⁷ As Alice perceived (Ge 5f):

The most of the passangers was South of Ireland the roughest & worst class of people I am sure ever come here before & nearly all R. C. If you had only heard them praying when the thought the were in danger when she used to be rolling about. All the crowd belong to her said the never sailed in one lunched so much.

¹⁴ Hastings, 'The Voyage Out', pp. 93-5.

¹⁵ Don Charlwood, *The Long Farewell* (Ringwood, 1981), p. 105.

¹⁶ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 19.

¹⁷ Hassam, *No Privacy for Writing*, p. xxi.

The was a great many never seen a ship before till the left Ireland & the were in the greatest state if there was a sea come over her. Ever you seen prayin to the Holy Mother & all other Half way subitutes & the next day if she ran any studdy [*erased: illegible*] like came dancing & singing & cursing & sweering & carry storyes & tell lies to the superintendent on thire shipmates.

According to Miller, the contrasting response to storms is explained by a Catholic ‘outlook on life on land was fatalistic and dependent.’ He claims that Protestant passengers were disgusted by the ‘sudden and abject piety displayed by Catholic emigrants who in “fair weather ... feared neither God nor man”.’¹⁸ O’Farrell, in a contradictory comment to his previous claim that divisions were broken down, attributes such harsh Protestant responses to ‘the intolerant attitudes generated by the separation of the religious communities in Ulster being confirmed and hardened by the shipboard proximity.’¹⁹ Examination of the voyage diaries maintained by Protestant passengers during their journey to New Zealand reinforces the suggestion that Protestants deplored the practices of Irish Catholics.²⁰ Regrettably, no nineteenth-century Catholic migrant in this study reported on their responses to the journey and their shipmates.

According to Hassam, national rather than class identity concerned steerage passengers.²¹ The diverse origins of those on board the *Donald McKay* prompted James McIlrath to conclude, ‘I think there is people here from all parts of the known world whole families young and old of every creed contry and clime’ (II 2c). Much more specifically, he classified his fellow passengers according to ethnic and regional divisions rather than religious or class lines: ‘There is two germans a Co Derry man a Co Armagh man a man from the Cottown and us three in one room’ (II 1d). James further observed that ‘The

¹⁸ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pp. 259-60.

¹⁹ O’Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 28.

²⁰ Hastings in ‘The Voyage Out’ notes that Protestants considered Catholics as savages, dirty, and dishonest, pp. 89-90.

²¹ Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, p. 131.

germans have both instruments of music and are playing at this time' but days later he complained, 'I think there is some never goes to Bed. Last night the music the dancing and singing I think never ceased. It is disgusting' (Il 1d, 2c). The tensions created by activities that were disapproved of undoubtedly strained relationships.²²

As the north-east trade winds carried vessels towards the equator the settled weather facilitated a range of activities. David McCullough provided a diverse catalogue of events that characterised his voyage in 1875. Card games were played every evening while during the day the sighting and catching of fish passed the time (Cu 3j, 3d, 3f, 3h). During the month of March, David outlined a variety of attempts to capture fish and bird life: 'On the 8 we nearly caught a shark but the confounded rope slipped and we lost him. On the 22 we caught 5 Albatrosses a very large bird living on the sea and measuring from 18 to 20 feet from end to end of wings. On the 28 we were more fortunate and caught a shark. He meas[ured] 16 feet 4 inches from his nose to his tail. Such an ugly brute. The sailors dont show them any mercy. The soon cut him up and we tasted him for breakfast. It was not very nice' (Cu 3h). Hassam has indicated that voyages were commonly replete with discoveries and concluded that 'An emigrant diary could hardly consider itself authentic without a record of the wing-span of an albatross.'²³ For Philip Carroll, making a six-week journey to Ireland in 1925, it was the 'deadly monotony of the trip that gets on one's nerves' (Cl 4e). To counteract this boredom, Philip spent all his time 'on a deck chair under the awning reading smoking or talking' (Cl 3g). Other forms of entertainment included concerts and dances (Cl 3e, 3h). It is curious to speculate on the types of activity that provoked Philip's comment, 'I could write a book on the things I have seen and heard

²² First-hand accounts of entertainment undertaken by German migrants travelling to America have been edited out of Kamphoefner's edition. See, for example, the notation on p. 327 in *News from the Land of Freedom*.

²³ Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, p. 80.

during the six weeks I have been on the Arawa' (Cl 4i). The letters give no indication of homesickness which Miller claims was 'another perennial of the voyage experience' of Irish migrants to America.²⁴ Only one migrant commented on the religious provisions of the journey. James McIlrath drew his second letter home to an end by announcing, 'I must finish as the minister is going to commence Divine worship' (Il 2c).

For emigrants voyaging to the colony in the nineteenth century, the sailors held a Dead Horse Day a month after departure. David McCullough provided a succinct summary: 'It is this way. Before the sailors leaves London the generally have an allowance of one months pay and the call this a dead horse because the have to work for nothing that month like and when that month is up the make up something like a horse and then the draw him up the mast and sing a comic song and then cut him down and away he goes with the waves. It was fine fun for us all. This day was also the Captains youngest boys birthday and we all drank his health in the Captains cabin.' A week later, with the crossing of the line, 'came the second sailors day it was Father Neptune. This time the seamen dress up in all kinds of dresses and walk about the vessel. The then call upon the passangers who have not been to sea before and shave them and give them a bath. Everybody enjoyed this much' (Cu 3e, 3f).

When David McCullough crossed the line, there was 'a tremendos thunderstorm such as is not seen on land. The lightning shivered our foremast and went into the forecastle' (Cu 3g). Other correspondents complained of heat and boredom as the ship crawled through the tropics. Alice Gilmore, for instance, revealed: 'We could not bear any cloths on us. I & a few other never slept any during that six weeks' (Ge 5d). By the time Philip Carroll returned to Ireland in 1925, the terminology may have altered but the predicament remained the same: 'On account of the slow motion of the boat the heat going

²⁴ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 355.

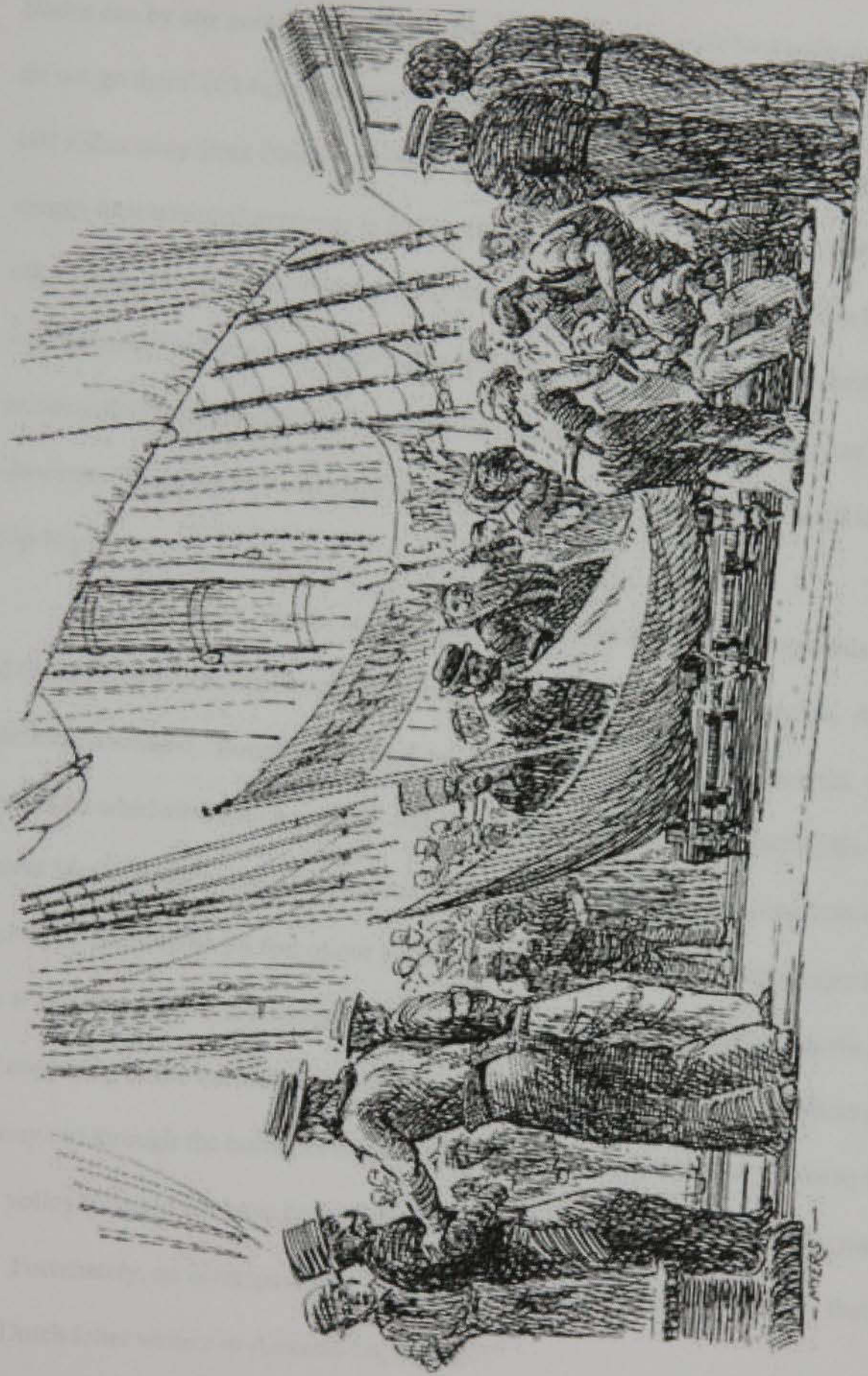


Fig 26 'The then call upon the passengers who have not been to sea before and shave them and give them a bath';
Crossing the Line Ceremony (The Passage Makers).

through the Canal was something awful. There was not a breath of wind and the perspiration rolled off us in bucketsful.' Philip declared tongue-in-cheek, 'I do not think Hades can by any possibility be any warmer. If it is well I must take jolly good care that I do not go there' (Cl 4a). The heat continued to linger as vessels departed the tropics and 600 miles away from Panama Philip remarked, 'We are experiencing that oppressive muggy heat now and everyone is feeling limp and seedy' (Cl 4d). James McIlrath, on the other hand, merely mentioned that 'The weather was very warm crossing the line. The Sun was fair over head and no shadow whatever' (Il 3f). Oliver McSparron's notation on crossing the line three weeks after departure generated his comment, 'we were going at no slow rate. We generally sailed at from nine to eighteen nauts per hour except in a calm' (Sp 1c).

Once out of the tropics, ships sailing to New Zealand continued towards the Cape of Good Hope where squalls and storms once again characterised the voyage. As James McIlrath disclosed, 'Round the cape of good hope the weather is very uncertin. Squals come like whirlwind which rents the old canvass like paper' (Il 3f). Nearing the colony, David McCullough's vessel encountered 'some tremendous seas and come over our sides and broke away about 16 feet of our bulworks' (Cu 3i). Oliver McSparron reported that the *White Star* 'was struck by lightning. It fractured the main mast and ran down a chain to the coppering of the bulwarks. It tore it up in some places and melted it in others and made its way out through the bulwarks into the water ... If a thousand cannon had been fired in one volley it would not have been as loud as the roar it made when it struck the water' (Sp 1c). Fortunately, no correspondent endured the catastrophe of a sinking vessel that German and Dutch letter writers in America experienced.²⁵

²⁵ See Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, pp. 244-6, and Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, pp. 371-2.

Bessie Macready, who voyaged to Canterbury in 1878 on board the *Pleiades*, vividly described two storms after passing the Cape of Good Hope. The first occurred in early February when the sea ‘rushed into our sleeping cabins and kept dashing backwards and forwards until we got it baled out. This occupied our time from breakfast till dinner with Steward and third mate to help us and the captain with his sleeves rolled giving what aid he could’ (Ma 1f). Though Hassam argues that storms stirred up confusion²⁶, the reaction of Bessie’s crewmates suggests anything but an erratic response to pending chaos. A second storm brewed the following month and ‘the roaring of the wind, the rattling of things all around us The creaking of the timbers and dashing of the sea against the ships side was enough to strike terror into a stout heart’ (Ma 1g). Despite this, Bessie ventured to the poop to view the scene (Ma 1i), a move that Hassam would perceive as transgressing the domestic sphere²⁷:

the sight that presented itself to me was truly grand. The sea was covered with little hills as it were as far as the eye could reach and each of these topped with white spray and constantly in motion. Now and again the sea would fall in one part, then a number of these hills would come together forming one great peak which would then break the spray rising to a great height and when the sun shone on it presenting all the colors of the rainbow. A feeling of admiration and awe came over me when I looked at it. The Officers said I was brave to come on deck at such a time.

Loss of life during the passage was occasionally reported. James McIlrath related several fatalities that took place on the *Donald McKay*: a sailor fell from a loft in to the sea and despite efforts to save him drowned; the cook became ill and died; and ‘a Woman was seen on deck at 4 in the morning and could never be seen again’ (Il 3e). The nature of her disappearance, be it murder, an accident, or suicide, is unknown. Most deaths during the voyage to New Zealand resulted from disease and the SS *Bebington* was the most afflicted ship in this study. As Alice Gilmore revealed, ‘We had a great deal of sickness 67 cases of

²⁶ Hassam, *Sailing to Australia*, p. 104.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 152.

Tiphod Tiphos Scallot & Remucicate [*scarlet and rheumatic*] fever & 16 deaths with children 4 or 5 besides & 12 births' (Ge 5b). Alice's brother John focussed on the deceased noting that '17 died and strange to say that 2 of the young men that went from Belfast was the first that died and 2 Brothers. Their name was Trassy. Robert seen them in Belfast. We had very good passage but long and at times looked very hard when our fellow passengers and country men were going overboard so often and did not of course know when it would come our turn but thank Him it has not come yet' (Ge 6b). Even before the SS *Bebington's* voyage commenced, a child died provoking John to resignedly reflect, 'I don't know what was the matter but it is most likely one out of so many would die on shore and one thing is certain will come and we will have births before the matter as it is' (Ge 4d). Although some children did die, including a child of the Heldts, Belich's claim that parents played 'New Zealand roulette with their children' is exaggerated.²⁸ With the exception of the SS *Bebington*, the voyages to the colony in this study underwent minimal loss of life.

Having endured sickness, storms, and tedium, migrants sighted land with immense relief as David McCullough intimated: 'At 5 O'clock on the 18 came joyful cries of land Ho land and we saw first the Mountain and then the land came in sight. We were very glad [*omitted: to*] think we were at our journeys end' (Cu 3j). For David McCullough, his journey on the *Andrew Reid* in 1875 was a 'very tedious and long voyage of 123 days' but this did not compare with the 'long & unpleasant voyage' of six months endured by John and Alice Gilmore (Cu 3a; Ge 5b). Even after arrival, the traumatic voyage of the SS *Bebington* continued with the vessel placed in quarantine at Motuihe Island just off the coast of Auckland. Commenting on the Island, Alice Gilmore observed that 'There is a

²⁸ James Belich, Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century (Auckland, 1996), p. 287.

cook house & accomotion for imigrants & a brick house for fumatitation. The cloths all boxes & every thing else is put in there before leaving. It is like a grate in the bottom & underneath that is a great fire burning of Brimstone to cleare all disease as the think on our voyage' (Ge 5c). Similar procedures were also noted by James McIlrath following quarantine of the *Donald McKay* at Port Phillip in Australia due to an outbreak of smallpox: 'The Boxes are all sent on shore. The ship is to be smoked, tared and painted' (II 3b).

Non-quarantine ships also experienced delays in disembarking. Bessie Macready, for instance, 'did not leave the ship until the following morning when I with my luggage was conveyed to the shore in a little steam boat. I found a M^r Robinson and his sister waiting for me. They conducted me to their mother, who is a great friend of aunts, and I waited there until I got a conveyance to take me to Governors Bay which is seven miles distant from Port' (Ma 1b). Generally, such delays were the result of official enquiry into passenger health and complaints, and observations of the ship's condition.

Despite the delays, dramas, and deaths, some ships failed to reach their intended destination. Fire was the most common cause. Upon his arrival in Australia in March 1861, James McIlrath puzzled over the fate of another vessel: 'The Dover Castle which sailed from London the day we sailed from Liverpool landed in Melbourne on the 5th. The seen a ship on fire off the Cape. The Queen of Commerce that sailed 10 days before us is not here yet. It is believed she is burnt and not one life saved' (II 3g). Fortunately, James's fears were unfounded for the *Queen of Commerce* arrived later that month.

Though most passengers disembarked with relief, Oliver McSparron told readers in Londonderry, 'I could live on sea during my life is not the dreadful place that I heard it was. I like it very well' (Sp 1d).

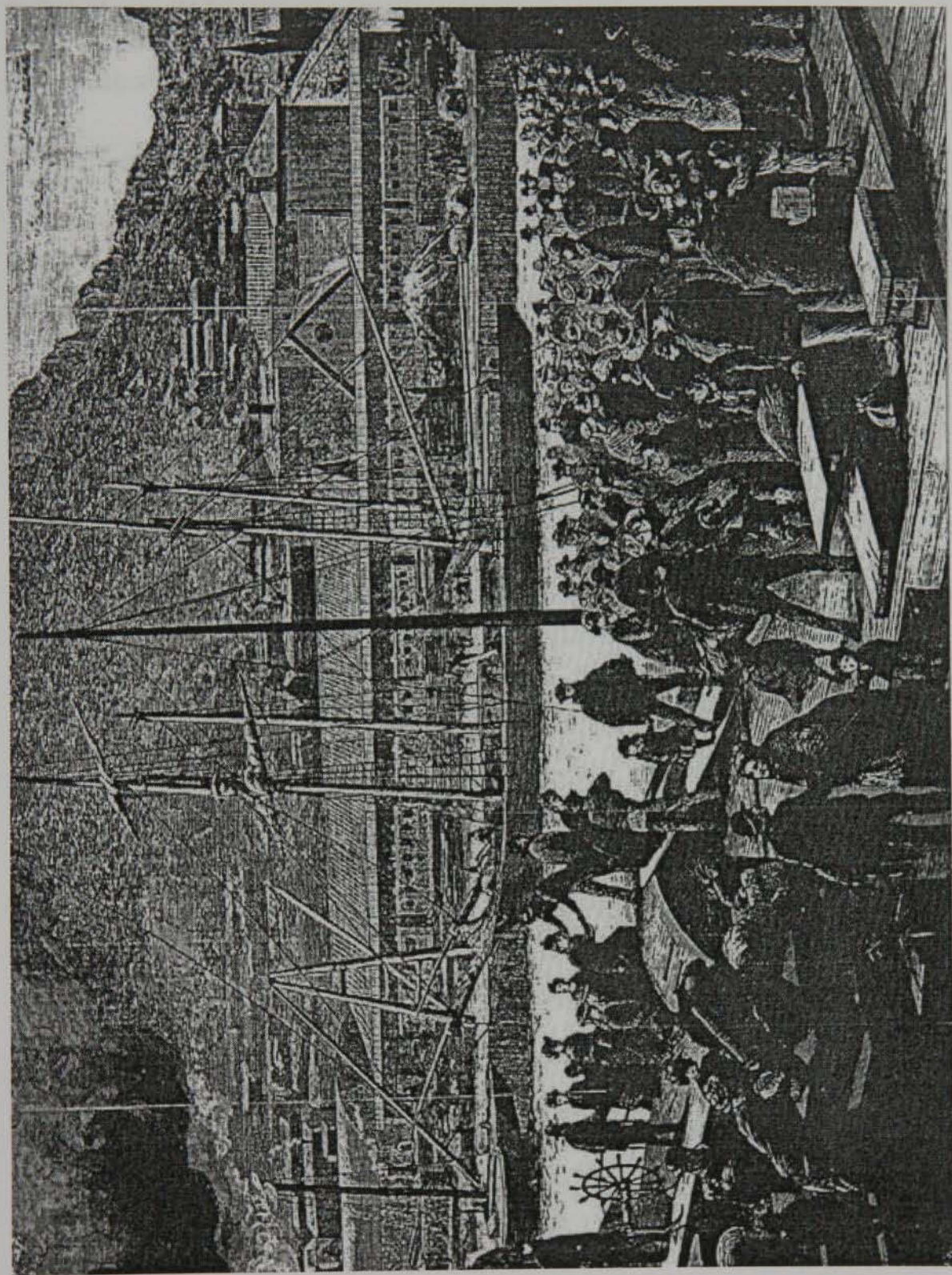


Fig 27 'The desired haven': Arriving at Lyttelton, circa 1878 (Illustrated Sydney News).

The extant accounts of the voyage utilised in this chapter indicate that migrants were well informed prior to their emigration. Such knowledge, provided by previous migrants, ensured that intending migrants were fully prepared for the journey that lay before them. This collective involvement continued on board as migrants fulfilled their roles such as mess duty. The proximity to a wide range of ethnic and religious groups, however, did not necessarily dilute rigid opinions. Once in the colony, the importance of the network involvement in the migration process, at home and abroad, continued. How did these networks operate and how were they depicted?

Chapter 6

‘Bands Of Fellowship’:

Migration Networks

As the previous chapter revealed, Irish migrants made their journeys to New Zealand within a backdrop of knowledge supplied by the kin and neighbourhood networks to which they were connected. The letters depict this worldwide dispersal. Honora Dwyer’s letter from Dromkeen in Limerick depicts the dispersal of kin in Canada and America while the Colgans, Sullivans, and Strongs all had relatives in America. All the Keane brothers settled in America. Louth migrant, Nicholas Flanagan, selected America rather than Australia where his brothers were initially based and eventually they joined him from New Zealand. The most frequent relocations, however, occurred between New Zealand and Australia, particularly during the gold rush period. Several correspondents initially voyaged to Australia before crossing the Tasman Sea to New Zealand, including Oliver McSparron, Hamilton Gilmer, the McIlraths, and the Flanagans. William Quinn, on the other hand, arrived first in New Zealand before making several return voyages to Australia before he finally settled in New Zealand. Correspondents also reported the movements of Irish acquaintances throughout Australia (Ar 1c; Cu 5e).

The sequences at the heart of this study are also noteworthy for what they reveal about the role of kin in Irish migration to New Zealand. The Dwyers, Kilpatricks, O’Neills, and Sullivans voyaged as family groups, while brothers from the McIlrath, McClure, and Flanagan families sailed together. Pioneering migrants from the Lysaght, Gilmore, Cardwell, Keane, Bell, and Quinn families were followed by other kin. Bessie Macready voyaged to aunts in the colony while John Armstrong, the Gilmer brothers, and the McMullans followed in the footsteps of uncles. Ann McCleland, Oliver McSparron,

and David McCullough are known to have travelled with companions while the correspondence of Hugh Rea and Daniel Strong mention Irish acquaintances. As far as can be ascertained, only Daniel Strong, Agnes Lambert, Alexander McKelvey, Philip Carroll, and Thomas Hughes were without Irish networks at all times in the colony.

The first section of this chapter considers the involvement of kin networks in the migration process. How did migrants and non-migrants depict the impact of emigration? Did migrants provide extensive encouragement for future migration or assist in other ways? What responsibilities and obligations were expected of migrants? The second section of this chapter examines the portrayal of kin, neighbourhood, and marital networks in the correspondence. In particular, it engages with Miles Fairburn's claim that nineteenth-century New Zealand was characterised by minimal kinship ties which created weak community ties.¹ In providing an alternative portrait of settler society, stressing the existence of extensive kin and neighbourhood ties, this chapter endorses Lyndon Fraser's findings in relation to Irish Catholics in Christchurch. The explorations of kin and neighbourhood networks in this chapter also consider whether Catholic and Protestant correspondents displayed divergent attitudes towards family and community.² Were Catholics more likely than their Protestant counterparts to give priority to family pursuits as claimed by Miller?³ Examination of the nature of marital networks and male-female interaction, meanwhile, builds upon the recent work of Daley in examining male-female interaction as well as the work by Philips on masculinity.⁴ The chapter concludes with an

¹ Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 192.

² Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 273.

³ *Ibid*, p. 270.

⁴ Caroline Daley, *Girls and Women, Men and Boys: Gender in Taradale, 1886-1930* (Auckland, 1999); Jock Philips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male, a History* (Auckland, 1996; 1st edn. 1987).

analysis of loneliness, home, and return migration. Did Irish-New Zealand correspondence endorse Miller's 'exile' motif and Miles Fairburn's 'atomisation' thesis?

Kin Obligations

Following their departure, many migrants reassured their families with an announcement that they would meet once more. For example, when David McCullough arrived in London for the second leg of his voyage in 1875 he reassured his aunt at Moneyreagh that 'I can not turn back now but I hope soon to return' (Cu 2a). The following year when John Gilmore emigrated, he hinted that 'I may drop down there some day yet as there is no saying what time may Bring' (Ge 6g). Gordon McClure also employed this tactic when he emigrated 25 years earlier. He advised his sisters to 'enjoy yourselves till I come back which will be in about 2 years when I expect you will all come out with me & settle' (Ce 2a).

Friends and family corresponding from Ireland also echoed the idea that the impending separation would only be temporary. From Tipperary, John Strong wrote to his cousin Daniel Strong prior to the latter's departure in 1883: 'When you receive a letter from me again thousands of miles of ocean shall roll between us and you will be in a strange land making new friends and perhaps forgetting the old ones, or only remembering them sometimes when some stray thought shall wander back to them and the land of your birth. But Dan you will never be forgotten by me and I feel certain that we shall meet again' (St 2a). Such declarations undoubtedly consoled both the migrant and their kin at home in order to ease the process of separation. The extent to which the expected return did occur is examined later in this chapter.

Despite reaffirming the notion that separation was only temporary, leave-taking generated emotional reflections. Only one migrant correspondent, however, disclosed his

feelings about his imminent departure from Ireland. Preparing to return to New Zealand following a visit to Ireland in 1925, Philip Carroll revealed that ‘Were it not for the fact that the sooner I leave home the earlier I will get to my real home in New Zealand, I would have an awful dread of the parting with all my old [*word illegible*] friends’ (Cl 23b). Even more disconcerting was his claim that ‘Mother will find the parting hard this time and so will I because I do not expect I will ever see her again in this life’ (Cl 18a). In his last surviving letter Philip sadly reflected, ‘Meetings are lovely but partings are rotten’ (Cl 24a). In order to ease his departure, Philip Carroll claimed to ‘look on my parting with Ireland like I would when leaving a place where I spent an enjoyable holiday’ (Cl 21d). No nineteenth-century migrant correspondent, however, ‘conveyed deep sorrow at leaving home and kin’ as claimed of the Irish in America.⁵ Nor did leave-taking mirror Dutch and German declarations that ‘my heart was heavy’ when departure took place ‘amid many tears and with sad feelings of melancholy’.⁶ If Irish migrants voyaging to New Zealand felt grief, they did not voice it.

Non-migrants, on the other hand, provided emotional evidence of the impact of departure. With heartfelt honesty, John Strong confided to his cousin: ‘We all loved you with more than brotherly love ... I liked you as well as the Dearest of a brother and first thing I heard on Wednesday morning was my mother crying for you. You never left our mind for a moment since you left and Lizzie cried after getting up this morning’ (St 1b). The departure of an acquaintance to America in 1886 resurrected the feelings experienced by Maurice Keane when his sisters left Waterford earlier that decade: ‘I thought my heart

⁵ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 482.

⁶ These expressions appear in Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, p. 30, and Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 305. Further echoes of the emotional impact of departure appear in Brinks, pp. 240, 306, 365, 385, and Kamphoefner, pp. 210, 266, 303.

would break thinking of ye both when ye were leaving us all' (Ke 3b). Protestant correspondents in Ireland expressed similar grief. From Armagh in 1863, Margaret Kilpatrick's mother admitted that 'there is one long heart rending thought that troubles me that is I fear I never will see you in this life' (Ki 2c). Fathers also grieved. David McCullough, for instance, sympathised with his aunt, 'I am sorry to hear my father taking it so much to heart' (Cu 2a). Few letters, however, equal the outpouring of grief contained in the letters of Elizabeth McCleland upon the emigration of her daughter Ann from Dunronan, County Londonderry, in 1840. Ann's voyage to the fledgling colony gave her mother 'the deepest heartfelt sorrow and distress of mind & bodey that it is possible for one of my age & constitution to bear. I suffered after you went away grieving night & day about you. I hoped that you would have perhaps ruid & changed your mind when you would goe to Liverpool but alas to my sorrow you went on leaving me to grieve your absence' (Cd 1a). Elizabeth McCleland also revealed that 'Sister Mary grieves day & Night' and other family members were 'in great grief about you when you went away' (Cd 1c, 1e). That such anguished accounts emerged from Ireland suggests that the immobile were more inclined to voice their loss while migrants adopted tactics of reassurance. There is no evidence, therefore, of the 'mutual grief' contained in the letters of the Irish in America.⁷

Despite the distress generated by her daughter's departure, Elizabeth McCleland nevertheless recognised the advantages conferred by emigration. She therefore asked Ann to 'let me know if you are content in your mind or if you be fretting about being home for I would wish you to tell me your mind for I would have more contentment to know how it is with you and if you be not content let me know and we will asist in sending money to fetch you home. But if you like that place and think if anserable I will on your acount be content

⁷ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 483.

to let Nancy and Jean Both go to you.’ Indeed, Nancy ‘longs greatly to hear from you. She intends to goe to you If you give her the least encouragement’ (Cd 2b, 1d).

Though it appears that no McClelland sibling joined Ann in the colony, other migrants were reunited with kin. Several of these, such as the McMullans, John and Alice Gilmore, and cousins of the Gilmers received assisted passages. In each of these cases, one male sibling remained in Ireland. There are only four instances, however, of migrants offering explicit encouragement for further migration. Andrew Gilmore attempted to lure his remaining brother Robert to the colony in 1881 by guaranteeing employment and claiming that Robert and his family ‘would get more civilised & I Believe Better connected’ (Ge 11b). If Robert did contemplate joining his siblings abroad, he was prevented by responsibilities towards his parents which Andrew reluctantly acknowledged: ‘I am sorry about the old people & could not advise you to Leave while the are alive not But the might be able with a little help to Live without you Being there But it seems so Hard to Leave them in old age’ (Ge 11d). William Gilmer in Monaghan was also encouraged by his brother to ‘go out again & live in Greymouth’ (Gr 2d). James McIlrath in Canterbury also explicitly encouraged emigration when in 1875 he wondered if his parents knew ‘of any young Woeman or girl that would like to come here Willing to milk & so. There is no rough work here like at home. I would pay all expences from she left home and make this a home for Her too’ (Il 24e). Margaret Kilpatrick also encouraged further emigration but set out guidelines: ‘Now I will tell you the kind of a man that may come here. One who is both able and willing to work, and blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, bakers and in fact any man that is willing to do any thing. Gentlemen are not wanted that has no money. Servents are much wanted both girls and boys’ (Ki 1b). In contrast, encouragement for the migrant to return was replete in the correspondence and is discussed later in this chapter.

Though there are few explicit requests for further migration, some comments suggest that migration was implicitly encouraged. James O'Neill, for instance, assessed from Auckland in 1863 that 'If Patt had not constant work in Lim^k I am shure he would do well here provided he would keep from drink' (Ne 11). Two decades later, Samuel Gilmer shared O'Neill's favourable interpretation of the colony but indicated that the final decision rested with his brother William: 'my advice would be to you if health better and no encumbrance that Greymouth should suit you well but please yourself. You should be the best judge off those matters' (Gr 1c). William was better suited than most migrants to decide his future for he already possessed first-hand knowledge of the country. In his uncertainty, however, William also sought guidance from another colonial based brother, Robert: 'w^d you advise me sell & go back again' he asked (Gr 2g). Presumably the response was negative as William remained in Monaghan.

Other correspondents offered to act as patrons to prospective migrants. Hence John Armstrong, having learned of an acquaintance's planned migration in 1859, promised to 'do what little I can to oblige him' while Daniel Strong was asked almost half a century later to look after a Protestant migrant (Ar 1d; St 6h, 7a). Sixteen years after James McIlrath arrived in the colony, he learned of his nephew's intending migration and pledged to 'meet him and give him any assistance in my power' while Margaret Kilpatrick guaranteed a 'hearty welcome' at her Auckland residence to any migrants from Armagh in 1905 (Il 27e; Ki 14b). Their offers of welcome can be read as implicit agreement with an intending migrant's decision.

Some correspondents conveyed a desire for kin to join them but tempered this with a warning placing the onus on the recipient to decide what option to pursue. As such, Agnes Lambert admitted from Auckland in 1877 that 'I would like to see some of my sisters out here But if they are doing any way [*erased: wel*] well at home they had Better

stay there for this is not much of a place unless you have plenty of money' (La 1d).

Likewise, when offering advice about his brother's intending migration to Christchurch two years later, William Cardwell hoped that 'if he comes here there will be something turn up for him to do although trade just now is very dull' (Ca 1c). These two comments suggest an implicit discouragement.

Despite her willingness to greet new arrivals in the twentieth century, when Margaret first arrived in 1862 she announced that 'I would not advise Joseph to come here as he would not stand the work he would have to do' (Ki 1h). Clearly, an intending migrant's disposition required careful scrutiny before emigration could be specifically recommended. Despite a general absence of outright inducement to emigrate, Oliver McSparron, on the other hand, remained entirely neutral and informed from Australia that 'I will send no word of encouragement or discouragement to anyone at present as I know little of this country' (Sp 1g).

Table 7 Occurrence of Encouragement versus Discouragement

Explicit Encouragement	Implicit Encouragement	Explicit Discouragement	Implicit Discouragement
4	3	1	2

Unlike Irish-Australian correspondence in which advice was 'as often discouraging as encouraging' and German correspondence from America which contained 'a long list of arguments for and against emigration',⁸ the letters sent to Ireland from New Zealand were more likely to encourage, but with warnings. The Irish in America, on the other hand, were more prone to provide outright discouragement for further emigration.⁹

⁸ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 520; Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 29.

⁹ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 358.

Though migrants rarely provided outright encouragement to kin to travel to the colony, they sometimes received explicit instructions from Ireland. In 1886 Maurice Keane tersely wrote from Waterford demanding that his sister Mary 'send James his passage at once if you can as he is too willing to go out there for there is no work for him here and it would be a charity for you to send for him & bring him out of this place & write to John and ask him would he like to go out for we dont know what he's going to do at present and it would be better for him if he would do something & go out of this place' (Ke 1c). A month later, John Keane also asked his sister to assist him: 'I would wish you to let me know what sort of a country is New Zealand for my trade. If its any way fair I would wish you to send for me & If not you ought to send me a help to send me to America or else to buy tools and work at home but don't put your self out of the way for me' (Ke 2d). Mary's response is unknown but it appears to have been discouraging or non-existent as John eventually emigrated to America. Mary Keane was expected to aid not only her brothers, but also her parents. Her brother Maurice forcefully reminded Mary of her obligations particularly towards their mother who 'is not well since she threw up the blood. She hardly have any appetite at all but now I am asking you to try and assisst her for you know very well she needs it and it is time for you to think of her now if you will ever think & I hope you wont be so false hearted as not to do so' (Ke 1b). William Lysaght also criticised Patrick and Catherine Lysaght for their filial failure: 'Is it not an awful shame to say that Patsy or Kitty dont write. The three of them have their mother working for Her living now in her old age. If they had the least shame in them they would not allow such a thing' (Ly 2i).

These statements reveal the responsibilities that non-migrants expected migrants to adhere to. As with Irish-Australian letters, however, references to old age and illness can

be interpreted as implicit appeals for material assistance.¹⁰ From Antrim in 1901, Catherine Colgan referred to her bout of influenza and informed her daughter that ‘Your Uncle Thomas Haughey is very low. He has dropsy’ (Co 6a, 7f). Accounts of ill health from Ireland were often communicated not just to gain sympathy but as a device to obtain assistance. The Hughes sequence, for instance, contains details of many ailments that afflicted the ageing parents of Thomas Hughes throughout the 1920s. Seventy-four-year-old Robert Hughes informed his son that ‘I am undergoing a course of mechanical treatment for Rh[e]umatism & stiff joints and good circulation of blood with an instrument called a “Pulsehaun” and great results are following it. The inventor of the instrument went down with the “Titanic” so is a rare little instrument worked on wheels with a Batt[e]ry inside that vibrates the whole frame. I have two Patients under my treatment along with myself’ (Hu 9f). Several years later, Mary Hughes also announced her affliction with rheumatism (Hu 18d). Accounts of parental illness were also emphasised to try and lure migrants home (Cu 6f).

In response to such depictions, migrant correspondents either offered sympathy (as well as sometimes stressing their own troubles), or remitted money.¹¹ As such, William Quinn, upon learning of his brother’s ill health from his nephew in 1906, remitted a substantial amount of money: ‘I send to your father a draft for one hundred and ten pounds. It will be in a seperad Envelope to this. £80 for your father £20 for your ant Lizzia £5 for your self £5 for my Neice Jennie’ (Qu 4c). Although the Gilmer series does not contain a list of money remitted from the colony, Samuel Gilmer did ask his brother

¹⁰ See the discussion in Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 504-7.

¹¹ Comparison with the amounts and circumstances of remittances from English rural villagers in New Zealand cannot be explored as ‘this is the kind of personal detail that would be edited out of most letters before publication in the newspapers.’ See Arnold, *Farthest Promised Land*, p. 251.

William in Monaghan to 'let me know if I am to send you another remittance' (Gr 1c).

Forty years earlier in 1846, Hanora Dwyer in Dromkeen informed her son of the receipt of a 'Five pound order' from a mystery donor (Dw 1b). Hanora also received a letter from relatives who 'say for me never to want during my life that they will always send me relief' (Dw 1c).

Sometimes migrants remitted money with a stipulation as to what the funds should be spent on. In 1875, Canterbury farmer James McIlrath sent a draft order for £25 to his parents to 'Buy something easy to go out in' (Il 24b). The following year from Otago, David McCullough asked his parents in County Down to 'Tell Lizzie that she may be on the look out for a silver watch. By the next mail I will send her the money for one' (Cu 4g). It is unknown whether David fulfilled his promise. From Christchurch in 1880, William Cardwell sent money to Tonaghmore with an instruction that some of it to be used to purchase a baby's dress. He also expressed concern as to whether his previous donation had been received (Ca 2f). William Quinn also sought confirmation that his substantial monetary transmissions had arrived safely in Belfast: 'Writte me when you get this and let me know if the Money has been got all wright' (Qu 4e). Occasionally, migrant offers to contribute to the household income were rebuffed as Philip Carroll discovered during his return visit to Tipperary in 1925: 'When I spoke about paying my board she was going to hit me with the frying pan. "The idea" she says "of my only son coming home from New Zealand and wanting to pay for his board in his own house". Needless to say I did not mention it again. On the contrary Mother insists [*erased: th*] on my taking a loan of some money from her which I cannot do unless I am absolutely stuck' (Cl 5h).

Remittances could also be sent from Ireland to New Zealand. John McMullan obtained money from his mother in Antrim along with the advice that he 'put it to good use as you know money is so easily spent'. As John had previously sent £10 home from the

colony his mother may have felt some compulsion to assist him (Co 3c, 4b). Philip Carroll also hoped to obtain funds from family members in Ireland during his return visit there in 1925 but was unsuccessful. He remorsefully told his wife, 'It is a big disappointment to me as she led me to expect it' (Cl 24e). Edward Lysaght also indicated to his wife during his return to Limerick that 'I think I will take something handsome back with me' (Ly 6d). He secured a sizeable sum. These extracts provide further support for the findings of Erickson, O'Farrell, and Fitzpatrick in which migrants sought financial support.¹²

Money and inheritance issues were a significant element in Irish-New Zealand correspondence and featured prominently in the Lysaght, Strong, Flanagan, and Carroll sequences. Edward Lysaght's attempts to obtain financial assistance from his family in Limerick met with repeated resistance. His brother William stated, 'I think you would act foolish in taking the money. Anyway we could not send it at present'. Later in the same letter, William revealed, 'You know if I was looking to my own interests I would let the money go to you as twill cost me far more to settle you here' (Ly 2b, 2g). Though William told Edward, 'We borrowed when we got this farm but we have it all paid off now and some thing to spare', his father Edmund contradicted this: 'You know the great amount of money I owed when I got this farm. When I make money if I send to you twill be only wasting it' (Ly 2h, 3b). Edmund Lysaght concluded, 'If I am able I will send you money at next Christmas' (Ly 3f). Mary Keane, on the other hand, was told by her brother Maurice in Waterford in 1886, 'John is not getting any money ... Dont attempt to send him any money' (Ke 3d). From America in 1910, John told Mary that their brother James 'wanted to get money from me & because I would not give it to him he got angry' (Ke 7d).

¹² Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 5; O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 133; Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 511-13.

Philip Carroll met with success and failure in efforts to obtain financial aid during his return to Tipperary in 1925. He initially received assistance from his mother and aunt (Cl 12f, 21i) but was reluctant to ask for further support: ‘asking of them for a loan of money is so hard as to be almost an impossibility’ (Cl 20h). Upon learning of his aunt’s wealth, however, he told his wife, ‘I never knew she had so much money and only wish she would push some of it my way’ (Cl 24c).

Money lending also appeared often in the letters. County Londonderry native Oliver McSparron refused to contemplate returning home as ‘there is money owing to me that I cannot get at present’ (Sp 6a). Goldminer Patrick Flanagan also discussed loans. He discouragingly conceded, ‘It is very hard to go away without paying one debts and so much owing to us one should ask it very blunt in a case like the present’ (Fl 8b). The distressed mother of their slain compatriot, Patrick Kirk, also requested the Flanagans to obtain her deceased son’s savings. As Michael and Patrick were informed by their uncle, ‘She will ask you to send any money you may be able to collect from the creditors’ (Fl 12c).

Financial considerations also impacted on marital choices. William Lysaght told his brother Edward, ‘if I married at all the woman I choose has no money’ (Ly 4c). The following year William emphatically announced, ‘I am married since May 12 to a young woman without fortune’ (Ly 5b). From Tipperary, the Strongs warned their cousin Daniel to ‘be careful of your money now as you in a good way of spending it and money does not hold long’ (St 1d). They also discussed their financial success as well as that of their acquaintances (St 3e, 3c, 6f).

Inheritance issues also appear in several letters. William Lysaght contradicted his brother Edward’s opinions concerning the division of the family’s holding: ‘As to what you said in my fathers letter that you had as good a right to half (what we had) as I had you know this is not true. Had you stayed at home my father would have divided evenly with

you' (Ly 2h). Edmund Lysaght also told his son Edward, 'As for dividing this farm tis not be thought of. Neither would it be allowed' (Ly 3b). William Cardwell, on the other hand, upon hearing of his father's death, was grieved to learn 'that my Father had not made any will nor settled his affairs in any way'. William therefore requested his siblings in County Down 'to write me and give me the amount of Debt due at this time as I may be in a position to help you reduce it. I hope you have not got into any trouble with the people you were due the money to' (Ca 1f). As the eldest child, he relinquished his rights, and reassured his brothers and sisters, 'I never will take a shilling from one of you' (Ca 1g).

Kin, Neighbourhood, and Marital Networks

Intriguingly, most explicit depictions of kin relationships in the correspondence from Ireland emphasised discord rather than concord with much strain evident between parents and children. Retired constabulary officer Robert Hughes told his son Thomas, 'I have not heard from any one of the family since I wrote to you so they are treating us very cooley' (Hu 4d). The letters composed by offspring were rather more severe. The disharmony within the O'Neill household in Limerick was apparent in James's letter from Auckland sent in response to a letter from his brother Patrick: 'He complains how he is treated by his father but I dont wonder at it from the treatment I got after spending my whole life I might say, in doing everything that I possibly could for the ruffian. I hope this winter will send him where he can light his pipe with the top of his finger' (Ne 1m). Ructions in the McNeice household occurred when Agnes became pregnant and was obliged to emigrate. As she indignantly reflected seventeen years later, 'I have Been an outcaste from you all But I forgive him that was the cause of it all as my father ought to have forgiven me' (La 1b). Following several short letters sent home, Oliver McSparron

accused his father that money left with him was ‘wrongfully converted’ (Sp 7a). Some strain in the Gilmore family is also apparent from John’s disdain at the outset of his emigration at not receiving a letter from his father: ‘he may have a better friend than me and I hope that who ever he may be will stand his friend from this out’ (Ge 4c). Philip Carroll also observed during his return to Nenagh that his sister ‘tries hard to order Mother about but Mother is well able to stand up for her rights’ (Cl 6h). A week later he cautiously conceded that ‘Mother is getting old now and is sometimes rather hard to get on with. I have not had a cross word with her but can well understand why Nance flies off the handle sometimes’ (Cl 8e).

Philip Carroll also informed his wife of the strain between himself and his sister Nance after she read a letter in which Philip described her as ‘so prim and precise’. Consequently, ‘there has been hell to pay in our house this afternoon’ (Cl 6l). Other correspondents, all Catholics, also disclosed shaky sibling relationships. When Edward Lysaght returned to Limerick, he incurred the disapproval of his father ‘for when you came home you gave me the greatest scandel and beat your brother in *in* presence of the publick’ (Ly 8c). James O’Neill also regretted ‘to hear that Theresa is going on in such a way as Patt complains’ and revealed that his daughter was named Theresa ‘so if she takes after her aunt I suppose she will be a saucy customer’ (Ne 1n, 1b). The most substantial discord among siblings appears in the letters of the Keane family of County Waterford. Maurice Keane informed his sister Mary of a disapproved relationship their brother John was involved in but warned her, ‘Dont attempt to mention anything to John about what I said of him to you for you dont know what he’d do if he’d know it. He might take & marry her at once then in order to vex us’ (Ke 3e). In later years, John Keane revealed from America that his brother James had sought money for drink ‘& because I would not give it to him he got angry so I told him to go his road. I hav’ent heard of him since’ (Ke 7d). In Tipperary,

Martin Strong was particularly scathing of his sister Margaret whom he castigated as 'a foolish girl' (St 3d). As Martin confided to his cousin Daniel, 'Margaret complains why we are so bad to her. Well to tell you the truth if she got anything she might not put it to good use and I would be against her for that' (St 3d). Louth native Richard Flanagan, meanwhile, complained to his brother Michael, 'I have fel[t] a good deal disappointed that you told nothing of your plans or arrangements for the future' (Fl 13c).

The letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand also reveal rocky relations among wider kin networks. Following her father's death, Kate Keane forcibly declared that 'we loathe any Keane except Fathers uncle James & his children' (Ke 5c). Monaghan farmer William Gilmer expressed his bitter disappointment that his cousin Robert 'never wrote me a line, & all I did for him' (Gr 2c). Margaret Kilpatrick also learned from her sister-in-law Sarah Reid that Sarah 'did not get on very well with Robert John's family' (Ki 15d).

In contrast with such disheartening depictions of kin relationships, evidence of harmony exists. For instance, Edward Lysaght, on his return to Ireland in 1872, 'spent another night in Waterford a very pleasant one too with N. Lysaght Pat's brother' (Ly 6b). Following his father's death in County Down, William Cardwell hoped that his siblings 'will all live agreeably together the same as you have done all along' (Ca 1a). Returned Tipperary migrant Philip Carroll commented several times on various kin networks surrounding him. Though he initially squabbled with his sister, he later told his wife that 'the more I know her the better I like her' (Cl 9k). He also commented on relations who 'are awfully friendly and do not seem to be ever tired of showing me how welcome I am' (Cl 12c). Some comments concerning warm kin relationships were retrospective. When Lizzie Strong's mother died, Lizzie recalled her as 'my kind good Mother the Dearest of all' (St 4c). The Strong sequence also documents the harmonious relationship that had

existed between the Strongs in Lehinch with their departed cousin Daniel. According to Lizzie, 'Those days were the happiest of my life when you and I were together rambling around the Dear old place' (St 4e). Her brother John conveyed his hope that he would one day be reunited with Daniel and that they would be 'unshaken in the affection we have for each other' (St 2a). John also confided to Daniel that 'We all loved you with more than brotherly love' (St 1b).

Writers in New Zealand also enlightened recipients about kin relationships. As with reports from Ireland, most documented disharmony. Ageing gumdigger Patrick Quinn complained to his brother in Belfast that William 'dos not Reconise mee as a Brother' (Qu 1d). Relationships between cousins were seemingly more fraught. Samuel Gilmer was particularly critical of his cousin Abigail whom he had given a job: 'I seen at once it was no good that her intention was to do as little as possible ... Well I kept her for twelve months and paid her regular every month but no thanks nor no improvement in the girl only dying with laziness' (Gr 1d). Evidently, Abigail reciprocated Samuel's feelings for as William Gilmer revealed from Monaghan, Abigail 'gave Sam & Mary an awful name also Henry & wife' (Gr 1d, 2c). Tension also existed between Edward Lysaght and other Lysaghts in Auckland. As William Lysaght commiserated, 'there must be some mistake between yourself and Patsy Lysaght if he reacted as you said' (Ly 4f). James McIlrath, on the other hand, considered that his cousin Robert 'has his own way so I believe he would do a thing sooner by letting him alone than coaxing' (Il 13f).

Explicit declarations of harmony among migrant kinsfolk was less frequent though David Bell in Duntroon was full of praise for his 'three Brothers to be Proud of' (Be 1f). Catherine Colgan also expressed delight that one of her migrant daughters 'has got such a kind sister in Miss Campbell' (Co 3h). Implicit evidence, however, suggests that kin bonds were positive. James and Hamilton McIlrath were in frequent contact with each other with

no signs of tension as were Andrew, John, and Alice Gilmore. Likewise, the Colgan series shows little evidence of strain among the McMullan siblings in Otago.

The letters therefore indicate that more explicit signs of strain existed among kin in Ireland than the predominantly harmonious and co-operative family life in Ireland revealed in Irish-Australian correspondence.¹³ Likewise, explicit declarations concerning kin disharmony in New Zealand features more often. Despite this, implicit evidence reveals that kin relations in New Zealand, as with the Irish in Australia, were generally harmonious.¹⁴ Given the noticeable tension among kinsfolk in Ireland, does the correspondence provide a tumultuous depiction of neighbourhood networks in Ireland? Or did Irish-New Zealand letters provide a positive portrayal of neighbours in Ireland as prevalent in Irish-Australian correspondence?¹⁵

Few correspondents reported on specific neighbours. However, William Gilmer considered an acquaintance in Monaghan ‘a very decent sort of chap, comes to see me regular’ while John Strong revealed a Protestant neighbour in Tipperary to be ‘a dear friend of ours’ (Gr 2f; St 6h). Several letters reported on neighbourhood gatherings. According to Sophy Lang in Armagh, ‘We spent the evening cheerful and pleasant as we always done’ (Ki 7b). The McIlrath brothers also learned that their parents in County Down had attended ‘a party on Monday night last’ (Il 4d). Several years later, following their son-in-law’s visit, James told his parents that he ‘speaks highly of the reception he got from you all’ (Il 28b). Writing to her daughter Ann in Wellington, Elizabeth McClelland mentioned the presence in Dunronan, County Londonderry, of a ‘vast catalogue of Friends and wellwishers to tedious to mention Individually’ (Cd 1e). Some correspondents at home

¹³ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 550.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 596.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 552.

and abroad did list such names while others used a variation of the phrase 'Remember me to all old friends & acquaintances' (Il 29e).

Migrants also frequently sought news of associates in Ireland. Thus David McCullough requested his parents to 'Let me know how all our old neighbours are getting on and all the moneyrea people' (Cu 3l). The extent of such sociability is recorded in John Armstrong's letter to his sister in which he cheekily mused, 'What a dissipated young lady you must have become since you left poor quiet Kiltoom. I do not remember your going out so many evenings all the time we lived there. As you say you were in a few works. I am glad you have the friends to go to and that you take advantage of their invitations to go out' (Ar 1i). Invitations certainly swamped Philip Carroll when he returned to Nenagh in 1925. He remarked that he had been 'deluged with applications and invitations from friends and relations' and that 'Every friend seems to vie with one another in doing me a good turn' (Cl 5e, 6k). In Sligo Robert Hughes admitted that his neighbours, predominantly Catholic, 'are not a bad lot after all' (Hu 8c). Upon learning of the death of his parents at Tonaghmore, Christchurch-based William Cardwell was 'glad indeed to know that the neighbours have been so kind to them that are gone' (Ca 1h).

Despite these warm depictions of Irish neighbourhood networks, discord is also discernible. Perhaps the most explicit denunciation of neighbours in Ireland was vented by Maurice Keane in Waterford: 'She is My biggest enemy & so are all the Doyles for I cant bear the sight of any of them'. The Doyles were not alone in incurring Maurice's wrath for in the same letter he spouted, 'Kate Hartnett & sister are my biggest enemies also. Every one hate them' (Ke 3d, 3f). Philip Carroll in Tipperary also revealed that 'I never had a line from Dick Donworth and Mother tells me that she would get the biggest surprise of her life if I got a loan of even £5 from him because she reckons the Bolands and the Donworths so far as money is concerned are the meanest people between here and New Zealand' (Cl

5h). Another acquaintance who failed to fulfil a promise also earned Philip's contempt: 'To h__ with him I say' (Cl 24d). Andrew Gilmore, upon learning of the death of a neighbour at home, admitted, 'Little did I think that He would been the First party out of the Two that gave me so much Dissatisfaction' (Ge 9d). Disappointment with the behaviour and attitudes of neighbours could also generate criticism. In County Louth, Richard Flanagan, the 'uncle priest' of Michael and Patrick, conveyed his dismay towards his neighbours when news of their brother's slaying reached them. Fr. Flanagan reported that Peter Kirk, a brother of the deceased, 'observed that it was bad enough to lose himself but that it would be bad altogether to lose his money. I was not pleased with him. It is a very thankless business to have to deal with some folk under such circumstances' (Fl 12f).

Occasionally, local friction resulted in physical violence or the threat of it. In 1886, William Gilmer in Monaghan expressed extreme displeasure when a neighbour returned to Ireland from New Zealand and 'gave a very bad acct' of William's brothers (Gr 2g). William claimed that 'if I heard the brat I w^d make mince meat of him' (Gr 2g). That same decade John Strong reported from Lehinch in Tipperary that 'Rob. and Mike Duffy got 14 days in nenagh jail for beating Curley' (St 2g). More widespread disharmony appeared in Robert Hughes's assessment from County Sligo in 1927 of 'a lot of suasides & murders here & at Tubbercurry & Skreen. All those places were familiar to you so you see the Country is not in a happy mood' (Hu 10e). The letters indicate that neighbourhood networks in Ireland were more likely to be portrayed positively than kin relations, but disharmony still prevailed in the existing accounts. How did neighbourhood networks in New Zealand compare?

The two most explicit instances of negative relations in New Zealand related to murder. In 1869, West Coast goldminer Pat Kirk was accidentally slain, with fellow Irishmen on the West Coast among the perpetrators. Another murder that same year was

carried out by John Smyth, formerly a policeman at Killinchy and Christchurch, who 'was sentenced to Death for the Murder of his Wife but his sentence was changed to penal servitude for life' (II 16e).¹⁶ Miles Fairburn has suggested that violence, among other factors, emerged from a 'deficient framework of association'.¹⁷ Yet there is evidence that networks operated for the perpetrators of the two slayings mentioned. As a Lyttelton hotelkeeper, John Smyth was surrounded by a range of individuals while prior to the trial of those arrested for Kirk's murder, 'About two hundred people assembled ... [and] the prisoners had a busy time of it listening to the expressions of good will and shaking hands with sympathising friends'.¹⁸ Fairburn has also attributed loneliness and drunkenness to minimal networks of association. However, both this chapter and Chapter 8 will document the prevalence of these features in Irish society. An alternative suggestion to Fairburn's thesis, therefore, is that close-knit societies produce tensions and strains. Nevertheless, depictions of Irish neighbours in New Zealand, as will be shown, were largely positive. In this, they mirrored the positive nature of Irish neighbourhood relations in Australia rather than echoing their compatriots in America who complained of harsh treatment from their fellow Irish.¹⁹

Though goldminers have been portrayed as having loose networks of association, the correspondence exhibits numerous affiliations, many based on parish networks in Ireland. As Richard Flanagan remarked, 'I am glad you have made an acquaintance with Peter Greene. He is a very decent fellow and I am sure it must be very pleasant to have one

¹⁶ The Coroner concluded that death was by 'suffocation, accelerated by the injuries evident about the head.' Details of the Inquest are contained in the *Lyttelton Times*, 12 November 1869, while details of Smyth's trial can be found in the *Press*, 4 December 1869, pp. 2-3, and 6 December 1869, pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 12.

¹⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, 11 December 1869, p. 5.

¹⁹ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 596; Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 509.

near you from your own neighbourhood at home' (Fl 10b). And when Patrick Flanagan moved from the West Coast to the Thames goldfields, he informed his brother, 'I see a great number of people here that I know' (Fl 7b). Likewise, during the McIlraths goldmining venture, Hamilton cheerfully pronounced, 'We saw almost all the boys from Killinchy' (Il 5d). Even solitary mining males such as the Quinns, Oliver McSparron, Hugh Rea, and David McCullough moved within ethnic networks. As David McCullough revealed, 'There are a good many County Down people here' (Cu 5d). From Armagh, George Reid expressed delight that his sister Margaret Kilpatrick sees 'M^{rs} Birch sometimes and are attached to her' (Ki 8a). Following the arrival of recent migrants from Ireland, James McIlrath informed his parents that 'We enjoyed ourselves very much the first Night they arrived here' (Il 26a).

Most migrant correspondents in their letters back to Ireland mentioned meeting acquaintances from home in order to reassure the recipient that the colony was civil and familiar. 'Do not suppose for a moment that we are in a wild uncivilised place', James McIlrath reassured in 1872. 'No. Only for the look of the Contry when we go to a cattle show or any other gathering one almost forgets but that he is in Ireland. I was at one on Thursday last and there was any amount of people we all know' (Il 17c). Given that more than half of Canterbury's assisted Irish immigrants between 1855 and 1876 were from Ulster, with County Down providing 13.5 per cent,²⁰ it was not surprising that James and Hamilton frequently encountered familiar faces from their home neighbourhood. Some faces were more recognisable than others as Hamilton intimated: '*Cuosin Rob*' is liveing close by us. He is farming on his own hook and getting on very well. There is a great many from home round here' (Il 12f). The lists of names in the McIlrath letters indicate a

²⁰ Calculated from Tables 7 and 8 in R. H. Silcock, 'Immigration into Canterbury', p. 191.

community based not solely on kin but also locality: 'You would be surprised to find how many of the Killinchy people was there', James pondered after attending Leeston's inaugural horse racing event in 1866. 'Sometimes I forget where we were. The only thing that is the great difference is the want of Ladies. The are very scarce but increacing fast' (Il 10b).

The strength of kin and neighbourhood networks in the colony facilitated marriage opportunities with many letters attesting to the frequency of ethnic matches. When James McIlrath grew 'tired living on a Farm by myself' in 1869, he enlightened home readers of his marriage to 'Agness Mathews from near Comber. James Anderson publican of Comber is her uncle' (Il 15b, 15a). Generally, letters from New Zealand portrayed marriage less as an economic alliance than as a matching of ethnicity. Catherine Sullivan therefore reported eagerly to her brother-in-law at Ballingarry that 'Maggie and Bridge married two brothers named Spelman. They are Irishmen. Katie is married to an Irishman from Limerick' (Su 1c).

Details of a spouse's lineage was vital to home correspondents who possessed no knowledge of the spouse's background. Consequently, elucidation was both expected and sought as Maurice Keane's letter from Waterford in 1886 following his sister's marriage reveals: 'I hope you'll give us all particulars about her & where her husband is from for there are many heartys around here. We would like to know where he is from' (Ke 3a). Meagre information concerning his brother's marriage in America generated Richard Flanagan's indignant revelation that 'He neither gave the name of his wife, nor any particulars about her' (Fl 10c).

Probably the most welcome announcement of a colonial marriage combined genealogical credentials, a matching of ethnicity, and favourable economic details. The

parents Gilmore must therefore have been delighted to learn the following details concerning their daughter's union from their son Andrew (Ge 8b):

Alice has shifted from us and left John and I to cook for ourselves. She prefers the Company of a strange man. She got married in January last to a Mr James Fenton. He is a carrier. He came here from Sydney New South Wales, Australia about 5 years ago. Him and I have been intimate friends since we knew one another. He left County Antrim about the year 1859 near Randalstown - only a boy then. He holds an ordinary position. He has 8 draught horses, 2 saddle horses, keeps 5 horse waggons and three horse drays on the road. Has a store and butcher shop 45 miles up Country - small block.

Occasionally, migrants elected to marry prior to emigration. James McClure, for instance, announced to his sisters in Belfast, 'I think it as well to take a wife with me. Her name is Emily Humphreys the orphan Daughter of a Solicitor. She is in her Twenty fifth year so not too young. Gordon thinks her very pretty, which she is, and that she will be a very suitable wife for me. She has good sound sense & no capers. I wish you could have seen her before we left for I am sure you would have liked her. She is not unlike poor Mary Moreland only her hair is brown. She is about the size of our Emily' (Ce 1a). James's decision to marry prior to his emigration in 1860 was a strategic manoeuvre as, within a few years, his brother Gordon wrote, 'as soon as I can I will come back for a wife, which can't be done without in a place like this' (Ce 4g).

Marriages in the colony not only assisted migrant settlement but often aided professional prospects. After announcing his marriage from Auckland in 1904, medical doctor Alexander McKelvey reassured his father, 'Do'nt bother too much about getting Lord Ranfurly's interest as I believe I will manage all right & I think I will have a better chance of promotion now that I am married' (Ky 1c). Alexander then set out his wife's genealogical credentials for the benefit of home readers. Hamilton McIlrath, on the other hand, indicated three decades earlier that his bride 'is going to write Mother a few lines and give you her whole pedigree' (Il 20d).

Besides ethnic and economic considerations, character also proved an important ingredient in marital unions. As James McClure warmly reflected five years after his marriage (Cu 5d):

My wife is all I could wish, but do not run away with the idea that she is a hum drum common place woman. She is a gentlewoman in every sense of the word, & respected & esteemed by all who know her. She is very handsome & only now 29. The Boys are as fond of her as if she were their mother, & not a woman but one like her of high principles would treat them like her own, as she does, after the manner in which she was treated by their foolish mother. I can tell you I feel proud of my wife for her noble conduct.

Correspondents in Ireland also provided details concerning the characteristics of their spouses. The Kilpatrick sequence is particularly illuminating in this regard. Margaret Kilpatrick's friend Sophy Lang claimed to 'have the best old man in our Country. He is a very healthy and industrious man' (Ki 7d). Sophy also reported that 'Margaret is married to a sea Captain. She lives in Dundalk like a Lady' (Ki 7f). That same year, 1880, Margaret's brother Joseph informed her, 'I have got an agreeable partner in life which is a great blessing' (Ki 9b). As an afterthought, Joseph added, 'I forgot to mention that I got the wife up near Newtonhamilton. She is the connection of the Clarkes of Clarksbridge' (Ki 9e).

Frequently, writers in Ireland discussed home unions in response to requests for information from New Zealand. Lizzie Strong therefore responded in 1898 to her cousin Daniel's query: 'You asked me in your letter if the Miss Walshes were all married. Well there are three of them married and got very good matches. Anna is to the good like myself not married yet' (St 4d). Seven years later, Lizzie's brother John Strong informed Daniel, 'I am married this three years to a second cousin of my own named Ellen Kennedy' (St 6b). And Martin Strong in Lehigh enthusiastically encouraged Daniel to 'face dear old Ireland once more where I will have a lump of a fine Connaught damsel to be your better half for the remainder of your days. I would marry myself for spite but tis bad to

commence in the rone end of the family' (St 3n). This tradition of the elder sibling marrying prior to younger siblings was echoed by John Armstrong: 'You did not mention the name of Kate's intending. Is it fair of him to pass over so many and choose the youngest but one as I believe she is' (Ar 1c).

News of home marriages occasionally shocked migrants and generated pensive analysis. As Hamilton soberly reflected on receiving news of his brothers' respective marriages in the 1860s (Il 12e):

When I heard that John was married it took me right flat aback. I thought he always said beggar the weman. However I like his pluck and for William I thought he was too much in love and too poetical ever to marry any one but the appear to be both happy and that is the only thing in this wicked world ... I dont think I ever knew Williams Missess and Robert how is he Getting on. He will be quite a man now. If he takes my advice he will court a hurricane but not be in [*erased: ?two*] too much hurry marreying. As for myself I dont think I will ever be able to make up my mind. Marriage is a very serious thought.

Hamilton's brother James echoed similar caution (Il 10e):

And you are got married too William. It will be Roberts time next. I thought I was all right while you were between me and matrymony. I am headstrong enough but to do what cannot be undone again I confess I am too much of the coward. I might try the old Scotch system and take one twelve months on trial and if she did not please have the liberty of annother choise and give her leave to be off. And John has married too who ever. Ah this the quiet John. But changes comes a how in all the world he put the question is beyond my poor conception. The M^{rs} only knows for I dont.

David McCullough was also informed of the respective marriages of his sisters after the event. David revealed that he was 'glad to hear that Isabella is married to Robert Magill. I always liked Bob. The have not got a large family only one Maggie called after Mother. Lizzie's husband Moore Fisher I dont think I know him. I dont remember any of that name near us' (Cu 5c).

These announcements of marriages, revealed after the event, indicate that correspondents rarely sought the advice of separated kinsfolk in this matter. There is evidence, however, of the collective involvement in marital decisions by those closer to

home, though correspondents remained vitally aware that family members could and did make their own decisions. When William Lysaght married in 1871, for instance, it was indeed ‘to a young woman without fortune. My Father knew it. Done his best to prevent me. Went so far as to make a will in your [?favour] leaving you all he had. I disregarded all and marr[ied] her. He cooled down in a little and asked myself and wife to come here to live with him just as we were going off to America’ (Ly 5b). Likewise, John Keane’s intended spouse generated opposition from family members in Waterford but criticism was muted for as Maurice Keane revealed, ‘He might take & marry her at once then in order to vex us’ (Ke 3e).

On occasion, separated kinsfolk were asked for their advice. Robert Hughes, for example, provided the requisite details of his soon-to-be son-in-law Michael O’Connell and then requested his son’s opinion (Hu 3e):

It is the wonder of the world how he selected the poor old military mans daughter without fortune & so many with hundereds striving to catch him. He is medium size dark and his name is O’Connell. I think he is a relation of the “liberators”. It is true Tommie as God made them he matched them. I don’t think you could get such a pair of T.T.S. [*?truly tuned souls*] in the world. He was greatly liked by the Gentry around here and always asked out to dine. He is coming to visit us at Easter and arrange matters & retire from the Army to his farm. He employs two constant men on the farm. I would like to have your views on this matter.

Subsequent letters in 1924 depicted Michael O’Connell’s character and his economic fortunes (Hu 4e, 5f). Philip Carroll clearly considered an approaching marriage in Ireland in 1925 as an economic union rather than a love match (Cl 20i):

Mother and myself had a drive out to Bertie’s, Auntie Tessie’s last night. Her eldest daughter Alys is getting married on the 17th in Dublin to a pub-keeper. I did not see her trousseau (no gents admitted) but Mother says it is splendid and she has got a lovely lot of valuable presents. She has £1000 fortune. Her husband is 44 and she is 24. What do you think for that difference, but such is the way they do things in Ireland. They say it is a love match. I “hae ma douts.” You dont believe it do you. I don’t. Anyway that they may live happy ever after is my wish.

There is evidence, however, that love could take precedence over financial considerations. When William Lysaght contemplated his choice of partner he informed his brother from Limerick, 'Women are easily to be got here brother. I could get marry with plenty of money if I wished but I must keep clear of marriage. Anything in that line would put me out of the world in a short time. Besides if I married at all the woman I'd choose has no money' (Ly 4c).

Whether marriage was undertaken for love or money, not all unions were harmonious. James McClure candidly contemplated his brother's marriage: 'He is a rol[ing] stone, but his wife has much to blame for what has happened to him. She made the poor fellow miserable, & he had not strength of Character to keep his own. They were a most unhappy pair' (Ce 5e). Women, though, were not always the harbinger of dissent. Philip Carroll reflected on the failed marriage of an acquaintance due to drink by announcing, 'The wonder to me is that his wife put up with him for so long' (Cl 20c). The comprehensive reports of marriages in Irish-New Zealand correspondence so far outlined stand in stark contrast with the 'veil of privacy and silence' that shrouded reports between Ireland and Australia.²¹

If 'Historians have scarcely begun to explore the emotional and sexual interaction of men and women in Irish society'²², the letters give some insight into intimate male-female relationships. From Canterbury in the mid-1860s, Hamilton McIlrath wished to know 'How you are carying on the War amongst the Girls and above all things keep clear of My perogitive' but confessed that the colony contained 'Better looking girls than some of the Dark Looking woman you see at Home' (Il 9a). Hamilton was relieved, however,

²¹ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 549.

²² David Fitzpatrick, 'Review Article: Women, Gender and the Writing of Irish History', in *Irish Historical Studies* vol. 27, no. 107, May 1991, p. 272.

that there was 'No woman in the house to trouble us' (II 8b). After a female allegedly left a candle burning at a ball which burned down a house in New Plymouth in 1859, John Armstrong hoped 'they will be more careful in future and if they must cause a sensation that it will be by kindling a fire of a less destructive nature' (Ar 1h).

The most revealing letters concerning male-female relationships, however, were the lengthy meditations of Philip Carroll from Tipperary in 1925. He teased his wife Nina with discussions of the attentions he had received from other females. The assistance provided to him during his voyage back to Ireland he discounted with the comment, 'She is over 40 is not good looking so it is quite safe. Oh lord ay! You understand dearest? She told me I reminded her forcibly of a brother of hers who died and it was on that account she took such an interest in me' (Cl 4i). Following a visit to Ballycahill, Philip confided that he had 'met an old "flame" of mine. Josie Smee. She told me she heard three years ago that I had died out in New Zealand and had said prayers for the repose of my soul. Imagine her surprise then when someone told her I was in Ballycahill. She had to come out to make sure it was right. She is still unmarried waiting until I am a widower. Oh lord ay!' (Cl 18g).

Despite such jests, Philip's letters divulge the amorous attachment between himself and Nina. His affection shines through in such quips as, 'The fact of Mr & Mrs Wilson being a honeymoon couple is quite interesting. Do they do much spooning? Do you ever feel jealous dearest? Wait on you and I will have a honeymoon next Xmas ... Yes Mother I do miss your good night kiss. Never mind we will soon make up for lost time' (Cl 9e). Possibly, Philip was hinting at intimate marital relations when remarking on the impending marriage of a family friend: 'I suppose Mag Prendergast is quite excited over her approaching marriage. You will have a good idea of how she must be feeling. If Mag were a different kind of a girl you could have a confidential chat with her and give her a lot



Fig 28 'You and I will have a honeymoon': Philip and Nina Carroll's wedding day, 16 December 1919 (Br. Philip Carroll).

of useful information' (Cl 18c). He also cheekily queried, 'How did Tom look after he arrived back from his honeymoon? Washed out I suppose' (Cl 13d). Presumably, Philip's more intimate reflections are due to the fact that he was corresponding with his wife. Though Edward Lysaght wrote to his wife during his return to Limerick in 1872, he was less forthcoming with such intimacies. He did, however, declare his 'Love for you as ever' (Ly 6d).

Marriage entailed the production of children and the letters contain many birth announcements though these were not always positive. Catherine Colgan, for instance, attempted to alleviate her daughter's disappointment at the predominance of daughters in the McMullan family: 'My Dear you need not think that he will be the only son amongst you for Aunt Haughey had 6 daughters & 7 sons' (Co 3g). Hamilton McIlrath, on the other hand, remarked, 'little Mary she ought to be much thought of being the first little girl of that line for some time' (Il 12e). Upon learning of an acquaintance's success with childbirth, Philip Carroll revealed, 'I expect Frank is feeling as proud as I felt last May twelve months' (Cl 18f). He commiserated, however, about the plight of another couple who were unable to have children: 'They so much want a kiddie. Such is life. Those who want them cannot have them and vice versa' (Cl 17e). William Lysaght claimed, prior to his marriage, that 'it is with regret I say that there is no chance of my lifting a few young Lysaghts so the family will have to continue through you' (Ly 2b). That the family name was important to correspondents is evident in two comments. Remarking on his cousin's murder, William Lysaght informed, 'He was the only one of our name ever taken so short' (Ly 2c). Martin Strong, on the other hand, expressed his grief 'to think that you who is the only living cousin of the name should be toiling for your bread amongst strangers' (St 3d).

Familial bonds were reaffirmed by traditional naming patterns with James McIlrath, for instance, advising that 'John is named for Father Jane for Mother and William for

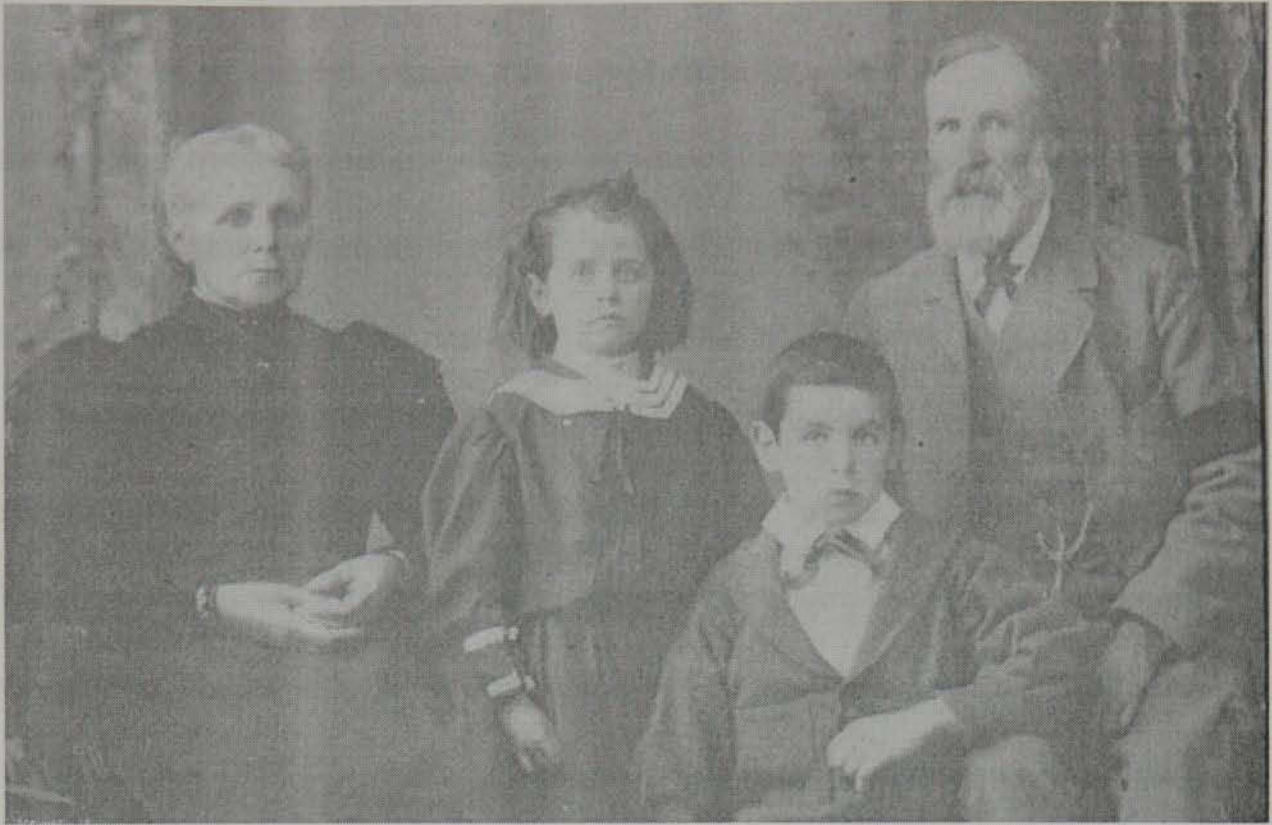


Fig 29 'We are all well and Getting on pretty well': Hamilton and Eliza McIlrath with two of their children (*Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 3).



Fig 30 'Greatly admired by everyone who sees them': The Carroll Family, circa 1924 (Br. Philip Carroll).

Agness Father' (Il 21e). Commenting on the extent of his family several years later James revealed 'so many you see requires one to look about for names' (Il 30b). Other commentators connected names with personalities. James O'Neill, in naming his daughter after her aunt, rued, 'We called her Theresa so if she takes after her aunt I suppose she will be a saucy customer' (Ne 1b).

Both Protestant and Catholic correspondents stressed the importance of education. Reflecting on his own schooling in Roscommon, John Armstrong admitted, 'I often think of the happy times when we had nothing else to think of than the best means of getting through school hours with the least possible good to ourselves. I succeeded admirably so much the worse' (Ar 2k). Catherine Colgan in Antrim was delighted to learn 'that the children are at school and the are learning so well' while William Lysaght instructed his brother 'Keep Willy to school. I must do something for him' (Co 5c; Ly 4d). James McClure, in assessing the progress of his nephews at school, concluded, 'George is clever, reads well, Geography, spelling, arithmetic &c. Gordy reads short stories, spells, tables &c. Arthur spells & reads in a sort of a way' (Ce 5i). Higher education also featured in the correspondence. From Christchurch, Bessie Macready, the daughter of a teacher, commented that 'young ladies go in quite as strongly for education as do the gentlemen. In fact I have met two young ladies here who have taken their degrees at the University' (Ma 3d).

Although colonial letters highlight the availability of educational facilities in the colony, Kate Keane had to contend with unsuitable facilities in London in 1921. Her concern centred on the absence of a nearby Catholic school and she considered moving for her children's education: 'I would not send the children to a county council board school. I think the teaching is no good the manners are dreadful but I will know with the sisters they will be taught everything good both physically & morally' (Ke 8c). Likewise,

Margaret Kilpatrick learned from her brother that 'M^r Rob' is living in Armagh to get his family better educated' and that Elizabeth Walker's daughter was sent away for her education: 'I expect Charlotte home from school in the course of five weeks. Her great progress in the many branches she had to study, has more than met our utmost expectations. She plays the piano most pleasingly, and exceeds her professor in drawing and painting' (Ki 9e, 4e).

In time, children became valuable additions to the household economy. As the ageing farmer's wife Catherine Colgan contemplated from Antrim, 'Maggie is a big girl of 10 years. She looks well. I am so glad she is able to help you with the work' (Co 7b). Fifteen-year-old Lizzie Gilmore also revealed to her cousins from Tauranga in 1903, 'I have just left school and I am helping at home in the shop with my sister. My sister Mary keeps all the books for father' (Ge 13c). Sophy Lang in Armagh also proudly told Margaret Kilpatrick that 'My 2 children is doing well. Andy is become very useful. He can drive the plough and harrow'. Her daughter, meanwhile, 'can do a great many things in the house for me' (Ki 7e).

Strong bonds developed between parents and children and both John Armstrong and Alexander McKelvey acquainted home readers with their responsibilities towards their children. John Armstrong deliberated in 1865, 'We often think how badly children would fare if nature had not implanted a pretty large amount of affection in the hearts of their parents towards them for it must be confessed that they are at times very troublesome and require a great deal of patience. Nature has not deviated from her course in the present case' (Ar 3c). How much greater were the tribulations of raising children in an environment where grandparents were generally absent?²³ Perhaps it is one explanation for

²³ Miles Fairburn has also indicated the dearth of elderly kinsfolk in New Zealand. See *The Ideal Society*, p. 166.

the amount of assistance provided by fathers such as Alexander McKelvey who in 1907 revealed, 'Baby Muriel is doing very well. She talks away at a great rate & orders us all about. She never gives me a minutes rest when I am at home except when she is asleep ... Of course I have to look after the two children on my ½ day off if Muriel wants to go to town' (Ky 2b). Fathers also cared for their children during times when their wives were sick. Mary Jane Hughes, for instance, on learning of her daughter-in-law's operation, indicated that her son Thomas must have found it difficult 'to manage the housekeeping and looking after children together with your other duties' (Hu 15a). Writing to New Zealand from Limerick in 1872, Edward Lysaght requested his wife to 'Give too [*two*] kisses to each of the children for me. Be very careful of them' (Ly 6b). Such extracts provide a contrasting depiction to the mother-dominated, sentimental family unit that commentators have claimed characterised the family between 1880 and 1920.²⁴

Loneliness, Home, and Return Migration

These extensive, enduring, expatriate networks, based on kin and ethnicity, call into question Fairburn's additional claim that, among other factors, 'the dearth of kinsfolk' led to loneliness.²⁵ As the Introduction revealed, expressions of loneliness have been a central concern for editors of migrant correspondence. Miller, O'Farrell, and Erickson all share the view that, in Erickson's words, 'loneliness was sometimes quite intense and the feeling of strangeness profound.' This homesickness 'was expressed in terms of a sense of loss of family and friends, familiar places and particular pleasures, rather than in terms of national patriotism.'²⁶ Expressions of loneliness and homesickness also figured in the letters of

²⁴ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country?*, p. 222.

²⁵ Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 195.

²⁶ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, pp. 64 and 69. Also see p. 256.

German migrants in America and less so in letters sent by the Dutch in America.²⁷ As for Irish migrants in America, Miller has claimed that ‘Acute homesickness pervaded the letters and journals of most post-Famine emigrants’.²⁸ The letters sent from New Zealand to Ireland, on the other hand, contain no expression of homesickness and only two migrant correspondents, both women, referred to their loneliness.

From Auckland in 1890, Agnes Lambert, missing her sisters, claimed, ‘I am very lonely. How I would like some of you out here with me’ (La 4a). The other declaration of loneliness emanated from Margaret Kilpatrick who, on the death of her husband in 1905, asked her brother in Armagh to ‘write again to your lonely sister’ (Ki 14n). Likewise, there is only one indirect hint of isolation. This emerged from Bessie Macready who claimed in 1881 that she was a ‘poor weary pilgrim alone’ and had experienced ‘many, very, very, weary days and often longed for the old home & friends’ (Ma 3a). James McIlrath did acknowledge that ‘we are never less alone than when alone’ and instantly declared, ‘I feel as happy as a king’ (Il 6f).

Just as most grief at departure emanated from non-migrants, so too did non-migrants more readily convey feelings of loneliness. Daniel Strong’s departure from Tipperary in 1883 caused his cousin John to predict that ‘we will have a lonely Christmas without you’ while the departure of an acquaintance of Maurice Keane’s from Waterford the same decade left him feeling ‘very lonely after her’ (St 2b; Ke 3b). When Philip Carroll’s sister returned to England from Tipperary, he conceded that ‘the house feels quite lonely since she left’ (Cl 11d). A visit to an old haunt also generated Philip’s remark that he felt ‘lonely passing it’ (Cl 13i). Contemplating his return to New Zealand, a

²⁷ Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, pp. 164, 166 (fn), 275, 478, 484, 493, 537, 555, 558; Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, pp. 230, 300.

²⁸ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 512.

disheartened Philip admitted that ‘now that the time for parting is coming close I am feeling very lonely’ (Cl 23b). Periods of non-communication could also generate admissions of loneliness. From London, Richard Flanagan confessed to his goldmining brother that ‘your long intervals of silence render us lonely’ (Fl 10a). These confessions of loneliness by male Catholic correspondents were echoed by their Protestant counterparts. In Armagh Margaret Kilpatrick’s sister-in-law divulged, ‘I am not so lonely’ but ‘if I feel lonely I got out for a run on the bicycle’ (Ki 15b, 15d). Another female acquaintance of Margaret Kilpatrick’s admitted to a ‘lonely separation from all my children’ (Ki 4g). Likewise, the absence of children in the Hughes household generated Robert Hughes’s disclosure that ‘We will feel our latter years lonesome’ (Hu 4d).

Death could also instigate revelations of loneliness that appeared in letters from Ireland. On the death of her mother in County Armagh, Mary Kilpatrick brooded, ‘We feel ve[r]y lonly since she was always with us and we are now alone’ (Ki 6b). Likewise, the death of Kate Keane’s father in Waterford provoked her reflection, ‘Mossie & I were very lonely indeed’ (Ke 4a). When Hamilton McIlrath learned of his aunt’s death in Killinchy, he regretted, ‘They will be very Lonely now’ (Il 5a). And following Robert Hughes’s death, his wife predicted a ‘lon[e]ly Xmas’ (Hu 14b).

Feelings of loneliness could generate expressions of nostalgia which were frequently conveyed by reflections about ‘home’. Fairburn has argued that use of the word ‘home’ by colonists ‘was a natural reaction to the dearth of associations - colonists remained emotionally tied to the Old World because their atomised society could not satisfy the human need for gregariousness.’²⁹ Likewise, Rollo Arnold has concluded that English rural villagers found that New Zealand had ‘unexpected lacks, limitations and

²⁹ Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 203.

disappointments; and inevitably also, there came nostalgia and longing for the scenes of childhood and youth, and for qualities of the old land whose value was only truly realised after their experience of their absence in the new ... England was referred to as the “Old Country” and as “Home”, and these expressions carried rich connotations of love and longing.³⁰ Yet Arnold provides little sustained evidence for these conclusions. Nor does he distinguish the various types of ‘home’ that David Fitzpatrick has charted in his study of Irish-Australian letters. Home, as Fitzpatrick observed, not only incorporated the wider term ‘Ireland’ but also encompassed the more immediate neighbourhood of upbringing.³¹ Irish-New Zealand correspondence likewise contains many uses of the word ‘home’ (see Table 8).

Table 8 Occurrences of the Word ‘Home’ in Irish-New Zealand and Irish-Australian Correspondence

	No of uses (NZ)	% N Z	% Australia
Total	315		
Written by men	241	77	63
Written by women	74	23	37
Sent from Destination	141	45	81
Referring to home in Ireland	123	39	66
Referring to home in Destination	18	6	16
Sent from Ireland	174	55	19
Referring to home in Ireland	156	49	17
Referring to home in Destination	18	6	2

Source: Australian figures are taken from Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, Table 6, p. 622.

In stark contrast with Irish-Australian correspondence in which ‘home’ appeared more often in letters sent from Australia (81 per cent), only 45 per cent of the uses of the word ‘home’ appeared in letters sent from New Zealand. The higher percentage of the word’s usage in letters from Ireland probably reflects not only the significant attempts of

³⁰ Arnold, *Farthest Promised Land*, p. 354.

³¹ See especially Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 620-7.

Irish based correspondents to lure migrants home but the dominance of home as a dwelling in letters from Ireland (see Table 9).

Only occasionally was home applied to a country. John Keane commented from Waterford on his sisters leaving 'ye'r home in Old Ireland' while others mentioned going 'home to Ireland' (Ke 2b, 2e). James McIlrath summarised more than thirty years after his emigration, 'It is refreshing to get news from (Home). I still call it Home yet although I have lived longer here than in old Ireland but I believe if we were to live here for a Century we would still call the place of our Birth Home' (Il 33a). Home for Philip Carroll, on the other hand, was New Zealand. During his return visit to Nenagh, he anticipated his return to 'my real home in New Zealand' (Cl 23b). Philip's acknowledgment of New Zealand as home was largely attributable to the presence there of his wife and children. Home could also mean Heaven as discussed in Chapter 8.

Home could sometimes be a neighbourhood in which acquaintances were mentioned or a household encompassing a range of inhabitants, but more often home referred to a physical dwelling. Kate Keane commented on her mother's grave located 'just opposite the home where she was born' (Ke 5d). John Strong encouraged his cousin to return to their 'humble home' while Margaret Kilpatrick's sister-in-law claimed to have 'a good home and very comfortable' (St 1b; Ki 15b). For Margaret's recently widowed brother, the 'same happy home as of yore is not here for me now' (Ki 5c). The activities of sleep, conversation, and reading were often carried out within the home. As for the characteristics of home, a range of economic, physical, and social functions applied.

By far the most frequent application of the word 'home' referred to return. Many correspondents in Ireland utilised the word in attempts to lure migrants back to Ireland. John McIlrath, for instance, hoped 'the time is not far distant when rolling Seas shall no more divide us and when you shall again breath the air of your Native Home's' (Il 4f).

William Gilmer urged his brother to ‘come home for a run’ while Martin Strong told his cousin Daniel that ‘How you would never say I will go home soon. You should throw New Zealand there and come to Ireland’ (Gr 2a; St 3h). Catherine Colgan, a farmer’s wife at Tonduff, County Antrim, was particularly concerned that her son Johnny should return. As she told her daughter Rose Gamble in 1897, ‘I would be so proud to see him in his own home, as working in that country’ (Co 3b). Two years later, upon learning of her son’s penchant for alcohol, Catherine requested Rose to ‘advise him to come home as I believe he would be far better in his own home’ (Co 5b). It is unknown if Johnny McMullan did return to Antrim.

Table 9 Uses of the Word ‘Home’ in Irish-New Zealand Correspondence

	Total	In Letters from			
		Men	Women	Ireland	New Zealand
Return	82	59	23	50	32
As Ireland	11	6	5	5	6
As New Zealand	13	13	-	12	1
Characteristics	50	31	19	11	39
Dwelling	47	39	8	34	13
Neighbourhood	7	5	2	5	2
Household	13	8	5	11	2
Address	37	33	4	20	17
Unspecified Place	55	47	8	25	30

Various examples exist in the letters of reverse migration being contemplated and being enacted and Table 10 sets out the numerical frequency of those returns. As Eric Richards has claimed, ‘The idea of returning home, either for or against, was rarely far from the mind of the emigrant, from the moment of expatriation to the time of death’.³²

³² Eric Richards, ‘Return Migration and Migrant Strategies in Colonial Australia’, in David Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Home or Away? Immigrants in Colonial Australia* (Canberra, 1992), p. 64.

Kamphoefner has also indicated of German migrants in America that ‘Some immigrants gave up and returned home, and many more toyed with the idea.’³³

Table 10 Number of Passages Citing Return Migration

	Male	Female	Unspecified
Possibility of return by an acquaintance	1		2
Reports of return by an acquaintance	18		1
Requests, hope, and desire for migrant’s return	18	1	
Reports of possibility, promises, and desire by writer to return	18	3	
Reports of return from another destination	5	3	

A letter sent from Canterbury by James McIlrath indicates that his initial emigration was undertaken in the belief that he would eventually return. ‘Twelve years is now past and gone since last we parted’, he nostalgically reminisced in 1872. ‘I thought to have seen you all before this but time here seems to roll on much faster than at Home’ (II 17b). In 1868 Hamilton McIlrath revealed his intentions to remain in the colony for three years and ‘if i dont alter my mind before then I intend if I am well and keep clear of the weman to go home and see how you are all getting on for I think I might stop Here a very long time before any of you would come to see me’ (II 14a). These extracts suggest that when the McIlraths emigrated in 1860, they did not consider their relocation permanent. Yet, although James wrote of coming home and mentioned others who did return, by 1873 he was wary of what reverse migration would entail: ‘I would be far more afraid of rueing coming Home to Ireland than I was of leaving which I never once done. I doubt a good many I wont say all that goes Home would wish to be back again but if I thought I could do any thing well at Home I might come before many years. I know the time[*erased: s*] is past I said I would and meant it too but what did I then know’ (II 18f).

³³ Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. vii.

Agnes Lambert's letter from Auckland in 1877 indicates her wish to return to Antrim as well as the desire expressed by her children in visiting Ireland: 'The would like to see some of there cousins. The are alyes toaking [*always talking*] about them and wishing the coud go home to se them ... I hope we will se you all son as I am think of coaming home soun as I can and bringin the three Boys with me ... One of my suns has been away for to [*two*] years and he said he woud go home to se all you befor he woud come home again' (La 4b, 4d). Thirty-five years later, and a year before her death, Agnes confessed, 'I would love to go back to Ireland now but of course it is impossible. I was leaving for Ireland some years ago - had my passage booked and luggage aboard but at the last minute had my things taken off and came ashore but now I wish I had gone after all' (La 6d). The letters from these Irish migrants certainly contradict Fender's assumption that migrant correspondents perceived migration as permanent and did not long to return.³⁴

Letters from migrants also contain responses to requests from home that they return. While a friend of Oliver McSparron returned to Ireland, Oliver himself consistently refused to return to Umrycam in County Londonderry. In 1865, four years after his arrival in New Zealand, Oliver advised that he intended to be home 'but I did not realise my expectations' (Sp 2b). Responding to later attempts to lure him home, Oliver informed his father, 'I cannot bring my mind to willingly as I am in a country that pleases me' (Sp 3b). The thought of returning home lingered but the resultant restlessness was enough to prevent the move: 'I had a great notion of going home this some time back but I could not bring my mind to it as I think I could not stop if I went home' (Sp 4c). Though Oliver McSparron decided to remain in the colony, his father continued his efforts to induce Oliver home, even going so far as to advertise in a colonial paper in 1880 for him to return

³⁴ Stephen Fender, *Sea Changes: British Emigration and American Literature* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 152.

(Sp 6a). Two years later any lingering thoughts of reuniting were completely eliminated when Oliver demanded payment of money owed to him by his father (Sp 7a). Fellow goldmining prospector David McCullough also rebuffed pleas to return. As time went by, David used his continued involvement in digging for gold, as part of a co-operative, as an excuse to remain in the colony when his parents requested his return to Ireland: 'Dear Father & Mother you are both asking me to come home. It would be very a[w]kward at the present time to get away. We are still holding on the cascade claim. We have got a good bit of money sunk in it now but I will try and be home in the inside of Twelve Months' (Cu 6f).

Disillusionment with New Zealand provoked other migrants to contemplate returning. David Bell, for instance, advised his kin at Kells, County Antrim, in 1886 that 'you need not be surprised if you see me home in about this time next year' (Be 1e). Although he did depart the colony, he eventually settled in America. James McIlrath considered that contemplation of return migration only occurred with downturns in colonial life: 'We are all here like so many on the Cockle Beds. You seldom ever saw any one leaving satisfied before the tide came and swept all before it so it is here. Few if any cares for leaving while the oppertunity offers of doing well but let the tide turn and I will not say all but a great many [*erased: turn*] will turn theirr thoughts for Home' (Il 17d). Another migrant informed James 'that he was going Home by the same ship. Poor fellow he will know much about the contry I should think' (Il 10d). In fact, only one migrant in this study, Michael Flanagan, returned to Ireland permanently.

Several correspondents, however, made return visits. These included Ann McCleland, Hamilton Gilmer, Edward Lysaght, and Philip Carroll. Following a stint in Chile, Ann McCleland settled in Moneymore with her family in 1847 but by 1859 she was back in New Zealand. Hamilton Gilmer ventured back to Monaghan to claim a wife.

Edward Lysaght, meanwhile, returned to Cappamore, County Limerick, seeking financial assistance from his brother and father. His visit was brief but he managed to obtain some funds before returning to Auckland. Edward's parents and brother also voyaged to the colony only to return to Ireland after a few months. Philip Carroll's return voyage was presumably sparked by his ill health. His account of his return voyage is intriguing for what it reveals of other migrants returning home: 'There are 89 third class passengers aboard. Quite a lot of them are homies who [*erased: o*] have been only twelve months in New Zealand and are returning home disgusted with the country' (Cl 3e). His fellow cabin companions conveyed their motives. A fellow Irishman was 'going home on business' to Dublin to obtain compensation for his business which was 'blown to atoms during the troubles there'. A Scotsman was 'going back to have a look at Ould Scotland before he dies' while a Londoner was on his third visit home (Cl 3b). Occasionally, the letters mention the return of migrants from other destinations. From Dromkeen in County Limerick Hanora Dwyer revealed that 'Johnny OBrien came down from new orleans ... He came in great splendour' (Dw 1b).

Return migrants played an important role in the migration process. As James McIlrath remarked about the return of his brother-in-law Robert Matthews to Ireland in 1876, 'He will be able to tell you all about New Zealand ... Hoping you all may enjoy a good chat with one so nearly connected and qualified to give you a good idea of colonial life' (Il 25f). Certainly, returned migrants were an important source for relaying immediate information about the colony to non-migrants. Letters, however, were a more substantial source of information about New Zealand. The following chapter considers the impressions of New Zealand contained in the correspondence and contrasts these with representations, current and past, of Ireland.

This chapter has revealed that in contrast with their compatriots bound for America, Irish migrants voyaging to New Zealand rarely referred to the emotional impact of their departure. Their friends and family, on the other hand, frequently penned searing accounts of the grief generated by emigration. The letters indicate that Protestants shared the preoccupation displayed by their Catholic counterparts with family and neighbourhood affairs. Catholic writers, however, were more likely to discuss the deep divisions within these networks. Monetary matters also preoccupied Catholics to a greater extent than their Protestant counterparts.

The chapter has also established the extensive presence of kin and neighbourhood ties in New Zealand, thereby presenting an additional challenge to Fairburn's claim that New Zealand was characterised by weak kin and community ties. Despite the extent of kin migration to New Zealand, the letters rarely encouraged or discouraged additional migration, though reports were more likely to be encouraging. Migrants preferred, however, to provide intending migrants with information and leave them to make their own conscious, calculated decisions in their selection of a destination.

Unlike the correspondence between Ireland and Australia, however, Irish-New Zealand letters reveal that kin and neighbourhood networks in Ireland were deeply divided. This dissent was rarely replicated in New Zealand where kin and neighbourhood networks prevented 'atomisation'. The absence of migrant expressions of loneliness and homesickness therefore fail to substantiate Fairburn's 'atomisation' thesis and Miller's exile 'motif'. Irish-based correspondents writing to New Zealand, on the other hand, often felt isolated and this may have been a major force in stimulating their constant requests for migrants to return.

Chapter 7:

‘Something like the old country’:

Comparing Ireland and New Zealand

On his return to Tipperary in 1925, Philip Carroll specified two striking contrasts that he observed between Ireland and New Zealand (CI 5i):

As compared with New Zealand there are two very big changes I notice here. First is the accent. I thought I had a bit of an Irish accent but no they tell me I talk just like a Yank and have lost all trace of the brogue. Oh lord ay! Then there is the light. Daylight Saving is in force here now and we have broad daylight until half past ten o'clock. It is indeed very strange to me to be sitting down at half past ten o'clock in broad daylight writing this letter.

Editors of migrant correspondence, on the other hand, have tended to focus on depictions of the place of destination. As such, Kerby Miller assessed in his study of the Irish in America that ‘urban-industrial America was startlingly different from rural Ireland’ and claimed that migrants were dissatisfied.¹ Charlotte Erickson has also indicated that differences rather than similarities between origin and destination preoccupied English and Scottish correspondents in America.² Kamphoefner, on the other hand, noted that German correspondents in America presented the country in positive and negative terms.³ Though Patrick O’Farrell did not comprehensively examine the background of the correspondents who appeared in Letters from Irish Australia he ventured that emigration ‘bred unsettlement, dissatisfaction and confusion’ in Ireland.⁴ Only David Fitzpatrick, however, has extensively examined the representations of both origin and destination. His edition of Irish-Australian correspondence suggests that Irish civility, comfort, and security

¹ Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, p. 516.

² Erickson, Invisible Immigrants, p. 65.

³ Kamphoefner, News from the Land of Freedom, p. 31.

⁴ O’Farrell, Letters from Irish Australia, p. 42.

contrasted with Australian coarseness, wealth, and diverse employment but that there was little evidence of grievance.⁵

This chapter examines the representations of Ireland and New Zealand that appeared in the correspondence exchanged between the two countries. Were similarities or differences stressed? Were depictions negative or positive? These questions are examined by focussing on various categories that have often been cited as motives for migration including employment, climate, accommodation, and the cost of living. How were such features presented in personal letters? In examining these topics, this chapter contributes to studies of everyday life in both Ireland and New Zealand.

Generalisations

In editions of Dutch and German correspondence from America, general contrasts between origin and destination frequently appeared and in both editions impressions of America were more favourable than place of origin. In Irish-Australian correspondence, 'Generalisations about home conditions were seldom ventured by correspondents in Ireland'.⁶ Correspondents writing from Ireland to New Zealand were more likely to offer generalisations but these were mainly negative and were largely confined to the twentieth-century. Fr. Richard Flanagan, and his nephew Richard, however, referred to the country as 'a wilderness' and an 'unfortunate country' (FI 1a, 3e). Two correspondents offered their opinions in the 1880s including George Reid in Armagh who observed in 1880 that 'Landlords Agents and Bailfiss [*Bailiffs*] are getting very bad care in the South and West of Ireland'. Six years later William Gilmer moaned from Monaghan that 'Ireland is a very miserable place' (Ki 9f; Gr 2b). Robert Hughes provided several generalisations, all

⁵ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, pp. 560, 608.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 536.

negative throughout the 1920s. In March 1924: 'This country is far from settled yet' and 'This Country is greatly gone to the bad'; April 1924: 'this Country is not settled yet nor I believe never will'; July 1924: 'don't think for a moment that old Ireland is finally settled yet'; February 1927: 'the Country is not in a happy mood' (Hu 2b, 2d, 3d, 5b, 10e). Philip Carroll also referred to Ireland as a 'distressful country' in 1925 (Cl 211). Robert also provided generalised accounts of the Irish weather, as did Kate Keane and Philip Carroll. In 1927 Robert told his son of an 'awful storm' that 'swept over all this country' as well as 'flue is raging in this Country' (Hu 10d, 10e). Kate Keane expressed her dismay from London that there had been 'No rain for months & worse in Ireland' while Philip Carroll in 1925 considered that 'The climate of Ireland generally is damp' (Ke 11g; Cl 17h).

Correspondents in New Zealand also conveyed negative generalisations about Ireland. In commenting that 'Ireland is still Ireland the only change being the Railway' (Il 10d), James McIlrath's informant was alluding to trouble permeating the country. Another letter in 1862 contained James's prediction that 'I suppose Ireland will soon be abandoned altogether. I Hear it is a disturbed state up the contry' (Il 6h). A decade later he wished 'to hear Ireland being a little more quiet as I Fancy it is a dangerous place betimes' (Il 17d). Forty-one years later Alexander McKelvey also believed that 'Ireland will be a good place to live away from' (Ky 1g).

Generalisations about New Zealand were also occasionally negative. During a particularly bad period of recession, David Bell in Otago claimed, 'taking everything in particular the country is very dull'. He further stated, 'people at home may eat less mutton and pies, and earn less wages than the do here but if the only thought it they have a lot more comfort than is to be found in this country unless you have plenty of money' (Be 1c, 1e). Philip Carroll also commented on migrants who had 'been only twelve months in

New Zealand and are returning home disgusted with the country' (Cl 3e). Occasionally, critics of colonial society received criticism themselves. James McIlrath, for example, discussed 'a young man of the name of Frew. He told me that he was going Home by the same ship. Poor fellow he will know much about the contry I should think'. In his next letter, obviously having been informed of Frew's impressions of the colony, James remarked, 'Let M^r Frew say what he may. There is worse places than New Zealand but it wants both willing heart and hands of which I rather doubt he had. But scant allowance faint Heart never win' (Il 10d, 13d). This emphasis on character was reiterated by Alice Gilmore in 1876 who told her family, 'As concerns the country I can say very little as yet but it is here as it is every where. Some has a good word & some a bad one but I remark that those that has a bad has many weak points in them selfeve' (Ge 5h).

James McIlrath's defensive position in relation to the colony sparked his own favourable impressions. According to James McIlrath, 'New Zealand is as near Heaven as any Contry' (Il 6g). He considered that 'Only for the look of the Contry when we go to a cattle show or any other gathering one almost forgets but that he is in Ireland' (Il 17c). His brother Hamilton also considered that 'New Zealand is a great place for trying to get more' and 'I dont think their is any better country than N. Zealand' (Il 28e, 32e). Also based in Canterbury, Bessie Macready considered that 'very fine wheat it is that is grown in New Zealand' (Ma 2b). Commenting on a Canterbury farm she claimed, 'This would not be considered a bad farm in Ireland' (Ma 2b). Further south in Otago, Oliver McSparron told recipients in County Londonderry, 'I am in a country that pleases me' while David McCullough told Down readers, 'I like this country its customs and its people' (Sp 3b; Cu 4b). From Manawatu in 1905 Catherine Sullivan claimed 'this is a good country for working men' (Su 1g). Margaret Kilpatrick also alleged from Auckland in 1862 'We like the country' (Ki 1a). Fifteen years later Agnes Lambert also stated from Auckland that

‘This is a good country’ though she had ‘many ups and downs’ (La 1c). Unlike generalisations about Ireland which were mainly negative, generalisations about New Zealand were more likely to be positive.

Propaganda

Positive generalisations about New Zealand echoed propaganda tracts that proclaimed the country as a haven, Arcadia, or Utopia. Three comments contained in the letters in this study may perhaps be viewed as evidence of the role of propaganda. When Bessie Macready arrived in the colony in 1878, she announced, ‘I have travelled over about fifteen thousand miles of water and at last got to the desired haven’ (Ma 1a). Although reports from Bessie’s colonial based aunts prior to her migration may have established this idea of the colony as haven in Bessie’s mind, her terminology does suggest the influence of propaganda. Likewise, Margaret Kilpatrick’s confirmation from Auckland in 1862 that her mother ‘dreamed a very straight dream about this place the green hill, the great mountain, the sea below, and the Valley beyond it’ (Ki 1e), may be indicative of the influence of propaganda. Such speculation could also be levelled at David Bell’s assessment that ‘It is not what it is represented to the people at home’ (Be 1e). On the other hand, David’s opinion may have been an indictment of comments made by his brothers who had emigrated to the colony prior to David.

If Irish correspondents in New Zealand had been influenced by propaganda tracts, they made no reference to this in their letters.⁷ In contrast with propaganda, the private letter offered a more intimate, accurate portrayal of the colony though letters could also be biased according to the correspondent’s motives. Nevertheless, letters from migrants

⁷ Likewise, there was infrequent mention to guidebooks by British migrants in America. See Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 35.

enabled intending migrants to weigh up the depictions received. They could also contradict or confirm rumours such as New Zealand being ‘a wicked place and little or no clergey’ (Cd 1i). Indeed this rumour probably stimulated Elizabeth McCleland, after receiving reassurance of her daughter’s safe arrival in Wellington, to urge her daughter Ann to ‘Rite as soon *as son* as posable and let us know all you can concerning that place if it be srubery or Mountain’ (Cd 2g). Elizabeth’s letter reveals that this request was not solely generated out of curiosity but was, rather, an appeal for information to assess the possible migration of other family members. And letters from migrants, as opposed to newspaper accounts or immigration manuals, were considered a more reliable source of information. Other correspondents in Ireland who sought information about the colony included John Keane in Waterford who asked his sister in 1886, ‘what sort of a country is New Zealand for my trade’ and John McIlrath who was ‘very anxious to hear how you are all settled’ (Ke 2d; Il 4a). Hugh Rea, on the other hand, wrote from New Zealand in 1905 seeking information about contemporary conditions in Ireland: ‘When you write you might mention what rent is charged for the laboureres cottage in Ireland and Haw much land is in with the cottage and what wages is paid in Ireland’ (Re 1b). Seemingly, Hugh had no need to be provided with depictions of the Irish countryside. Migrant correspondents, on the other hand, attempted to depict their immediate surroundings.

The Natural Environment

When Bessie Macready caught her breath after her stormy voyage to Canterbury in 1878, she observed ‘beds of magnificent flowers roses fuchsias geraniums &c with the sea a little beyond and mountains rising up on either side. The prospect is beautiful’ (Ma 1a). Proximity to the coastline provided another settler in Canterbury, James McIlrath, with an opportunity to wistfully muse, ‘I should like a visit from you all some Evening to have a

walk by the lake side and then still farther on to the sea beach and hear the roar and see the waves of the South pacivic [*Pacific*] Ocean' (Il 7c).

For some correspondents, descriptions of the colonial environment incorporated the wildlife. From Southland, Gordon McClure confessed to his sisters in Belfast, 'I can hardly describe this country to you but it is beautifully wooded with streams of large rivers running in all directions, snowy mountains in the distance with small ranges close at hand, plenty of Parrotts, pigeons & ducks of the most beautiful colours. Wild pigs abound close at hand' (Ce 4d). Some migrants gained a sneak preview of the country's sea and wildlife prior to settlement. During his quarantine in 1876 on Motuihe Island near Auckland, John Gilmore noticed that 'The Island abounded Rabbits pigs & game also plenty of oysters there to all ends' (Ge 6d). These impressions reinforced the image of New Zealand as a land of natural abundance.⁸

Similarities between the home and colonial environment only rarely struck some settlers. John Gilmore, for example, noticed the similarities between Tauranga and Ballyhalbert on the Ards Peninsula. Tauranga, he reported, 'is a small village of about 1000 Inhabitants and is situated on a [*word illegible*] of an eminence above the sea. The principal street is along the shore as B. halbert [*Ballyhalbert*] - which is called the strand' (Ge 6e).

Most correspondents in Ireland rarely provided commentary about their physical surroundings, presumably because migrants were already acquainted with the home environment. Philip Carroll did, however, tell his New Zealand born wife of his sightseeing 'along by the Banks of the Shannon and the scenery is something splendid' (Cl 9i). When such descriptions of the Irish countryside did enter the correspondence, it was

⁸ See Fairburn, *The Ideal Society* for similar 'insider' accounts.

often due to changes taking place in Ireland. As a recent arrival to Canterbury in 1866 informed James McIlrath, 'Ireland is still Ireland the only change being the Railway' (II 10d). More substantial changes were evident during the following century. As Robert Hughes admitted from Sligo in 1923, 'I don't know your Tramcars or Ferry boats but we have they two systems in some parts of Ireland. Id know the Tram system in Dublin, Belfast & D[e]rry. The Ferry System is not so numerous. There is one at Achill S[o]und in Mayo' (Hu 1g).

Alterations occurred much more rapidly in the colony but the occupational pursuits of some migrants sheltered them from such developments. David McCullough, who mined along the West Coast, told his parents, 'We went into the Mackley country prospecting ... There is neither roads nor horse tracks there' (Cu 6b). Margaret Kilpatrick, on the other hand, portrayed Auckland in 1905 as a 'lovely city with its electric trams, & its hot springs & its lovely scenery & mount Eden, which is close to me 500 feet above the sea. A lovely view from the top' (Ki 14l).

The most striking accounts of development appear in the extensive McIlrath sequence. When James first settled in the district in the early 1860s he remarked, 'There is not a House in view but one solitary Shepherds Hut and that is on the other side of the river.' By the next decade he eagerly noted that 'the Railway is formed now right up to Southbridge and the Talegraph is finished' (II 6f, 21a). James's brother Hamilton also contemplated the changes taking place in his vicinity. Sixteen years after his arrival he reminisced, 'When I settled here first it was as much as I could see a house in any direction but now every inch of goverment land is bought up and the railroad runing past and coal mines and batterys within about a mile of us' (II 28e). It was a depiction Hamilton reiterated four years later (II 30c). In 1873 James gratifyingly confessed, 'I feel a certin amount of pride to watch the progress of this once waste spot' (II 18e). James also outlined

developments at Southbridge town where, apart from a blacksmith, there was 'A carpenters shop, a Bakery, a saddler shop, a shoemakers Three large stores and a fourth in course of erection, one Hotel, one Boarding House, Milliners shop, besides a Nursery, and coaching establishment, and a large Town Hall for public Meetings and amusements. There is a Ball there this Night and I suppose by this time 10 oclock they are Heel and Toeing pretty freely' (Il 18d).

Recreation and Conversation

Charlotte Erickson has indicated that English and Scottish migrants in the United States expressed a 'longing for leisure'.⁹ Miles Fairburn, on the other hand, has argued that there was 'little leisure' in nineteenth-century New Zealand.¹⁰ The accounts contained in Irish-New Zealand correspondence, however, reveal a diverse range of leisure activities undertaken in both countries. Leisure pursuits in Ireland, however, rarely featured in the correspondence until the twentieth century.

From Southland in the mid-1860s Gordon McClure commented on 'a small dance here the other night the opening of the newspaper office, so we are not so bad after all' (Ce 4i). James McIlrath admitted to 'Reading in Bed with Lamp Light' while Robert Hughes also mentioned his reading activities (Il 34b; Hu 1b, 2a). John Armstrong, more than any other migrant, bemoaned the fact that his leisure hours were limited: 'My time for reading & study of any kind is rather limited. A settlers life is not favorable for the pursuit of knowledge. I often regret that I did not give my mind a little more up to it when it was unoccupied with other matters ... I do not neglect to read the Bible daily. It is a habit

⁹ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Fairburn, *The Ideal Society*, p. 192.

which from being so accustomed to both at home and with Uncle that I would feel uncomfortable were I to break it off' (Ar 1j).

Musical interests occupied some correspondents. In the early twentieth century Margaret Kilpatrick proudly claimed that her 'children were musical & their company was sought after, by every body' as 'Willie taught & led a choir of 300 voices before he left here. Mary sings & plays on the organ, so does Robert' (Ki 13c, 13h). Meanwhile, Hamilton McIlrath guessed that his brother's children in Ireland 'must have got their musical talent from their mother for I dont think either of us could ever sing any' (Il 32c).

Some leisure activities centred around tourism with both Alexander McKelvey and Thomas Hughes visiting Rotorua, a district with 'geysers, hot pools, boiling mud holes, & steaming mountains' (Ky 3c). James McIlrath's wife visited the 'Museum, Domain and gardens' at Christchurch while Hamilton mentioned an exhibition in that city in 1906, 'the largest ever held in any of the colonies' (Il 33c, 37d). Philip Carroll, during his return to Ireland in 1925, recounted several excursions he undertook as a tourist. He was offered the use of motor cars and a pony and trap, took a trip down the Shannon on a motor boat, and attended the Nenagh Show (Cl 5e, 5f, 6k, 8b, 11d, 18g). He refused to attend a wedding or dance as 'you have no business attending those affairs unless you can put away your share of the good things going' (Cl 13e). The following year, booming tourism in Sligo provoked Robert Hughes to reflect, 'The Country is Crowded with tourists & no doubt there is great sightseeing here with fashionable motors &c passing to & fro from early morning to night' (Hu 9g). His daughter's pursuit of entertainment revolved around the cinema (Hu 4d).

Conversation, however, was perhaps the most frequent recreational activity pursued by migrants and non-migrants. Goldminer David McCullough revealed that he and an acquaintance from home 'often have a talk together' (Cu 5d). James McIlrath in

Canterbury divulged that he and his companions 'can enjoy a good chat and the Discourse is generally about scenes at Home' (Il 6i). From Armagh George Reid mentioned 'sober conversation' (Ki 8b). Philip Carroll's letters from Tipperary during his visit there contained the most extensive discussion of conversations including: 'a few chats', 'chatting', 'Koreros'¹¹, and a 'chat in the evening' (Cl 8b, 11d, 11f, 12b). Following one particularly long conversational session, Philip admitted, 'I had to go to bed to rest my weary throat' (Cl 12d). Robert Hughes in Sligo also revealed that 'all would sit around the big Kitchen fire & each one besting the other in good yarns' (Hu 7d).

Sporting past-times occasionally featured in accounts from both Ireland and New Zealand. Robert Hughes announced from Sligo in 1924 that 'We had a Horse Race here on St Patricks day - great sport & good racing' while James McIlrath attended a horseracing event in Canterbury (Hu 3g; Il 10b). Some migrants discussed their horse-riding endeavours. 'As for myself it is not uncommon for me and some others to have 20 miles of a ride after dinner of Sunday', John Gilmore reported in 1877. He also mentioned, 'There is plenty of game here to shoot. The licence is only £2' (Ge 7g). In Southland Gordon McClure indicated that 'Sporting is not much gone after except for the Pot' (Ce 4d). From Canterbury, Hamilton McIlrath reported on pheasant shooting while in Ireland, weather permitting, fish was often the prey (Il 28a; Ly 1c; Hu 7c, 7d). Robert Hughes, a keen fisherman, remarked from Sligo, 'I have been most unsuccessful in fishing up to this but many a one I left with a sore jaw' (Hu 5e). Robert also mentioned the shooting tours of acquaintances (Hu 6e, 7d). For Robert Hughes, 'Sport first and work after has been my lot' (Hu 7c).

¹¹ 'Korero' means talk or discuss in the Maori language.

Employment

For most correspondents, however, work took precedence over leisure. As such, employment opportunities, conditions, wages, and hours featured prominently in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. Indeed the importance of employment issues is reflected in the extensive nature of this section which provides support for the importance of the economic motive in deciding to migrate. What do the letters reveal about the occupations undertaken in Ireland and how significant was the contrast with colonial employment? How did wages and work conditions compare?

Female Employment

Though little information is revealed in the letters about the types of work females engaged in, the correspondence from Armagh to Margaret Kilpatrick is particularly enlightening with respect to female occupations. Sophy Lang animatedly assured Margaret Kilpatrick that Margaret's sister-in-law 'has an agreeable manner and a first rate house-keeper. She is very industrious and attends to her man and her domestic affairs properly' (Ki 7c). Sarah Reid herself told Margaret several years later that 'I do a little farming but does not labour much so that I have a very nice time' (Ki 15b). Mary Jane Hughes in Sligo was kept busy by 'exterminating the weeds from the Flowers' and caring for a 'mumerable family of fowls' while the ageing Catherine Colgan reassured from Antrim that 'I am able to do the work of the house as yet' (Hu 1c; Co 8g).

A range of occupations were also pursued beyond the confines of the house. Catherine Colgan informed her daughter Rose Gamble that 'Mary is in a shirt factory learning to sew' while Agnes Lambert's sister Isabella McNeice worked in a Belfast mill (Co 1f; La 2b). Joseph Reid informed his sister Margaret Kilpatrick that an acquaintance's 'former Master raised £20 and sent hir to Dublen to learn the midwifery business. She is

now coming at it. Hir head sentre is Belfast' (Ki 9d). Another acquaintance of Joseph's 'is Mistress in the Balleer school. She is wroth £40 per annum' (Ki 9e). William Gilmer's wife was also qualified as a teacher but was unable to obtain a position. As William admitted from Monaghan in 1886, 'If I thought my wife could get a situation as teacher, I w^d very soon leave here' (Gr 2b). In 1916 Margaret Kilpatrick learned that her brother Thomas Reid's daughter, 'teaches Art in several of the schools in Armagh and has a lot of pupils as well' (Ki 15c). She appears to have fulfilled Margaret's wish that 'I hope she gets to the top in her profession' (Ki 14d). Sarah Reid's daughter, meanwhile, 'is in business in Armagh in a Book Shop' (Ki 15a). Philip Carroll's cousin Tess advised him in 1920 that she was 'taking on the nursing business ... and like it very well'. Nevertheless, Philip commiserated that her 'hours are very long and I am sure the half day per week is thoroughly appreciated' (Cl 1e). Philip's sister Nance was also a nurse.

The letters provide less information about female employment in New Zealand. Only Catherine Sullivan, Agnes Lambert, and Bessie Macready referred to their working environment. Agnes Lambert established a shop but struggled to maintain herself and her family. By 1890 she discouragingly declared from Auckland that 'Bisonus is very Bad and I have lost a Deal of *noney*' (La 4a). Bessie Macready also took 'the entire charge of a shop in Lyttelton' but sombrely claimed, 'many a weary time I spent there, business dull, long hours, and innumerable little trials' (Ma 3c). She then took charge of a villa in Christchurch and expressed with satisfaction, 'I am very comfortable just now. I have got a nice girl for a servant and am attended to like a lady' (Ma 3e). Bessie later returned to Governor's Bay and resumed her dressmaking trade. Meanwhile, Catherine Sullivan in Manawatu was 'only milking four cows ... Nellie milks 83 cows besides all the dry cattle ... Bridge milks 35 cows. Her husband has about 800 acres of land in use' (Su 1e, 1c).

Details of female employment in New Zealand can also be discerned in several letters composed by male correspondents. Andrew Gilmore indicated from Tauranga in 1881 that ‘There is no out door work for Girls about Here. Girls from 10 year to 17 Gits from 4^s to 10^s per week & found at House work’ (Ge 11e). James McIlrath, however, sought a female worker from Killinchy in 1875 who was ‘Willing to milk &c’. In an attempt to lure an intending migrant, James promised, ‘There is no rough work here like at home ... I would give from Twenty to £25 per year’ (Il 24e). Presumably Maggie Auld, who was recommended to James, performed her tasks more efficiently than Abigail Gilmer. As Abigail’s cousin Samuel bitterly complained from Wellington in 1886, ‘I put her in the laundry. Of course I seen at once it was no good that her intention was to do as little as possible ... Well I kept her for twelve months and paid her regular every month but no thanks nor no improvement in the girl only dying with laziness’ (Gr 1d).

The letters reveal that in both Ireland and New Zealand, housekeeping, farm duties, and shopkeeping were common trades among women. Teaching, however, appeared more frequently in letters sent from Ireland. As the letters indicate, most comments relating to women’s work were favourable in both countries.

Male Employment

Unlike female labour, male employment patterns featured prominently in the correspondence. Several Irish male migrants in New Zealand pursued a variety of occupations throughout their lifetime. James and Hamilton McIlrath, for instance, sought their fortune on the gold fields, were a station manager and merchant respectively, and eventually purchased land to farm. What comparisons can be made between male employment in Ireland and New Zealand with regard to conditions and wages?

General Accounts

When Margaret Kilpatrick arrived in Auckland in 1863 she confidently contrasted colonial and Irish work habits: 'We can live well here. I can tell you they people at home are onely sleeping. The master is not greater than his servant here. All work, and hard work' (Ki 1f). A year later, James O'Neill's summary of work opportunities in Auckland was less favourable. As a wheelwright, James complained that 'there is not a ship that comes but brings 1 or 2 wheelers or body makers.' The competition made it a 'bad place for some of them.' Despite the drawbacks, James remained optimistic, believing that 'as soon as this war is settled they will all be going out to the country and it will be easier for me to get a place to do some buisness for myself' (Ne 1l, 1j). That same decade in Canterbury, Hamilton McIlrath revealed that while his brother James found employment on a station, fellow migrant William James Alexander 'has got nothing to do for his £70 per anum but milk the cows and drink the milk. I am with A whole sale wine and spirit merchant. I drive out grog and beer and sometimes I plough. I like my work first rate' (II 5c).

David McCullough, a 24-year-old native of County Down, arrived in Dunedin in 1875 and initially toiled as a labourer before gaining employment with the Albion Brewing and Malting Company. David enthusiastically informed his family six months after his arrival, 'I have never regretted coming out as I have been in constant employment since I came' (Cu 4b). His acquaintances also succeeded in gaining employment. William Hobson 'got work the same day that he came ashore' (Cu 4d). Even the disenchanted David Bell wrote home to Antrim from Otago in 1886 noting, 'I have been working pretty constant since I came here. In fact I get as much work as I want' (Be 1b).

In Christchurch, County Down migrant William Cardwell obtained a position as an accountant with a firm of agricultural suppliers. The firm, however, underwent a period of

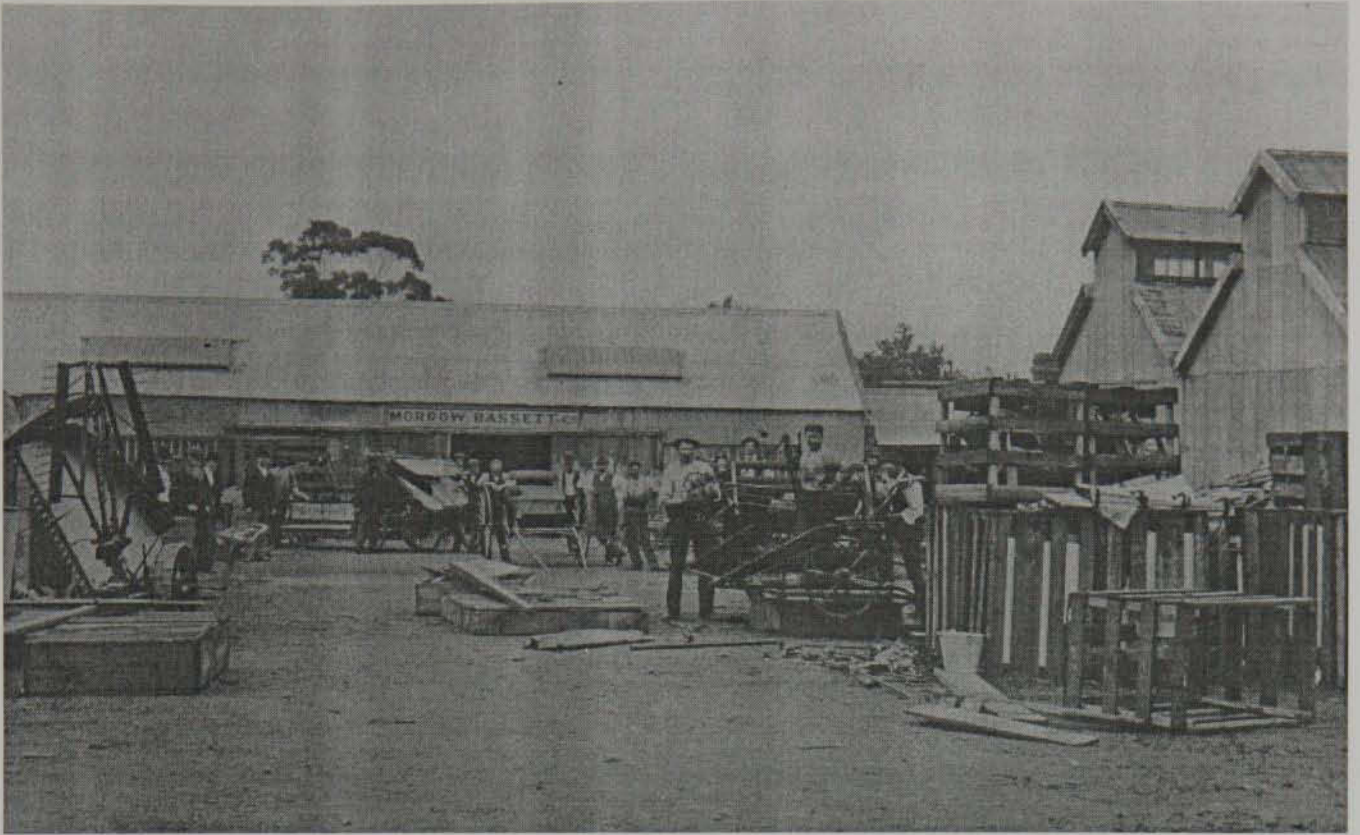


Fig 31 'As fortunate in business as the old firm': Morrow, Bassett, and Co., Christchurch (Canterbury Museum).



Fig 32 'I am so glad that your husband is getting on well': Charles Gamble's blacksmith business, East Taieri, Otago (Richard Herbert).

debt as ‘farmers who got Reapers and Binders from us have had to go bankrupt’ (Ca 1d). When his old boss departed from the business William considered that ‘if Tom is as good a boss as his two uncles have been I will not have any room to complain’ (Ca 2c). William’s comment is the only reference to employers in the letters.

Goldminer Oliver McSparron also reported favourably on his employment in Otago. After a period ‘roving about the country’, during which he carted goods to the diggings, Oliver hoped that the ‘next time I write I will be telling you about turning up the Gold by the Hundredweight or perhaps by the ton but whether little or much I will be satisfied with it as all is not gold that glitters’ (Sp 4b, 4e). By the close of the nineteenth century David McCullough was goldmining on the West Coast and he described his mining exploits in subsequent letters home: ‘Time goes very quick when you are out prospecting shifting camp so often and carrying Tucker. I have had about Eight months of it this time but at any rate we are back again not a bit better off and very little the worse. There is any amount of men in Newzealand and Australia doing the same. The will go into any Country or through any hardship after Gold’ (Cu 6d).

Just as colonial goldmining presented a significant contrast with occupational pursuits in Ireland, so too did colonial differences among more typical trades warrant mention. From Tauranga in 1877, John Gilmore stated that ‘Smithing as everything else is done in a different way that is the easiest and soonst, make no nails no bolts unless large bolts no nuts, work all our iron’ (Ge 7e). He further observed, ‘there’s no coming with 2 old shoes to make one new one. We never make out of anything but new iron. Have a heap of old shoes enough to ballast a schooner’ (Ge 7f).

Correspondents also contrasted the nature of employment in New Zealand with work patterns in Ireland during the twentieth-century. For instance, Hugh Rea told his brother in County Down, ‘You Have Know knowledg of How Some people are Situated

Here. The labouring class in porticklar you would think Strange in Ireland to See working men traveling on the roads in ½ dozens carr[y]ing thire Blankats and a little can in thire Hand to make thire tea together with a little Bread in a bag Slung on thire Shoulder. If you were Here you could see this every day in the year' (Re 1c).

Medical doctor Alexander McKelvey also commented on contrasts between work in Ireland and New Zealand: 'I am getting on well here now. The Inspector complimented me on my work last time he was here. This does not happen so often here as at home, Heads of Depts. not being so considerate towards their subordinates as in Ireland. They spend too much time looking after their own interests but I always keep quiet and say nothing' (Ky 1e). McKelvey also ventured some general contrasts between the two countries in respect of his occupation: 'We have more trouble of this sort here than at home as all the Criminal Lunatics are treated in the ordinary Asylums & not in Criminal Asylums as they are in England & Ireland' (Ky 1i).

Despite opportunities for employment in New Zealand, not every migrant could obtain work and not every migrant sought work. David Bell commented on both: 'There is a good many idle people knocking about here, and can get nothing to do whatever, & a good many that wants nothing to do If the could get their tucker. A sort of larry good for nothing fellows and a nuisance to the country' (Be 1b). Such idleness also existed in Ireland. William Cardwell in 1879 learned 'that trade is very dull at home and that there are thousands going about idle' (Ca 1e). Seven years later Maurice Keane discussed his brother's unemployment in Waterford. He told his sister Mary that 'there is no work for him here' (Ke 1c). In September 1931 Mary Jane Hughes reported that her son-in-law Michael O'Connell 'was nearly two months out of work during the summer' while Harriette O'Connell revealed in 1937 that Michael 'was a long time out of work' (Hu 17b, 20b).

Some correspondents, such as the ageing Catherine Colgan in Antrim, mentioned the trades of Ulster relatives: 'John is learning to be a carpenter, Willie is working with painters' (Co 1f). In Belfast Bernard Quinn was studying Marine engineering. His uncle William, however, advised him, 'If you are a first class man you make good money at it but if you can get a good Job on Land you would be better of' (Qu 4a). The letters also indicate that employment opportunities for males in Ireland diversified through time. The last decade of the nineteenth century, for instance, saw Martin Strong reporting to his cousin Daniel that 'I went for an examination in the Customs and took 27th place out of over 1,000 candidates' (St 3f). Martin's brother John meanwhile set up as a publican as did relatives of James McIlrath and Philip Carroll (St 6a; Il 15a; Cl 14d).

In 1924 retired constabulary officer Robert Hughes had 'two men & horses ploughing for Potatoes' while his soon to be son-in-law 'employs two constant men on the farm' (Hu 3c, 3f). Robert's work involved 'Turf cutting & saving' and at 71 years of age he complained of 'backache and all the other aches attributed to Turf Cutting' (Hu 4c, 5e). Robert's son Thomas, meanwhile, was in the New Zealand Navy prompting Robert to enthuse, 'Your sea journeying is wonderful. It brings gladness to our hearts to see you are leading such a useful life' (Hu 3a). Upon learning of his son's retirement from the Navy, Robert commented, 'Now I see fully what a wonderful stretch of Sealife you have had though I outdone you by a few years in Service. I put in 30 years & Seven months & I struggled along as best I could with a family of nine' (Hu 5d). Robert Hughes's son-in-law Michael O'Connell was in the Irish Army and Robert Hughes observed that his 'pay is good & that he is a man looked up to much by the authorities' (Hu 5f).

Hours and Wages

Robert Hughes and Martin and John Strong were the only correspondents in Ireland to refer to male wages. From Lehigh in 1895 Martin informed his cousin Daniel, 'when examined by the doctor he rejected me for weak lungs. It was a loss to me. The salary commences at £95 and rises to £650 per year' (St 3f). Martin also revealed that a cousin in England 'is earning over £5 a week' (St 3g). John Strong, meanwhile, revealed in 1905 that acquaintances were 'earning big money at Sin[n]jott's in Dublin' (St 6f). From Sligo in 1924 Robert Hughes claimed to be 'struggling along keeping on my old feet and carrying on the work at a rapid rate doing all myself. You could not employ labour wages are so high' (Hu 5b). He was delighted to learn, though, that his son Thomas 'will have a fine pension' and when Thomas obtained his new position Robert hoped that 'it carries a good salary with it' (Hu 6d, 8e).

Generally, the comments concerning wages and hours in New Zealand were favourable. Both James O'Neill and Margaret Kilpatrick reported from Auckland in the early 1860s. According to O'Neill, coachsmiths could command at least £3 a week for eight hours work a day (Ne 11). Margaret's husband, David Kilpatrick, a blacksmith, worked 'from 7- to 6. If he goes back after 6 he is paid over time' (Ki 1f).

From Otago in 1880, Oliver McSparron noted that 'General farm servants get from 10^s to 15^s and 20^s per week and scarcely any work to be got at that rate. The government are employing men on the railways at 21^s per week' (Sp 6b). Six years later, David Bell reported positively on the progress of his brothers in Otago: 'Bob has got as good a job as in the country nearely, Ploughing all the year round 8 hours each day & plenty to eat & Drink And he has got a good wage ... Billy is as content as you Please. Nothing to trouble him. He is making plenty of money' (Be 1f).

Catherine Sullivan also positively endorsed employment conditions for males in the colony from Manawatu in 1905: 'this is a good country for working men as some men have from ten to twelve shillings per day. It is not like at home. The worst men here won't come to work for less than 7/- per day; and only work from 8 to 5 pm' (Su 1g). That same year from Otago, Hugh Rea commented favourably on wages but this was counteracted by the impermanence of labour: 'The wages in this country is good but in a great many cases you cannot get Steady Employment So that when you calculate your earnings for the year it comes to be a verry Small avrage' (Re 1b). As with English and Scottish correspondents in America, then, letters from the Irish in New Zealand expressed dissatisfaction with the irregularity of employment.¹²

From Auckland in 1906, William Quinn could reassure his sister that her son was 'in constent work and getting good wages' (Qu 5d). William Quinn's brother Patrick, on the other hand, was progressing less easily. As Patrick Quinn informed his brother in Belfast in 1903: 'I am at the Gum Digging and I dont avarage 2 shillings a week. It is no good. If there is one man making Wagges there is 20 barrley making tucker and onley for the pension I wood bee verry badley of' (Qu 1b). The letters do not reveal any hazards associated with work that appears in letters from America.¹³

Medical doctor Alexander McKelvey also discussed his wages. In 1907 he was delighted to be able to report an increase of £25 in his salary though this announcement was tempered by his remark that 'There is a steady rise in the prices of everything here so that it is hard to manage. Meat has risen 3^d a pound in my time. So that the increase of £25 is not so much as it appears' (Ky 2d).

¹² Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 250.

¹³ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 505.

These accounts of male employment reveal that employment in New Zealand contrasted in many respects with occupations in Ireland particularly with regard to mining and transient labourers. Wages also featured more prominently in letters from New Zealand. Accounts from both countries, though occasionally negative according to specific times and places, were generally positive. How did accounts from their farming counterparts compare?

Farming

Many migrants to New Zealand emerged from farming backgrounds but only the McIlraths, the McClures, and John Armstrong became farmers in the colony. Nevertheless, the farming background of many migrants meant that they often commented on farming practices in New Zealand. Likewise, farmers in Ireland often conveyed information about their farming activities.

William Lysaght's work as a farmhand, for instance, generated his boast from Limerick to his migrant brother that 'I had some hard work this past Harvest. I can mow pretty well now. I often cut an acre last season' (Ly 2e). In the last decade of the century, Rose Gamble learned that her step-father Charles Colgan was 'busy ploughing. Indeed he has to work hard on account of him having no help of his own' (Co 1b). As with the Lysaghts, the Colgans commented frequently on their crops. The Lysaghts, however, also had livestock: 'We have 12 cows in Pallasbeg. We will live here this year when we will then move to the Glebe where we will have 20 cows'(Ly 1h). The loss of his livestock in 1870 caused Edward Lysaght financial difficulty which he cited as the reason for being unable to assist his emigrant son: 'I have met pretty heavy losses this season. Cow and pigs [*erased: f*] worth £50 died on me' (Ly 3b). In 1886, Monaghan farmer William Gilmer also rued his loss of '3 pigs with disease & a good horse took founder' and

concluded 'My luck in farming has not been very good as yet' (Gr 2f). He therefore resolved to 'try something else than farming in Ireland, working & spending money for nothing' (Gr 2d).

Colonial farming conditions could also be portrayed negatively. As James O'Neill, based at Auckland, complained, 'There is not much tillage about here. The land is bad' (Ne 1j). Most accounts of farming conditions in New Zealand, though, tended to be favourable. The McIlrath letters, for instance, contain many positive comparisons between farming in Ireland and the colony. Initial reports focussed on the novelty of encountering contrasting conditions and learning new skills: 'You people at home would think it strange to begin on land where there was not a fence whatever nor one sod turned since it was land and this is land of the richest quality,' James McIlrath remarked in 1863 (Il 7c). Bessie Macready also observed from Canterbury in 1881 that there was 'Not much land lost by fences here' (Ma 2d).

Developing land in the colony was costly in terms of money and time. Traditional skills were either adapted or abandoned in the new environment, while new techniques were frequently adopted. As Hamilton McIlrath mentioned in 1874, 'we do not go to the trouble of draining and manuring just ploughs and harrows and rolls and leaves it there untill fit for cutting. No weeding [*erased: of*] or thistle pulling here. Thrashes the grain in the paddocks and burns the straw. Makes no manure except what the horses makes. In the winter never houses cattle' (Il 20b). Two years later from Tauranga, John Gilmore also told County Down readers that 'There is no trouble about wreek or dung no such thing spoken of. Plough and sow is all' (Ge 6f).

Despite new methods of production in New Zealand, James warmly reminisced about practices in Ireland. In 1891 he noted, 'We have had one of the Driest summers here this one that I remember. It puts me in mind of hearing the old people talk of the year of

short corn. It is short enough here this year. We have just finished stacking. Johnie can manage the Reaper and Binder very well. It is nice to see the sheafs come off Bound, but still I think the old harvest with the Hook looked merry' (II 33g).

Advances in mechanisation continued throughout the late nineteenth century and by 1906 Hamilton revealed the colony's utilisation of machinery (II 37e):

people here have far more up to date implements to work the land than at home. We have from a one furrow to a four furrow plough, disc harrows and cultivator grain & manure drill and two reapers and binders and one man works from four to six horses in a team but they dont work near so long hours here as at home only eight hours a day and a half holiday a week. We never house the cattle here so there is no trouble with manure.

Comparisons between New Zealand and Ireland also appear in Catherine Sullivan's letter from Manawatu in 1905. She told her brother-in-law: 'They don't churn the cream out here like we did at home. They take it to the factory.' The flax also differed: 'Dear Tom the flax here is not like the flax at home. One blade would tie the strongest horse. It is about 6ft long more or less' (Su 1c, 1h). Catherine also mentioned her cattle as did the McIlraths, James McClure, and Bessie Macready. Sheep also featured. In contrast with Ireland, it was the volume of livestock that prompted comment. James McIlrath reported on '1200 cattle and 12000 sheep and about 100 Horses not to mention the wild pigs' (II 6e). During her period of quarantine Alice Gilmore noted 1000 sheep on the island while in Canterbury Bessie Macready also commented that 'Farmers keep them in thousands' (Ge 5c; Ma 2f).

When David Bell, a native from near Kells in Antrim, wrote home in 1886 from Duntroon in Otago, he assessed that if the land in the district 'was Broken up in farms from 200 up to 500 acres It would form one of the best places in the world for a farmer to speculate upon, for it is splendid land almost all the farming land having limestone bottom' (Be 1c). Despite his positive portrayal of the condition of the land, David Bell observed

that farmers did not have it easy: 'At the present time a working man in a good situation is better off than any of the small farmers are.' David furthermore castigated farmers for being 'pretty flash livers ... not worth a shilling' due to their mortgaged land and assets (Be 1d). During the same decade, Oliver McSparron also informed sombrely from Otago that 'There is nothing but farmers selling out and insolvencies on all sides' (Sp 6b).

In Canterbury, Hamilton McIlrath underwent trials during the 1880s but optimistically concluded, 'I dont think their is any better country than N. Zealand. A few years ago people here were doing too well and speculated too much on Land and other ways and got haeily in debt and now the reaction has set in they feel as woeful as a drunken man when he is Getting sober again' (Il 32e).

Colonial farming, then, also contrasted significantly with practices in Ireland, most notably with regard to an absence of fences, natural manure, and machinery. Unlike the depressing accounts of farming in Ireland, New Zealand accounts were largely positive.

Land

Irish-New Zealand correspondents also commented frequently on the extent of land holdings, land tenure, and the value of land, all of which contrasted with accounts from Ireland. Irish correspondents in New Zealand also shared with their Australian counterparts discussion of the scale of land.¹⁴ From Canterbury in 1881, Bessie Macready informed her cousin, 'The gentleman I am with possesses land up country & in one paddock he has 600 acres' (Ma 2d). Five years later from Otago, David Bell told his farming brother in Antrim that 'All the good available land in this district is taken up in big blocks of from 2 & 3 thousand acres up to as much as one hundred thousand acres' (Be 1c).

¹⁴ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 576.

In Canterbury in 1862, James McIlrath noted, 'In this run there is thirty thousand acres' (Il 6e). Later letters in the McIlrath series reported on their acquisition of land. Hamilton bought 100 acres and another 50 acres in 1879 (Il 14a, 29b). In Manawatu Catherine Sullivan's son-in-law 'has about 800 acres of land in use' (Su 1c). The only correspondent in Ireland to report on the extent of landholding was William Lysaght who in 1866 told his brother, 'we have taken 42 acres of Mr Atkinsons land about a week ago' (Ly 1c).

The Lysaghts also commented on tenure patterns. William Lysaght observed that 'James Cunningham has got the leases' while Edward also was also reminded of the money borrowed to obtain the farm (Ly 1c, 2h, 3b). Edmund Lysaght also gruffly told his son Edward, 'As for dividing this farm tis not be thought of' (Ly 3b). Correspondents in New Zealand also discussed the manner in which land was held. Commenting on the Katikati settlers, John Gilmore informed Ards Peninsula readers that 'I think will cost about 30s per acre half the money to be paid down, the remainder in 4 years, the Government to pay all passage and the tenant to pay for the land' (Ge 7d). As for his brother Andrew, John Gilmore told his parents, 'Andy has a good house & the ground that it sits on for 21 years at very little rent' (Ge 7b). In Canterbury in 1862 James McIlrath revealed that 'The run Holders has the land from goverment for about one penny per acre and some less. The more stock the less rent but any person can choose a piece of that land where he likes and buy it from goverment at 2£ per acre which is the price of all government land title Crown grant' (Il 6f). James furthermore noted, 'We can Buy good land for 2£ an acre free forever flat and clear and we can let it on a purchasing clause. Many comes here with Family and is not able to buy land for themselves. The rent it at a low rent of about 3 [word illegible] an acre with a purchasing clause. That is they pay the rent for 5 years at which [erased: period] period it is theirs for 5£ an acre' (Il 6d).

The unpredictability of land prices also featured in letters from New Zealand. From Southland, James McClure told his sisters in 1865 that 'One friend refused to sell some land 2 years ago at £4 per acre & now offers it at 25/- shillings & can not get it' (Ce 5b). Forty years later in Otago, Hugh Rea had his 'property in the market for Sale but as fare as came I cant Sell at the price I want for it' (Re 1a). When buying out his brother's share of their joint land, James McIlrath gave Hamilton £350, '£7-10^s per Acre for his share of the 100 Acres' (Il 15b). James later told home readers that 'I was offered One thousand £1000 pounds or ten pounds per Acre' for that land (Il 18b). As time progressed, James reported that 'Land property is one third higher than [*erased: wh*] when last I wrote. I would get fifteen pounds £15 per Acre now quick' (Il 21b). Town sections 'fetched up to £30 *Thirty pounds* per half Acre free forever' (Il 21b).

The cost of land purchases and rents also featured in the letters sent from Ireland. William Lysaght informed his brother Edward that an acquaintance 'is paying 55 shillings per acre for it while our rent is only £1.1.4 per acre which leaves us a profit rent of £1.13.8 per acre' (Ly 1c). Limerick native Jeremiah Spelman told his daughter in 1846, 'I sold this place for £80' while a friend of Margaret Kilpatrick's in Armagh had their 'whole concern bought at £1400' (Dw 1i; Ki 7g). The McClure brothers expected to obtain £1200 for their land in Ireland in 1860 while the Strongs informed their cousin Daniel more than thirty years later that they had purchased £500 worth of land in Tipperary (Ce 2b; St 3e).

Land in New Zealand, then, was distinguished by the extent of land holdings, the relative cheapness of land, and freedom from taxes. Nevertheless, the value of colonial land remained unpredictable.

Food, Crops, and Prices

Apart from their preoccupation with land values, farmers were also obsessed with the prices of their crops, which were frequently precarious. In 1867 Hamilton McIlrath soberly reflected, ‘Markets never was as low in Canterbury as this present year. Wheat is from two to three shillings per bushel and very little demand for it even at that price. Oats is much the same and nearly unsaleable. We have any amount of both but we [*erased: till*] shall let the rats eat it before we sell it for that price just yet’ (Il 12b). In the mid-1870s reports were more favourable as James McIlrath joyously specified: ‘Times has never been better since we came here than the have been since last I wrote. Cattle is 75 per cent higher than they were two years ago. Land property is one third higher than [*erased: wh*] when last I wrote’ (Il 21b). Despite the boom, prices did not match those of Ireland. As Hamilton lamented, ‘If we got the same prices for our grain and stock here as you [*get*] at Home we could live like [*the*] sons of an irish King’ (Il 20b). Inevitably, impressions of New Zealand varied according to the time and place the migrant was writing from. The McIlraths, like many, were subject to fluctuations in prices and yields as Hamilton’s letter home in 1886, during a time of depression in the colony, indicated: ‘There is a great cry of hard times here as elsewhere. It is pretty hard to make much money at present but still I can hold my own pretty comfortable. Sheep that sold last year for 18^s/ are fetching at present about eight or nine shillings’ (Il 32e).

The price of crops in Ireland rarely featured in the correspondence though Hanora Dwyer commented gravely from Limerick in 1846 that potatoes fetched ‘over a pound a Barrill’ (Dw 1g). Despite the continued reliance on the potato, only two correspondents from Ireland mentioned the Famine. From Dromkeen in County Limerick in 1846, Hanora Dwyer dejectedly informed her son that ‘There is a great failure in the Potatoes here in general through the whole Kingdom. There was never a finer crop grew and before the

digging they got spotted and after piting rotted away to nearly no seed at all for the next season' (Dw 1g). Almost eighty years later, Robert Hughes referred to the interventions of a vicar on Achill Island: 'The Rector in old times when there was great distress & famin got them a ship load of seed Potatoes to plant their ground. Well the people called them "Protestants" after the Parson, so the carry that name still & are good for Eating' (Hu 1h). In a later letter, Robert Hughes's wife animatedly exclaimed, 'Fancy you digging new potatoes at xmas. It seems so strange to the people in this country' (Hu 18d). Other crops, besides potatoes, appeared in letters from Ireland. David McCullough in Dunedin was 'glad to hear that you have so good crops of corn and so fine an apperance of Turnips' (Cu 4e).

When Philip Carroll returned to Tipperary in 1925 he was treated to 'Lashings of milk eggs, milk butter cream and other good wholesome food' (Cl 12c). Less healthily, he indulged in cigarettes which undoubtedly incurred his wife's disapproval: 'As for "coffin nails". I am still using the little dears and although they only cost 6d per packet of ten, three packets generally last me a couple of days. Doctors differ, patients die. Dr Powell when I asked his advice about smoking said six or seven cigarettes a day would not do me any harm and that he would prefer to see me smoking cigarettes to a pipe' (Cl 18e). It was inevitably the harmful effects of smoking which led to David Kilpatrick's effort to quit: 'He smoked for 60 years & it was a battle I can tell you' (Ki 13d).

Several decades earlier, Margaret Kilpatrick observed from Auckland that 'Every thing is a little dearer here but then we cant complain of that' (Ki 1f). She set out a catalogue of food and prices that encompassed tea, coffee, sugar, bread, flour, beef, butter, and eggs. A year later, in 1863, James O'Neill's list was similar but also included potatoes and milk (Ne 1i). In 1877 Agnes Lambert cautioned that Auckland 'is not much of a place unless you have plenty of money' (La d1). Thirteen years later the situation remained

ominous: ‘Pototes is ten shillins for [*erased*: half] a hundred and flour is ten shilins for a fifty pounds Beg and those is thing we use a Deal of. Suyyer [*sugar*] sixpence a pound’ (La 4c). Bessie Macready, meanwhile, enthusiastically reported on the quality and cost of food from Canterbury in 1881: ‘Mutton we are now buying at 2d per lb for fore quartis and in the summer @ 1½ pr lb splendid. We have got good & cheap butchers meat good flour our baker’s bread is equal if not better than the best home bread & as cheap 3^d for 2lb loaf. Butter very nice & cheaper than home’ (Ma 2f). The ready availability of food also meant that William Alexander, a friend of the McIlrath brothers, ‘told an old Lady at Tea one evening when She asked him if He would have Butter or Cheese he simply said both please’ (Il 13e).

Mobile migrants, on the other hand, frequently transported their food as David McCullough revealed: ‘You have to carry all you eat on our backs.’ Goldminers such as David McCullough also had to depend upon capturing wildlife for food: ‘There are plenty of birds pigeons, Kaka and ducks and also the weka or Wood-hen. It cannot fly. The walk or run along the ground. The dogs can easily catch them. The come in very handy when one is short of meat’ (Cu 6c).

Some settlers, such as Patrick Quinn, harvested their own products: ‘I have Caddags [*cabbages*] and Pumpkings and Potatoes growing in the Garden’ (Qu 3d). Occasionally, gardening was a hazardous operation. Margaret Kilpatrick, for example, explained how she ‘broke my arm when digging in the garden & fell against the fense’ (Ki 13i). During his visit to Tipperary, Philip Carroll hoped to return to Auckland to find his garden ‘in full bloom with vegetables and flowers’ (Cl 9b). In Ireland he spent time ‘strolling around the fields and garden’ (Cl 13i). Indeed, most reports of gardening emerged from Ireland. A correspondent in Armagh reported on Margaret Kilpatrick’s mother, appreciatively observing that ‘Not even her flowers are forgotten’ (Ki 4c). The

same acquaintance sought from Margaret 'a few flower seeds. They would be appreciated in Baleer' (Ki 4f). Robert Hughes in Sligo emerges as the most enthusiastic gardener. As he boasted to his son Thomas, 'I have a most beautiful garden [*word illegible*] of flowers & all kinds of vegetables & Potatoes. There is a nice frontage to the house neatly kept & all flowers' (Hu 4c). In a later letter, Robert proudly pronounced, 'My garden is a picture to look at. It is one blaze of Roses Oranges Lillies & thousands of other varieties' (Hu 11b).

Housing

Robert Hughes also supplied an extensive description of his property: 'After searching the whole country by Easkey Dromore-West &c and fail[e]d in securing a place suitable or otherwise I succeeded in getting this house & garden from John Devaney. You know the house. It is on the Dromore West Road just opposite the house I left. It is a large two storied house altogether too large for our family. There is a large kitchen Parlour Hall and large room off the Kitchen also three beautiful rooms overhead also good outhouse for Fowl &c. The g[a]rden is fair size with flower Plot in front and three large trees. I have it all planted with Potatoes & different varieties of vegetables. I am under very heavy rent over three times what I paid for our last nice place' (Hu 3b). Despite allegedly excessive tenancy costs, Robert claimed that 'Your mother & I would feel it a big strange in a mean house & low people around us' (Hu 5g). The high rental rate inevitably had some reward: 'We have a house & accomodation fit for any man so we can entertain properly' (Hu 4d). Likewise, Sarah Reid claimed from Armagh in 1916, 'I have the house nicely rennovated and have got a back door a nice stone in the kitchen and it very nicely furnished. It is a good home and very comfortable. That is the reason I do not like to leave it. I wish you could come to see me. I would make you welcome' (Ki 15b). Nine years later Philip

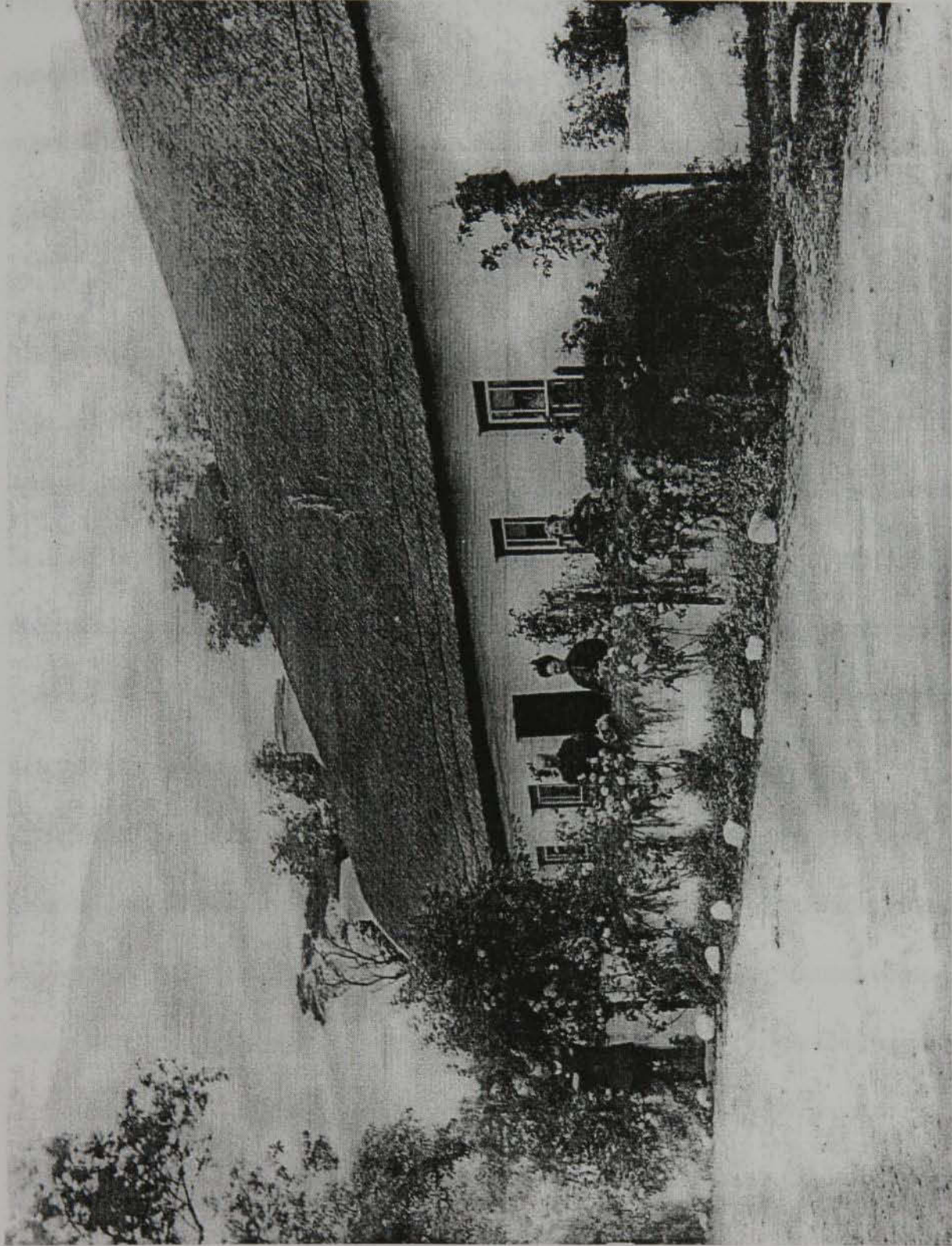


Fig 33 'You shall again breathe the air of your Native Home's': The McIlrath home, Balloo, County Down (Jenny Langford).

Carroll reported on the purchase of a house by his cousin for '£700 cash and is going to spend a couple of hundred in furnishing it' (Cl 24c).

These positive descriptions from Ireland of housing were confined to the twentieth century. Comments on accommodation in New Zealand, however, spanned both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Several correspondents begrudged the high housing costs although Robert Hughes in Sligo concluded of his son's house in Auckland in 1924, 'you have something for your money there' (Hu 5d). The expense of accommodation in Auckland also prevailed more than sixty years earlier when James O'Neill noted, 'House rent is awful dear. If the place in Brunswick S¹ was here they would be at least £4.000, a year got out of it' (Ne 1h). During the same decade in Auckland, Margaret Kilpatrick informed her brother that she paid 5s 6d a week for lodgings 'in town to he got a cottage fitted for me' (Ki 1c). In later years, Margaret and her husband David lived 'rent free' in their son's 'comfortable house' (Ki 13a). When David McCullough first arrived in Dunedin from Moneyreagh in 1875 he reassured his parents that 'I am at present boarding in a priprate house and feel very comfortable for which I pay 18/ per week' (Cu 4b). From Canterbury five years later, Bessie Macready complained, 'house rent very dear. A small 4 roomed domicile will be 10/- or 12/- per week' (Ma 2f). Philip Carroll also complained in 1921 about the cost and scarcity of accommodation in Auckland: 'Houses to rent are as scarce here as honest peelers are in Ireland, with the result that people looking for somewhere to eat and sleep have to take whatever is offering'. After several temporary lodgings, Philip told his cousin, 'We have now a furnished house of four rooms and a kitchen for which we are paying 30/- per week. The rent appears high but when you consider we were paying 25/- per week for one furnished room and use of conveniences it is reasonable enough' (Cl 1b).

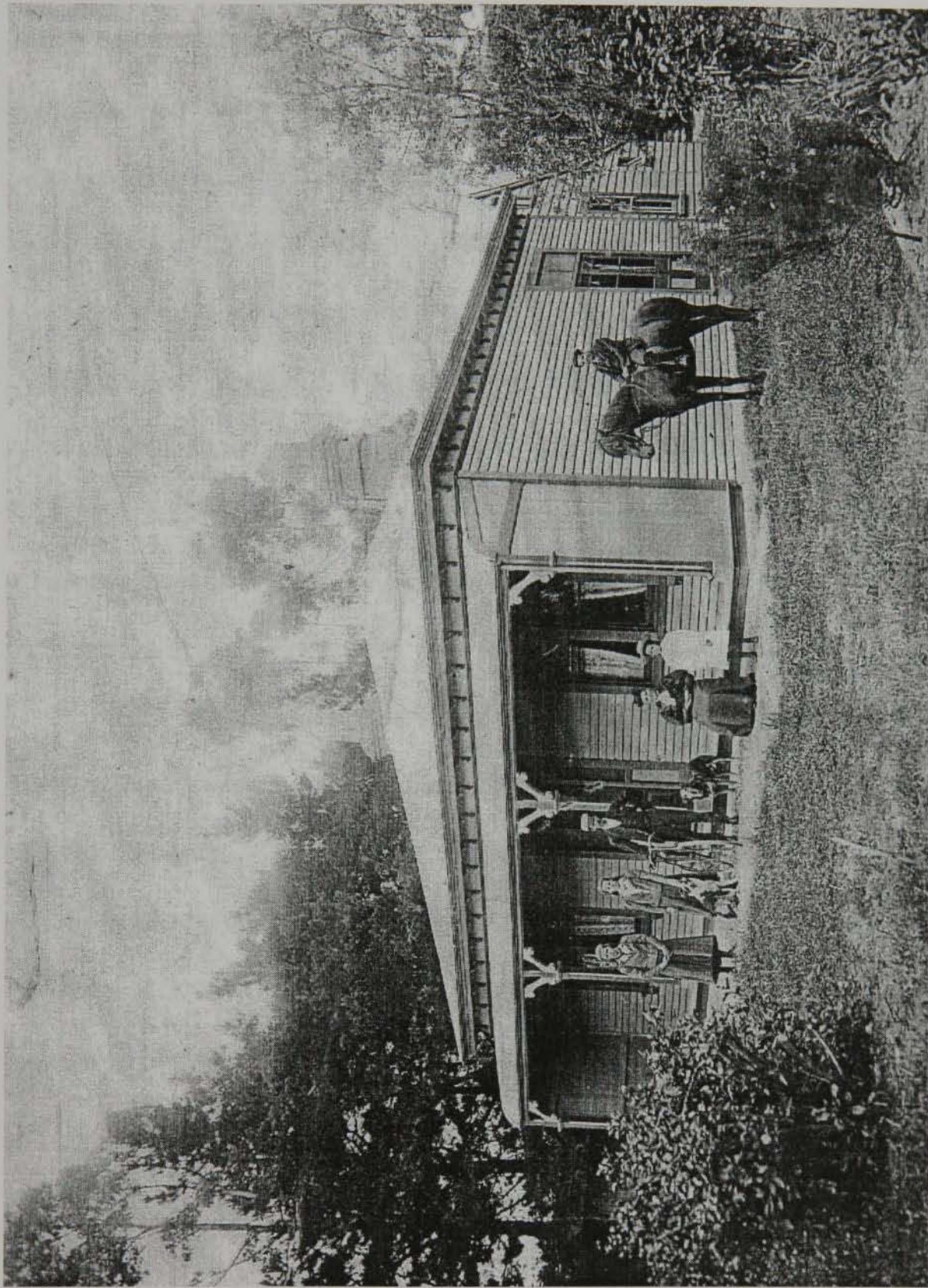


Fig 34 'A splendid likeness of us even to the house, horse and dog': Emily, Edith, Jim, Eliza, Olive, and Frank McIlrath at Thorndale, Springfield, Canterbury, 1901 (Jenny Langford).

The quality of colonial housing was variable. Upon arrival, the Gilmores found themselves confined to a quarantine station at Motuihe Island, just off the coast of Auckland. Alice noted that the quarantine station consisted of ‘a cook house & all accomotion for imigrants & a brick house for fumatitation. The cloths & all boxes & every thing else is put in there before leaving’ (Ge 1c). Spartan accommodation also awaited miners. Upon their arrival in New Zealand, the McIlraths spent time on the diggings but ‘when winter set in it was getting rather cold for A canvis tent and Little fire’ (Il 5b). From Southland in 1865, however, James McClure proudly informed his sisters in Belfast that ‘Our house is comfortable & is the best in the neighborhood. It is in [*erased: the*] a cottage in the old English style, 3 Gables thus [*drawing of house*] an Oriel window in one end & front Gable, verandah &c. I shall send you a scetch next time. Large parlor, dining room, & best bed roon. Hall on ground floor & 2 bed rooms in attics. Kitchen is behind, Casements to open 7 feet by 3 feet. Comfortably furnished’ (Ce 4c).

Bessie Macready was less concerned with describing the Christchurch villa she moved to from her cottage at Governor’s Bay than she was of detailing the villa’s cutlery: ‘We have silver teaspoons silver plated table and des[s]ert spoons & forks & other silver pieces in use every day and a better set for state occasions’ (Ma 3e). Medical doctor Alexander McKelvey also discussed the contents of his house in Auckland in 1913: ‘I did not have to furnish the house, all the furniture is provided by the Board. The only things one has to buy are pictures & things of that sort. Even cutlery & bed clothes & table linen are provided’ (Ky 3f).

Nine years earlier, Alexander McKelvey informed his parents that a local builder was constructing his house (Ky 1b), an undertaking that several migrants mentioned. Canterbury farmer James McIlrath, for instance, informed his family in 1863 that he was ‘getting a House up and Fencing off a Garden getting in some potatoes peas parsnips and

so' while six years later he erected a new house at a cost of £100 (Il 7b, 15b). Andrew and John Gilmore also constructed a house at Tauranga for as their sister Alice revealed, 'accomatiom is not easy got where they are, of a quaility' (Ge 5a). John Gilmore later informed his parents that 'Andy has a good house here & the ground that it sits on for 21 years at very little rent. He has built the house at his own expense that is about 270 pounds' (Ge 7b). Constructing houses was not confined to the colony, for Catherine Colgan in Antrim revealed that newlywed relations 'have built a beautiful new house' (Co 3g).

The predominance of wooden buildings in New Zealand, however, made them more susceptible to fire. Andrew Gilmore's house burned down in 1880 and Andrew discovered 'The Effects of the Fire in Replacing the things I Lost I am Beginning to feel now' (Ge 11a). From Christchurch the previous year, William Cardwell wryly observed, 'There is a great many failures here and any amount of fire's nearly one every week and sometimes two, so that the Insurance offices are getting in pretty hot just now. There scarcely happens a fire when the house or store is not insured which seems very strange. I suppose houses that are not insured will not burn?' (Ca 1c). John Armstrong also reported on a fire that burned a house rented by the Provincial Government in New Plymouth in 1859.¹⁵ Again, the house was 'insured so that the loss is not as heavy as it might have been'. The fire resulted when 'one of the ladies left a candle burning in a house to which parties from the country were in the habit of repairing to dress & undress' (Ar 1h, 1g).

¹⁵ Eight years later the Daily Southern Cross noted that the town's houses 'are all of wood, of a very primitive style of architecture, with zinc chimneys; they are unpainted, more than half untenanted, and going rapidly to decay.' Daily Southern Cross, 23 January 1867, cited in R. P. Hargreaves, 'The Golden Age: New Zealand about 1867', in New Zealand Geographer, vol. 16, no. 1, April 1960, p. 22.

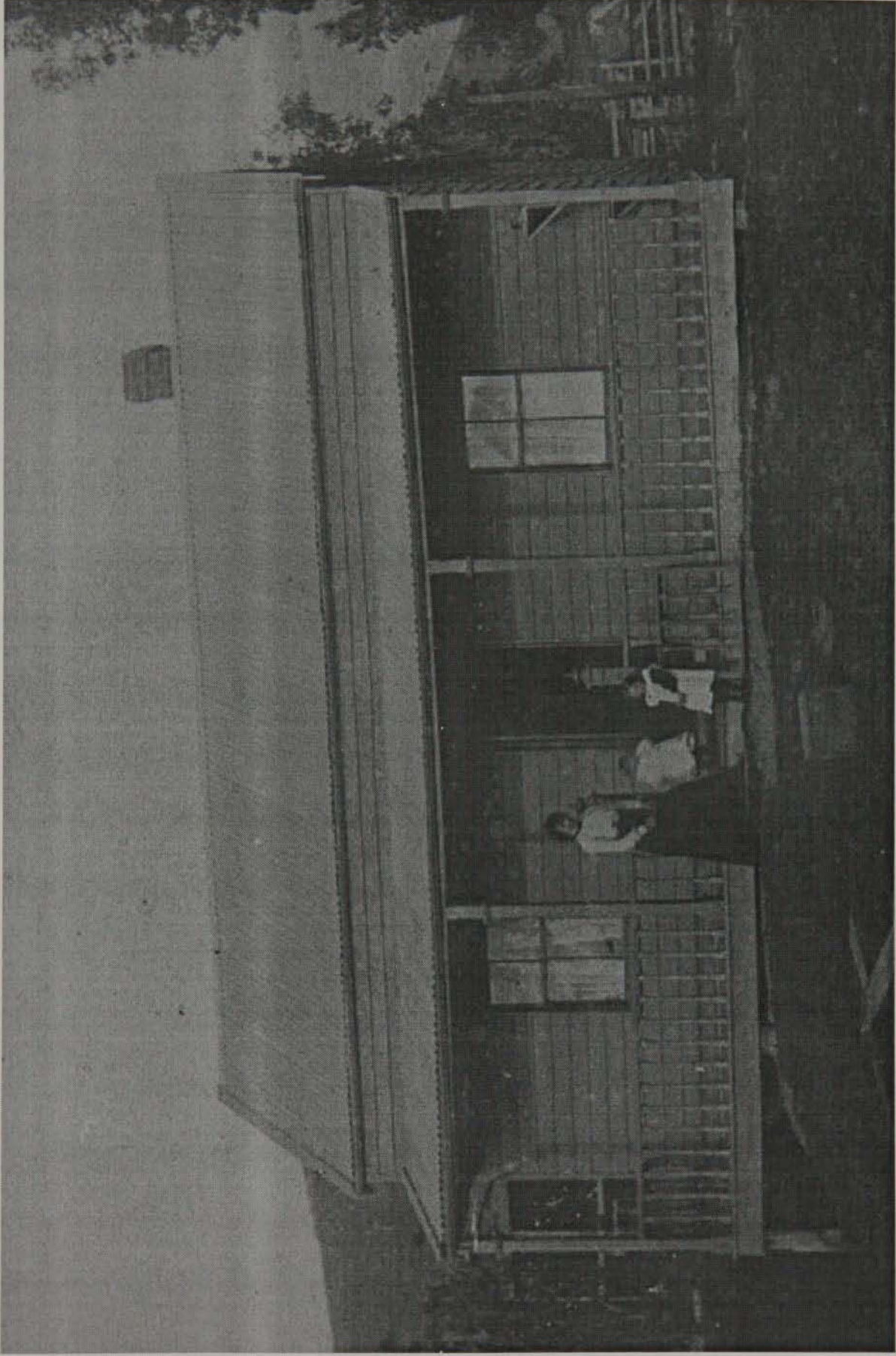


Fig 35 'As well off as ever': The Gamble home, East Taieri, Otago (Richard Herbert).

Clothing

Participation in public events, such as the ball in New Plymouth, required stylish clothing. The female penchant for such attire prompted Andrew Gilmore's complaint in 1881 that females 'are very Hard to keep in Colonial stile & Fashion', while that same year from Christchurch dressmaker Bessie Macready noted that 'Clothing is also dear' (Ge 11e; Ma 2f). Wellington hotelkeeper Samuel Gilmer was suitably unimpressed with his cousin whom he considered 'far extravagant as regarding her clothing' while gumdigging bachelor Patrick Quinn informed, 'I am mending and Wassing my cloth[e]s' (Gr 1e; Qu 1b).

Sometimes clothes were sent as gifts such as the 'pretty socks' received by the McIlraths in Canterbury in 1878 (Il 28d). Accessories were also desirable and it is therefore likely that David McCullough's sister eagerly awaited her brother's promise of money for 'a silver watch' (Cu 4g). On the other hand, not all recipients were as easily pleased, particularly when the gift arrived in poor condition. 'I got the watch you sent but it is of little [*erased: f*] value. I would lose £1 by repairing it and then it would be only worth £2 so you can see it was not worth much' (Ly 7b). Not surprisingly, this appears to have been the last present Edmund Lysaght ever received from his emigrant son.

Correspondents in Ireland also provided only brief comments about clothing. From Waterford in 1886, Maurice Keane told his sister, 'I havent as much clothes as would bring me to mass for I couldnt get them & I am asking you to send me something to clothe me as I would go to a situation if I had any clothes to bring me there' (Ke 1e). The most extensive discussion of clothing appears in the letters of Philip Carroll in 1925. Desirous of purchasing Irish clothing, he requested details from his wife of sizes for 'shoes, silk stockings (and whether you prefer shoes to lace or button) corsets (excuse me) for yourself and shoes and socks for kiddies' (Cl 10c). He also requested his wife's size in gloves and asked, 'What is your bust & waist for blouses?' (Cl 10f, 10c).

Intriguingly, migrants made no mention of the lighter clothing worn in New Zealand. Instead, Philip Carroll happily approved of his wife's purchase of a dress for she was 'due a heavy frock' (Cl 20f). Robert Hughes, on the other hand, wryly commented on the influence of the climate on clothing: 'The Summer is more like winter here' and that 'One part of the day you could go in your shirt another time you could do with your overcoat and a blanket' (Hu 1d, 11b).

Climate

As with many correspondents in Ireland, Robert Hughes exhibited a particular preoccupation with the climate. Writers in Ireland, though, were less likely to praise the Irish climate than did their compatriots writing to Australia.¹⁶ The showers and hailstorms that battered the Limerick landscape in the mid-1860s provoked William Lysaght to rue, 'It is a bad time for fishing as the weather is terrible' (Ly 1d). At the end of the century a 'very stormy winter' impeded farming on the Colgan farm at Tonduff in Antrim: 'We have got no ploughing done yet. We have some frost now' (Co 5a). Even when the weather was favourable, it could impact negatively as revealed by Elizabeth Walker in Armagh: 'We have not had so hot a summer for the last six years, and I regret to say that owing to the great drouth the oats have [*word illegible*] though not eight inches high. Indeed I see some not 4.' She observed, more favourably, however, that 'The flax is beautiful, also the potatoes, and the best hay safe' (Ki 4i).

The most extensive discussions of the Irish climate appeared in the letters of Robert Hughes from Sligo. Throughout 1924 his letters contained a range of despairing descriptions. Mid-April: 'We had a really dry spell of weather up to a few days ago when

¹⁶ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 545.

it has turned bitterly cold, Thunder Hail Rain & now heavy snow so the farming business is all up for the present'; mid-June: 'The weather has been very wet for along spell now which leaves us backward in all our pursuits of labour'; early November: 'winter is fairly in on us bitterly cold high hurrican[e] winds & I may say a continual downpour of rain' (Hu 3c, 4f, 7e). The most graphic account appeared in February 1927 when Robert informed his son that 'We had an awful storm about a week ago. It swept over all this country. It came from the S. W. It raged for a full day carried away houses, sheds, hay & corn stocks uprooted trees causing terrible destruction, loss of life and hundreds injured. Our house got a bad tearing, hundereds of slates carried away walls around the garden leveled to the ground; vegetables &c blown clean away' (Hu 10d). The following year, Robert observed 'Miles of Country under water and Cattle & lives lost' (Hu 12e).

In Ireland, as in New Zealand, the climate greatly influenced the crops. In 1926 Robert Hughes indicated from Sligo that 'We have had a very good dry summer & harvest with good crops of all Kinds' (Hu 9b). In contrast, Edmund Lysaght complained from Limerick in 1872 that 'This was a wet and a bad year here. It is continually raining. We have no potatoes and other crops were equally bad' (Ly 7c). The following decade, William Gilmer wearily lamented from Monaghan: 'We have not had more than 2 or 3 dry days at once all this summer. Harvest is ripe & no dry weather to cut it. The potato crop is a failure. Things are looking very bad indeed' (Gr 2b). By the end of the nineteenth century, a despondent Catherine Colgan reported from Antrim that 'the potatoes & turnips are a poor crops owing to much rain' (Co 3e).

The climate could also aid or destroy crops in New Zealand as James McIlrath revealed from Canterbury: 'We are now in the middle of Harvest and a very unfavourable one so far. We had a very wet backward Spring and dry Summer and in the beginning of last week when the grain was about ripe we got three days rain' (Il 35b). John Armstrong,

on the other hand, cheerfully noted, 'The weather is however seasonable & it does a farmer good to see how the grass and wheat shoot up' (Ar 1k).

New Zealand's climate could also be portrayed negatively. Bessie Macready noted that 'our summers are very long and sometimes very dry then the grass is scarce' (Ma 2e). More than a quarter of a century later Hamilton McIlrath revealed: 'We have had the hottest and driest spring and summer here that I ever remember. Grass clean burnt off not a green blade to be seen' (Il 38b). The absence of green fields was possibly the most telling example that both these Canterbury based commentators could provide home readers to convey the fine, dry climate of the region. Yet their references to the warmth of the colony did not resemble the reports of Australia's oppressive climate emanating from their counterparts across the Tasman Sea.¹⁷

Other drawbacks existed besides the heat. When a flood swept through Rangiora in 1868, Hamilton McIlrath solemnly reflected on the destruction: 'Pigs and fowls nearly all drowned and worse than all any amount of houses washed down and several lives lost'. Hamilton also depicted the havoc caused by earthquakes and fierce winds (Il 14c). His brother James also complained about the effect of the climate on crops: 'on Saturday and Sunday we got a Howling Nor-Wester a regular Hurricane. The are the ruin of this otherwise fine Climate. The Burn up the grass so that if a lighted match was thrown down the whole district would be on Fire' (Il 35b).

Subjected to a range of weather patterns, James and Hamilton McIlrath provided several comparisons between the colonial and Irish climates. James noted that 'There was double the frost in one Night ever I seen at Home' while his brother Hamilton confessed, 'We Like this place very much only we have had A very severe winter. It was every bit as

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 587.

cold as home. The snow does not Lie as Long but we have far more rain. The sun rises in the east and goes Left about insted of right as at home which I thought rather curious at first' (Il 6c, 5b). Hamilton also observed that 'we have far more hevvy hot winds here than you have got at home and this harvest has been rather more than usual stormy' (Il 20b). In 1891 Canterbury's arid aspect stimulated James to remark 'We have had one of the Driest summers here this one that I remember' (Il 33g). Comparisons were also made with the weather patterns of previous years. As James O'Neill noted from Auckland in 1863, 'The weather here is not so hot as it was this time last year. It was very blust[e]ry and wet since begining of Augst last with a few days excepted and them are pretty hot now' (Ne 1o).

The climate also influenced accounts of wellbeing. Bessie Macready certainly celebrated the climate's favourable contribution to her health: 'We have here nine months of splendid summer weather most of it a great deal warmer than the warmest summer day you experience at home & I believe my health has been greatly benefitted by the change' (Ma 3a). In Otago, David McCullough's acquaintance Alex Young 'says he never was in better health or more contented in his life' (Cu 4c). Though goldminer Michael Flanagan wearily bemoaned the 'dreary monotony of a life in this climate', he confessed that his brother Patrick was 'one of the very few upon whom the climate or the hardships to be endured in this vagabond life seems to have no ef[f]ect' (Fl 2a, 2d). William Quinn, meanwhile, 'had to lave australia as it was too hot for my Leg. The Doctors said I had better go to a colder country' (Qu 2b). And from Tipperary, John Strong urged his cousin, Daniel, to meet a neighbour travelling to New Zealand for health reasons (St 6h). Elizabeth Walker also indicated that her son's departure from Armagh was due to 'bad health' but his destination was Australia (Ki 4d).

Diverse weather conditions throughout New Zealand, however, meant that some migrants relocated within the colony to improve their wellbeing. Agnes Lambert moved a

short distance from the centre of Auckland 'to the north shore across the water. My health is a little better since I went' while William Quinn 'had some land in Taranaki but I sold it as the place was too cold for me' (La 4c; Qu 2c). He moved north to Auckland's warmer climes.

Despite emphasis on the health benefits of the colony's climate, some migrants returned home for the same reason. For instance, in 1886 William Gilmer's brother wrote to him in Monaghan from Wellington suggesting, 'Would you not have been better here only for your health' (Gr 1a). William himself wearily confessed, 'If I had only middling health I w^d not stop long in Ireland' (Gr 2b). And in 1925, Philip Carroll, suffering from Bright's disease, returned to Tipperary. He informed his wife, 'I am improving every day but when a damp muggy day comes it seems to get into the marrow of my bones and make me wish I were somewhere up the Waitakere Ranges inhaling the Ozone. The climate of Ireland generally is damp but Ballycahill atmosphere is miles ahead of Nenagh' (Cl 17h). When a spell of fine weather enveloped the country, Philip declared, 'It is Ireland's first spell of fine weather for 15 months so you can understand everybody is happy' (Cl 9j).

Unlike Australia where the weather was 'construed as a menace to good health, and therefore a deterrent to migration', and America where 'post-Famine emigrants' avowed antipathy to the America climate symbolized the profound sense of discontinuity felt by many displaced peasants'¹⁸, New Zealand was acclaimed for a climate deemed beneficial to the wellbeing of many migrants. Such representations inevitably became tied to the idea of the 'national type' in which the climate was alleged to influence the forming of character and nation.¹⁹

¹⁸ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 588; Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 516.

¹⁹ See Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington, 1986), pp. 9-10.

The representations of Ireland and New Zealand contained in this chapter indicate that substantial contrasts existed between the two countries. Generalisations offered about Ireland were mainly negative whereas impressions about New Zealand were more likely to be favourable. Specific reports emanating from Ireland concerning farming, climate, and housing costs, were also inclined to be negative. Reports in New Zealand echoed the discontent expressed by non-migrants with regard to housing costs. Accounts from New Zealand, however, spanned both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries while Irish accounts of accommodation were largely confined to the twentieth century. Both migrant and non-migrant correspondents also shared a concern with the climate's effect on crops. Migrant correspondents, however, were more likely to report favourably on the wellbeing of settlers. Unlike reports from Ireland, farming in New Zealand was also a positive undertaking. The absence of fences, taxes, and the scale of farming struck many correspondents. Both migrants and non-migrants made positive representations of employment opportunities, though migrants commented more extensively on wages. Correspondents in Ireland and New Zealand also discussed diverse and enjoyable leisure pursuits, though non-migrant accounts were again confined largely to the twentieth century. As with Irish-Australian correspondence, little grievance and disappointment featured in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. Migrants were also more inclined than their American counterparts to display a certain satisfaction with their settlement abroad.

Chapter 8

‘Never Denie Your Country’:

Identity, Politics, And Faith

The previous chapter concluded with a reference to the influence of climate on the development of national character in New Zealand. Only two letters, however, refer to the New Zealand born population. In 1904 Alexander McKelvey disparaged the native population by claiming, ‘I think it is the Colonials themselves who are different. They are not so decent as people at home. They are always very friendly & Hail-fellow-well-met, but they would not go very far to do their neighbour a good turn if it at all interfered with their comfort’ (Ky 1j). From London in 1918, Kate Keane had ‘Many an anxious hour’ reading the newspapers as ‘the New Zealanders are well in the firing line’ (Ke 10b). She also claimed that her sister Mary’s son Ernie ‘well tutored John his language’ (Ke 11b). Irish correspondents, however, were more concerned with considering aspects of their own Irish identity. In doing so, did they depict allegedly Irish characteristics in a positive or negative light?

Kerby Miller has attributed the survival of Irish identity and nationalism in America to ‘the exile motif and the worldview that sustained it’.¹ In contrast, Malcolm Campbell has argued that conditions encountered at the destination were more influential as the Australian environment contributed to weak Irish nationalism there.² Following his comparison of Irish nationalism in America and Australia, Campbell concluded that Irish

¹ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 8.

² The conditions facilitating weak Irish nationalism in Australia included distance and Irish involvement in the British Empire. See Malcolm Campbell, ‘Irish Nationalism and Immigrant Assimilation: Comparing the United States and Australia’, in *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, December 1996, p. 35.

nationalism in America was not ‘a norm of Irish emigrant experience of their compatriots in other parts of the world.’³ How do the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand compare? Catholicism has also been cited as the ‘primary cause and expression of Irish identity’.⁴ But how significant was the church, Protestant and Catholic, in aiding migrant adjustment to the colony?

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first considers the characteristics of Irish identity contained in the letters as perceived by correspondents. The second section examines the political content in the letters and the extent to which Irish nationalism prevailed in New Zealand as compared with Australia and America. The final section outlines the significance of faith for Irish correspondents at home and abroad.

Identity

In 1862, Margaret and David Kilpatrick with their infant son William emigrated from Armagh to Auckland on board the *Indian Empire*. Following their arrival Margaret recounted to her brother Thomas Reid in Belfast: ‘They Captain on board ship used to send down porter to me and say it was for they mother of “that fine little Irish man”. Every one seem to be kind to me on his account’ (Ki 1d). Babies born in New Zealand were also accorded Irish ethnicity. As Robert Hughes boasted from Sligo in 1924, ‘You know Tommie I am a proud old Grandfather now, seeing I have three Grandsons & all Roberts (Hughes, Stewart & Reynolds). You just gave the little Irishman a nice name & I think he is just heavy enough loaded’ (Hu 4a). Armagh native Margaret Kilpatrick declared herself an ‘Irish woman’ while Roscommon-born John Armstrong, reflecting on an almost unpronounceable placename that has not been identified, declared, ‘If I were not a

³ Ibid, p. 38.

⁴ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 526.

thoroughbred Paddy I could hardly get my tongue round it' (Ki 1e; Ar 2j). In his contemplation of the passengers who had died during the SS *Bebington's* voyage to New Zealand, John Gilmore concluded it was 'very hard when our fellow passengers and country men were going overboard so often ... But strange to say they that died were Irish' (Ge 6b, 6c).

These extracts, produced by Protestant Irish correspondents, reveal their sense of Irishness as Patrick O'Farrell found in letters from Irish-Australia. According to O'Farrell, Irish Protestants 'were firmly and intensely Irish and proud of it'.⁵ Also in common with their counterparts across the Tasman Sea, New Zealand's Ulster Protestants utilised the phrase 'North of Ireland' rather than 'Ulster' in their correspondence.⁶ John Gilmore, a County Down Protestant recently settled at Tauranga, reported on the settlement at Katikati of Ulster Protestants: 'there is a Large settlement of North of Ireland people about from 10 to 25 miles from here. The are called Stewarts settlers' (Ge 6f). Correspondents in Ireland likewise employed the phrase. John Strong indicated from Tipperary in 1905 that 'Police from this place was down in the North in Lurgan when a fine old man came up and asked was there Tipperery men there' (St 6f).

That the North of Ireland was considered somewhat a place apart, and that a certain amount of anti-Catholic prejudice was transported to New Zealand, is evident in a letter sent home by Alice Gilmore, John's sister, following her arrival in New Zealand. Alice revealed that her fellow passengers on the *Bebington* were mainly 'South of Ireland the roughest & worst class of people I am sure ever come here before & nearly all R. C.' She

⁵ O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia*, p. 5. See also Fitzpatrick, "That beloved country", p. 333.

⁶ See Fitzpatrick's discussion in "That beloved country", p. 329.

then outlined their pursuits on board which consisted of ‘dancing & singing & cursing & sweering & carry storyes & tell lies to the superintendent on thire shipmates’ (Ge 5f).

Such stereotyped portrayals of Irish entertainment are generally absent in letters sent to Ireland from New Zealand.⁷ Nonetheless, the correspondence does include examples of traditional Irish hospitality. More than forty years after her arrival in New Zealand, Margaret Kilpatrick assured her brother that ‘I will be very pleased to see any one who may have had the pleasure of seeing you or any one of the folk in or about Armagh & will give them a hearty welcome’ (Ki 14b). Philip Carroll certainly received a rousing reception when he returned to Tipperary in 1925: ‘I was not home an hour when cousin called up to see me and brought me a little present of two bottles champagne and a bottle of port wine. Heavens Nina the Irish are ten times more hospitable than ever I thought they were and that is saying something’ (Cl 5e). Philip’s return also stimulated his reflection that ‘I thought I had a bit of an Irish accent but no they tell me I talk just like a Yank and have lost all trace of the brogue’ (Cl 5i). Not only did Irish correspondents refer to their accents, but also to a reputed tendency to exaggerate. Margaret Kilpatrick was perhaps refuting her own habit of embellishing when she declared in 1903, ‘God has blessed me with good children. Every bodey says the are models. This is no Ireish blow, but a fact’ (Ki 13g). Despite reference to the Irish accent, no mention is made of the Irish language. In stark contrast, Dutch and German migrants in the United States frequently referred to an inability to speak English which hampered their opportunities to progress.⁸

⁷ For a study of Irish stereotypes, positive and negative, in New Zealand see Alitia Lynch, “‘Drunken, Dissipated, and Immoral’”: Perceptions of Irish Immigrants to New Zealand, 1868-1918’ (MA, University of Auckland, 1997).

⁸ See Kamphoefner’s index under ‘English Language’ in *News from the Land of Freedom*, and the index under ‘Languages’ in Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*.

Irishness could also encompass darker elements. Upon learning of the slaying of goldminer Patrick Kirk on New Zealand's West Coast, Richard Flanagan commiserated with his brother Michael (F1 13b):

I quite agree with you in what you say of our own people. When good there are none better in the world. When bad none worse, if any indeed can equal them in wickedness. There is an immense mass of rubbish and nonsense written consequently by scribblers in poetry and prose about the virtues of Irish men and women but any one who has an extended acquaintance with the world must know that they are no better than others. No doubt at home the majority are virtuous and well conducted - other people are so also, but when the Irish go abroad it happens that if they fall away, or if they have brought vices with them they excel all others in the excess of wickedness. I know that in this city of London there is no class wor[s]e or more profigate than the vicious Irish of either sex and so it is in all the cities of the United States and I suppose in the colonies.

A less sinister, but also a negative, portrayal of Irishness was a lack of sophistication. Following criticism of his sister, arising from the cool welcome she afforded the returned migrant, Philip Carroll altered his opinion and admitted, 'The mistake I made was to expect Nance to be like the average unsophisticated Irish girl when she could not possibly be so considering she has been over 17 years in England. She is cool and undemonstrative but withal she is most sincere' (C1 8e). This alleged lack of sophistication in Ireland is also evident in William Quinn's admonishment of his nephew's writing conventions: 'It might be the way they address in Ireland but it [*omitted: is*] not so in New Zealand. I expected better from Bernard. I care nothing about myself but it makes very little of Mr Sheath a gentle man of very high standing in auckland ... Mr Sheath must think the people I communicate with in Ireland must be very much behind the times' (Qu 5c).

William Quinn was just as scandalised by his brother's drinking habits as he was of his nephew's writing style. In 1907 he advised that it would be best if his nephew Robert Jenkins avoided visiting Patrick as Patrick 'might get drunk and if a old age pentioner is brought up twice before a maestrate [*magistrate*] for drunkness they loose their pention and

Pat has been before one for drunkenness so he has only another chance left him. It would be a bad thing for him to loose £26 a year. I give Bob Pat address and told him if he went to see him to be sure and see that he got no drink' (Qu 5b). James O'Neill displayed similar concern for his brother Patrick in Ireland in 1863: 'If Patt had not constant work in Lim^k I am shure he would do well here provided he would keep from drink' (Ne 11). Alice Gilmore also remarked from Auckland in 1876 that alcohol 'made every thing run cont[r]ary in our old home' (Ge 5h).

The ill-effects of alcohol abuse were also noted by Philip Carroll who criticised colonial acquaintances affected by drink: 'He is an unfortunate wretch alright and a fine example of the trouble booze will get a man into' (Cl 17e). Yet Philip could sympathise: 'I was very sorry but not altogether surprised to hear about Jim Hendry and his wife being separated. The wonder to me is that his wife put up with him for so long. Jim is a fine fellow only for the booze and that has got him well under unfortunately' (Cl 20c). Other acquaintances earned Philip Carroll's fulsome praise: 'I was indeed pleased to learn that Jim Holt is still off the drink. It is indeed truly wonderful to have him stay off it for such a long time' (Cl 21m). As for his own drinking habits, Philip explained that a local Irish doctor 'advised me not to drink stout but that if I felt like a stimulant to take whiskey well diluted with water. Whiskey is 1/8d per glass in this country so needless to say I have not imbibed any of his medicine' (Cl 18e).

In most instances where liquor was discussed at length, then, its negative impact took precedence over its conviviality. Moreover, the extent of Irish-New Zealand anxiety

about alcohol outweighed similar concerns expressed in other editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence.⁹

Unlike the personal letters sent between Ireland and Australia, which indicate that ‘the menace of alcoholism seemed not “inherent” but environmental’¹⁰, the reverse applies in the case of Irish-New Zealand correspondence. When Daniel Strong emigrated from Lehinch, County Tipperary, his cousin John Strong implored him to ‘above all things beware of drunkeness that curse of Irishmen that follows them into every land degrading and debasing them’ (St 2e). John’s brother Martin also offered Daniel his thoughts on the subject. As with William Quinn and James O’Neill, Martin Strong equated sobriety with success and attributed both his and his family’s financial prosperity to avoiding the temptations of alcohol: ‘We bought land to the amount of £500 and gave Margaret a fortune of two hundred pounds. Could we do it if drinking. I say no. So you see drink is the ruin of the world. I thank God for myself I never drank any sort of liquor and during my old College days I had many temptations to fight in that line but overcame them all’ (St 3e). So enormous was the concern that Daniel Strong avoid the temptations of alcohol that Martin vigorously warned, ‘I always heard the strongs had one misfortune and that was liquor and when one of their name commences they cannot stop so the only remedy when they know that is to shun it’ (St 3e).

⁹ In Irish-New Zealand correspondence the negative aspect of alcohol featured 14 times in 7 sequences. In David Fitzpatrick’s *Oceans of Consolation*, a ‘decorous silence’ was maintained in letters from Ireland to Australia while emigrant correspondents condemned alcohol in 7 extracts in 4 sequences, pp. 544, 582. By contrast, German and Dutch correspondents in America condemned alcohol 5 and 4 times respectively in 3 sequences each while the letters of English and Scottish migrants in America contained only one explicit condemnation of drinking. See Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, pp. 68, 139-40, 141, 144; Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, pp. 189, 213, 306, 402; and Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 309.

¹⁰ Fitzpatrick, ‘That beloved country’, p. 344.

The Strongs of Tipperary not only issued warnings to their cousin but also discussed neighbours afflicted with alcoholism. 'Your old boss is still alive but I am afraid he is going to kill himself from the hard stuff', divulged Martin Strong. Tragic events may have swayed some to seek comfort or escape in alcohol: 'Jack Carrolls wife is also dead & he wont be long there himself. He has turned completely to liquor' (St 3m, 5c). In his study of the Catholic Church in Tipperary, Kevin Whelan has indicated that 'the culture of drink was deeply embedded in local life, and only the most spectacular campaign by Theobald Mathew curbed its dominance in the social life of the people, and even then, only temporarily.'¹¹

Although the Strongs made no mention of temperance movements, the Keane letters from Waterford reveal the existence of the county's temperance societies.¹² In 1886 John Keane confessed to his sister Mary that 'for some time past I squandered & raked about for many a week & month from place to place through means of ye forgetting us here at home as much as ye did sat me nearly out of my mind but now that I have changed & I am temperate for a long time to come perhaps for life. James & Maurice are joined also. The have a temperance society got up in Clashmore & are getting up a band there at present' (Ke 2c). John seemingly resisted alcoholic temptation but his brother James succumbed. As John Keane expressed with frustration from Chicago in 1910, 'B^f Jim was arround here 2 years ago. He is worse than ever. Will do nothing but drink' (Ke 7d).

Temperance movements also developed in New Zealand in response to a mounting culture

¹¹ Kevin Whelan, 'The Catholic Church in County Tipperary, 1700-1900', in William Nolan (ed.), Tipperary: History and Society. Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County (Dublin, 1985), p. 243.

¹² Temperance and intemperance in Ireland is surveyed in Elizabeth Malcolm, 'Ireland Sober, Ireland Free': Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland (Dublin, 1986). For the early temperance movement in County Waterford see Donnchadh Ó Ceallacháin, 'The Temperance Movements in Waterford, 1839 to 1841', in Waterford Archaeological and Historical Journal, no. 52, 1996, pp. 57-91.

of drink. By 1879, one pub catered for 287 colonial settlers.¹³ This decade also witnessed the establishment of temperance societies and in 1881 the Licensing Act entailed the closure of pubs on Sunday.

Protestant correspondents in Ireland also viewed intemperance with dismay. When Catherine Colgan in Antrim learned of her son's indulgence in alcohol, she resignedly wrote, 'I am so sorry about Johnny falling into drink and him knowing better.' She was relieved, though, that both her son-in-law and spouse remained sober: 'I am so glad that her husband is so good and does not take none of that curesed drink ... I hope Charles is not inclined to drink for it is the downfall of all men for it is destroy both body and soul' (Co 5b, 5d). In Armagh, George Reid was obliged to defend himself in response to a letter from his sister Margaret Kilpatrick who had been informed by recent arrivals from Armagh that George was inclined to drink. Clearly offended, George indignantly responded, 'I have not myself yet acquired the love of strong drink. I really dont care for it. I never [*word illegible*] any possibility taste anything of any description till after my tea in the evening ... I can assure you that I am and always have been a sober man' (Ki 8b). These extracts reveal that Irish correspondents writing to New Zealand certainly did not share the silence of their counterparts writing to Australia about the menace of alcohol.¹⁴

Identity issues also feature in requests for baptismal information. Martin Strong informed his cousin Daniel in 1895 that 'I have searched the registry in Loorha for M^{rs} M^cInness' age back for sixty years and her name does not appear on it. We could not go back any furthur as the old books are in the Parochial house, but next letter you may inform her I will send her the date of her birth. If she could give you an Idea of the year she was

¹³ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country*, p. 57. Chapter 2 in this book, 'The Boozer and the Decent Bloke - the New Zealand Quest for Respectability', discusses male drinking habits in New Zealand.

¹⁴ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 544.

born it would be a great help to me' (St 3i). Five years later Martin requested Daniel to have 'Mr Hayes send me as near as he can guess the year he was Born' (St 5d). Agnes Lambert also sought her 'proper birthday' from her sister (La 3a). Mary Kilpatrick undertook to find her brother's baptism in the 'Book of first Armagh' but when the book was examined 'two leaves had been cut out from 1825 until 1835. As David was born 6 January 1832 it could not be found there' (Ki 10a). Consequently, Mary took the family bible with births recorded to Armagh to have a certificate provided by a magistrate (see Fig 36).

Several correspondents remained aware of significant dates and anniversaries.

Mary Anne Reid, for instance, announced that she would 'wear my Joy Caps in commemoration' of her grandson's birthday (Ki 2c). Her daughter Margaret Kilpatrick knew not only her own birthday but also that of her siblings and her husband (Ki 14m, 12d, 13d). Margaret also acknowledged in 1903 that 'it is 41 years past since we arrived here' (Ki 13a). John Strong likewise reflected nostalgically in 1905 that his cousin was 'gone nearly 21 years' (St 6a). And John Armstrong mused wistfully a decade after his departure from Roscommon, 'Just 10 years since I left Kiltoom. What a long time to be without seeing one of the old family circle' (Ar 2i). Marian Armstrong, John's sister, also recalled days gone by prompting John to remark, 'one or two allusions you made to our Kiltoom days almost made an old woman of me' (Ar 3a). Indeed, the letters contain several examples of nostalgia for local places and Ireland. Letter writers referred to their native country as 'old Ireland' (Hu 5b, Ly 1f, Ke 2b, Il 33a), 'holy Ireland' (St 2h), 'dear old Ireland' (St 3n, Re 1e), and 'poor dear Ireland' (Ke 10d). In contrast, Dutch correspondents in America utilised the phrase 'old country' while Germans writing from

PETTY SESSIONS (AND) ACT, 1851, 14 & 15 VICT., CAP. 93.
(Form) Solemn Declaration.

ERLBY, BAYERS & WALKER,
(LONDON & LONDON)
Dublin.



~~Complainant~~; Petty Sessions District of **ARMAGH.**
~~Defendant~~ County of **ARMAGH.**

I, *Mary Kilpatrick* of *Ballyards*
do solemnly and ~~unswornly~~ declare, That *I am senior member of the*
family of William Kilpatrick of Ballyards afore-
said - That my brother David is my junior.
He is at present residing in Auckland in
New Zealand. That his birth is recorded
in the family Bible of my parents. That
said Bible is now and has been in my
possession since the death of my parents,
without my parting at any time with the
custody of same. That my said brother's birth
registry is recorded in said family Bible as
David Kilpatrick born January 6th 1832.
That said record is in the order of dates of
the births of my brothers and sisters in a
clear and legible handwriting, without
erasure or alteration, and is in the same
order and condition to my certain knowledge
during the last fifty years. And I make the
foregoing declaration believing the same to be
true

And I make this solemn Declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act passed in the Sixth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth, Chapter Sixty-two, for the abolition of unnecessary Oaths.

Signed, *Mary Kilpatrick*

Made and subscribed before me, this *21st* day
of *August* in the Year Eighteen hundred
and *ninety nine*

Signed, *J. L. ...*
Justice of said County. *Magistrate*



Fig 36 'We hope it will do what you want': Declaration confirming David Kilpatrick's date of birth for pension requirements, 1899 (Alan Kilpatrick).

America recalled their place of birth as the 'old homeland'.¹⁵ Frequently, gatherings of fellow Irish migrants in New Zealand led to reminiscences in which 'We almost felt as if we were roaming over Irish soil again and forgot for the time that there is a distance between' (II 26a). As with Irish correspondence from Australia, most reminiscences about Ireland from Irish migrants in New Zealand were nostalgic recollections rather than the exiled laments that Kerby Miller has argued emanated from America.¹⁶

Irish Politics

The earliest references in the correspondence to Irish nationalist and political enterprises concerned the Fenians.¹⁷ From County Limerick in 1866, William Lysaght informed his brother that 'in America they are hard at work yet making up man and money with which they intend to invade Canada and there to establish an Irish Republic after than there they would have another stroke for old Ireland. Its hard to say if they will do any good ... the Fenian Leaders are now in Prison some for life some for 20 years some more for 10 years and a few for 5 years' (Ly 1f).¹⁸ Three years later, William reported that 'ODonovan Rossa the Fenian convict has been elected M. P. for Tipperary' (Ly 2j).¹⁹

Fenian activities in New Zealand also generated comment from home correspondents. Writing from London in June 1868, County Louth born Richard Flanagan cautioned his brothers in New Zealand to steer clear of any Fenian involvement: 'I see by

¹⁵ Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, pp. 258, 268, 271, 277, 278, 283, 314; Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, pp. 156, 161, 469, 478, 519, 557.

¹⁶ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 616.

¹⁷ For a review of the Fenian historiography see Patrick J. Quinlivan, 'Hunting the Fenians: Problems in the Historiography of a Secret Organisation', in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Creative Migrant* (London, 1994), pp. 133-53.

¹⁸ The arrests occurred on 15 September 1865.

¹⁹ Although elected at the Tipperary by-election, Rossa was prevented from being a member of Parliament and another by-election was held. He remained imprisoned until 1871.

the news that those misguided people, the Fenians, are not without sympathisers in your part of the world. I hope you will have sense enough to hold aloof from mixing up in any way with people who have anything to do with them. They have only brought misery and misfortune on themselves and all who have had anything to do with them and injury on their unfortunate country' (F1 3e). Reports of the mock processions, funerals, arrests, and potential riots that threatened relations on the West Coast goldfields probably stimulated Richard's warning.²⁰ He would also have learned of the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh in Sydney by a Fenian sympathiser, albeit an unstable one.²¹

Though the letters from Irish Catholic writers in New Zealand make no reference to the Fenians, two contrasting opinions feature in the correspondence of the Unitarian McIlrath brothers. From Canterbury in 1867, Hamilton McIlrath drew comparisons between the Fenians and Maori before uttering concern for agitative tactics played out on his brother's farm in County Down: 'The fenians seems to be keeping Ireland in a small fever of excitement. The dont show even as much pluck as the Maorias. What the want is to be lynch law'd as soon as cought. I hope the have not been trying on any more [*erased:* at Johns] of thire games at Johns. When he got that man he ought to have tied him and *and* sent for the police and made him Give an account of himself' (II 12d). Unlike his brother, James McIlrath assessed that the Irish rebels would make worthy opponents of the Maori warriors: 'I Hear it is in a disturbed state up the contry. The have not forgot their old tricks. The will be useful here to fight the Moiries' (II 6h). James also conveyed the desire that 'I should [*omitted:* like] to hear of Ireland being a little more quiet as I Fancy it is a dangerous place betimes' (II 17d). Perceived similarities between Irish and Maori rebels

²⁰ These events, discussed in Chapter 1 of Davis, *Irish Issues*, followed news of the execution of three Fenians at Manchester.

²¹ For the Fenian movement in Australia see Keith Amos, *The Fenians in Australia, 1865-1880* (Kensington, 1988).

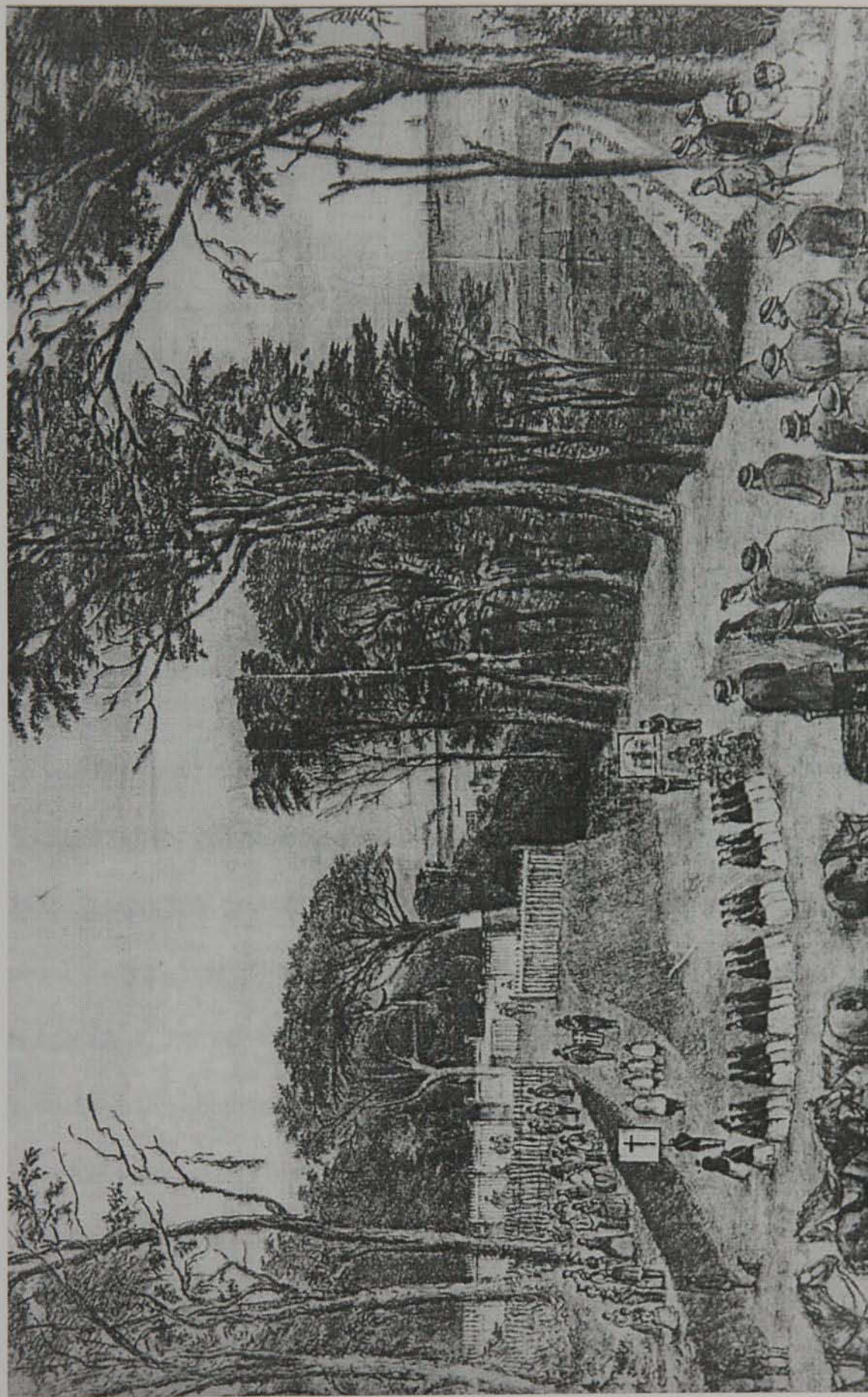


Fig 37 'Those misguided people the Fenians are not without sympathisers in your part of the world': Mock funeral procession, Hokitika, 1868 (Alexander Turnbull Library).

struck William Lysaght in Limerick. As such, he ardently advised his brother Edward to support Maori objectives: 'I wish the Maories every success. Take care. Join no party [*erased: to*] to fight against them. They are the same as Irish men fighting for the[ir] own Land. Twas a regul[ar] Humbug the way their land were confiscated. Again I say to you do not fight again[st] them - help them if you wish. I have it on good authority that they are assisted by many Irishmen' (Ly 2f).

Such examples of Irish-Maori solidarity are rare but one commentator has recently suggested that 'Perhaps because they share a history of oppression and land loss, and have both been the butt of racist jokes, the Maori and Irish in New Zealand have long identified with one another.'²² Despite some Irish support for Maori claims, many more Irish enlisted in contingents of the colonial and imperial forces to fight against the Maori as will be discussed later in this chapter. As Donald Akenson has indicated, the Irish were active participants in the British Empire as soldiers, administrators, clergy, and settlers.²³

Irish land issues continued to appear as topics of discussion in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand throughout the nineteenth century. From Armagh in 1880, Joseph Reid told his sister Margaret that 'There is great agitation here at present about lowering rents. Four of Five of the leaders is about to be brought before the Queens Bench for it. Parnell & others. Landlords Agents and Bailfiss [*Bailiffs*] are getting very bad care in the South and West of Ireland. We were obledged to get an abatement in our rents last year, and we have asked the same this year' (Ki 9f). A letter sent from Otago to Antrim in 1886 also alluded to initiatives for land reform in Ireland: 'But taking everything in particular the country is very dull and will continue to be so untill the get some sort of agitation such as was at home and make the big sheep farmers break up their

²² Rogers, *A Lucky Landing*, p. 92.

²³ See especially Chapter 6 in Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*.

big lots of land or Stations as the call them here' (Be 1c). This voice of support emanated from David Bell, a Presbyterian native of Kells, County Antrim. Although David's dissatisfaction with land holding practices in New Zealand provoked his comparison with the Irish situation, his positive reference to agitation in Ireland suggests that he was a willing supporter of the protests that had fuelled there.

The following decade, Martin Strong of Tipperary criticised the government of the day: 'Of course you read in the paper about the unfortunate split in the Parliamentary party and every day its growing worse as we now have a Tory Government and are as far as ever from the long talked of Home Rule' (St 3k). Martin's brother John also supported nationalist endeavours for in 1883, on the eve of his cousin Daniel's departure, John was adamant in instructing Daniel to 'never denie your country. Always help it to the best of your ability and according to your means, and never sit silent while your country or your countryment are misrepresented or slandered' (St 2d).

Political comment also appeared in the correspondence sent by Kate Keane from London during the twentieth century. Her musings about World War I generated her conclusion that, 'Were they to treat Ireland fair, every man would be [*omitted: in*] the army & fight for freedom but coercion will never get the Irish under subjection' (Ke 10d). Kate also informed her sister Mary in 1921 of the unrest permeating Irish society, particularly as it wreaked havoc in her native Waterford and neighbouring Cork²⁴ (Ke 11e, 11g):

Pilltown has suffered & up the Blackwater. They are now being shamed into trying a settlement - but believe me it is a black spot in the History of England & all through the Orangemen. Our Cousin Tom says he had a nice business & doing well in the motor line. The Sinn Feiners took some of his petrol from his garage & set fire to the police Barrack. He says it is an old ruin now & Patrick St Cork is in ruins by the Black & Tans ... The Black & Tans have burned the Farms & Creameries as reprisals on Sinn Feinn.

²⁴ For analysis of events in County Cork during this period see Peter Hart, The I. R. A. and its Enemies: Violence and Community in Cork, 1916-1923 (Oxford, 1998).

Philip Carroll commented more savagely that same year from Auckland (CI 1f):

The “Black and Tan” brutes are brave heroes when they are up against unarmed men and women and children. The same British soldiers were too frightened to advance against the Turks on Gallipoli and would only do so when a New Zealand captain turned a machine gun on them. The New Zealanders and Australians will tell you what kind of hero the British Tommy is. Lloyd George had a great victory when he prevented Dr Mannix from visiting Ireland, but his victory will be short lived. If the omens are correct I should think his days as Prime Minister, of the outrager of small nations, have been numbered. Anyway Ireland has got Home Rule and I suppose we should be satisfied.

Mannix eventually visited Ireland in 1925, the same year that Philip Carroll made his return to Tipperary. Philip’s 23 letters, sent from Ireland over a six-month period, document a turbulent society. Philip reported that the conflict prompted the return of a migrant who ‘had a big place of business in Dublin which was blown to atoms during the troubles there’ (CI 3b). Philip’s return to Tipperary gave him first-hand knowledge of lingering resentments, brought to the fore at a ferocious hurling match (CI 13f):

It was the first hurling I had seen since I left Ireland and I am not anxious to see any more. Rugby will do me: There is a lot of bad blood still here between the Free Staters and the Republicans (Rories). When two hurling teams meet one team may be Rories and the other Free Staters. Then if an argument starts it is very little will cause a miniature pitched battle with hurleys for weapons, and heaven alone knows where it might end. It started on a small scale last Sunday but was luckily stopped in time.

That same week, Philip visited ‘Castle Fogarty which was a lovely gentleman’s mansion before I left but it has been burned to the ground by the Rories and there is nothing left standing but the walls. It is estimated that it would cost close on £100,000 to put it up again. Wanton destruction is right’ (CI 13h). Given his intimate knowledge of such events, Philip speculated to his wife that ‘I suppose when I return I will have all the Irish friends buzzing about me asking for the latest news of the distressful country. [I] will have some eyeopeners to give them about the present state of affairs here and about the times they have gone through in this old land’ (CI 21l).

The most extensive discussion of violence and political proceedings in Irish society throughout the 1920s appears in the letters of Robert Hughes, a retired constabulary officer based in County Sligo.²⁵ In 1923 Robert remarked in a letter to his son Thomas, ‘We are a lot easier in our mind since the Free States Army came here. There is a good detachment of them quartered in the old Workhouse that was partially destroyed by fire’ (Hu 1e). Despite Robert’s initial relief, atrocities continued throughout the country and in March 1924 Robert gloomily informed his son of ‘a ter[r]ible slaughter of british soldiers & their wives & children at a place called Cobb [*Cobh*] Co. Cork, when landing from Spike Island. This Country is far from settled yet’ (Hu 2b).²⁶

Even when attending to his bog in adverse weather conditions, Robert Hughes was reminded of the warfare (Hu 5b):

the peals of thunder & flashes of lightening [*erased: flash*] darting here & ther[e] brings to my mind the fierce battles faught between the National & Republican arms. The *the* terrible conflicts were fierce on both sides. The ambushes were more horrible. Many a fine man & comrades of my own were cut down like grass & don’t think for a moment that old Ireland is finally settled yet. There are plenty eager & watching for a new fight and to strive and get the British back to power. I’m glad it is the British pays me my coffers.

Prominent political personalities during the period also featured in Robert Hughes’s correspondence. In November 1924, he explained to his son Thomas (Hu 7j):

I will not trouble you about the Country & how it stands as the Connaughtman I am sending will fully explain our attitude some & ex[c]ept that Devalar [*de Valera*] is arrested every time he crosses the Border into northern Ireland & Mary M^cSweeney [*MacSwiney*] another of his supporters gets so many searchings and tumblings about that I really believe she is beginning to like it. Nothing will do us now but a sound Republic North & South. Well many say thats the stuff to give them but all I have to say is they have not got it yet.

²⁵ For discussion of events in Sligo, see Michael Farry, Sligo 1914-1921: A Chronicle of Conflict (Trim, 1992).

²⁶ The attack resulted in one death and twenty casualties.

Writing in July 1927, a month after elections, Robert remarked, ‘I dare say you saw the news of our General Election. Well the Republicans &c outvoted the Government party by long odds. Still they would not take the oath and got chucked out like dogs and the Government with President Cosgrove [*Cosgrave*] as head formed the new Government and will carry on for five years more’ (Hu 11e). Eight months later, Robert told Thomas in Auckland that ‘The President of this State had a great tour through America & Canada. He got a great reception ever[y] where. The Government is working well here now’ (Hu 12g). Unlike their counterparts writing to Australia, then, correspondents in Ireland writing to New Zealand were more inclined to discuss Irish political issues.²⁷

International Affairs

As with Irish-Australian correspondents, however, comments relating to international matters in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand were concerned with wars.²⁸ In 1859, prior to his enlistment in the colonial army, John Armstrong lamented, ‘What a dreadful state things seem to be in on the continent. Nothing but wars and rumours of war. From what I have heard today it seems that Austria is likely to lose her footing in Italy and the conclusion of the war proves more favorable to her than the commencement. I hope England will not be obliged to take part in the struggle’ (Ar 1e). Commenting on the same conflict from Limerick in 1866, William Lysaght wryly speculated that ‘England will very likely interfere’ (Ly 1f). Four years later, George Reid revealed from Belfast that ‘There is little thought of here now but the war on the continent. Our trade at the foundry is good but generally trade is bad because of the war’ (Ki 5d).

²⁷ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 557.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 559.

In November 1900 James McIlrath resignedly reflected from Canterbury on contemporary international relations (Il 36b):

The old century will soon expire and there is no appearance of Peace on Earth and goodwill to men. Nothing but War and rumors of War. Even here the war Fever raged nothing but Drilling Volenteers and sending Contingents to south Africa. I am doubtful if it was a just war. I feel for those who Fight for Hearth and Home. The Lion found the Boer an ugly customer to deal with and now [*erased: all*] all the Nations of the Earth almost are having a cut at China and very likely they will qurrell over the spoil. So much for Peace on Earth and goodwill to men.

World War I featured in the letters Mary Keane received from her sister Kate who revealed, 'Many an anxious hour I have when I read the news papers. I see the New Zealanders are well in the firing line. I hope & trust dear Ernie will come through alright' (Ke 10b). The involvement in the conflict of sons from both Kate's emigrant sisters spurred Kate's declaration, 'One thing I can say our family have given to this War' (Ke 10d). Sarah Reid, Margaret Kilpatrick's sister-in-law, also reported on her sons' involvement in the war. She explained that one son 'was sent to England after a years training in Canada and has now been sent out to France just a few days ago. The oldest boy has not been in France except on Transport duty. He was not in the firing line. I dont know if I will see them again' (Ki 15a).

Colonial Politics

Domestic conflict was a prominent feature in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand. As James O'Neill observed from Auckland in 1863, 'They have the country covered over with soldiers militia and volunteers from all parts of Australia Hobart town, Sidney [*Sydney*], Otago &c I believe 2.500 up to this.' Known as the 'Waikato Militia', these recruits were largely lured by the promise of confiscated Maori land as outlined by James: 'They are promised 50 acres of the Waikato land when the war is over but they must live 3 years on it before they get a title to it and 100 out of the lot wont do

that' (Ne 1h). James's prophecy was fulfilled as only 20 per cent of soldiers who received land grants remained on their land in 1874.²⁹ Most took up their allotments, stayed the obligatory three years to obtain the freehold, and then departed with their families.

Two significant battles during the Waikato Wars at Meremere and Rangiriri appeared in James O'Neill's sole surviving letter. While Meremere was captured without loss of life to either side, the campaign at Rangiriri three weeks later 'cost both sides more than any other engagement of the wars'.³⁰ The battle, which took place on 20 November 1863, resulted in the death of approximately 41 Maori. According to James O'Neill, 'only 50 Maories killed. 200 gave themselves up prisoners and more escaped. The prisoners was brought to Auckland' (Ne 1f).

Although the conflict posed no disruption to residents in the South Island, settlers such as the McIlraths remained aware of events unfolding in the North Island, including attempts to enlist soldiers by offering land as bait. Yet the information distributed throughout the colony and abroad was sometimes inaccurate. Hamilton McIlrath's account of the conflict at Rangiriri in 1863, for example, greatly exaggerated the death toll of the Maori (Il 8c):

The Moris In the North Island has Been very troublesom Lately. The More the are civelized the *the* worse the get Burning Houses and killing the setlers But I think the will be forced to give over soon. The goverment gave grants of Land to all the young Men that would volenter and has raised A force of about three thousand Men Besides 2 thousands from England. The took one of there Pa's last week and killed 400 natives and took 500 prisoners. The intend to give them A dressing Before they have done with them that the shall Remember. The very Men that the Instructed Most and thought they had made saints of the were the Leaders of the Rebelion. I expect Mother would like to see one of them with there face tattoed and all the Devices you could Imagine painted on them and A Boars Tusk strung to there ear.

²⁹ Belich, *Making Peoples*, p. 386.

³⁰ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p. 142.

Ten years later, Hamilton McIlrath sent home a photograph of ‘an old tatoood Moria Chief and a rather well dressed Moria woman’ (Il 19e). Presumably his mother’s response differed from that of Robert Hughes who in 1924 received a photograph of a Maori chief. Upon receipt, Robert ‘showed him to a few Paddies around here as my uncle. Would you think the though[t] him not a bad looking old man’ (Hu 6g). Few correspondents, however, provided physical descriptions of the Maori but when Michael Flanagan encountered his brother in Australia after several months apart he observed, ‘His appearance would nearly put one in mind of a Maori. The sun of Queensland browned him very much but the climate did not disagree with him.’³¹

The Maori were the most prominent racial group to feature in Irish-New Zealand correspondence. Nevertheless, other groups were occasionally mentioned but mainly in relation to the voyage. As such, David McCullough mentioned a Scotsman at the outset of his migration while James McIlrath discussed Germans and other migrants ‘of every creed contry and clime’ who were voyaging to Australia (Cu 2b; Il 1d, 2c). Alice Gilmore’s account of her voyage, meanwhile, featured English, Scottish, and French crew (Ge 5b, 5e). During his return to Ireland in 1925 Philip Carroll reported on ‘niggers, Chinese & Japanese with a fair sprinkling of Yanks’ at Colon (Cl 4c). Such reports, however, did not match the widespread range of nationalities appearing in the correspondence of the Irish in Australia and Dutch and German correspondents in America.³²

Inevitably, accounts of hostile relations in the colony generated concern in Ireland and several letters were sent home throughout the 1860s to reassure home readers of the migrant’s safety. In 1863, for instance, James McIlrath in Canterbury revealed that ‘There

³¹ Michael Flanagan (Australia) to his uncle Revd. Richard Flanagan (Louth), 18 February 1865, in Murphy and Murphy, *The Flanagan Letters*.

³² Natives from America, China, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Poland, Scotland, Spain, and Turkey feature in these editions.



Fig 38 'You will see by the want of the finger the woman is a widow':
Photograph sent to the McIlraths in Balloo, County Down, 1866
(Jenny Langford).

is great talk of the Mowrie war but we have nothing of it here' (Il 7d). Likewise, William McSparron in Australia assuaged his niece's fears that her brother Oliver was threatened by the disturbances: 'You may rest content as far as the war is concerned. He is not near it. New Zealand is composed of several ilands such as Scotland and Ireland and there is no war in the iland that he is in. He is in Otago and the war in Aukland.'³³ And from Southland, Gordon McClure informed his sisters in Belfast that 'We have no connection with the War in this Island whatever as the Maoris here are too poor & never were warlike. There are several villages close at hand but they don't come much among the white men' (Ce 4e). Of course, not all North Island Maori were hostile either. Margaret Kilpatrick, for instance, discussed her amicable interactions with urban Maori at Otahuhu following her arrival there in 1862 (Ki 1d).

The most substantial migrant commentary concerning the conflict appeared in the correspondence of Roscommon native John Armstrong, a captain in the Taranaki Militia. His three letters provide lengthy and articulate accounts of the views he held towards the Maori population of New Zealand. Such impressions were inevitably influenced by his upbringing as a Church of Ireland minister's son and the family's long military tradition. Armstrong's opinions were most clearly imparted following Bishop Selwyn's visit to Taranaki in 1861 in which Selwyn promoted Sir George Grey's proposal for a new system of government.³⁴ While Armstrong indicated that the Maori appeared amenable to the proposal, the settlers were reluctant to make peace without a guarantee 'that a repetition of

³³ William McSparron (Australia) to his niece (Londonderry), 22 March 1864, PRONI, T 2743/1/11.

³⁴ This proposal involved a measure of Maori self-government. Debate exists as to whether it was genuine or a smokescreen to conceal preparations for war. For accounts of George Grey's life see Edmund Bohan, *To Be A Hero: Sir George Grey, 1812-1898* (Auckland, 1998) and J. Rutherford, *Sir George Grey 1812-1898: A Study in Colonial Government* (London, 1961). For Selwyn see Warren E. Limbrick (ed.), *Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand, 1841-68* (Palmerston North, 1983).

the two last years' events will not take place before they will again risk either their property or their lives'. Armstrong emphatically concluded, 'The more I think on the subject the more I am convinced that the perfect subjection of the Maori race to our rule is the only means humanly speaking of effecting a permanent peace with them. Let them find out the uselessness of prolonging the struggle with us and they will be more careful in future in taking up arms against us and more anxious to submit to our terms of peace' (Ar 2f, 2g).

Though peace eventually permeated Taranaki, the Wanganui campaign generated scathing comments about General Cameron including John Armstrong's observation that 'General Cameron has not gained many laurels either for himself or the troops under him by his Wanganui Campaign' (Ar 3g). Criticism of Cameron was widespread with later commentators attributing this to his incompetence, lethargy, fear, and moral doubts. Belich has queried such claims and suggested that Cameron's reluctance in the Wanganui campaign stemmed from his experience of the Waikato Wars.³⁵ Indeed, Belich has portrayed Cameron as 'A good tactician, a very good strategist, and a superb organiser'.³⁶

Quite possibly, the impact of the disturbances in New Zealand may have contributed to greater domestic political concern among the Irish who settled in New Zealand as opposed to Australia. But, given that warfare offered a sensational topic for inclusion in the correspondence, this may have guaranteed the survival of these letters. As with the Irish in New Zealand, the letters of German migrants in America also depict concern with political issues in relation to war, elections, and native hostility.³⁷ English

³⁵ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, pp. 206-7.

³⁶ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 1, p. 66.

³⁷ Kamphoefner, *News from the Land of Freedom*, p. 31.

and Scottish settlers in America, however, were less inclined to comment on political matters.³⁸

In 1864 the removal of government from Auckland to Wellington provoked John Armstrong to declare that the Editor of the Southern Cross, in conjunction with 'the Auckland public, seems to be a little beside himself with indignation at the idea of the Seat of Government being removed to Wellington. Were it still at Auckland no doubt his view of the matter would be very different. The other Provinces seem to view matters in a much more cheerful light and I think with reason' (Ar 3e). Auckland's inhabitants undoubtedly had good cause for alarm as the removal of Government contributed to a downswing in the city's prosperity. The benefit of government to a city was emphasised two decades later when William Cardwell explained attempts by Cantabrians to have the government relocated to Christchurch 'and if they only succeed it will help this City very much' (Ca 1e).

Prior to 1876, a provincial system of government characterised the colony.³⁹ James McClure highlighted these provincial divisions in 1865 when he informed his sister in Belfast that 'Southland is a Province of which Invercargill is the Capital. Otago is another Province of which Dunedin is the Capital. With the latter Province or Capital we have nothing to do' (Ce 5a). The separation, however, was short-lived. By the end of the decade Southland was bankrupt and eventually reunited with Otago in 1871. James's familiarity with the provincial system was presumably enhanced by his own political ambitions which he outlined to his sister in 1865, five years after his arrival in the colony (Ce 5f):

³⁸ Erickson, Invisible Immigrants, p. 259.

³⁹ See W. P. Morrell, The Provincial System in New Zealand, 1856-76 (London, 1932).

I was beaten 10 months ago for the seat for this district in the Provincial Council, But now have been called [u]pon to stand for this County, for the House of Representatives. The requisition [*erased: has to*] calling on me to become a candidate has been numerously signed by former opponents, & by the Gentleman who proposed my opponent for the Provincial Council, 10 month ago. I consider I have a good chance to be returned, but will let you know the result of the election which promises to be sharply contested as I oppose one of the big wigs.

McClure never gained a seat in the House of Representatives. In 1867, however, he was elected to the Provincial Council for Southland. Only one other migrant in this study, Hamilton Gilmer, entered the national political arena. However, several migrants were politically active in their local district. Hamilton McIlrath, for instance, 'secured a seat though competition was great' on the local school committee and at that time, 1882, had 'for the Last nine years been at the head of the poll as a member of the road Bord never was defieted' (Il 30d). Hamilton McIlrath was also a member of the Cemetery and Domain Board and on the Farmers Union while John Gilmore was elected to the Tauranga Borough Council.

In 1891 the Liberal Party was installed as New Zealand's first party government and so began a democratic style of politics. It has been suggested that this "Democracy" had no enemies in New Zealand and met with minimal resistance or even criticism.⁴⁰ But colonial politics had at least one critic, in the form of Alexander McKelvey, recently arrived from County Tyrone. In 1904, a year after his arrival, Alexander confessed, 'I know nothing of N. Z. politics but from all I can learn there is a good deal of the Tammany System in them' (Ky 1e). Tammany Hall, headquarters of the American Democratic Party in New York, possessed strong American Irish connotations and was renowned for corruption.

⁴⁰ David Hamer, 'Centralization and Nationalism, 1891-1912', in Keith Sinclair (ed.), The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand (Auckland, 1996; 1st edn. 1990), p. 132

The 'Liberal era' continued until 1912 at which time the Reform Party came to office. The following year industrial conflict erupted and, once again, Alexander McKelvey gave his opinion (Ky 3e):

We had a pretty bad time here with the strike ... but the farmers formed themselves into regiments of special constables and 1600 came down and took charge of the city under the Police Inspector and the strikers have been afraid to whisper ever since. We had a lot of local special constables but they were all on foot while the farmers have all got horses & are splendid horsemen.

These constables were known as 'Massey's Cossacks' after William Ferguson Massey who held the office of Prime Minister from 1912 until his death in 1925.⁴¹ When Philip Carroll learned of his demise, he remarked from Tipperary, 'Poor old Bill Massey lingered on a good while and so did not die to suit the Mack boys. Hard luck!' (Cl 6e).

Lodges/Sectarianism

William Ferguson Massey was a Mason and an Orangeman. Initially, both organisations in New Zealand were primarily fraternal. As one commentator has argued, 'Freemasonry and Orangeism flourished because they served as bridges to the Old World. By helping settlers communicate, socialize, and form communities, these associations were among the most significant and influential means by which colonists adapted to their new environment.'⁴² Yet both organisations in New Zealand were internally divided. An attempt to establish a Masonic Grand Lodge in 1876 was complicated by the existence of no fewer than nine Provincial Grand Lodges while in 1868 the Grand Orange Lodge only

⁴¹ For Massey see W. J. Gardner, *William Massey* (Wellington, 1969) and D. Christine Massey, *The Life of Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey P.C., L.L.D: Prime Minister of New Zealand, 1912-1925* (Auckland, 1996).

⁴² Jessica Harland-Jacobs, 'Maintaining the Connexion: Freemasonry, Orangeism, and the Construction of Imperial Identities in British North America' (MA, Duke University, 1995), p. 41.

had jurisdiction over the North Island.⁴³ The Orange Lodge became increasingly anti-Catholic with the enlistment of non-Irish Protestant members.⁴⁴

Only two sequences refer to Masonry in New Zealand. Shortly after his arrival in the colony, Alexander McKelvey enlightened his father in Tyrone that ‘I have not joined any Lodge here yet. I want to make sure of the best one. Mr Wilson the Rector tells me Masonry is not so good here as at home. The fees are pretty high but the Lodges accept too many questionable characters and Masonry is used too much for pushing business’ (Ky 1j). John and Andrew Gilmore, like McKelvey, were also members of ‘the secret bands of fellowship by whom we are so closely united’ (Ge 4e). Four years after his departure from Ireland, Andrew Gilmore received a request to remit funds to his brother’s Masonic Lodge on the Ards Peninsula. Andrew’s reply indicated that colonial rather than home matters took precedence: ‘As regards the Masonic Lodge I wish it all prosperity but I must decline to be a subscriber as there are so many calls at present that it is taking us all out time to meet them. I am a member of a Lodge here and we are on the same pursuit at present and the Hall will cost about £700’ (Ge 8a). Andrew also indicated that George Vesey Stewart ‘Belongs to the same Lodge as I do Here’ (Ge 12d).⁴⁵ Vesey Stewart was also an Orangeman though, interestingly, if the migrants in this study joined Orange Lodges, they made no mention of it.

⁴³ See R. E. Parkinson, History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland, vol. 2 (Dublin, 1957), pp. 310-11, and Moyes, ‘The Sash Their Fathers Wore’, p. ii.

⁴⁴ Moyes, ‘The Sash Their Fathers Wore’, p. ii.

⁴⁵ See the Gilmore profile in Chapter 3 for a lengthier discussion of their masonic connections.

Likewise, there is no indication in the letters of membership of the Hibernians though Michael Flanagan was apparently a member.⁴⁶ As with Orangeism, discussion was absent in the correspondence. Just as the letters are void of references to Orangeism and Hibernianism so too are they relatively free of sectarian issues, though silence does not necessarily imply that sectarianism was absent in the colony.⁴⁷ Alice Gilmore's account of her voyage to New Zealand, for example, contains prejudicial remarks about her fellow Catholic passengers (Ge 5f). And Alexander McKelvey wrote from Auckland in 1904, 'I read all about the Catholic Association & I think if the R. C's go on as at present, Ireland will be a good place to live away from in a few years more' (Ky 1g). Catholic correspondents also alluded to divisions between the denominations. Kate Keane indicated the attitudes of Catholics in Ireland towards those outside their faith: 'You know Mary how prejudiced the people at home are against any outside R I Church'. Despite this, Kate emphasised her tolerance confessing that 'some of my best & truest friends are Church of England' (Ke 8d). Likewise, John Strong in Tipperary beseeched his cousin Daniel to greet a new arrival in the colony who 'is a protestant but is true as steel' (St 6h). If Irish Protestant correspondents shared this tolerance, they were less inclined to express it.

Faith

As indicated in the Introduction, the religious composition of the migrants in this study is overwhelmingly Protestant. This disproportion, however, fits with what is known of Irish migrants in New Zealand: that they provided between 25 and 40 per cent of the

⁴⁶ For a discussion of Orangeism and Hibernianism in New Zealand see Chapter 3 in Davis *Irish Issues*, and Coleman's thesis, 'Transplanted Irish Institutions'. Flanagan's Hibernian affiliation is mentioned in Murphy, *The Flanagans of Tobertoby*, p. 34.

⁴⁷ In "The Battle of the Borough" Brosnahan has examined the sectarian conflict at Christchurch and Timaru in December 1879 and concluded that the events 'contributed to the development of a Catholic community apart from the Protestant mainstream', p. 59.

country's Irish-born contingent. The religious composition of the counties the migrants originated from generally reflects the faith of the migrants. Catholics from Tipperary, Limerick, Waterford, and Louth mirror the overwhelming Catholic population in those counties while Protestant migrants from Monaghan, Sligo, and Roscommon were a minority (see Table 11). A significant proportion of migrants were natives of the overwhelmingly Protestant populations of Antrim and Down while migrants from Armagh and Londonderry also emerged from counties with a slight Protestant majority.

Table 11 Denominations in Ireland and New Zealand in 1861

County	Catholic	Anglican	Presbyterian	Methodist	Other
Antrim	24.8	18.3	53.2	1.6	2.1
Armagh	48.8	30.9	16.2	3.2	0.9
Down	32.5	20.3	44.6	1.4	1.2
Londonderry	45.3	16.9	35.1	0.6	2.1
Tyrone	56.5	21.9	19.5	1.6	0.5
Monaghan	73.4	14.0	12.0	0.3	0.3
Sligo	90.1	8.4	0.7	0.6	0.2
Roscommon	96.1	3.6	0.2	0.1	-
Limerick	96.4	3.3	0.1	0.2	-
Louth	91.7	6.9	1.2	0.2	-
Tipperary North Riding	92.6	6.7	0.2	0.4	0.1
Tipperary South Riding	95.6	3.9	0.2	0.1	0.2
Waterford	96.6	2.9	0.2	0.1	0.2
New Zealand	11.0	44.9	21.4	8.5	14.2

Sources: W. E. Vaughan and A. J. Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971* (Dublin, 1978), pp. 51-53; H. R. Jackson, *Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand, 1860-1930* (Wellington, 1987), p. 20.

Donald Akenson, in his survey of Irish New Zealand correspondence, commented on 'The general absence of religious references and religious imagery and metaphor in the emigrant letters'.⁴⁸ While the holdings at PRONI utilised by Akenson may convey little

⁴⁸ Akenson, 'Reading the Texts' p. 404.

interest in religion, private collections indicate that Protestant and Catholic Irish, in Ireland and New Zealand, did concern themselves with religious matters. Faith was a vital element for the wellbeing of migrants and non-migrants alike.

The uncertainty of several months at sea sparked the utterance of familiar phrases of religious protection for the migrant's voyage. As such, Ann McClelland's departure from Dunronan, County Londonderry in 1840 provoked her mother's fervent prayer to 'commit you to the god of all Grace praying that agreeable to his promise he may be a Father to the Fatherless the strangers shield and the orphans stay' (Cd 1k). More than forty years later, upon the Catholic Daniel Strong's departure from his native Tipperary, his cousin John gravely implored 'may god and the blessed virgin watch over and protect you. May they guide your steps back again to holy Ireland to mingle your clay with your father's in the old spot under the shadow of Lorrha Abbey' (St 2h). Of course, Daniel was expected to contribute to his own welfare: 'I have every confidence in your own sense and in your own spirit and I hope God will watch over and protect you as I know you will pray for his assistance and protection' (St 2f).

Emigration was often perceived as a threat to faith and, given the minimal religious facilities available in the colony, there was widespread concern among home correspondents. As Elizabeth McClelland anxiously announced, 'It is reported that that place is a wicked place and little or no clergey or publick worship' (Cd 1i). Elizabeth's local minister, the Reverend Campbell, who had an old schoolfriend in the colony, also a clergyman, probably influenced Elizabeth's impression. Elizabeth therefore urged Ann 'not to neglect your duty to your God who has hitherto been the guide of your life' (Cd 1g). Given such representations, Elizabeth expressed relief upon learning of her daughter's continuing attendance at church: 'I was verry glad to hear that your mind was cheered in that strange place with religion and that you had found comfort going to hear M^r Eleart and

that you had enjoyd peace of mind after the Communion at Easter' (Cd 2c). More than forty years after Ann McClelland's emigration, concern for the migrant's religious welfare still preoccupied correspondents in Ireland. Daniel Strong, for instance, was urged to 'practice your Relegion as you did in portumna. Be always a good Catholic earnest and fervent' (St 2c).

Despite intentions, facilities for colonial worship were often unavailable and migrants could not or did not always wish to attend to their religious duties in the colony: 'I have not been to Church Mass or Meeting but twice since I left Home and that was in Australia. There is not a House of worship within 25 miles of me', James McIlrath noted in 1862 (II 6g). The perceived threat to religious faith caused by emigration concerned those in Ireland and James's family would perhaps have suspected that his non-attendance at a Unitarian service implied his defection to another faith. James therefore emphasised his absence from all forms of religious service. A similar situation confronted John Gilmore at Tauranga in 1876. As he informed home readers on the Ards Peninsula, 'We have no such thing as Unitarian service here. Only Church is Catholic and a few weeks ago a Presbyterian came here to preach in hall' (Ge 7h). In order to participate in colonial religious practices, adaptability was frequently necessary as Hamilton McIlrath indicated: 'I gave an acre of land for a presbitarain church about a hundred yards from my house whitch will improve the lack of it a bit. By the bye there is no uniterians here leastways no churchs or clergeyman so when I do go I go to the presbiterian' (II 19d).

Jackson has claimed that 'The churchgoing of New Zealanders was mediocre by the standards of the British at home' and attributed low attendance to a lack of facilities.⁴⁹ Meagre facilities for formal worship, brought about by limited church finances and a

⁴⁹ Hugh Jackson, 'Churchgoing in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', in *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 17, no. 1, April 1983, pp. 51, 53.

dispersed population, created movement between denominations for Protestant migrants. Facilities gradually improved but while there was general religious tolerance among adherents of the major creeds, some denominations encountered disapproval. As James McIlrath confided to his family in County Down, 'Now this Southbridge is a Nice little Town with one English Church and one Scotch or Presbeterian but by the way there is no Uniterian (Hush) it is a thing never mentioned here' (II 18c). In similar terms, his brother Hamilton informed, 'I still hold the same views but people here would call you a heritic if you mentioned such a thing' (II 28d). Despite colonial condemnation of certain creeds, James maintained, 'You may think perhaps that I have turned Methodist. No I am as sound a Unitarian as when I left Killinchy altho I never heard a unitarian Sermon since. We have a very eloquent little presbeterian Clergyman here but I must confess that I cannot believe all He says' (II 23c). Such disagreement and James's refusal to conform to their rules was cited as the reason that the minister refused to baptise one of James's children (II 28d). The episode echoes Erickson's claim that English and Scottish correspondents in America elected to avoid church rather than engage in services they disapproved of.⁵⁰

James McIlrath was also the only correspondent to reflect deeply on his faith: 'I used to have some queer notions about religion and you will not be surprised if the are queer still (such as no personal Devil yet Devils many). I have Nature in Her truest form and Revelation for my guide and with god for friend and Father I may be little worse than many who like the Parsons Horce find their way to the Church gate but there they leave their religion behind and if far from Church be near grace' (II 6g). Despite the extensive discussion of faith, there is no mention in the letters of ethnic solidarity being generated from attendance at church. In contrast, letters from Dutch migrants in America highlight

⁵⁰ Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 73.

the significance of bilingual pastors and native language liturgies in sustaining ethnic solidarity.⁵¹

The range of denominations in Ireland appears most prominently in a letter sent to Auckland from Sligo in 1923 by Robert Hughes who commented, 'This Country is almost Romancatholic with a slight sprink[*l*]ing of Protestants, Presbyterians, New Lights, Dippers, Methodists, Seekers Cooneyites' (Hu 1h). Hughes himself was a member of the Church of Ireland and followed his religious observance carefully (Hu 8f):

When I was laid up I lost count of the days of the week not being about seeing the people goöing to Mass Church &c. So on a Sunday evening M^r Morrison called to see me. Your mother had War Crys &c on the table by the fire for me & mark you this was sunday but I did not know it and after an hours conversation I asked what day it was and he very gravely said Tuesday so when my sunday came which was Friday by right I got up dressed gathered my Bible Hymnal &c and sat down to keep the Lords day in a befitting manner. I saw Lorries of dead Pigs & all sorts of traffic going on outside and I said to your Mother what does them brutes mean working that way on Sunday and all the time I could see there was a rather amusing smile or hidden grin on her face so then they had the laugh at me. It looked like my memory failing me but it was morrison the man that would not tell the truth unless where a lie would not suit but thank God I have a little memory yet.

Robert Hughes placed great emphasis on written texts but was bewildered by developments in 1928: 'What do you think of the church of England & the Prayer book. It seems we will have to pray by Act of Parliament' (Hu 12g). Robert continued to 'read a portion of scripture & a hymn every morning & evening. I am unable to attend the church services but I read my Bible at home & other good books if I can get them' (Hu 5i).

Likewise, John Armstrong, son of a Church of Ireland clergyman, assured his sister from New Plymouth in 1859, 'I do not neglect to read the Bible daily. It is a habit which from being so accustomed to both at home and with Uncle that I would feel uncomfortable were I to break it off' (Ar 1j). Elizabeth McCleland in Londonderry revealed the significance she placed on the Bible when she urged her daughter Ann to 'Make it your constant

⁵¹ Brinks, *Dutch American Voices*, p. 118.

companion & studey day & Night. It is able through Faith in Christ Jesus to make you wise unto salvation. Therefore meditate in it day and Night' (Cd 1j). The Bible also served a function as recorder of family births (Ki 10a, 10b).

Biblical extracts occasionally featured in the correspondence of female writers. From Tonduff in County Antrim, Catherine Colgan quoted from the Gospel of St. Luke after telling her son 'My Dear son many a prayer I have put up for you & the Lord will answer his own children's prayer when offered up in Faith. My Dear son it should encourage us more & more to pray in Faith for all around us & for all our Friends' (Co 4c).

No letter from Catholic correspondents mentioned the Bible. Philip Carroll, however, purchased a prayer book and rosary beads when visiting Ireland in 1925 while the Strong letters indicate attendance at stations in Tipperary in 1883 (Cl 18d; St 1d).

Although Irish-Australian correspondence highlighted the visibility of the church at home and abroad⁵², only one remark in a letter from Ireland to New Zealand referred to growing prosperity among the Catholic congregation in Ireland. As William Lysaght informed from Limerick in 1871: 'There is a beautiful convent now in Doon in Father Hickeys place. He left all his money to them and to some Monks who have now finished their buildings in Doon' (Ly 5a). Such a difference may be attributable to the strong concentration of Catholics in New South Wales and Victoria. In contrast, South Australia and New Zealand contained a larger Presbyterian component. However, both New Zealand and New South Wales possessed a dominant Church of England population.⁵³ Nevertheless, internal rather than external expressions of faith mattered more to Irish correspondents.

⁵² Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 604.

⁵³ The percentages of each colony's adherence to the principal denominations between 1860 and 1861 is charted in Table 2, p. 20, in H. R. Jackson, *Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand, 1860-1930* (Wellington, 1987).

If little mention was made of church buildings in Irish-New Zealand correspondence, there was concentrated discussion of religious personnel in both countries. When William Lysaght's mother died in 1871 he told his brother Edward in Auckland that 'Our curate was very constant in attendance upon her and so were the good Sisters of Mercy - from Doon Convent. To their kindness and attention (through the mercy of God) she owes the happy and contented death she died' (Ly 5a).

Catholic migrants displayed concern towards their clergy in Ireland and the colony. From Manawatu, more than forty years after her arrival, Catherine Sullivan sought information from her brother-in-law concerning a local Limerick priest: 'Dear Tom let me know is Father Enwright in Ballangarry or where is he. We had a missioner here a Father O'Donall who said he was in Ballangarry' (Su 1f). Lone gumdigger, Patrick Quinn, on the other hand, wrote home informing them of his contact with an Irish priest in Dargaville: 'Wee had a roman Catholick Priest here a month or 6 weeks befor Christmas the rev Father Maggrah. He is on a Mission. He is from Deerry in the North of Ireland. He was talking to mee and asked mee my name. I told him Patrick Quinn and he asked mee where I Came from. I told him I came from Newry and he told mee that he was there. I went to Confession to him' (Qu 3e). On his return visit to Tipperary in 1925, Philip Carroll praised his local Auckland priest remarking, 'Fr Colgan is good alright and if necessary I know he will help you. After some of the things I have seen and experienced since I came home I will be a regular attendant at that little church on the hill when I return if my health permits it' (Cl 9d).

Protestant migrants also commented on their colonial clergy including David Kilpatrick who obtained employment through the assistance of an Auckland-based minister (Ki 1c). Other migrant correspondents were less complimentary towards colonial clergy. Although James McIlrath admired the preaching ability of his local Southbridge preacher,

‘One of those men that can take out a text square Himself up and deliver a very good sermon without (Hem or Ha) none of those written affairs’ he admitted, ‘but still I for one can scarcely swallow all He says not with the same ease as His Revnd seems to deliver it anyhow’ (Il 18c).

Despite being without Unitarian facilities in the colony, the McIlraths sought information about the flock and the teachings from home. ‘You might let me know how the uniterians is getting on at home and especially M^r M^caws flock if he is still their minister’, Hamilton requested thirteen years after emigrating (Il 19d). Following the local minister’s retirement in Killinchy, Hamilton reflected, ‘He has been in charge over that congregatation a long time now, and I expect he has done his duty. We have no churches of that sort here and no one that I know of convenient that I could ask for a subscription except James’ (Il 29a). When fellow Unitarian and County Down migrant David McCullough learned of the retirement of the local Moneyreagh Unitarian minister, he indicated that he was ‘glad to hear that you are satisfied with your new minister as you moneyrea people are so hard to please. I believe you had a great day at the putting of him in’ (Cu 4e).

If Irish Protestant migrants recollected Irish-based clergy with affection, their counterparts in Ireland were less complimentary. Robert Hughes, for instance, mentioned that (Hu 6f):

Our Rector was here on a visit so we met for the first time after he being over a year & a half in the Parish, so we had a very good Exchange for a little while. He was greatly admiring your Photos and views of Residence &c. I gave him a couple of War Crys to bring home & read. He promised to call soon again. I said that I might Expect him any time the assesment money became due. So he looked at me as if I considered him a doubtful shepherd.

Robert Hughes was somewhat more complimentary in his assessment of a previous vicar at Achill Island who assisted the Island’s Catholic population during a period of

famine: 'The Rector in old times when there was great distress & famin got them a ship load of seed Potatoes to plant their ground. Well the people called them "Protestants" after the Parson, so the carry that name still & are good for Eating' (Hu 1h).

Prayer and blessings also featured regularly in the correspondence. Daniel Strong's cousins offered prayers for his passage while Ann McClelland's sister 'remembers you night & morning in her prayers as we do all' (St 2b; Cd 1c). When an old beau of Philip Carroll's heard he had died she 'had said prayers for the repose of my soul' (Cl 18g). Blessings also accompanied prayers at death. Kate Keane, having attended her father's death, informed her sister Mary that 'he left his blessing to all his children. So his last words Mary was a blessing' (Ke 5b).

James Keane's death was viewed positively given his poor health. Kate indicated that 'He was very happy & glad to die for he suffered great pain from kidney disease only 3 months ailing' (Ke 5b). Other correspondents also depicted death in a positive vein, particularly when it removed the deceased from the cares and tribulations of the world. When Daniel Strong's aunt died, his cousin Lizzie lamented, 'God has called her to a happy home beyond the skys' where grief cant reach her more' (St 4c). Likewise, Catherine Colgan, learning of her brother's suicide in New Zealand, remarked 'I hope he is better off not in this weary world' (Co 7e).

When, in 1870, James McIlrath learned of the premature death of his brother, he penned an in-depth reflection on his own mortality (Il 16b):

Death so sudden and its victim so young I hope will be a warning to each and all of us so to live the remainder of our lives that we may be prepared to Die. We know not how soon our souls may [*omitted: be*] called upon to give an account of the deeds done in the Body. One thing is certin that Die we must sooner or later and that every Day bring us nearer that awful and solemn event. But if god in his infinite wisdom sees fit to remove us from this earthly scene may He also enable us to submit without a murmer and in whatever way He deals with us his erring Children. And altho we may have to drink deeply of a bitter cup being sure that all

is for the best may we have from the heart Aclaim not my will but thine be done Oh Father.

Death struck the McIlrath household in Killinchy again fifteen years later. When James learned of his father's death he remarked, 'Let us not mourn and may he recieve that welcome sentance well done good and faithful servant enter ye into the joy of thy Lord' (II 31b). He added:

I hope Mother is bearing her bereavement with C[h]ristian resignation and that when it pleases god to call Her Home she may like him pass away peacefully and join him again in that land where parting is unknown. (Mother you have had a long lifetime. You have had length *length* of days beyound the alloted span and we are told that old age is honourable. Be resigned, and the time is not far distant when we all though now seperated shall meet again. None of us can reasonably expect to live to your age but may we live so that when our time comes we may be ready.

When his own wife died five years later, James's grief was intense (II 33b):

I think I might say there is not a pang that rends the heart of which I have not had a part. But we are told that the Lord loveth whom He chasteneth and that He will in no wise lay upon us more than we can bear. But still I have been constrained to say with Him who spake as never man spake Father if it is possible let this cup pass from me but not my will but thine be done. My cup was full to overflowing and I had to Drink it to the very Dregs and a Bitter Drink it was that Night my Dear partner breathed Her last.

Unlike the references to death in Irish-Australian correspondence, which were brief and unadorned⁵⁴, discussion of death in the letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand was often lengthy and replete with religious images. This may reflect a divergence between the writers but is probably more attributable to a difference in the letters that have survived.

The demise of siblings also provoked comment in the letters. From Tipperary, Martin Strong movingly related the death of his brother from cancer: 'They opened him, but was unable to remove the lump as it was connected to a vital part. He came home &

⁵⁴ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 506.

after a few months peacefully passed away. He faced death fully reconciled & never murmured. We all feel it awfully' (St 5b).

Other deaths reported were of spouses. Catherine Sullivan reassured her brother-in-law in Ballingarry that her husband 'died a happy death; just as you would put the candle out' while Margaret Kilpatrick sighed, 'David has gone to rest' (Su 1b; Ki 14c).

Occasionally, the death of acquaintances was reported and in the colony such deaths often resulted from accidents. Thus Hamilton McIlrath wrote 'I expect you have heard Long Before this that Robert Adair was killed by the kick of A horse' while the mother of a friend of Margaret Kilpatrick's 'was killed by the train. She was in her carriage & the hor[s]e took fright, so caused the accident' (Il 8d; Ki 12c).

Childhood fatalities were also regularly relayed. From Antrim, Catherine Colgan 'was so sorry to hear of M^{rs} Blacks 2 children dying on the one day' (Co 1f) and Margaret Kilpatrick lost a grandchild to bronchitis (Ki 14h). Thomas Hughes, meanwhile, learned that his sister 'Amelia buried one of her little children six weeks ago. It died from Diptheria and was only 4 days ill' (Hu 14c).

Death inevitably generated discussion of burial services and graveyards. When Mary Lysaght died, her son William claimed, 'We had a splendid funeral and had 20 gallons of Whiskey. Kept up the old style' (Ly 5d).⁵⁵ Unlike some correspondents, William remained silent as to his mother's burial place. Yet other letters from Ireland, particularly those from Catholic correspondents Kate Keane and John Strong, highlight the importance of funerals and burial places. When James Keane died in 1902, Kate Keane

⁵⁵ A letter sent from the McCarthys of Ballinlough, Leap, County Cork, to family members in America reported on the provision of six gallons of whiskey at a funeral in 1896. The sequence also testifies to the significance of burial places. See Patricia Trainor O'Malley, "'I remain your fond sister, Katie McCarthy, Ballinlough": Letters to America from a Dying Sister' in *Mizen Journal*, no. 6, 1998, pp. 87-104. I am grateful to Barra Ó Donnabháin for bringing this article to my attention.

informed her migrant sister Mary of his burial at Clashmore graveyard. She noted that 'We could not be shown greater respect if we had 2 thousand a year for rich & poor flocked to our Fathers funeral. People marvelled at the funeral. It was about 2 miles in length' (Ke 5c). She then told her sister (Ke 5d):

When I go to Clashmore I am going to place an everlasting wreath on Father's grave & also on Mother's in Dungarvan churchyard. Mother is buried with her own people (the Currans) & the grave is just opposite the home where she was born. I've been there & it is the biggest farmhouse in the old parish. I am going if possible to get a photo of the graves of Father & Mothers when I am home for I don't expect I shall ever visit only once more.

From Tipperary, John Strong made the pilgrimage to the graves of his cousins in Dublin only to discover 'I had the numbers found the spot But found also that others were burried in the same grave. Poor fellows' (St 6i).

Colonial deaths also generated comment as to a migrant's final resting place. When a neighbour from County Louth was killed in New Zealand, Michael Flanagan received a letter from the dead man's mother: 'I am Glad to heare of him getting a decent buirial ... If you would be so kind as to let me know the name of the churchyard that Patt was buired in as i ever will think of it' (Fl 11c, 11e). On occasion, colonial graves of Irish migrants attested to their ethnicity by proclaiming their place of birth or being inscribed with Irish motifs. William Quinn's headstone, for instance, declared his County Down origin, while the O'Neill headstone was decorated with shamrocks.

Death could also appear as a premonition in dreams.⁵⁶ According to Agnes Lambert, her father was 'dead I know for I have Been dreaming about him so much' (La 1c). Gumdigger Patrick Quinn informed his brother in Belfast, 'I Dremt one night about 6 months ago that I saw my mother standing in the Wharrie and I tho[ugh]t that shee looked

⁵⁶ Irish-American correspondence also contained premonitions of death. See Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, p. 514.

very sorefull [*sorrowful*]’ (Qu 1d). Margaret Kilpatrick’s mother appears to have placed great reliance on dreams. From Auckland following her arrival Margaret asked her brother to tell her mother that ‘she dreamed a very straight dream about this place’ (Ki 1d). In response to the letter, Mary Anne Reid told her daughter, ‘the long dream I had about you 2 years ago is nearly fulfilled’ (Ki 2c). Margaret’s brother George placed less credence in dreams but had his beliefs challenged in 1880: ‘I awoke this morning early out of a dream. There is something to me at present very strange about it. I dreamt I had a pretty long telegram from my Sister Marg¹ in N. Z. and before reading it the excitement awoke me. This is only 3 hours since and I have not quite recovered and the arrival of your letter seem to strange to me who never had the least faith in dreams or anything pertaining to them’ (Ki 8c). Margaret Kilpatrick also dreamed for when told of a friend’s death in Armagh, ‘Sophia and I made that “clean shift” for her, which you dreamed of’ (Ki 4b).

For correspondents such as Catherine Colgan, death was portrayed as the ultimate reunion of long parted kin: ‘I send my love to all my dear children and I hope to meet you all if not in this earth I hope we will all meet in heaven where there will be no parting’ (Co 5e). Elizabeth McClelland also expressed the wish that ‘Hoapeing that we shall one day meet in Heaven where we never have to part’ (Cd 2b). From Sligo in 1924, Robert Hughes echoed his son’s wish ‘that we shall all share that Heavenly joy of meeting in our Heavenly Father’s home through the atoning blood of our Redeemer’ (Hu 4g). Protestant migrants also shared the anticipation voiced by their non-migrant counterparts of a heavenly reunion. In 1882 James McIlrath recognised ‘as it is likely we shall never meet again in this world I have a certain hope we shall all meet in a better where there is no parting’ (II 30g).

This chapter has revealed that despite infrequent reference to formal ethnic institutions, Irish correspondents, Catholic and Protestant, remained aware of their Irish identity. As with their counterparts in Australia, however, Irish Protestants were more likely to voice their sense of Irishness. Both Catholic and Protestant correspondents did not hesitate to reflect on the negative as well as the positive characteristics of their ethnicity. Alcohol, in particular, was universally condemned. Unlike Irish-Australia correspondence which ‘seldom touched on public events or expressed political opinions’⁵⁷, public issues featured prominently in Irish-New Zealand correspondence. Letters from Ireland contained vivid depictions of Irish politics while migrant correspondents were, not surprisingly, more preoccupied with colonial affairs particularly conflict with the Maori. The absence of strong nationalist expressions in New Zealand further support Campbell’s claim that ‘the nationalist cause was to be embraced only warily.’⁵⁸ Likewise, sectarian issues featured rarely in the correspondence. Indeed, Catholics indicated strong alliances with Protestant acquaintances.

In contrast with Irish-Australian correspondence, which contained extensive comment on the visibility of the church, Irish-New Zealand correspondents were more likely to reflect on the internal elements of their faith. The letters exchanged between Ireland and New Zealand also contained more substantial accounts of death than the letters exchanged between Ireland and Australia. Catholics, especially, displayed substantial concern for the burial place of their departed kinsfolk. Protestant correspondents, on the other hand, were more likely to voice their anticipation for a heavenly reunion; a belief that undoubtedly made separation from their kinsfolk more tolerable.

⁵⁷ Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, p. 557.

⁵⁸ Campbell, ‘Irish Nationalism’, p. 33.

Conclusion

The letters in this study, spanning the years 1840 to 1937, record the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of individual Irish correspondents who endeavoured to maintain their intimate connections with separated kinsfolk. Their reflections, utilised in conjunction with biographical details, record the critical importance of the family's involvement at origin and destination in Irish migration to New Zealand. Nevertheless, migrants did not passively follow established migration chains but actively and deliberately selected their destination based on a range of information from their 'global networks of communication'.

As Part One revealed, Irish-New Zealand correspondence depicted numerous alliances and conflicts in families. Though these relationships were largely facilitative, several migrants asserted their individual interests at the expense of collective strategies. This affected their relationships which, as the correspondence reveals, became fraught or occasionally ceased altogether. Other strains evident in the correspondence provide strong support for arguing that discordant relationships were a motive for migration. Likewise, the disruption to households brought about by the death of one or both parents may also have hastened departure.

Many migrants made their departures with family or friends and the profiles indicate the extensive presence of kin and neighbourhood networks in New Zealand. These associations present an additional challenge to Fairburn's claim that New Zealand was characterised by weak kin and community ties. Seemingly, the strength of these ties prevented effusive expressions of exile, loneliness, and homesickness that many editors of migrant correspondence have emphasised. In addition, this thesis suggests that many of the social problems attributed by Fairburn to the absence of personal ties (such as

loneliness, drunkenness, and violence) sprung instead from the tensions and strains generated by intimate associations.

Quite apart from the extensive presence of friends and family in New Zealand, the correspondence also reveals the presence of associates at other destinations within the Irish diaspora. North America and Australia, in particular, were major destinations. Indeed, several Irish migrants in New Zealand spent a period of time elsewhere before their arrival in New Zealand. Non-migrant intermediaries in Ireland kept Irish migrants in New Zealand informed of these contacts and also documented the instances of return migration to Ireland.

Indeed, reverse migration was a major theme in Irish-New Zealand correspondence, with reports, requests, and longings to return to Ireland featuring in half of all sequences. The reasons for reverse migration included disappointment at destination, perceived success, pressing obligations, inheritance issues, and temporary visits. In all, five migrants in this study returned to Ireland. That four of these migrants returned to New Zealand suggests that Ireland provided little attraction. Irish migrants in New Zealand were also consistently urged to return to Ireland and several migrants thoughtfully contemplated their return. Departure from Ireland, then, did not necessarily entail a permanent separation. Indeed, it is significant that many migrants claimed at the outset of their departure that their migration was only a temporary undertaking. Whether such assertions were genuinely intended is unknown. Perhaps such declarations were also a means to ease the impact of departure, the impact of which non-migrants voiced more vividly.

Many specific contrasts between Ireland and New Zealand featured in the correspondence exchanged between the two countries. Chapter 7 highlighted the contrasts between a range of factors including the climate, employment, farming practices, the natural environment, prices, housing, and leisure. In general, reports from New Zealand

tended to be more favourable. Contrasts between Ireland and New Zealand are also discernible in Chapter 8, particularly with regard to political matters. Whereas non-migrants reported extensively on Irish political matters, colonial correspondents expressed immense interest in the conflict with the Maori.

By placing this study in a comparative context, several contrasts have also emerged with other editions of Irish and non-Irish correspondence. In common with Irish-Australian correspondents, migrants expressed little sense of grievance or disappointment towards their destination, minimal sectarian animosity, and stressed the importance of home. Contrasts with Irish-Australian personal letters include penetrating impressions of Irish and colonial political matters, criticism of kin and neighbours in Ireland, elaborate accounts of death, engaging discussions of male-female relations, extensive reports on marriages, and substantial accounts of the negative aspects of alcohol

Such contrasts seemingly reflect the varying responses of divergent Irish backgrounds and foreign foregrounds. The correspondents in this study, for instance, emerged primarily from Munster and north-east Ulster. In particular, Antrim and Down, the two most Protestant counties in Ireland, supplied several writers. Significantly, few letters in this study originate before 1860. Consequently, the representations differ substantially with accounts emanating from correspondents in North America. The environment in which migrant correspondents found themselves also influenced the content of their letters.

What are the implications of this thesis for the study of the Irish diaspora, the study of the Irish in New Zealand, migration theory, and the use of correspondence in the study of migration? Essentially, the study has highlighted the significance of viewing Irish migration within a family context which has revealed migrants to be deliberate rather than passive movers. Though differences existed between Protestant and Catholic letters, both

displayed similar preoccupations with family concerns. These findings indicate the necessity for a new edition of Irish-American correspondence, and the publication of correspondence between writers and recipients at other points of the Irish diaspora, following the format of this and Fitzpatrick's edition of personal letters. Such compilations would further indicate the influence of Irish background and foreign foreground in dictating the content of personal letters.

This study has also illuminated the diversity of individual experiences of migration and the impact on migrants and non-migrants. It has also uncovered a range of alliances and conflicts within families. Furthermore, it has posited explanations for non-migration, repeat migration, and return migration. The use of personal correspondence in examining these issues has provided a necessary corrective to studies based on statistical analysis in which the experiences of individuals are largely hidden.

Given the significance of correspondence as an avenue for exploring migration, the letters exchanged between English, Scottish, and Welsh settlers in New Zealand with their acquaintances should be located, transcribed, edited, and published. Such an agenda would permit comparative analysis to ascertain if these letter-writers shared the preoccupations featured in Irish-New Zealand correspondence. Would the letters of non-Irish writers reflect a strong family involvement in migration or mirror the writings of colonial women which was characterised by an absence of family ties? Would non-Irish correspondents also discuss the conflicts and alliances among their kin and neighbourhood networks? And would their bonds with non-migrants echo James McIlrath's reflection, half the world from home, that 'Seas may divide and oceans roll between But Friends is Friends whatever intervene'?

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