Consuming Behaviours Ireland 1922-1960

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of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

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Summary

This thesis addresses consuming behaviours in Ireland 1922-1960. Few works have previously addressed the history of consumption in twentieth century Ireland, and this work aims to redress this lacuna. Consuming behaviours are defined as activities that revolve around the marketplace, but do not necessarily involve purchasing. 1922 was selected as the start point because it is the foundation year of the Irish Free State, and 1960 was selected as the end point primarily because of the manner in which the period has been presented by broader Irish historiography. The dominant meta-narratives on Ireland in this period emphasise poverty and economic backwardness, overbearing control by the Church and State, and ignorance of international trends and developments. This thesis seeks to re-examine these narratives and ask how relevant they are to understanding everyday life in Ireland by using consumer behaviours as a frame of analysis.

The research involved consulting largely unconsidered source material, including advertisements in newspapers and magazines as well as oral history archives and records of associations that have received limited attention like the Irish Housewives Association. Additionally, many government archives were consulted, in particular Department of Taoiseach, Department of Industry and Commerce and Department of Justice files. The use of a wide variety of primary source material resulted from the aspiration to encompass the complexity of Irish consumer behaviours.

The thesis divides somewhat inexactly into two sections. The first is intended to offer context in regard to both the everyday practicalities of consumer decision making and the wider political, economic and cultural developments that shaped, limited and informed their behaviours. The first chapter covers the entire period and provides an introduction to the commonly purchased goods and services, the retail locations and the

credit or cash arrangements used to purchase them as well as how authority and responsibility over consumption was divided within families. This discussion is mediated according to the various different experiences of consumers based on the rural/urban divide, geographical location and social status. The following two chapters provide context and analysis for specific time periods, namely the Economic War and the Emergency and afterward. These periods were selected as especially significant for consumers in Ireland, and they also serve to explain shifts in thought and discourse on consuming. During the Economic War consumption was framed primarily in terms of nationalism, and 'Buying Irish' was viewed as the best protection for consumers. During and after the Emergency, however, the State came to be valorised as the best protector, albeit imperfectly, of consumers. After 1940 consumer nationalism faded in significance and visibility.

The second section focusses on specific consumer behaviours; dance hall attendance, pilgrimage travel and emigration linked consumption. These three case studies were selected because they closely match the definition of consumer behaviours used in the thesis. Additionally, each case study is representative of a certain prominent strand of writing on Irish social history, social control, Catholicism and emigration respectively. The chapters on dance halls and pilgrimages both highlight the limits of Church control over consumers and the relative agency of consumers to create their own behaviours. The chapter on emigration discusses the receipt of consumer goods from relatives abroad and the importance of this practice in spreading knowledge and encouraging individuals to leave the country.

Together the chapters emphasise the agency of consumers and question how much control authorities, including the Church and State, were able to exercise over their behaviours. At the same time the limitations and restrictions affecting consumers are highlighted and discussed, but they are not given the often exaggerated significance found in some historiography. Frequent comparisons are drawn with other national

contexts, both within and outside Europe, and the idea of Irish exceptionalism is repeatedly challenged. Most importantly the thesis argues for a reinterpretation of the dominant historiographical narratives on the era 1922-1960 and a more nuanced examination of everyday life during this time.

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Through the course of researching and writing this dissertation I have incurred many debts of gratitude. I could not have completed this work without the help and guidance of those listed below.

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I am also indebted to the many archivists and librarians who have assisted my research tremendously. In particular, I wish to thank the staff in the National Archives of Ireland, the National Library of Ireland, Trinity College Library, the Dublin Diocesan Archives, the Galway Diocesan Archives and the Electricity Supply Board Archives. I owe a special debt to Dr Maura Cronin, who gave me access to the Oral History Archive in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

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I am forever indebted to my family, especially my parents Carol and James. I must also gratefully acknowledge other members of my family who have supported me throughout my entire life. Thank you Isobel, Susan, Kathryn, and Myrtle. I also want to thank my grandfather Hugh Irvine. He was a historian who worked for many years on the social history of Northern Irish folk, and I believe he would have been pleased to see me complete a PhD on this topic.

Finally thanks to my wonderful girlfriend, Imogen. She has always offered love and support, along with her brilliant proof-reading skills. Without her I could not have completed this PhD.

Abbreviations

Central Statistics Office (STAT)

Department of Industry and Commerce (INDC)

Department of Justice (JUS)

Department of the Taoiseach (TAOIS)

Dublin Diocesan Archives (DDA)

Galway Diocesan Archives (GDA)

Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA)

Irish Housewives Association (IHA)

Irish Republican Army (IRA)

Knock Shrine Society (KSS)

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association (NAIDA)

National Archives of Ireland (NAI)

National Library of Ireland (NLI)

Official Publications Ireland (OPIE)

Oral History Archive (OHA)

Public Dance Halls Act 1935 (PDHA)

Saint Vincent de Paul (VDP)

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA)

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Introduction

This dissertation will explore consuming behaviours in Ireland in the period 1922 to 1960. The history of consumption has received relatively scant attention in Irish historiography, which is a notable lacuna given its importance to everyday life. The dissertation will highlight the significance of consuming behaviours as everyday activities, but ones with the capacity to both inform and transform wider political, economic and cultural developments. The period 1922 to 1960 has been selected because of its continued image in the broader Irish historiography. Irish society prior to the 1960s has frequently been presented as economically backward, isolated and controlled by a Church-State nexus.[1] There has also been a tendency in much of the historiography to focus on the uniqueness of the Irish experience, rather than seeking appropriate international comparisons.[2] Some recent research has challenged these meta-narratives and offered a more nuanced interpretation, but the narratives still have a currency in Irish historiography.[3]

[1] Tom Garvin, *Preventing the Future: Why was Ireland so poor for so long?* (Dublin, 2005); Erika Hanna, *Modern Dublin: Urban Change and the Irish Past 1957-1973* (Oxford, 2013), pp 7-8; Joseph Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1989), pp 179-328; John Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland* (Dublin, 1999); Tom Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 1998); James Smith, 'The Politics of Sexual Knowledge: The Origins of Ireland's Containment Culture and the Carrigan Report (1931)', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, xiii (2004); James Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment* (Notre Dame, 2007).

[2] Peter Martin, *Censorship in the Two Irelands 1922-1939* (Dublin, 2006); Mike Cronin and John Regan, 'Introduction' in Mike Cronin and John Regan (eds.), *Ireland: The Politics of Independence* (London, 2000), p. 7; Kevin Rockett, *Irish Film Censorship: A Cultural Journey from Silent Cinema to Internet Pornography* (Dublin, 2004); Barbara O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identity 1900-2000* (Cork, 2013), p. 42.

[3] Mary Daly, *Sixties Ireland: Reshaping the Economy, State and Society, 1957-1973* (Cambridge, 2016); Brian Girvin, 'Economic Policy, continuity and crisis in de Valera's Ireland 1945-61', *Irish Economic and Social History*, xxxviii (2011), pp 36-53; Brian Girvin, 'Before the Celtic Tiger: change without modernisation in Ireland 1959-1989', *Economic & Social Review*, xli, no. 3 (Autumn, 2010); Caitriona Clear, *Women of the House: Women's household work in Ireland 1922-1961: discourses, experiences, memories* (Dublin, 2000); Caitriona Clear, *Women's Voices in Ireland: women's magazines in the 1950s and 60s* (London, 2015); Eleanor O'Leary, *Youth and Popular Culture in 1950s Ireland* (London, 2018).

A study of consuming behaviours permits a reinterpretation of everyday life in Ireland prior to 1960. Relatively few works have addressed the history of everyday life in Ireland in this period, but such research is vital to reconsider conventional political history and conventional social history. The dissertation will highlight the continued popularity of foreign products and foreign brands during the Economic War. It will also show, in regard to both dancing and pilgrimages, that the behaviour of consumers could not always be effectively limited by clerical or state authority, and that consumers in Ireland may have enjoyed greater freedom than has previously been imagined. Consumers in Ireland were still limited by many factors, including income, class, geographical location, as well as the action of the State and the Catholic Church. The dissertation will not ignore these limitations, but will also focus on the agency of consumers and their ability to undermine supposed restrictions.

This dissertation will raise questions of the broader Irish historiography and argue for a more nuanced interpretation of the period 1922-1960. It will also offer new insights for international research into consumption history. Many of the topics broached by the study have received limited attention previously in consumption historiography. The title 'consuming behaviours' develops a new strand in consumption research that is more interested in the behaviours associated with consuming rather than the acts of shopping or buying themselves. The last three chapters of the dissertation address case studies of particular consumer behaviours: dancing; pilgrimage travel; and consuming linked to emigration. These case studies were selected as many consumers remembered them being very consequential in their everyday lives. Each study also addresses one feature seen as central to Irish exceptionalism, namely social control, the Catholic Church and emigration. The case studies will follow from the first half of the study, which will provide the wider political, economic and cultural context for everyday consumer action?.

Consumption Historiography

Research into consumption in the Irish context has been comparatively limited, but there are some examples.[4] Stephanie Rains and Barbara Walsh have written on shopping practices; Rains focussed on department stores in nineteenth century Dublin, while Walsh concentrated on the Woolworths stores in twentieth century Ireland.[5] Bernadette Whelan, and John Strachan and Claire Nally have written on advertising practices and trends.[6] This research has provided valuable insights for this dissertation. The work of Rains, as well as Nally and Strachan, though addressing the period prior to independence offered insights into the development of modern consumer nationalism in Ireland and that is discussed in the second chapter.[7] Walsh has demonstrated the popularity of American shopping practices and products and Whelan has also highlighted the influence that American advertising practices had on Irish advertisements in the period prior to 1960.[8]

Paddy Dolan has written on consumption from a historical sociological perspective. His work offers a theoretical account of shifts in discourse on consumption throughout the twentieth century, which was influenced especially by the work of Norbert Elias.[9] Dolan has argued that there was a shift in discourse on consumption in the 1960s, from 'a collective, and socially regulated process towards a more self-determined process'; beginning in the 1960s there was greater focus on individual

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[4] Martyn Powell, *The Politics of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2005).
[5] Stephanie Rains, *Commodity Culture and Social Class in Dublin 1850-1916* (Dublin, 2010); Barbara Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good: Woolworths and the Irish Main Street* (Dublin, 2011).
[6] Claire Nally and John Strachan, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922* (Basingstoke, 2012); Bernadette Whelan, 'American influences on Irish advertising and consumerism 1900-1960: fashioning Irishwomen', *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, xi, no. 1 (2014).
[7] Rains, *Commodity Culture and Social Class*, pp 95-125; Nally and Strachan, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922*, pp 4-10 + 45-87.
[8] Barbara Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good*, pp 67-144; Bernadette Whelan, 'American influences on Irish advertising and consumerism 1900-1960', pp 159-82.
[9] Paddy Dolan, 'Developing consumer subjectivity in Ireland: 1900–1980', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, ix (2009), pp 117–41; Paddy Dolan, 'Figurational dynamics and parliamentary discourses of living standards in Ireland', *British Journal of Sociology*, lx (2009), pp 721–39.

self-expression through consuming.[10] The broad trend identified by Dolan is correct, certainly if approached through a discourse analysis of political debates and newspaper editorials. This dissertation will offer a different approach based on an analysis of the behaviour of consumers, though it will also take account of discourse on consumption. The argument advanced by Dolan is too absolute to capture the nuance of consumer experience in Ireland. Dolan's thesis fails to distinguish between different concepts of a 'collective' in twentieth century Ireland. Chapters two and three will discuss the shift in discourse on consumption from 'the nation' in the inter-war period to 'the state' during and after the Emergency. Both are concepts of a collective, but the chapters will argue that discourse on 'the nation' and 'the state' asked very different demands of individual consumers and of society.

The interests of Irish consumption historians mirror, to a certain extent, those found in the international historiography on consumption. Consumer nationalism has been the focus of several studies. T.H. Breen's *Marketplace of the Revolution* is perhaps the most notable example, but research has also been conducted into consumer nationalist movements in China, India, and South America.[11] Beyond consumer nationalism the intersection between consumption, citizenship and politics has been of significant research interest.[12] Frank Trentmann and Lizabeth Cohen

[10] Dolan, 'Developing consumer subjectivity in Ireland: 1900–1980', p. 125.
[11] T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of the Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford, 2004); Karl Gerth, 'Consumer Nationalism' entry in Dale Southern (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Consumer Culture* (London, 2011), pp 279-81; Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908* (Telangana, 2011); Lisa Trivedi, *Clothing Gandhi's Nation: Homespun Modern India* (Bloomington, 2007); Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (London, 2003); Benjamin Orlove, (ed.), *The Allure of the Foreign: Imported Goods in Postcolonial Latin America* (Ann Arbor, 1997).
[12] Kate Spur and Frank Trentmann (eds.), *Citizenship and Consumption* (Basingstoke, 2008); Matthew Hilton and Martin Daunton (eds.), *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America* (Oxford, 2001); Matthew Hilton, 'The female consumer and the politics of consumption n twentieth-century Britain', *The Historical Journal*, xlv: no. 1 (2002); Charles McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1940* (Chapel Hill, 2006); Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford, 2000); Harmutt Berghoff, 'Consumption Politics and Politicized Consumption: Monarchy, Republic, and Dictatorship in Germany, 1900-1939' in Hartmut Berghoff and Uwe Spiekermann (eds.), *Decoding Modern Consumer Societies* (Basingstoke, 2012).

have written significant works on citizenship and consumption in Britain and the United States, respectively.[13] The role of consumer movements in influencing political decision-making and socio-economic developments has received significant attention.[14] Matthew Hilton's work on consumer movements in twentieth century Britain has demonstrated their influence on political discourse.[15] Victoria de Grazia's fascinating *Irresistible Empire* details the Americanisation of European culture through consumer goods and behaviours.[16]

The consumer culture of totalitarian regimes has also attracted significant research interest. Several studies have focussed on Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, usually seeking to determine if the professed ideology of the regimes affected the consumer behaviour of the citizens living there.[17] This has also been the case to some extent for communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Russia. Historians have asked how various regimes' professed public commitment to collective development was facilitated alongside private consumer desires.[18] Others have looked

[13] Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Consumption, Civil Society and Commerce in Modern Britain* (Oxford, 2008); Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, 2003).
[14] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: The Search for an Historical Movement* (Cambridge, 2003); Matthew Hilton, 'The female consumer and the politics of consumption in twentieth-century Britain'; James Hinton, 'Militant housewives: the British Housewives' League and the Attlee government', *History Workshop Journal*, xxxviii (1994); Peter Gurney, *Co-operative culture and the politics of consumption in England 1870-1930* (Manchester, 1996); Nicole Robertson, *The Co-operative Movement and Communities in Britain 1914-1960* (Farnham, 2010).
[15] Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain;* Matthew Hilton, 'The female consumer and the politics of consumption'.
[16] Victoria de Grazia, Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-century Europe (Harvard, 2005).
[17] Hartmut Berghoff, 'Consumption Politics and Politicized Consumption', pp 125-48; Adam Arvidsson, 'Between Fascism and the American Dream: Advertising in Interwar Italy', *Social Science History*, xxv, no. 2 (2001), pp 151- 86; Adam Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity: Italian advertising from fascism to postmodernity* (London, 2003), pp 27-64; S. Jonathan Wiesen, 'National Socialism and Consumption' in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 433-50; Bianca Gaudenzi, 'Press Advertising and Fascist Dictates', *Journalism Studies*, xiv, no. 5 (2013); Emanuela Scarpellini, *Material Nation: A Consumer's History of Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2011), pp 85-104.
[18] Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Things under Socialism: the Soviet Experience' in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 451-66; Kacper Poblocki, '"Knife in the Water": The Struggle over Collective Consumption in Urbanising Poland' in Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger

to certain consumer products and practices as symbolic markers representing opposition to communist regimes.[19] There has been much historical research less interested in the directly political aspects of consumption. Initially much of this work was interested in what could straightforwardly be labelled as consumption. Department stores in late nineteenth century Europe have attracted significant attention, as have supermarkets in both the United States and Europe.[20] The female shopper and her significance to these new shopping environments has often been the focus of these studies.[21]

More recently research on consumption has moved into new areas. Interest in gender and consuming has addressed male in addition to female consumers and there has been increased interest in sexuality and consumption.[22] There has also been increased interest in individual products and their significance in society and for individuals. The work

(eds.), *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe* (Oxford, 2012), pp 68-90.

[19] Tamas Dombos and Léna Pellandini-Simányi,'Kids, Cars or Cashews? Debating and Remembering Consumption in Socialist Hungary' in Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (eds.), *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe* (Oxford, 2012), pp 325-50; Paulina Bren, 'Tuzex and the Hustler: Living it up in Czechoslovakia' in Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (eds.), *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe* (Oxford, 2012), pp 27-48; Raymond G. Stokes, 'Plastics and the New Society: The German Democratic Republic in the 1950s and 1960s' in Susan Reid and David Crowley (eds.), *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe* (Oxford, 2000), pp 65-80.

[20] Louisa Iarocci, *The Urban Department Store in America 1850-1930* (Abingdon, 2014); Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (eds.), *Cathedrals of Consumption: The European Department Store 1850-1939* (Farnham, 1999); Tracey Deutsch, *Building a Housewives Paradise: Gender, Politics and American Grocery in the 20th Century* (Chapel Hill, 2010); Erika Rappaport: *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, 2000); Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, 'Small Shops and Department Stores' in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford, 2012), pp 267-87.

[21] Deutsch, *Building a Housewives Paradise*; Lisa Tiersten, 'Marianne in the Department Store: Gender and the politics of consumption in turn-of-the-century Paris' in Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (eds.), *Cathedrals of Consumption: The European Department Store 1850-1939* (Farnham, 1999), pp 116-134; Rappaport: *Shopping for Pleasure*.

[22] Justin Bengry, 'Courting the Pink Pound: Men only and the Queer Consumer 1935-39', *History Workshop,* lxviii, no. 1 (2009), pp 122-48; Justin Bengry, 'Who is the Queer Consumer? Historical Perspectives on Capitalism and Homosexuality' in Erika Rappaport, Sandra Trudgen Dawson and Mark Crowley (eds.), *Consuming Behaviours: Identity, Politics and Pleasure in 20th Century Britain* (London, 2015), pp 21-36.

undertaken by Erika Rappaport on tea in Britain and the British Empire is a good example here.[23] A broader understanding of consuming has become more prominent in historical research. Brett Bebber has written on the consumption of violence at British football matches in the 1970s.[24] Bebber analysed the behaviours around the traditionally understood act of consumption.

The title for this dissertation is borrowed from a recent work on consumption history in twentieth century Britain edited by Rappaport, Dawson and Crowley. In the introduction the editors explained their choice of the term 'consuming behaviours' for the following reasons:

> We have used the idea of consumer behaviour instead of consumption or consumer society to highlight the similarities between past and present and a range of political, social, cultural and economic activities that revolve around the marketplace but do not necessarily involve purchasing.[25]

This justification chimes with the aims of this study. By focussing on 'activities that revolve around the marketplace', Rappaport et al. offer a broadened understanding of consuming. Shopping is an immediately understandable act of consumption. What about paying for a dance or going to the cinema? Presumably there is a moment of purchase involved in the activity, but if the individual had sneaked into the cinema or the dance hall for free, would it still qualify as consumption? Are consumer goods received as presents from friends and relatives no longer consumer items once they are given as gifts? It seems that there is an element of consumption involved in all of these activities even if one could argue that they are not all defined simply by consuming. For this reason, proceeding with a broad definition of consuming is a useful approach. The Rappaport et al. definition is particularly appropriate for pre-1960s

[23] Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, 2017).
[24] Brett Bebber, '"The Misuse of Leisure": Football Violence, Politics and Family Values in 1970s Britain', in Brett Bebber (ed.), *Leisure and Cultural Conflict in Twentieth Century Britain* (Manchester, 2012), pp 129-56; Brett Bebber, 'Unwanted Consumers: Violence and Consumption in British Football in the 1970s', in Erika Rappaport, Sandra Trudgen Dawson and Mark Crowley (eds.), *Consuming Behaviours: Identity, Politics and Pleasure in 20th Century Britain*, pp 103-20.
[25] Rappaport, Trudgen Dawson and Crowley (eds.), *Consuming Behaviours*, p. 3.

Ireland, in which many consumers experienced scarcity, and a comparable lack of amenities and facilities. And, yet, in this society consuming continued even if purchasing was not always involved. What is meant by consuming could be expanded potentially exponentially to include any and all activities. The Rappaport et al. definition, whilst broad, does provide some limiting boundaries to ring-fence the scope of the project.

The aim of this study is to move beyond the relatively limited definition of consuming so far adopted in much Irish historiography, and largely in international historiography, by drawing on the examples of the new research listed above. Everyday purchasing will be considered, especially in the first half of this study. Consuming lives are defined by mundanity to a significant extent; provisioning the house via weekly or daily shopping routines. They are also punctuated by moments of excitement or significance. The second half of the dissertation will focus on such moments: dancing: the pilgrimage; and consumption linked to emigration. As in the Rappaport et al. definition, the behaviours selected 'revolve around the marketplace, but do not necessarily involve purchasing'. The final chapters are intended as case studies of specific consuming behaviours.

Previous studies of consuming in Irish historiography have often been rooted largely in the discussion of a particular class or social status group behaviour. Tony Farmar's work specifically addresses the middle class, and this is also the case in Rains's discussion of department store shopping and Orla Fitzpatrick's discussion of wedding gifts in 1940s Ireland.[26] Walsh's work on Woolworth's stores focusses primarily on the working class and lower middle class segment of the population.[27] The dissertation aims not to be limited by class and social hierarchy in its

[26] Farmar, *Privileged Lives*; Rains, *Commodity Culture and Social Class*; Orla Fitzpatrick, 'The Material Culture of Marriage: What wedding gifts can tell us about Dublin in the 1930s', *Éire-Ireland* (Spring-Summer, 2011), pp 177-93.
[27] Barbara Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good*.

discussion of consuming behaviours, whilst also accepting that such behaviours depended very much on income, social hierarchy and geographical location, which will be addressed at length in the first chapter. The three case studies selected are good examples of consumer behaviours that were not limited to a particular class or social grouping in Ireland. Dancing spaces ranged from worn-down barns in remote areas to elaborate hotel ballrooms. Pilgrimage travel included month long trips to the Holy Land, but also one day journeys to Knock or even half day journeys to local gravesites. Emigrants, despite their image as the poor and despised of Irish society, often came from relatively affluent backgrounds.[28] This dissertation will not ignore the differences in these various behaviours caused by wealth or social hierarchy, but neither will it focus specifically on one group over another.

As well as offering a new approach to consumption history in the Irish context, this dissertation also explores areas that have received limited attention from international historiography. The fifth chapter, on pilgrimages, will understand religious practice in part as a consumer behaviour. Kauffman has already approached the Lourdes shrine from this perspective, but little additional research has been conducted into the connection between religious practices and consumer behaviours.[29] This is despite the increasing sociological research interest in pilgrimages as an act of consuming.[30] The sixth chapter, on consuming and emigration, will view gifts sent between emigrants and their families in Ireland in part as consumer objects. Gifts such as these have often not been viewed as consumer products within the historiography, but in the Irish context it is important to hold at least a dual perception of these items that held both an emotional and a cultural significance. 'Consuming the Dance Hall' is so named because it studies the practice of attending dance halls,

[28] Patrick Blessing, 'Irish emigration to U.S. 1800-1920' in P.J. Drudy (ed.), *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation and Impact* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 16.
[29] Suzanne Kaufman, *Consuming Visions: Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine* (Chicago, 2005).
[30] Antón Pazos (ed.), *Redefining Pilgrimage: New Perspectives on Historical and Contemporary Pilgrimages* (Abingdon, 2014).

which included much more than simply dancing. This broad view of consuming behaviours offers new approaches for the international history of consumption.

Irish Historiography

In addition to discussing consumption historiography, the dissertation must also be situated within the broader trends and debates of Irish historiography. First, it will be helpful to contextualise macroeconomic developments in Ireland prior to 1960 and the attendant historical debates. Irish nationalist hopes of rapid economic development post-independence were not meet in reality. Despite some efforts to transform the economy, especially Fianna Fáil's push to industrialise in the 1930s, Ireland remained poor in comparison to its near neighbours.[31] Britain proved an attractive destination for many Irish citizens looking to improve their standard of living. Figures on net migration show that 50,000 Irish men and women left the country annually during the 1950s.[32]

Tom Garvin's work, *Preventing the Future*, asked in the subtitle 'why was Ireland so poor for so long?'[33] He argued that a series of postponed political decisions in the post-war era prevented Ireland from enjoying the same economic growth seen in the rest of Western Europe after 1945.[34] The 1950s especially has been viewed as a decade of economic and societal stagnation. An edited collection of essays on the 1950s used the title 'The Lost Decade' to capture this impression. In economic and social histories of twentieth century Ireland terms like 'Malaise' or 'Gloom' for the 1950s are often transposed against 'Growth'

[31] Mary Daly, *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity* (Dublin, 1992), pp 60-121.
[32] Enda Delaney, 'State, politics and demography: The case of Irish emigration, 1921–71', *Irish Political Studies* vol. 13, no. 1 (1998), p. 36
[33] Garvin, *Preventing the Future.*
[34] Ibid, p. 4.

or ‘Expansion’ for the following decade or two.[35] This understanding of the 1950s has often coloured how the entire 1920-1960 period has been represented even in serious academic works. A recent work by Erika Hanna on urban change in Dublin for example claimed ‘in the period after independence, the country had entered a long period of entrenched poverty and isolation’.[36]

Ireland was certainly not a wealthy country but neither should Irish poverty or economic backwardness be overstated. ‘Judged by British standards the Free State must be classed as a poor country’, as T.K. Daniel observed.[37] Brian Girvin has noted however, ‘When Ireland is compared with Britain it does appear less developed but not when it is placed within a wider European context.’[38] This is demonstrated by chart 1 below. Irish GDP per capita lagged dramatically behind the United Kingdom across the period, but was similar to Austria and Italy and higher than Spain and Greece until the 1950s.[39] It was only by the 1970s that Ireland’s GDP fell below Spain and Greece, and the country could be considered the “poor man” of Western Europe. Other measures of poverty and economic deprivation also highlight that Ireland was not outside the European average. Chart 2 below shows that infant mortality rates in Ireland were lower than France or Belgium up to the 1950s.[40]

Chart 1: GDP per capita European Nations 1922-1973

[35] Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, pp 271-401; Cormac Ó Gráda, *A Rocky Road: The Irish Economy since the 1920s* (Manchester, 1997), pp 25-30.
[36] Hanna, *Modern Dublin*, pp 7-8.
[37] T.K. Daniel, ‘“Turning Griffith on his noble head” in the determinants of Cumann na nGaedheal economic policy’, *Irish Economic and Social History*, ii (1976).
[38] Brian Girvin, ‘Economic policy, continuity and crisis in de Valera’s Ireland 1945-61’, *Irish Economic and Social History*, xxxviii (2011), p. 39.
[39] Stephen Broadberry and Kevin O’Rourke (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe Vol. 2* (Cambridge, 2010), p190+301.
[40] Ibid, p. 237.

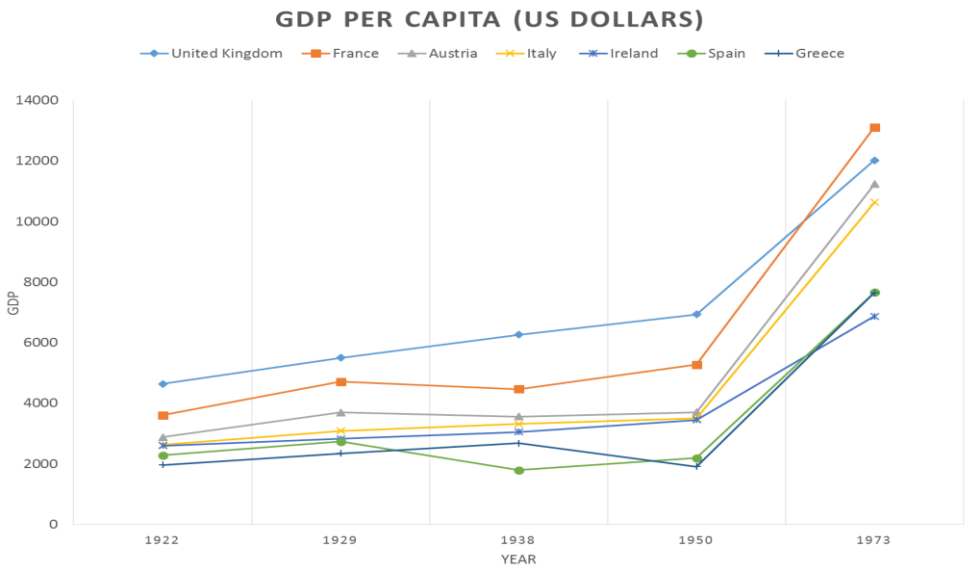
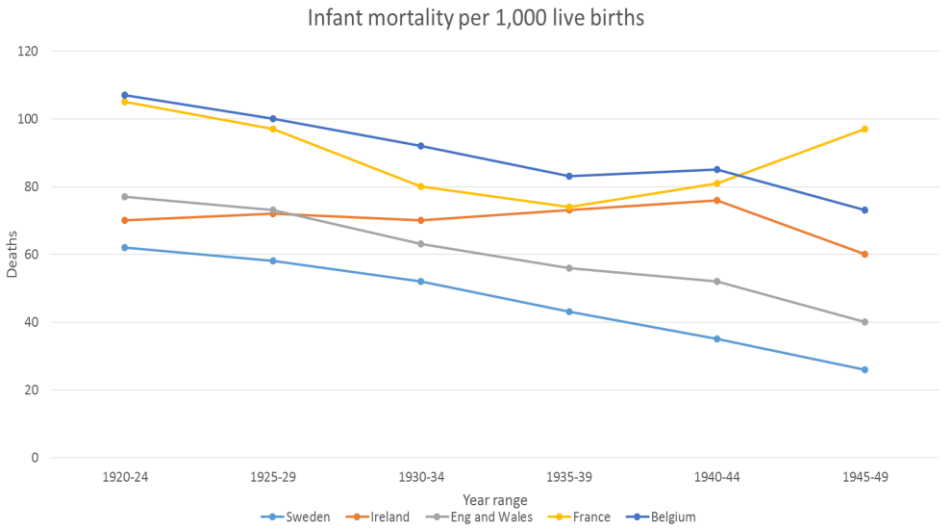


Chart 2: Infant mortality in European nations 1922-1949



Poverty and slow economic development of course affect different segments of society more harshly. The first chapter will discuss standard of living issues according to income and social hierarchy divisions in Ireland. When we speak of Irish economic backwardness we

should remember that the nation was not dramatically outside the general western European trends. If Ireland did depart from the general European trend, moreover, it was only from the 1950s onward.[41] The proximity of Britain (one of the wealthiest countries in the world) made the relative backwardness of the Irish economy all the more apparent. Many Irish people faced the harsh economic realities of daily survival in the period 1922-1960, but everyday life in Ireland should not be defined solely in relation to deprivation.

Beyond questions of economic development, the wider historiography has often focussed on the power the Catholic Church was able to exert over society, especially when acting with the authority of state support.[42] Tom Inglis in his study, *Moral Monopoly,* described Catholicism in twentieth century Ireland as a 'systematic process of socialisation' in which 'those at the centre, especially the bishops, [were] able to limit what those at the periphery, and even those outside the institution, [did] and [said]'.[43] The power of the Catholic Church has been highlighted even more clearly by in-depth studies of Catholic-run institutions such as Magdalene Laundries, Industrial Schools, or Asylums.[44] The influence of powerful individuals like John Charles McQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin from 1940 to 1972, has also been emphasised. Cooney describes McQuaid as 'Ruler of Catholic Ireland' in the subtitle to his biography of the prelate.[45] The role of the State in providing the legislative framework for Church-run institutions and Church-approved restrictions on 'immoral' behaviours has also received significant attention. James Smith has advanced the idea of a

[41] Brian Girvin, 'Economic policy, continuity and crisis in de Valera's Ireland 1945-61'
[42] Jim Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-79* (Dublin, 1984); Dermot Keogh, *The Vatican, the bishops and Irish politics* (Cambridge, 1986); John Cooney, *The Crozier and the Dáil: Church and State in Ireland 1922-86* (Dublin, 1986); Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid*; Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*; Smith, 'The Politics of Sexual Knowledge'.
[43] Inglis, *Moral Monopoly*, p. 63-4.
[44] Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment*; Conor Reidy, *Ireland's 'Moral Hospital': The Irish Borstal System 1906-1956* (Dublin, 2009); Eoin O'Sullivan and Ian O'Donnell, (eds.) *Coercive confinement in Ireland: Patients, prisoners and penitents* (Manchester, 2012).
[45] Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid*.

'containment culture' to describe Church and State efforts to define, limit and conceal immoral behaviour.[46] Smith highlights an extensive list of legislation and reports, ranging from the Inquiry Regarding Venereal Disease (1925) to the Criminal Law Amendment (1935), as comprising the 'containment culture' framework for the Irish State.[47]

Many pieces of legislation dealt with everyday acts of consumption including the Censorship of Films Act (1923), the Censorship of Publications Act (1929) and the Public Dance Halls Act (1935). The broader historiography has tended to focus on how consuming behaviours were limited by Catholic moral teaching and the actions of State regulators. Much has been written for example on the censorship of both film and literature.[48] Historiography on dancing has also largely been concerned with questions of Church and State control and the limitations imposed on dancers.[49] As Diarmaid Ferriter has notably commented, research has focussed on what people were 'not permitted to do as opposed to what they actually did'.[50] Having said this, there are some counter-examples that will be discussed in chapter four.[51]

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[46] Smith, 'The Politics of Sexual Knowledge', pp 208-33.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Michael Adams, *Censorship: the Irish experience* (Alabama, 1968); Julia Carlson, *Banned in Ireland: censorship and the Irish writer* (London, 1990); Peter Martin, *Censorship in the Two Irelands 1922-1939* (Dublin, 2006); Mary P. Corcoran & Mark O'Brien (eds.), *Political censorship and the democratic state: the Irish broadcasting ban* (Dublin, 2005) Donal O'Drisceoil, '"The best banned in the land": Censorship and Irish writing since 1950', *Yearbook of English Studies*, xxxv (2005), pp146-80; Kevin Rockett, *Irish Film Censorship: A Cultural Journey from Silent Cinema to Internet Pornography* (Dublin, 2004); Kevin Rafter, 'Evil literature: banning the News of the World in Ireland', *Media History*, xix, no. 4 (2014); Kevin Rockett and Emer Rockett, *Film Exhibition and Distribution in Ireland 1909-2010* (Dublin, 2011) pp 299-335.
[49] Valerie A. Austin, 'The Céilí and the Public Dance Halls Act', *Éire-Ireland*, xxviii, no. 3 (1993), pp 7-16; Jim Smyth, 'Dancing, Depravity and all that Jazz The Public Dance Halls Act of 1935', *History Ireland*, ii (Summer, 1993) (http://www.historyireland.com) (24 April 2015); Barbara O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identity 1900-2000* (Cork, 2013) p. 42; Helen Brennan, *The Story of Irish Dance* (Lanham, 2001), pp 123-8; Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935', *New Hibernia Review*, ix (Winter, 2005), pp 9-18.
[50] Diarmaid Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (New York, 2004), p. 10.
[51] Elizabeth Russell, 'Holy Crosses, guns and roses: themes in popular reading material', pp 11-28; Helen Byrne, 'Going to the Pictures: The Female Audience and the Pleasures of Cinema'; James Donnelly Jr., 'Bishop Michael Browne of Galway (1937-76) and the regulation of public morality' *New Hibernia Review*, xvii, no. 1

There are also examples of historiography that has dealt with the everyday practice of the Catholic laity in more nuanced detail, which will be considered in chapter five.[52] This study will add to the research already undertaken by suggesting that the limitations on consuming behaviours may not have been as restrictive as previously imagined. In particular, this will be emphasised in the fourth and fifth chapters, discussing dance halls and pilgrimages respectively.

The emphasis on the control of the Catholic Church and the State has perhaps also led to an emphasis on the distinctiveness of the Irish experience. Peter Martin has described censorship as an 'expression of self-determination' and Kevin Rockett has stressed the need to 'create an external enemy' through fear of imported consumer culture.[53] A notable strain in the historiography has argued that Irish society was isolated from international trends in the period 1922-1960. F.S.L Lyons famously used the metaphor of Plato's Cave to describe life in Ireland during the Emergency, claiming the society experienced almost 'total isolation from the rest of mankind'.[54] This assumption will be questioned in the third chapter discussing the Emergency and post-Emergency conditions in Ireland. The sense of international isolation and navel gazing has often been used to explain the Irish experience beyond the Emergency as well. Mike Cronin and John Regan, in the introduction to their edited collection on Ireland 1922-1949, argued: 'Post-revolutionary Ireland championed a narrowly-focused mono-culture which remained

(Spring 2013), pp 25-30; David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain 1920-1970* (Basingstoke, 2008), pp 86-91.

[52] Maurice Hartigan, 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940' in James Kelly and Daire Keogh (eds.), *History of the Catholic Diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 331-349; James Donnelly Jr., 'The Peak of Marian Devotion in Ireland 1930-1960', p. 252; James Donnelly Jr., 'Knock Shrine: The Worst of Times—The 1940s'; James Donnelly, Jr., 'The Marian Shrine of Knock: The First Decade,' *Éire-Ireland*, xxviii (Summer, 1993), pp. 54–99; James Donnelly, Jr., 'Lough Derg: The Making of the Modern Pilgrimage' in William Nolan, Liam Ronayne and Máiread Dunlevy (eds.), *Donegal: History and Society* (Donegal, 1995), pp 491-508.

[53] Martin, *Censorship in the Two Irelands 1922-1939*, p. 228; Kevin Rockett and Emer Rockett, *Film Exhibition and Distribution in Ireland 1909-2010*, p. 299.

[54] F.S.L Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine* (London, 1985), pp 557-8.

remarkably impervious to sources of pluralism.'[55] Much of the historiography has focussed on distinct aspects of Irish culture like Gaelic sports, Irish music and dancing, and the Irish language and it is only quite recently that Irish historians have focussed on 'foreign' influences on Irish society such as the popularity of soccer and rugby.[56]

The perceived isolation of pre-1960s Ireland becomes particularly evident if it is contrasted with historiography on the succeeding period. 'The blinds were let up, the windows were thrown open, the doors were unlocked; and good, bad or indifferent the modern world came in among us at last', was the often quoted judgement of Fergal Tobin on the 1960s.[57] The opening of windows is a metaphor commonly deployed by Irish historians to describe the change that occurred in the 1960s. Tim Pat Coogan titled the seventh chapter of his work on twentieth century Ireland 'Lemass: The Window Opener', commenting that 'compared to the stagnation and decay under de Valera, Lemass's brief tenure in office (1959-1966) was astonishingly, refreshingly productive'.[58] Tom Garvin has claimed that Irish society's,

> [h]istorical dependence on the overarching structures of the Church, the State, the Fianna Fáil party and the GAA only began to fade in the 1960s, as a general social pluralism began to melt the sociological glaciers generated by the Great Freeze of the post-civil war period.[59]

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[55] Cronin and Regan, 'Introduction' in Cronin and Regan (eds.), *Ireland,* p. 7.
[56] Malcolm Brodie, *100 years of Irish football* (Belfast, 1980); Marcus de Burca, *The GAA: a history* (Dublin, 1980); W.F. Mandle, *The Gaelic Athletic Association and Irish nationalist politics, 1884- 1924* (Dublin, 1987); John Hutchinson, *The dynamics of cultural nationalism: the Gaelic revival and the creation of the Irish nation state* (London, 1987); Margaret O'Callaghan, 'Language, nationality and cultural identity in the Irish Free State, 1922-27', *Irish Historical Studies*, xxiv (1984); Cathal Billings, 'Speaking Irish with hurley sticks: Gaelic sports, the Irish language and national identity in revival Ireland' in *Sport History*, xxxvii, no. 1 (2017), pp 25-50; Mike Cronin, William Murphy & Paul Rouse (eds.), *The Gaelic Athletic Association 1884-2009* (Dublin, 2009); Mike Cronin, Mark Duncan & Paul Rouse, *The GAA: A people's history* (Cork, 2009); Paul Darby, *Gaelic games, nationalism and the Irish diaspora in the United States* (Dublin, 2009); M Cronin, 'Projecting the Nation through Sport and Culture: Ireland, Aonach Tailteann and the Irish Free State, 1924-32,' *Journal of Contemporary History* , xxxviii, no. 3 (July 2003), pp 395-411; David Toms, *Soccer in Munster: A Social History 1877-1937* (Cork, 2015); Liam O'Callaghan, *Rugby in Munster: A Social and Cultural History* (Cork, 2011).
[57] Fergal Tobin, *The Best of Decades: Ireland in the 1960s* (Dublin, 1996), p. 8.
[58] Tim Pat Coogan, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 419.
[59] Garvin, 'The Aftermath of the Civil War', p. 387.

Recent research on the 1960s has presented a more nuanced picture of societal and cultural transformation. Enda Delaney has focussed on change facilitated by individuals and groups rather than the high political narrative that emphasised the importance of the Whitaker Report for example.[60] Brian Girvin has argued the period 1959-1989 was characterised more by continuity, including the continued importance of the Catholic Church and Fianna Fáil.[61] Mary Daly's recent monograph on the long 1960s, 1957 to 1973, argued that many of the institutions and beliefs dominant in the state remained unchallenged.[62] Attitudes towards sexuality were resistant to changing western cultural norms, and the Catholic Church retained a position of authority on social and moral questions.[63] Emigration levels, despite decreasing, remained significant and were much higher than comparative European nations.[64] On the important economic question, Daly argues that Ireland lagged behind Western European standards until the 1990s, as was already noted above.[65]

The supposedly radical transformation that began in the 1960s may not have been as sweeping as initially imagined. Looking back to the 1960s we can select undercurrents of resistance that might appear to herald the dawn of a modern Ireland. Yet, if we were to look back to the 1950s, 1940s, or 1930s, we can also select moments of conflict and expressions of defiance. Young people in dance halls across Ireland were challenging the moral conventions demanded by the Catholic Church in the 1930s. Tradition and continuity tended to be stressed more by preceding generations of Irish politicians. Fianna Fáil in the 1930s for

[60] Enda Delaney, 'Modernity, the Past and Politics in Post-War Ireland' in Thomas Hachley (ed.), *Turning Points in 20th century Irish history* (Dublin, 2011), pp 117-8; T.K. Whittaker, *Economic Development* (Dublin, 1958) (OPIE/Department of Finance/58).
[61] Brian Girvin, 'Before the Celtic Tiger: change without modernisation in Ireland 1959-1989', pp 349-65.
[62] Daly, *Sixties Ireland*.
[63] Ibid, pp 181-213.
[64] Ibid, pp 140-50.
[65] Ibid, pp 15-38.

example affirmed their desire to retain a traditional rural society whilst at the same time facilitating profound changes in the Irish economy and society.[66]

Delaney, Daly and Girvin have challenged the concept of the 1960s as a transformational decade largely by interrogating the change that was said to have occurred in the succeeding decades. It remains to take this analysis backwards from the 1960s and read it against the first four decades of the independent Irish state. This dissertation seeks to question the transformation achieved in the 1960s by considering the consuming behaviours prominent in the preceding decades. Even Daly's more nuanced interpretation underestimates developments in Irish consumer society prior to the 1960s. Daly claimed for example 'television was a major force in promoting a consumer society'.[67] Television may have been important in promoting a particular form of consumer society in the 1960s but we should remember it was preceded by a long period of avid cinema-going in Ireland.[68] Daly argued that 'television helped to erode social and geographical distinctions – everybody with a TV could enjoy the same entertainments'.[69] This process was already begun by the widespread practice of cinema-going. The same claim could be made in regard to the mass publishing of newspapers and periodicals, and especially in regard to the advertisements placed in such publications, which promoted a vision of consumer fulfilment. Consumer society in Ireland was not transposed by developments in the 1960s, but rather developed from already existing trends in the society. Consumers in pre-1960s Ireland were not aware they were living with the blinds pulled down, and on the contrary many were excited by the consuming possibilities open to them.

[66] Mary Daly, *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity* (Dublin, 1992), pp 60-118.
[67] Daly, *Sixties Ireland*, p. 131.
[68] Rockett and Rockett, *Film Exhibition and Distribution in Ireland*, pp 15-114.
[69] Daly, *Sixties Ireland*, p. 131.

Research into everyday life prior to the 1960s has been relatively limited but there are some notable examples of particular importance to this work. Caitriona Clear's research into women's household work and women's magazines is highly instructive in this regard.[70] Clear highlighted that Irish women were not only aware of international shifts in fashion, but were also able to swiftly adopt such contemporary fashion.[71] Eleanor O'Leary's recent work on youth and popular culture in the 1950s is a further example.[72] O'Leary identified a young generation with an international outlook, shaped as much by imported culture as the supposedly static national culture.[73] Young people, O'Leary has argued, may have lacked monetary funds but they did not lack knowledge of international shifts in fashion and culture.[74] The dissertation will frequently focus on processes of adaptation by Irish consumers that did not necessarily involve spending money. Clear and O'Learys' monographs are also complemented by articles on reading, cinema-attendance, and lay religious engagement; all of which undermine the idea that Irish consumers were isolated or deprived.[75]

Source Material

The source base for the dissertation is intentionally broad. Given the relative lack of research undertaken into the topic of consumption, especially in the period under consideration, a wide variety of primary sources have been consulted for the study. Many consulted sources feature only briefly, or not at all, in the dissertation, but it was important to assess what material was available to conduct this study. A broad range of governmental records were consulted, including files in the

[70] Clear, *Women of the House;* Clear, *Women's Voices in Ireland.*
[71] Clear, *Women of the House*, pp 84-95; Caitriona Clear, 'The minimum right of every woman? Women's changing appearance in Ireland, 1940-1966', *Irish Economic and Social History*, xxxv (2008), pp 68-80.
[72] O'Leary, *Youth and Popular Culture in 1950s Ireland*.
[73] Ibid, pp 70-112.
[74] Ibid, p. 9.
[75] Russell, 'Holy Crosses, guns and roses', pp 11-28; Helen Byrne, 'Going to the Pictures', pp 88-103; James Donnelly Jr., 'Bishop Michael Browne of Galway (1937-76)', pp 25-30; Maurice Hartigan, 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940', pp. 331-49; Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion in Ireland 1930-1960', p. 252.

Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Industry and Commerce, Department of Justice, and the Department of Foreign Affairs. The fourth chapter is based primarily on a collection of police records and District Justice comments held in the Department of Justice files, but it is more common that the fruit of this research into governmental records is widely dispersed in the dissertation.[76] Government commissioned reports and studies also formed an important source base. Quantitative reports into the cost of living and nutritional standards, though limited in Ireland when compared to the United Kingdom provided significant material for the first chapter on everyday practicalities.[77] The Report of the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems and the research material collected for the report provided an important base of information for the sixth chapter.[78]

The records of private associations also proved significant for the dissertation. In particular, the records of the Irish Housewives Association (IHA) held in the Hilda Tweedy papers, provided useful material for the third chapter, on the state and consuming.[79] The Irish Countrywoman's Association (ICA) files held in the National Library were also consulted but they did not yield as much directly relevant information.[80] Much of the work of the Association did not focus directly on issues of consumption and most of the files, especially of local associations, relate to the post-1960 period. The records of the National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association (NAIDA) were

[76] An Garda Síochána Circular Report on Dance Hall Licences, Dec. 1938, (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37); Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to Dec. 1938 (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[77] *Report on the cost of living in Ireland* (Dublin, 1922) (Official Publications Ireland/I/15); *Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure* (Dublin, 1933) (OPIE/Department of Finance/15/11); *National Nutrition Survey Parts I-VII* (Dublin, 1948) (OPIE/Department of Health/53); *Household Budget Inquiry* (Dublin, 1952) (OPIE/Central Statistics Office/44); This material does not offer the insight into the everyday consuming lives of Irish citizens as is offered by the Mass Observation Surveys collected from 1937 to 1950; Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex.
[78] *Report of the Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems 1948-1954* (OPIE/ SOCW/10/6); Some of the more interesting material is provided in the Arnold Marsh Papers (TCD Manuscript Library/Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8305-6).
[79] Hilda Tweedy Papers, (National Archives/Hilda Tweedy Papers/98/17).
[80] Records of the Irish Countrywomen's Association (NLI/MSS 39,284/MS 39,890).

useful for the second chapter, buying for Ireland.[81] The dissertation also sought, as far as was possible, to reconstruct the activities of the Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA), whose records have not survived, by use of newspaper sources. Newspaper, journal and magazine sources have been vital for the dissertation. Such sources often provided insight into events, associations and institutions for which no archive material was available. The Irish News Archive was invaluable, but the dissertation also consulted numerous magazines and journals. Niche journals were important for the fifth chapter on pilgrimage travel, which relied especially on the *Lourdes Messenger* and the *Knock Shrine Annual*.

This study is also reliant on some independent sociological studies. Aspects of Arensberg and Kimball's research into the rural community in Clare are used throughout the dissertation, though especially in chapters one and six.[82] Other sociological works are also significant for chapter six, in particular, Hugh Brody's Inishkillane and *The Limerick Rural Survey* especially the third volume on social structure.[83] Religious archives also proved valuable for the research. In particular, the John Charles McQuaid Papers, held in the Dublin Diocesan Archives, provided useful insight into the fifth chapter, on pilgrimages.[84] Galway and Meath Diocesan archives were also consulted for this research, as were the records of the Irish Jesuit archives and those of Saint Vincent de Paul, which also provided helpful information for chapter three, in regard to Emergency conditions.[85]

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[81] NLI, Dublin Industrial Development Association Annual Reports 1922-1935; National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association 1935-1960.
[82] Conrad M. Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (Dublin, 2001); Conrad M. Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman: An Anthropological study* (Prospect Heights, 1988).
[83] Hugh Brody, *Inishkillane: Change and Decline in the West of Ireland* (London, 1973); Jeremiah Newmann, F. Lyddy, P.J. Meghan and Patrick Mc Nabb, *The Limerick Rural Survey: Interim Reports I-V* (Dublin, 1965).
[84] Archbishop John Charles McQuaid Papers, Dublin Diocesan Archives.
[85] Bishop Michael Browne correspondence, Galway Diocesan Archives; Meath Diocesan Archives; Rathfarnham and Milltown Retreats, Irish Jesuit Archive; Saint Vincent de Paul Annual Reports 1939-1946, Saint Vincent de Paul Archive Dublin.

This dissertation also draws on source material that has previously received little attention in Irish historical research. Advertisements in particular provided a major source base for the study, used especially in chapter two, but also chapters four and five. International research has established the usefulness of advertisements as historical sources as well as highlighting the appropriate approaches to take when making use of them.[86] What we unfortunately lack in the Irish case is significant information on the advertising agencies and companies who placed advertisements in newspapers, which is available for other nations.[87] The records of the Publicity Club of Ireland, founded in 1923, do not offer any information on the advertising campaigns undertaken by its members, and neither do we have surviving records from the prominent advertising agencies.[88] One insight is offered by O'Kennedy-Brindley's publication, *The story of a remarkable campaign*, recording the advertising campaign undertaken for Cumann na nGaedheal in the September 1927 election.[89] This provides more detail on political campaigning, however, rather than the day-to-day advertising of consumer goods.

Research for the dissertation began from the advertisements themselves as source material. To guard against potential omission the dissertation has used large data samples and married quantitative approaches with qualitative analysis when considering advertisements as source material. Such sources offer an insight into what businesses and agencies believed to be attractive to consumers. It is a logical assumption that companies sought to portray their products and services in the most attractive light, whilst obviously influenced by the stereotypical images

[86] Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way For Modernity 1920-1940* (London, 1985), pp xv-xxii; Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity*, pp 22-64; Bianca Gaudenzi, 'Press Advertising and Fascist Dictates'.
[87] This was highlighted by Bernadette Whelan's research; Whelan, 'American influences on Irish advertising and consumerism 1900-1960'; Hugh Oram's work offered some insights into advertising campaigns based on the personal recollections of advertising agents, Hugh Oram, *The Advertising Book: The History of Advertising in Ireland* (Dublin, 1986).
[88] The Publicity Club of Ireland Archives, (Dublin City Library & Archive).
[89] Brian W. O'Kennedy, *Making history: the story of a remarkable campaign* (Dublin, 1927).

and preconceptions of the time. What we cannot draw from advertisements is what consumers thought about particular products. Gaining a direct insight into the perspective of individual consumers has proved challenging. The records of consumer associations like the IHA are available. Such groups claimed to represent 'the consumer', but in reality were speaking for a certain section of consumers.

Oral history collections have offered some useful material on the opinions of individual consumers, and are used throughout the dissertation. The Oral History Archive, held in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, provided helpful information on retailing that has been used especially in chapter one.[90] The UCD National Folklore Collection has provided insight on emigration used in chapter six, and the dissertation has also drawn on other oral history studies conducted with Irish emigrants in the United Kingdom.[91] In the early stages of research, undertaking oral history interviews for the project was considered. Given the breadth of the areas under consideration and the abundance of other available source material it was decided that this would be an inefficient method of collecting information. A very large number of interviews would have been necessary to provide a useful data-set given the wide variety of topics covered and the broad geographical areas covered by the dissertation. In addition, the interview questions would have had to range over very extensive territory. Oral history interviews can often unduly shape a project, as it becomes focussed almost solely on the information offered by the interviewees. The dissertation wanted to avoid this potential problem. In the oral history interviews consulted for the study usually the value of the interview was not directly of interest to the conducting interviewer. The interviewees questioned as part of many

[90] Oral History Archive, Mary Immaculate College Limerick.
[91] Arnold Schrier notebooks, (National Folklore Collection/University College Dublin/CBE/MS/1408-14); Pam Schweitzer (ed.) *Across the Irish Sea: an Age Exchange Publication based on memories of Irish pensioners* (London, 1989); Catherine Dunne (ed.), *An Unconsidered People: The Irish In London* (Dublin, 2003); Sharon Lambert, *Irish Women in Lancashire 1922-1960: Their Story* (Trowbridge, 2001); Anne Lynch, *The Irish in Exile: Stories of Emigration* (London, 1988).

emigrant oral history projects provided valuable insight into questions of material culture and everyday consumer life in Ireland. This was of limited interest to those studies but of considerable interest for this dissertation. Often it is the tangential topics that can prove the most illuminating in oral history interviews.

The dissertation has also consulted available, relevant business sources. McBirney department store account records are used in the discussion of credit worthiness in the first chapter. This source material was only available through the appendix of a secondary work on credit.[92] The records are stored in the National Archives of Ireland (NAI), along with those of other department stores in Dublin. Unfortunately, NAI could not provide access to these records throughout the course of my study, because the folders were stored in a warehouse as part of a scheduled renovation plan. This was regrettable, as the records could have added greater depth to the study. They would not, however, have significantly changed the thesis of the dissertation or its structure. It is not even clear what information is held in the records of the respective department stores, and is possible that no useful material would have been provided. W.D. & H.O. Wills's tobacco archive, in Bristol, and John Player and Sons's archive, in Nottingham, were also consulted for any available material relating to their Irish operations in the 1920s and 1930s. Whilst only limited material was available both archives did offer some insight into the different advertising strategies adopted in Ireland as compared to the United Kingdom, and this is discussed in the second chapter. Other consulted business records did not yield useful information for this study. Switzer's records held by the House of Frazer archives for example only held material pertaining to the 1960s and 1970s. These records could be very valuable for future research, as could the records held in NAI if they were once again made available for consultation.

[92] McBirneys Account Ledger, reproduced in I. Jeacle and E. Walsh, 'From moral evaluation to rationalisation: accounting and the shifting technologies of credit', *Accounting Organisations and Society*, xxvii (2002), pp 757-8.

Structure of the Dissertation

As was noted above, the dissertation divides somewhat inexactly into two halves. The first half will provide context on the everyday lives of consumers in Ireland, including information on the restrictions consumers encountered, especially in regard to income, social hierarchy, geographical location, gender, age, and governmental policy and the external supply situation. The first chapter will focus on these issues throughout the 1922 to 1960 era, while chapters two and three will focus on significant periods for Irish consumers, the Economic War and the Emergency. These two chapters will also discuss consumption discourses, including conceptions of the consumer and how this might have shaped governmental policy. The second half offers in-depth case studies of consumer behaviours in Ireland; dancing, pilgrimage travel, and consumption linked to emigration. While there would have been value in selecting other case studies, such as a chapter on women's or men's fashion, these case studies were chosen as they focus on activities not typically understood as acts of consumption, and ones remembered as particularly consequential in the lives of many consumers. They also address some of the features seen as central to Irish exceptionalism in the period, namely social control, the Catholic Church, and emigration.

The dissertation is focussed on the 26 counties (The Irish Free State, Éire, the Republic of Ireland) though it does discuss Northern Ireland at points when appropriate context and comparisons are necessary. The decision to focus on the 26 counties was taken for several reasons. Historiographical narratives on the 26 counties, as discussed above, have presented a particular image of the nation, which is not replicated in the same manner in regard to Northern Ireland. Concepts such as poverty, Church control and isolation have not been as widely deployed in historiography on Northern Ireland. Recent research has shown that there may have been greater similarities between North and South in regard to several of these issues.[93] The chapters where possible

[93] Leanne McCormick, *Regulating sexuality: Women in twentieth century Northern Ireland* (Manchester, 2009).

discuss developments in Northern Ireland and its relevance to southern Ireland. The second chapter for example highlights how northern consumers were excluded by economic policy in the 1930s. Chapter three discusses smuggling across the border during the Emergency, which took place throughout the 1920 to 1960 period. The fourth chapter notes some comparisons that can be drawn between the experience of dance hall consumers in both the north and south. Northern Ireland and the connections between north and south are not absent from the dissertation. It would not have been possible, however, to discuss both regions in requisite detail, especially as the dissertation covers a broad range of topics.

The first chapter is intended as an introduction to the everyday practicalities of consuming in Ireland. It will ask which products and services were commonly consumed; which retail locations were they purchased in; what was used to purchase these goods; and finally which groups or individuals were making the purchases. Given the limited available space it will not be possible to cover these topics in full detail, and it is rather intended to make the reader familiar with the topic. The aim of the chapter is to highlight the different consuming lives that were open to Irish consumers in the period. It will ask how consumer behaviours were mediated according to social hierarchy, geographical location, income, gender and generation. To do so the chapter will draw on quantitative material including cost of living and household budget surveys conducted by the state and more qualitative material including sociological studies.

The second chapter ‘Buying for Ireland’ will address the questions of isolation and protectionism that have been seen as central to the Irish economy and society prior to 1960. With its introduction associated, rightly or wrongly, with the ascent to power of Fianna Fáil in 1932 and its termination with the Whittaker Report of 1958 and the premiership of Séan Lemass, the policies of protectionism have been presented as causes of economic stagnation. Irish industry was geared

toward production for the home market, and yet a largely absent figure from most discussion on the Irish economy is the consumer. Whilst the promotion of Irish goods has been understood as central to economic policy no research has considered the efforts made to promote these goods to Irish consumers.

Conditions during the Emergency theoretically offered the greatest opportunity for the promotion of Irish products. With the country isolated from normal trade networks consumers increasingly had to rely on Irish grown or Irish made goods. The third chapter will ask if the emphasis on consumer nationalism, prominent in the 1930s, remained or diminished during and after the Emergency. It will determine what effect the Emergency had on consumers in Ireland both in direct material terms and at the level of societal discourse and governmental ideology. The supply situation for essential goods, especially fuel and food was dire at certain points during the Emergency, especially in the years 1941 and 1942. The chapter will ask what effect this had on different consumer segments in Ireland. How for example were rural consumers affected compared with urban dwellers, and how were poorer consumers affected in comparison to more affluent consumers? The chapter will ask what effect governmental policy had on consumers, and how this compared with other European nations at the same time.

The fourth chapter will examine what control Church and State authorities could exercise over consumer behaviour. It will do so by considering dance halls in the period after the 1935 Dance Halls Act. Previous scholarship on dance halls has discussed efforts by Church and nationalist groups to exclude foreign music and dancing, and subsequent efforts by clerical authorities to assert their authority over dancing.[94] The wider historiography has emphasised the authoritarian nature of the 1935

[94] Barbara O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identity 1900-2000*, p. 42; Helen Brennan, *The Story of Irish Dance* (Lanham, 2001), pp 123-8.

Public Dance Halls Act, and the limitations imposed on consumers.[95] The chapter will ask if the narrative presented by this historiography is accurate or whether there has been a tendency to overemphasise the power of both the Church and State to control the behaviour of Irish consumers.

Research on the Catholic Church in Ireland has tended to focus on its relationship with the State, and the power clerical authorities were able to exercise over society. Comparatively little work, however, has focussed on lay engagement in religious practice.[96] The relative paucity of research is a significant lacuna in our knowledge of everyday life in Ireland given the time devoted to lay religious practice. The fifth chapter will consider the popular lay practice of pilgrimage travel across the period 1922 to 1960. It will assess the popularity of pilgrimage travel to sites in Ireland and to foreign sites especially Lourdes in the period by drawing on a wide range of primary source material including advertisements, popular religious publications and the Diocesan Archives. The dissertation focusses primarily on the experience of Catholic consumers, and provides limited discussion of other religious communities. The fourth chapter does establish comparisons between Protestant and Catholic reactions to dance halls and discusses the similar experiences of Protestant and Catholic consumers. The primary focus on the Catholic Church owes to its importance for Irish society, but also to its portrayal in the historiography, as has been discussed.

The chapters discussed above will repeatedly draw appropriate comparisons to other national contexts. Frequently, they ask if Irish isolation and exceptionalism has been overemphasised and whether international trends are also apparent in Ireland though perhaps with their own distinctive expression. Having said this, there were differences

[95] Valerie A. Austin, 'The Céilí and the Public Dance Halls Act', pp 7-16; Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell', pp 9-18.
[96] Though there are some counter-examples noted above, especially the work of James Donnelly.

between the consuming possibilities available to many Irish consumers and those on offer abroad. At particular times the disparity became even more apparent especially during the 1950s when comparisons with British consumer culture were frequently made in Ireland.[97] The desire for consumer products and facilities not available in certain areas and for certain groups was seen as a significant cause of the large-scale emigration that occurred in that decade.

The sixth chapter will examine the connection between emigration and consuming by considering the post-war period, especially the 1950s. The chapter will assess the significance of consumer aspirations as a motivation to emigrate, in particular, by using material collected by the Commission on Emigration. It will ask if consuming behaviours became a language to describe differences between Ireland and the United Kingdom and to explain the motivations of emigrants. The last section of the chapter will focus in particular on the emigrant parcel: goods sent from emigrants to their families in Ireland. The chapter will attempt to conceptualise this practice and ask what purposes were served by the sending of goods.

Together the chapters will convey the interesting and multifaceted lives of Irish consumers in the period from 1922 to 1960. The chapters focus especially on the agency of Irish consumers in the face of limitations and restrictions either imposed by material scarcity or by State or Church authorities. This focus is not intended to diminish the stark reality of life for many Irish consumers in the period, but rather to highlight the relative autonomy of consumers and the vibrancy of life.

[97] Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*; Wills, *The Best are Leaving*.

Chapter 1

Everyday Consuming

This chapter aims to provide a brief introduction to everyday facets of consuming in Ireland. It will discuss what consumers were buying, how and where they were purchasing products and services and which consumers were doing the purchasing. First, it will attempt to outline the commonly purchased products and services that both divided and united different groups across Irish society. Second, it will discuss the spaces of consumption and the medium of acquisition: the retailers and other consuming outlets and the credit/cash facilities used to make purchases. Lastly, the chapter will consider how purchasing power and responsibility was divided within families, considering gender and generational divisions.

To achieve this, the chapter will draw on both quantitative and qualitative studies. Whilst there is relatively little data on consumption habits in Ireland we do possess some important examples. One of the first actions taken by the independent Irish state was to calculate a cost of living figure. In 1922 a Committee on the Cost of Living Figure was established, which was somewhat limited in that only 308 households were consulted.[1] In 1932-1933 the Johnson Committee considered the appropriateness of the cost of living figure for the Civil Service.[2] These studies focussed on particular sections of the population: the wage earning working class for the 1922 Committee, and the middle class for the Johnson Committee. Both also failed to consider rural consumers. Between 1946 and 1948 a National Nutritional Survey was conducted, which covered both urban and rural consumers, along with different

[1] *Report on the cost of living in Ireland* (Dublin, 1922) (Official Publications Ireland/I/15); Data for the report was collected through budget forms that were completed by householders and then corroborated by National School teachers.
[2] *Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure* (Dublin, 1933) (OPIE/Department of Finance/15/11); the Committee collected information primarily from Civil Service Associations and then compared their expenditure patterns with the official cost of living figure.

classes of Irish society.[3] The Nutritional Survey was limited though in that it only considered food consumption. In 1951-1952 a Household Budget Survey collected information on all household expenditure across various classes of urban society, but, again, unfortunately the rural consumer was not considered.[4] The Survey did consult 3,700 household across 148 towns and villages.[5] The studies collected information through budget forms that were completed by householders and then checked by an independent source.

The quantitative studies will be used to establish the broad trends. They are supported and complemented by more qualitative work. The chapter will draw on Arensberg and Kimball's sociological research on the farming community in Clare.[6] There are some questions over how representative their research is in regard to Ireland generally, but, it is one of the few sources of insight into the everyday life of rural consumers. The chapter will also make use of the *Limerick Rural Survey* and Hugh Brody's *Inishkilane*, both of which focus on the later period.[7] A highly valuable resource is provided by the Oral History Archive, held in Mary Immaculate College Limerick (MIC).[8] Numerous interviews were conducted with shopkeepers and retailers, and other information from customers has also proved very useful and will be referred to frequently throughout the chapter. This source material provides insight into rural consumption patterns, but there is certainly more material available for urban consumers, especially for those living in Dublin.

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[3] *National Nutrition Survey Parts I-VII* (Dublin, 1948) (OPIE/Department of Health/53); Information for the Survey was again collected via forms completed by housewives that were checked by employees of the Survey; All food items in the house were also weighed as a further checked.
[4] *Household Budget Inquiry* (Dublin, 1952) (OPIE/Central Statistics Office/44); Data for the Inquiry was collected via forms distributed to householders that was corroborated through interviews; All households who completed a full set of usable forms to the enquiry were paid £1;
[5] Ibid.
[6] Conrad Arensberg and Solon Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1940); Conrad Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman: An Anthropological Study* (Prospect Heights, 1968).
[7] Patrick Mc Nabb, *The Limerick Rural Survey: Interim Report III - Social Structure* (Dublin, 1962); Hugh Brody, *Inishkillane: Change and Decline in the West of Ireland* (London, 1973).
[8] Oral History Archive, Mary Immaculate College Limerick.

Alexander Humphrey's work, *New Dubliners*, provides much useful insight into the daily lives of consumers.[9] Humphreys conducted interviews and collected information on various social classes in Dublin in the late 1940s and early 1950s but the work was not published until 1966. Several articles published in *The Bell* journal, especially during the early 1940s, provide useful information on daily consumption choices.[10] In addition, the chapter will use numerous sources offering an insight into specific issues such as credit account ledgers for the McBirney's department store in the 1920s and 1930s.[11] The available material skews the focus of the chapter somewhat towards Dublin consumers as against other cities and towns and rural consumers. This has been a general tendency for much Irish historiography, but this chapter aims to correct for this bias, as far as possible, by using the material that is available outside Dublin.

The differences between the daily lives of rural and urban consumers significantly shaped their consuming behaviours. One notable difference is the speed with which urban and rural areas gained amenities like electricity and running water. Many consumers in cities and towns had electricity by the 1930s, while it took until the mid-1950s before the majority of rural dwellers had the same benefit.[12] The progress of running water was even slower for rural dwellers, and by 1971 40% of rural homes still lacked any supply.[13] The consumer amenities provided to the urban poor, however, often lagged far behind general urban trends and often their quality of life was worse than rural dwellers. It would also be mistaken to divide the urban and rural into distinct categories with little overlap or interaction. Rural consumers travelled to towns and cities

[9] Alexander Humphreys, *New Dubliners: Urbanization and the Irish Family* (London, 1966).
[10] *The Bell*, xi, nos. 3-6 (Dublin, 1943).
[11] McBirneys Account Ledger, reproduced in I. Jeacle and E. Walsh, 'From moral evaluation to rationalisation: accounting and the shifting technologies of credit', in *Accounting Organisations and Society* xxvii (2002), pp 757-8.
[12] Mary Daly, 'The Modernization of Rural Ireland 1920-1960', in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda (eds.), *Refiguring Ireland: Essays in Honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003), p. 364.
[13] Ibid.

to make purchases regularly. Many market towns were reliant on the rural consumers in the surrounding hinterland to provide the bulk of trade. Some market towns already had large and well regarded department stores established in the nineteenth century.[14] The cultural practices of consumption, including cinemas, dances, music, and magazines for example were also spread quite widely through rural society. Travelling cinemas brought American films to small village halls, as travelling bands brought foreign music and dances.

The Census defined a settlement as urban if it had more than 200 people, but this could be considered highly rural in industrialised societies.[15] Villages and small towns in Ireland could be seen as rural and urban; rural by city dwellers, and urban by farm families. There were also major differences between the ration of urban to rural dwellings in different parts of the country. In Leinster the 1926 Census recorded the urban population as 57%, which rose to 70% by 1956.[16] In Connaught, by contrast, the urban population was only 16% in 1926, rising to an equally small 25% by 1956.[17] The structure of farming in Leinster and east Munster was also different to that in the rest of the nation. There were larger farm holdings in the east, meaning a higher percentage of the population were employed as agricultural labourers.

The significance of the rural/urban divide has often been noted as an important factor in Irish life. In contrast, relatively little research has focussed on the importance of status hierarchies to everyday life. Again it is important to approach status divisions along rural and urban divides. In rural areas, the ownership of land was important in conferring social status. Richard Breen and Dan Bradley have shown that agricultural labourers holding little or no land were on the lowest rung of rural

[14] Muireann Charleton, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism: A cocktail for consumer craving in a rural Irish department store 1878-1930' (MA Thesis, NCAD, 2007).
[15] *Census of Population 1926 Vol. 1* (Dublin, 1926), p. 19.
[16] Ibid; *Census of Population 1956 Vol. 1* (Dublin, 1956), p. 21.
[17] *Census of Population 1926 Vol. 1*, p. 19*; Census of Population 1956 Vol. 1*, p. 21.

society.[18] Yet, as was noted above, agricultural labourers were not equally distributed across the country. They were concentrated in Leinster and East Munster, while in Connaught and Ulster they were infrequent.[19] At Muinitir na Tire meetings the Limerick, Rural Survey noted that the attendees sat according to perceived social rank.[20] Land owners generally controlled the meetings and farm labourers felt they had little input.[21]

The size of farm holding was significant in conferring social status though it would be misguided to offer clear-cut divisions in regard to acreage. Mike Cronin has argued that those owning less than 60 acres in the 1930s could not be considered large farmers.[22] Terence Dooley has questioned this, however, by noting that the standard Land Commission holding was around 20 acres, and that a farm of 60 acres would have been considered appropriate for redistribution in many areas.[23] The 1926 Census recorded farm sizes over 50 acres as 26% of all farms, while only 9% were over 100 acres.[24] By 1961 the percentage of 50 acre and over farms had increased to 37%, while those over 100 acres had increased to 13%.[25] The quality and location of the land were also determinants of value and thereby also the likely wealth and status of the owner. It is probably a reasonable assumption though that those holding 50 acres or more were generally comfortable, while those holding 100 acres or more could be considered wealthy.

[18] Richard Breen, 'Farm Servanthood in Ireland, 1900-1940', *Economic History Review*, xxxvi, no. 1 (1983), pp 87-102; Dan Bradley, *Farm Labourers: Irish Struggle 1900-1976* (Belfast, 1988).
[19] Bradley, *Farm Labourers: Irish Struggle 1900-1976*, p. 10.
[20] Mc Nabb, *Limerick Rural Survey Third Interim Report*, p. 18.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Mike Cronin, 'The socio-economic background and membership of the Blueshirt movement, 1932-1935', *Irish Historical Studies* xxix, no. 114 (Nov. 1994), pp 237-8.
[23] Terence Dooley, 'Land and politics in independent Ireland, 1923-48: the case for reappraisal', *Irish Historical Studies* xxxiv, no. 134 (Nov. 2004), p. 193; The Land Commission was established by the British government in 1881 but continued to redistribute farmland in the first decades of the independent Irish state.
[24] *Census of Population 1926 Vol II: Occupations* (Dublin, 1926), p. 3.
[25] *Census of Population 1961 Vol II: Occupations* (Dublin, 1961), p. 3.

Proffering useful social hierarchy divisions for urban areas can prove equally challenging. The middle class/working class or white collar/wage earner divide is perhaps too broad to capture the complexity of consumer experience. For social class division in urban areas the 1951 Household Budget Survey used the following five categories:

1. Higher professional, lower professional, employer/manager
2. Wage earner non-manual, salaried employee
3. Skilled wage earner
4. Semi-skilled wage-earner, general labourer, non-manual wage
5. Retired, or not in gainful employment, Farmer, Farm manager, agricultural worker.[26]

The final category is perhaps not useful, as it encompasses too broad a range of consumers. The other four divisions are useful for the purposes of this chapter and similar divisions are also used by Alexander Humphreys in his study of urbanisation in Dublin, titled *New Dubliners*. Humphreys divides Dublin society according to the professional-managerial class, the clerical class, the artisan class, and the working class.[27] Again it is important to bear in mind the differences between urban settlements in Ireland. Dublin was much larger than the next comparable city, and many significant market towns had populations of only 5,000. The broad division into the higher and lower middle class, and the higher and lower working class, which is suggested by both Humphreys and the Household Budget Survey, is useful for the purposes of this chapter. They will be used to provide context in outlining the quantitative and qualitative material, but in reality social hierarchy divisions where more complex and multifaceted than these divisions allow.[28]

[26] *Household Budget Inquiry 1952*, p. x.
[27] Alexander Humphreys, *New Dubliners: Urbanization and the Irish Family*.
[28] See Ernie O'Malley's comment on the 'layers of an onion', *On another man's wound* (Dublin, 1979), p. 24.

It will be helpful, before starting the discussion, to provide a general picture of wage levels for some of the income and status groups that have been discussed above. It is difficult to encounter useful material in this regard, but the *Irish Independent's Career Guide Book*, published in 1936 and 1956 provides a reasonable overview encompassing change across the period.[29] Further material has also been drawn from newspaper articles and advertisements, which has been useful in estimating income for agricultural labourers and domestic servants. Yearly income has been estimated on the basis of a 52 week year. This may exaggerate income somewhat, especially agricultural labourers, who might have had only quite intermittent employment. The figures though do provide a reasonable estimate of income.

Table 1: Agricultural Labourers Hourly/Weekly and Yearly Income estimates 1932-1955

Year	Source	Week/Hour rate	Year Salary (estimate)
1932	Tony Farmar [30]	15s weekly	£39
1937	Wages Board[31]	24s weekly	£62
1948	Wages Board[32]	1s 3 1/2d hourly	£156
1955	Wages Board[33]	£5 weekly	£260

[29] *Irish independent's careers book: A guide for parents and teachers* (Dublin, 1936); *Guide to careers: reprint of articles from Irish Independent* (Dublin, 1956).
[30] Tony Farmar, *Ordinary lives: three generations of Irish middle class experience* (Dublin, 1991), p. 80.
[31] *Nenagh Guardian*, 14 Aug. 1937.
[32] *Meath Chronicle*, 4 Nov. 1948.
[33] *Kerry Champion*, 20 Aug. 1955.

Table 2: Domestic Servants Yearly Income and Location 1924-1948

Year	Source	Location	Yearly Salary
1924	Advert[34]	Dublin 4	£26
1938	Advert[35]	Kildare	£24-£36
1939	Advert[36]	Howth	£24
1948	Advert[37]	Dublin	£52
1948	Advert[38]	Tralee	£52

The tables above provide information on two of the lowest income groups in Irish society. The table below is drawn from the *Independent* career books, mentioned above. These books provide more information on white-collar employment, which probably gives some indication of the market they targeted.

Table 3: White Collar occupation income range 1936-1956[39]

Career	1936	1956
Shorthand Typist	£104 - £156	£280 - £398
Clerical Officer	£60 - £200	£255 - £522
Bank clerk	£80 - £450	£250 - £930
National School Teacher (M)	£140 - £303	£400 - £800
National School Teacher (F)	£128 - £246	£340 - £640
Garda officer	£156 - £215	£374
Dispensary doctor	£250 - £300	£623 - £813

[34] 'Classified Advertisement', *Freeman's Journal,* 2 Jan. 1924.
[35] 'Classified Advertisement', *The Irish Press,* 27 Jan. 1938.
[36] 'Classified Advertisement', *The Irish Independent,* 19 Oct. 1939.
[37] 'Classified Advertisement', *The Irish Independent,* 16 Jan. 1948.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Information taken from *Irish independent's careers book 1936 Guide to careers: reprint of articles from Irish Independent 1956.*

Solicitor	£300 - £1,200	£650 - £1,500

The Independent Career Guides did, however, provide some information on wage rates for skilled manual workers. In 1936 the pay rate for skilled apprentices in Dublin ranged from only £13 annually for first year apprentices to £130 for fifth and sixth year apprentices.[40] The yearly salary for a hairdresser in 1956 was estimated at £312, while the rate for a skilled tailor in a factory was estimated at £462.[41] Skilled industrial and manufacturing work in Ireland was often quite well compensated, even in comparison to the United Kingdom. In 1924 boilermakers working at a factory in Inchicore earned £3 15s 11d weekly, compared to the average wage in England of £3 2s 6d.[42] In the baking industry in 1937 the typical salary for an 'ovensman' in Dublin was £5 2s, compared to £3 17s in Belfast and Glasgow and only £3 5s in London.[43] In 1956 the typical ovensman's weekly wage was recorded as £9 18s, equating to over £500 per year.[44] The average industrial wage in 1932 was £126 and by 1956 it was £364, which is roughly a three times increase over the period.[45] Over the same time period the official cost of living figure increased roughly 3.5 times, meaning that wages slightly failed to keep pace with inflation.[46] At certain periods, however, the rate of inflation greatly outstripped wage growth such as during the Emergency.[47]

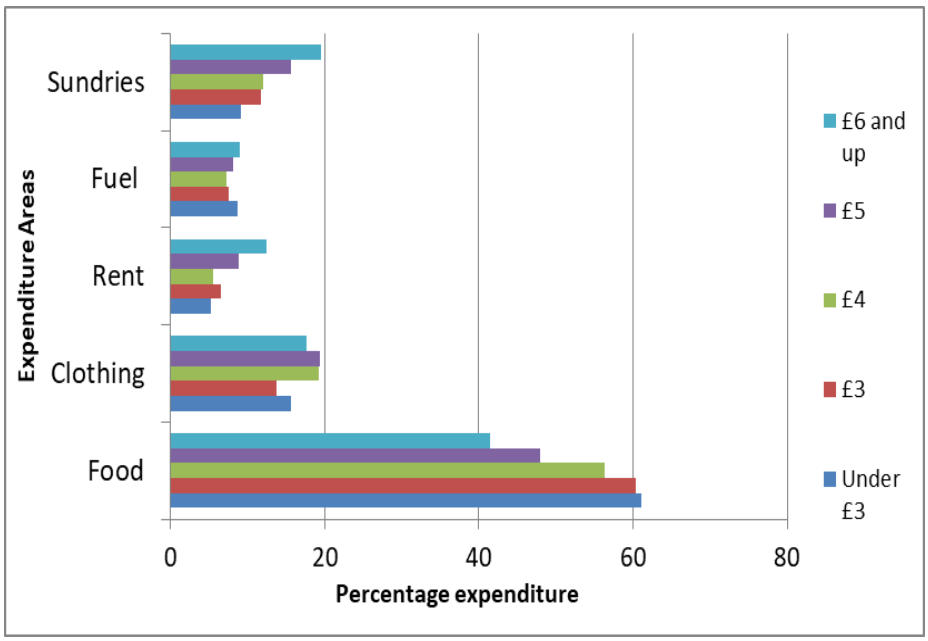
Products and Services

To the modern observer, the most notable aspect of consumer expenditure in the early to mid-twentieth century was the large proportion of income devoted to purchasing food. The 1922 Cost of Living Committee, which as was noted above was confined to the 'wage-

[40] *Irish independent's careers book,* p. 152; *Guide to careers,* pp 285-7.
[41] *Guide to careers 1956*, pp 285-7.
[42] *The Freemans Journal*, 10 Oct. 1923.
[43] *The Irish Press*, 4 Dec. 1937.
[44] *Guide to careers: 1956*, p. 292.
[45] Tony Farmar: *Privileged Lives: A Social History of the middle class in Ireland 1882-1989* (Dublin, 2010), p. 198.
[46] The cost of living index figure is provided in the *Irish Trade Journal* 1925-1960 (TCD/OPIE/Central Statistics Office/36).
[47] Ibid, 1940-47.

earning classes', estimated a figure of 57% on food expenditure. The percentage expenditure on food was found to vary significantly according to income, as Figure 1 demonstrates.[48]

Chart 3: Report of the Committee on the Cost of Living 1922; percentage weekly expenditure according to household income in pounds sterling[49]



For household incomes of £6 and above per week percentage food expenditure is slightly above 40; 20% less than expenditure for the £3 and under group. As is apparent, the excess income for the higher groups is spent on larger clothing, rent and sundry outlays, whilst expenditure on fuel remains relatively consistent for all groups. Sundries included expenditure on tobacco, cigarettes, soap and cosmetics. Alcohol expenditure was not calculated as it was considered inappropriate to include such costs in a cost of living figure. A 1922 election poster produced by the Labour Party listed the typical weekly purchases of a 'working family' in order to make a point regarding taxation.[50] The purchases included three ounces of tobacco or cigarettes and seven pints

[48] *Report on the cost of living in Ireland 1922*, p. 16.
[49] Ibid, p. 15.
[50] 'How to reduce the cost of living', Dublin Labour Party Poster 1922 (National Library of Ireland/Ephemera Department).

of porter.[51] This might have been a slight exaggeration of typical purchases to make a political point, but, the weekly purchase of both tobacco and alcohol was undoubtedly common for the urban working class and poor.

A 1923 survey of rural labourers' expenditure suggests broad similarities with urban wage earners. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union carried out a survey of rural labourers' expenditure in the Fermoy, Mallow, Mitchelstown and Charleville areas of Cork, which is given in its entirety below.[52]

Table 4: ITGWU Survey on Farm Labourers' Weekly Expenditure 1922.

Bread (4lbs per day)	1s
Butter 2lbs per week	4/4d
Milk (quart per day)	2/11d
Tea (1lb per week)	3/8d
Sugar (6lb per week)	3/9d
Bacon (2lbs per week)	3s
Beef (6lbs per week)	8s
Vegetables	1s
Coal (1 ½ cwt per week)	5/4 ¼ d
Light and Sundries	2/6d
Rent and Rates	2/6d
Total	**£1/18/ ¼ d**

[51] Ibid.
[52] Irish Transport and General Workers' Union survey of rural labourers' expenditure 1923, quoted by Bradley, *Farm Labourers*, p. 13.

The ITGWU, like the Labour party, produced the Survey to make a political point; highlighting the relative poverty of labourers as they were attempting to unionise them. They commented that the budget made 'no provision for clothing, boots, beer, tobacco, insurance, trade union fees or holidays'.[53] Having said this, there seems no reason to doubt the broad expenditure patterns outlined by the Survey. The absence of potatoes suggests they were grown on labourers' land or gardens, probably along with further vegetables. It is noticeable that percentage expenditure for rural labourers on sundries and rent was significantly lower than for urban wage earners.

Low income consumers spent the majority of their income on food. The majority of this income, moreover, was spent on dietary staples, as is demonstrated by Table 5 below.[54] Basic staples included meat, bread, potatoes, butter as well as sugar and tea, which were considered virtual necessities within the Irish diet.

Table 5: Report of the Committee on the Cost of Living 1922; Food expenditure as percentage of total household expenditure[55]

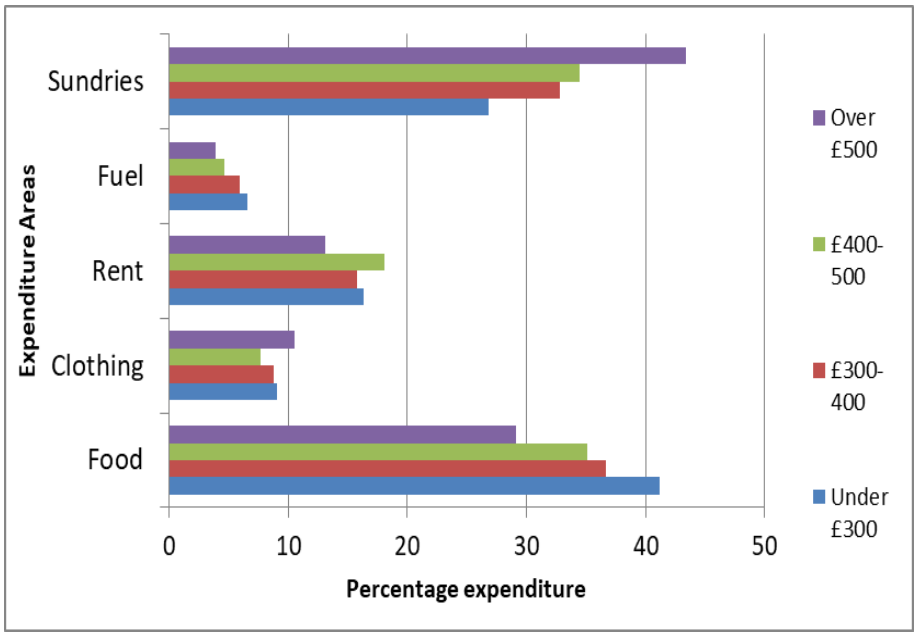
All meat	14.80
Bread	6.37
Flour	3.70
Potatoes	3.16
Tea	3.80
Sugar	3.24
Eggs	3.44
Fresh milk	4.56
Butter	6.91
Meals Out	0.70
Total Food	**57.05**

[53] Ibid.
[54] *Report on the cost of living in Ireland 1922*, p. 13.
[55] Ibid, p. 13.

Lower income consumers did not enjoy much discretionary spending. The 1933 Johnson Committee on the Cost of Living demonstrated the middle classes enjoyed much greater disposable income.[56] The Report focussed ostensibly on a different segment of society than the previous study - higher civil service employees. In the early 1930s Civil Service Associations had complained that the current cost of living figure, used to calculate their bonus, was not adequate to satisfy their standard of living.[57] Chart 2 below shows significantly smaller expenditure on food for most income groups as compared with the 1922 figures.[58] For the highest income group, £500 annually and above, percentage expenditure on food is less than 30, and expenditure on sundries is above 40.[59] Civil Service employees included a broad spectrum of the Irish population, including quite poorly paid postal workers. The lowest income group, under £300 annually, included 68% of all civil service employees.[60] The other groups are representative of the professional classes in Irish society. The Johnson Committee did find that civil servants were spending significantly more of their income on housing, which included mortgage expenditure, than the wage-earning classes considered by the 1922 Report.[61]

[56] *Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure 1933,* p. 20.
[57] Martin Maguire, *The Civil Service and the revolution in Ireland, 1912-38* (Manchester, 2008), pp 205-10.
[58] *Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure 1933*, p. 20.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid, p. 7.
[61] Ibid, pp 17-18.

Chart 4: Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure 1933; percentage weekly expenditure according to household income in pounds sterling



The 1922 and 1933 Reports focussed solely on urban wage and salary earners excluding the large section of rural consumers in the Irish population. The 1946-1948 National Nutritional Survey was the first effort to collect nationwide information on consumption for both urban and rural society. The Survey collected information using the following divisions; Dublin; urban areas with a population above 10,000; urban areas with a population below 10,000; farming families; families of agricultural labourers; and families living in the Congested Districts.[62] Variations were noted between these various groups, but most significant variations were highlighted within the divisions according to income and social class. Across all groups the Survey noted a 'more or less steady rise in consumption … as the income increases'.[63] Expenditure on the basic staples was relatively common across all income groups. The Survey found that expenditure on bread and flour varied more consistently according to family size than according to income.[64] Higher

[62] *National Nutrition Survey Parts I-VII* (Dublin, 1948).
[63] *National Nutrition Survey Part I*, p. 15.
[64] *Ibid*, p. 16; *Part III*, p. 13

income, however, did have a significant impact on the 'consumption of such vitally important foods as milk, eggs, meat and vegetables'.[65] This was true for all the divisions used by the Nutritional Survey. For farming families the Survey found the 'consumption of milk, meat, eggs, vegetables and fruit increased consistently with increasing valuation per head of land holding'.[66]

The 'Bread and spread' diet was found to be common amongst lower income families, and many such families were found to have nutrient deficiencies. Forty-nine percent of the 'slum' population of Dublin was found to be deficient in calcium, while agricultural labourers' families were found to be deficient in vitamin A.[67] The Survey found relatively little variation according to rural and urban areas; there was higher consumption of potatoes and slightly higher consumption of milk in rural areas.[68] It is worth noting at this point that consistently, throughout the period 1922-1960, international statistics found Irish citizens consumed the highest number of calories in the world. In 1955 Irish consumers were found to consume an average of 3,500 calories per day.[69] This does not equate to the best or healthiest diet in the world. A large consumption of bread and potatoes could give one adequate calories but leave one deficient in essential nutrients. The Irish diet was generally considered to be quite good by contemporary international standards.

The 1951-1952 Household Budget Survey offered greater detail on expenditure in areas apart from food but unfortunately it does not offer any information on rural consumers. In general the Survey demonstrated the correlation between income and expenditure outlined by the previous three reports, which is highlighted by Chart 3 below.[70]

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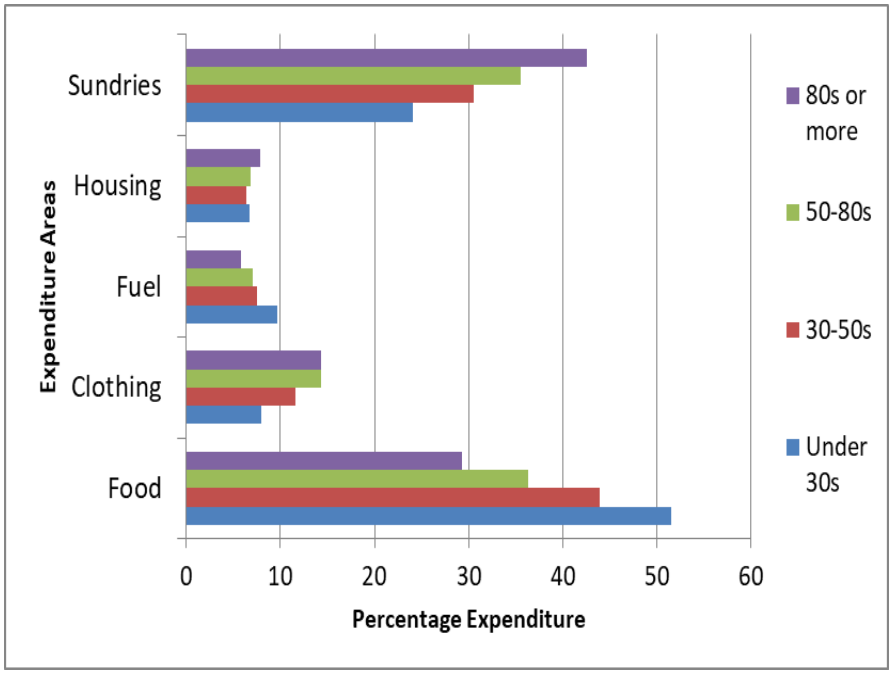
[65] *National Nutrition Survey Part I*, p. 16; *Part III*, p. 12; Part IV, p. 12; Part V, p. 11.
[66] *National Nutrition Survey Part IV*, p. 12.
[67] *National Nutrition Survey Part I*, p. 16; *Part V*, p. 11.
[68] *National Nutrition Survey Part IV*, p. 12; *Part V*, p. 11.
[69] *The Irish Press*, 28 Feb. 1955.
[70] *Household Budget Inquiry 1952*, p. xxx.

Chart 5: Household Budget Survey 1952; percentage expenditure according to weekly income per head given in shillings.

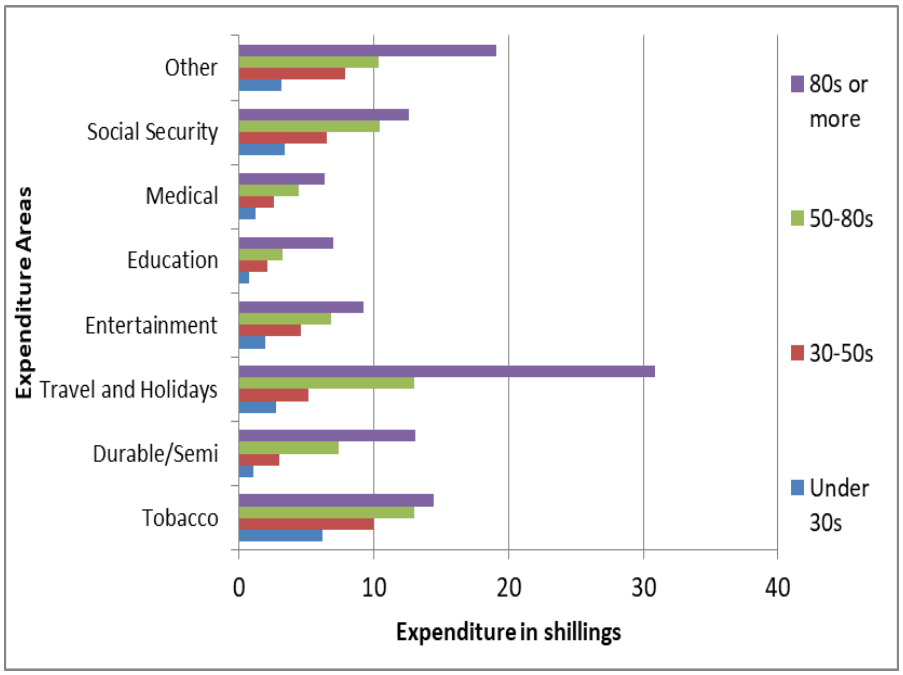


The 1951 Survey does suggest a slight reduction in total expenditure on food as compared with the 1922 Cost of Living Committee Report. In this case the lowest income group spent slightly over 50% on food, as compared with slightly over 60% for the lowest income group in 1922, and a similar reduction is also apparent for other income groups. The Survey also demonstrated differences in regard to specific food expenditure for different income groups. The 80 shillings and over groups spent much more on vegetables and fruit than the lower income groups, whereas, the 30 shillings and under group spent more than any group on bread.[71] The higher income groups also spent more on luxuries like cakes and biscuits.[72] Similar variations can also be seen across the other expenditure categories, except for expenditure on fuel, which remained relatively consistent regardless of income. The large disparity in discretionary expenditure is demonstrated perhaps most clearly by

[71] Ibid, p. xxxii.
[72] Ibid.

sundry expenditure according to income, presented in Chart 4 below.[73] There is large variation in expenditure on particular areas. Spending on travel and holidays is especially high for the 80 shillings and higher bracket, which is explained largely by car ownership and maintenance costs.

Chart 6: Household Budget Survey 1952; Sundry expenditure according to weekly income per head given in shillings.

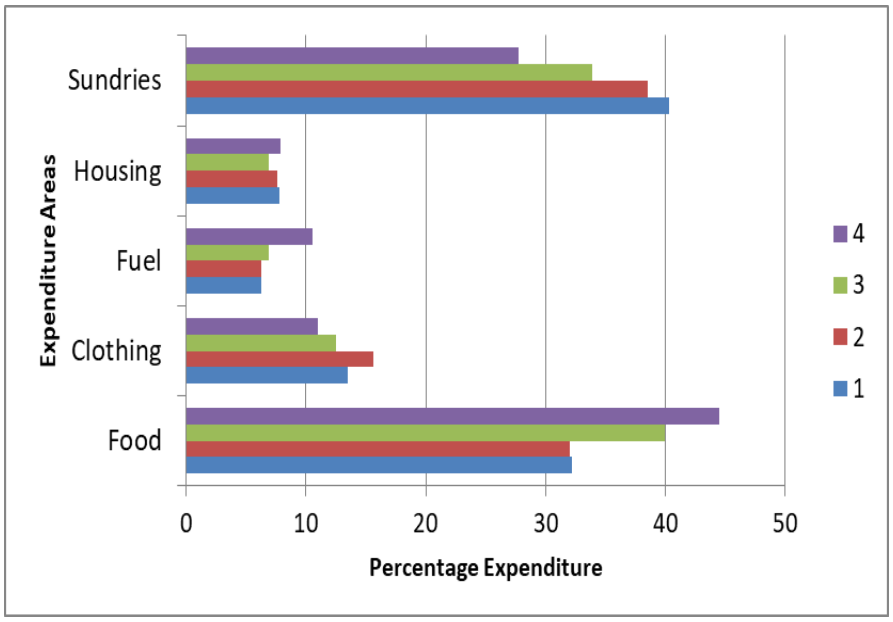


Taken together the information from the four reports demonstrates some clear and unsurprising trends. Poorer consumers enjoyed much less discretionary spending than their wealthier counterparts and had to spend a much larger portion of their income on food. Their food expenditure tended to be on dietary staples, especially bread and butter; what was referred to above as the 'Bread and spread' diet. As income increased consumers spent more on meat, vegetables, fruits, eggs, and luxuries. Wealthier consumers also had more disposable income to spend on clothing, housing, and various sundries, especially travel and holidays, as Chart 4 demonstrates.

[73] Ibid, p. xxxv.

None of this information is surprising or controversial, but rather confirms natural assumptions. The Household Budget Survey, additionally, allows us to posit some suggestions in regard to social class and consumption. As was noted above, the Survey divided their respondents according to social class and income. Chart 5 below demonstrates similarities between expenditure when divided according to social class and when divided according to income group, as seen in Chart 3. The trend is towards higher expenditure on food for social groups 3 and 4; skilled wage earners, and semi-skilled wage-earners or general labourers. Social groups 1 and 2; professionals and managers, and salaried employees/ non-manual wage earners, spent more on sundries and clothing. This suggests parallels with expenditure according to income groups, but there are also some peculiarities evident in social class expenditure.

Chart 7: Household Budget Survey 1952; weekly percentage expenditure by social class groups.[74]



The Survey collated groups 1 and 2 into what they described as 'white collar' and groups 3 and 4 into what they labelled the 'wage

[74] The large variation in the travel and holiday section is covered almost wholly by motor car ownership and costs

earner' section. The 'white collar' and 'wage earner' groups were then analysed with reference to their income group. This allows us to judge if social class affected consumption decisions regardless of income. The Survey highlighted significant variation between white collar and wage earner spending even for households in the same income group. In regard to housing, percentage home ownership for the white collar class was relatively uniform across income groups, varying from 34 to 42%.[75] There was greater variation amongst income groups in the wage-earning class, but in all income groups percentage home-ownership was significantly below the white collar level. The lowest home ownership percentage was 5% for the under 30 shillings income group, rising to 18% for the 50 to 80 shillings income group.[76] Similar variations can also be highlighted in regard to clothing expenditure between the white collar and wage earning classes. For the under 30 shillings income group the difference between white collar and wage earner expenditure on male, female and childhood clothing was more than 100%.[77] For expenditure on sundry items the disparity is even clearer. Spending on education by the white collar under 30 shilling group was ten times the level for the wage earner under 30 shilling group and the difference on medicine expenditure was similarly large.[78]

The choices made by white collar households on consumer spending suggest that questions of respectability and class identity were significant. Home ownership, clothing, education and medicine appear to have represented important markers of white collar identity. In a submission to the 1933 Johnson Committee Civil Service Associations claimed:

> Items such as Travelling Expenses, Life Insurance, Restaurant Meals, Medical Expenses, Books and Newspapers, Domestic Service, which assume

[75] Ibid, p. xliii.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid;
[78] Ibid, p. xliv.

> considerable importance in the Civil Servant's budget, do not appear at all in the working-class budget.[79]

Many of the trends suggested by the quantitative studies are also confirmed by more qualitative information. Social distinction as expressed via consuming behaviours perhaps becomes clearer when it is considered at the micro-level. *The Bell* in 1943 carried a series of articles on the expenditure patterns of various income groups. It is clear that the writer sympathised most with the struggles of middle class consumers, and often evinced quite a patronising tone towards the working class consumers. The information collected is still very useful by providing an insight into the daily consumer decisions of individual families. One article focussed on the family of a clerical worker earning £400 a year.[80] The X family claimed when their girls started school they faced a decision between private education and retaining their household maid.[81] The family decided on private school education; 'it would be pretty awkward for Mrs X having to face the people on the road, and Mr X wouldn't feel too good about it in the office either'.[82] Private education was chosen primarily out of a sense of social obligation. More generally, as *The Bell* article highlighted, many of the X family's consumer decisions were taken in order to 'keep up appearances'.[83] The article noted that Mr X had 'the social obligation of living at a certain standard', claiming that this standard included 'fairly good clothes, a semi-detached house, a maid, a fair school for his children, a certain amount of mild entertaining, an insurance policy'.[84] Indeed, one of these items; a maid, the family had been forced to give up, deciding that it was preferable to spend money on education, which could be seen daily by neighbours and members of the wider community.

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[79] *Report of the Committee on the cost of living index figure 1933,* p. 8.
[80] 'Other People's Income No. 2', *The Bell*, xi, no.6 (Sept, 1943), pp 467-73.
[81] Ibid, p. 472.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid, p. 467.
[84] Ibid.

The other items, however, were all accommodated within the X family expenditure. The family were purchasing a semi-detached house through Dublin Corporation; the father was described as 'dressing himself decently'; he and his wife invited friends over to play bridge and attended the cinema roughly once a week; and he paid towards an insurance scheme.[85] In addition to these outputs the family also spent a considerable sum on medical expenses, more than £30 per year in total, if chemist expenses are included, almost 8% of the father's total income of £400 pounds.[86] To maintain such expenditure, however, the X family were required to make a number of sacrifices, including 'having two meatless days in the week, by walking to save a penny bus ride, by using the same water for two or three baths to save fuel'.[87] Some of these sacrifices resulted from the increased costs brought about by Emergency conditions in Ireland. The general trend towards making unseen sacrifices in order to maintain an outward appearance of affluence and status, however, appears to apply broadly to the clerical or lower middle class. While Mr X purchased his own clothing, Mrs X made clothing for herself and her children, and it is not suggested that this is a recent development resulting from Emergency rationing.[88] Mr X required professionally made clothing more than the other members of the family because he worked in the Civil Service every day.

Humphreys, in his study conducted in the 1950s, does not mention domestic service as an item of significance to clerical (lower middle class) expenditure, suggesting the gradual decline of the practice.[89] The study does highlight a number of products that were becoming more prominent in middle class expenditure. An interviewed clerk claimed that members of his class were 'keen for cars and clothes and the best of everything', and that 'a great many of them now belong to

[85] Ibid, p. 468.
[86] Ibid, p. 470.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, p. 199.

golf clubs and rugger clubs'.[90] In the 1950s the level of car ownership was increasing significantly, and it appears that car ownership was a fairly good sign of middle-class membership.[91] Membership of certain clubs and associations could also denote a middle class identity; golf and rugby were especially associated with the middle class, but there also existed a plethora of non-sporting associations. Another good barometer of middle class consumption was home ownership, as Humphreys suggests:

> Clerical families prevalently own their own homes and are more likely to be found in the newer and more modern residential districts, their quarters are only slightly more commodious than those of the artisans.[92]

We can differentiate social hierarchies not only according to home ownership, but also according to the geographical distribution. As Humphreys highlights, clerical families tended to live in more recently built residential areas, where they were surrounded largely by other clerical families.[93] It is significant that the houses they lived in were not much larger than those of the artisan families; the clerical class was not necessarily choosing suburban housing because it was more commodious but because living in such areas denoted a certain social hierarchy.

Beyond the clerical class, which we might define as lower-middle class, Humphreys posited the existence of a managerial class, which we might define as upper middle class, or the elite of Irish society. Humphreys was able to identify distinct consumption preferences and practices amongst the managerial class. In contrast to the clerical class living in newer residential areas, he suggested that members of the managerial class tended to live in older and more ornate Victorian dwellings, which he described as 'single, large houses of two and

[90] Ibid, p. 199.
[91] *Statistical Abstract 1960* (Dublin, 1960) (TCD/OPIE/Central Statistics Office/3, p. 301).
[92] Ibid, p. 207.
[93] Ibid.

sometimes three stories'.[94] Differing with the clerical class in which the use of domestic service was declining by the 1950s, he suggests that typically families in the managerial class would employ a cook, a maid and perhaps even a nanny.[95] Humphreys suggests a similar interest in golf and rugby to the clerical class, but adds the pastimes of horse racing and hunting to the list of those popular amongst the managerial class.[96] Literature, music and art are also noted as significant markers of membership to this class. Humphreys suggests that taste in such culture was even a criterion for deciding on a marriage partner.[97] One interviewed member of the managerial class claimed that marriage to someone who had not attended secondary school would not be suitable, because 'if you were interested in literature and liked to discuss Dickens and she knows nothing about either literature or Dickens, it would not belong before you would be very bored with her'.[98] Such comments seem to confirm Pierre Bourdieu's arguments in regard to cultural capital, and its effect in shaping marriage patterns.[99]

A similar interest in high culture is also suggested by *The Bell* article on what may be described as a member of the upper-middle class; a young solicitor living in what is called a 'suburb like Clontarf'.[100] The solicitor had Humbert Craig paintings on his walls and regularly attended the theatre as well as events held in the Royal Dublin Society.[101] He claimed not to attend the cinema, contrasting his taste to that common in the working and lower middle class.[102] The solicitor's home also contained two sets of golf sticks, again highlighting the significance of particular leisure pastimes.[103]

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[94] Ibid, p. 213.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid, p. 154.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London, 2012), p. 243.
[100] 'Other People's Income No.1', *The Bell*, xi, no.3 (Jul., 1943), p. 292.
[101] Ibid, p. 293.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

Todd Andrews also highlighted the significance of certain sports in his "conversion" to upper-middle class membership. In his autobiography, *Man of No Property*, he claimed at the time of the Civil War: 'We disapproved of golf and tennis and the plus fours and white flannels that went with them … within ten year we had all played golf or tennis. We had worn black ties and even white ones.'[104] Taste in high culture, along with certain pastimes, especially golf and tennis, were important markers of upper-middle class or elite membership. Symbols of membership to the upper middle class could also be found in more material possessions. Humphreys claimed that members of the managerial class tended to 'have phones and cars which are likely to be American or the larger style of English cars'.[105] In the 1950s the cost of many imported products was inflated by customs duties. Ownership of such imported goods as American or English cars denoted a certain level of wealth and perhaps a certain taste for the perceived quality of foreign rather than home manufactured goods. The young solicitor, mentioned above, owned a phone and was purchasing a car through an Insurance Society, but the article does not record where the products were manufactured.[106] Todd Andrews certainly implies that a taste for foreign products and consuming behaviours was commonplace amongst the upper-middle class. He claimed that by the early 1930s 'some of our friends had begun to sample wine as a result of visits to France', and that in later years 'to know the vintage of wines became a social accomplishment'.[107]

Members of the Irish elite were often reluctant to accept any identification with the upper class. A Director of Bank of Ireland, interviewed by Alexander Humphreys in the 1940s, was shocked that he was referred to as 'upper class'. He went on to state:

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[104] C.S. Andrews, *'Man of No Property',* quoted by Tony Farmar, *Ordinary lives*, p. 85.
[105] Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, p. 213.
[106] 'Other People's Income' No.1, p. 294.
[107] C.S. Andrews, *Man of No Property*, (Dublin, 1982), p. 91.

> We are quite ordinary people. We do not in any way consider ourselves upper class. We think of ourselves as ordinary middle class people and we don't have any of the activities that are associated with upper class people.[108]

Being upper class in Ireland carried connotations of Britishness. Todd Andrew's distaste for plus fours and white flannels, mentioned above, suggests a broader fear of absorbing the cultural practices of British elite society. The Andrews family preferred to holiday in the Gaeltacht rather than venturing abroad for foreign travel.[109] Gavin Foster has argued that Fianna Fáil in the 1920s and 1930s 'self-consciously eschewed bourgeois fashions' in favour of 'soft-caps and Sunday suits'.[110] In doing so they conveyed a message about social hierarchy, but also a message regarding national identity. The Irish-Ireland elite often sought ways to eschew any association with British cultural practices. Irish artisanal production for example was often valorised by members of the upper-class. Orla Fitzpatrick has highlighted that at the Longfield-Leask wedding in Dublin in 1940 the couple received primarily Irish artisanal gifts, including, Avoca and Dun Emer Guild rugs, and Ada Longfield used Irish lace for her gown.[111] The couple were Protestant, which suggest that the valorisation of Irish goods was not limited to any religion.

Many of the trends in regard to middle class expenditure in Ireland find parallels with the British middle class. Ross McKibbin in a study of class and culture in Britain between 1918 and 1951 argued, 'Most members of the middle class believed that there were certain standards in dress, housing, and diet from which they could deviate only with loss of status.'[112]Appropriate housing in particular was thought to be a necessity for the middle class. Philip Massey, in 1939, commented

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[108] Humphreys, *New Dubliners,* p. 196.
[109] Andrews, *Man of No Property*, p. 103.
[110] Gavin M. Foster, *The Irish Civil War and Society: Politics, Class, and Conflict* (London, 2015), p. 113
[111] Orla Fitzpatrick, 'The Material Culture of Marriage: What Wedding Gifts can tell us about Dublin in the 1930s', *Éire-Ireland,* xlvi, no. 1 (Spring-Summer, 2011), pp 177-93.
[112] Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford, 1998), p. 102.

'There exists a sort of minimum middle class rent below which non-manual workers cannot find the accommodation they feel to be appropriate.'[113] Home ownership was also an important marker of middle class belonging. McKibbin noted that by 1939 60% of middle class families either owned or were buying their own houses, a level higher than in Ireland.[114] The real marker of the English middle class according to McKibbin, was 'their formal associationalism: their obvious propensity to join clubs and associations'.[115] In regard to home ownership and associational affiliation the British middle class may have outstripped their Irish counterparts but similar consumer behaviours connect both. Differences in the consumer taste of the lower and upper middle class in England were also highlighted by McKibbin, as has already been shown for the Irish case. McKibbin claimed that for the upper middle class expenditure on motoring, telephones, travel and domestic service was much greater.[116]

Having highlighted some of the consumer markers of respectability for the clerical and professional classes it is also important to note that respectability was a significant driver of consumer choices for the wage earning classes. Respectability is viewed by the chapter as a near-universal aspiration that was expressed in different ways according to socio-economic circumstances and divergent class conceptions of society.[117] Even for some of the poorest consumers in Irish society it appears that there were certain markers of respectability, which had to be met from meagre incomes. For consumers above a poverty level it was important to distinguish themselves from such poor consumers, in part,

[113] Philip Massey, *Expenditure*, 1939, p. 171.
[114] McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*, p. 73.
[115] Ibid, p. 87.
[116] Ibid, p 72.
[117] It is difficult to provide a concise definition of respectability. In essence to be respectable was to appear 'decent' and 'upright' within one's status group. Further discussion of the concept of respectability is provided by the historiography on Victorian Britain, see Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England* (London, 1971); Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848–1914* (Cambridge, 1991); Charles Walter Masters, *The Respectability of Late Victorian Workers: A Case Study of York, 1867-1914* (Newcastle, 2010).

by demonstrating that they were not reliant on the charitable or state receipts needed by the poorest.

The K family were living in a Dublin tenement slum scheduled for demolition, when they were interviewed by *The Bell* magazine in 1943.[118] All the household income came from State support or private charity. The family received 27/6d per week unemployment assistance, and six food vouchers at 1/9 ½ d each.[119] Every day, apart from Sunday, each member of the family received a dinner at a food centre run by the Saint Vincent de Paul Society free of charge, and apart from this food the family largely subsisted on "Bread and spread" noted above as typical of the working class diet.[120] *The Bell* article commented of Mrs K 'she is so poor she has no money worries. She owes no debt. She runs no accounts.'[121] This depiction would suggest that the family were making no consumption decisions whatsoever, but this was not the case. The most important prioritisation in Mrs K's weekly household budget was no item of food, nor even rent, but rather the 1/6d she spent on burial insurance for the entire family.[122] Mrs K claimed this was what she worried about most when calculating the weekly budget; 'if God takes any of us we'll be able to pay our way decent'.[123] As Paul Johnson has demonstrated in the case of Britain, paying money towards a burial society was considered as almost an essential item within working class budgets.[124] Although not included within the weekly budget Mrs K also claimed that she prioritised spending on school supplies for her children whenever they were needed. These consumer choices suggest a concern on the part of the K family to appear respectable. Money spent on burial insurance guaranteed that each member of the family would have a decent funeral. Spending on school supplies for the children likewise

[118] 'Other People's Income' No. 4, *The Bell*, xii, no. 2 (Oct. 1943), pp 149-55.
[119] Ibid, p. 150.
[120] Ibid, p. 152.
[121] Ibid, p. 150.
[122] Ibid, p. 153.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Paul Johnson, *Saving and Spending: The Working Class Economy in Britain 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1985), p. 223.

suggests a concern with appearing respectable. *The Bell* claimed that Mrs K was 'inured to squalor', but, comments such as these imply a lack of interest in appearance and respectability, which is not suggested by Mrs K herself.[125] In fact, both Mrs and Mr K took their meals from the Saint Vincent de Paul kitchen home rather than eating there with their children.[126] It is specifically stated in the article this was done to 'avoid embarrassment'.[127] This decision implies a keen awareness of appearance and propriety. Respectability is again demonstrated through consumer choices.

Paying the full economic cost of rent appears to be one means by which skilled workers or artisans sought to distinguish themselves from the working class. One artisan mother interviewed by Humphreys explained:

> In this neighbourhood there are different classes of people all mixed together. For example, we pay 25 shillings, 6d in rent. The man next door in exactly the same type house pays 12 6d. The reason is the rent is based on a means test and he is not a skilled worker.[128]

Her comments suggest that the different price paid for the accommodation affected how neighbours viewed one another. She went on to say 'He is a very nice man, but – well, you do get people in here who are a bit below the standard you set for yourself, and it does create a problem.'[129] Skilled workers and artisans had much more disposable income than the family of an unemployed worker such as Mr K. The most detailed example available of a skilled worker's family is provided in Humphreys's *New Dubliners* in which his primary focus is on the Dunn family. John Dunn, the father, began work as an unskilled labourer in Guinness in the 1920s and by the late 1940s, when Humphreys

[125] 'Other People's Income' No. 4, p. 150.
[126] Ibid, p. 152.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, p. 183.
[129] Ibid.

conducted his research, he was a Foreman.[130] Humphreys's study revealed a considerable degree of consumer choice was exercised by the Dunn family. The family were able to make regular purchases of clothing and furniture. This was certainly not possible for the K family, who relied on clothing donations, and had to sell off their furniture once Mr K lost his job.[131] The K family were surveyed during the Emergency, a particularly difficult time for low income families, but the differences between the two families owe to more than just Emergency conditions.

The Dunn family was in a positon to devote a considerable percentage of their expenditure to leisure spending. Mrs Dunn described their typical summer holiday:

> We would take a house down in Bray or Rush, and the children and myself would stay there the whole month. John would be there with us all day for two weeks when he had his vacation, and during the other two weeks he would come down in the evening.[132]

The description given by Mrs Dunn implies that renting the house was not a recent development but a regular feature during the 1940s, and possibly even the 1930s. The family's capacity to spend on leisure had increased, however, by the 1950s, as in that year Mr and Mrs Dunn travelled to Rome for their son's ordination as a priest.[133] Funding a son through education to the level of priesthood was another considerable expense for a family like the Dunns. As Humphreys comments: 'to send a boy to secondary school is a considerable decision'; not only must the family finance the education, but they must also forego the potential income of sending the boy out to work after leaving primary school.[134] Indeed, the decision to finance a son through school was somewhat peculiar for artisan families. Mr Dunn himself noted that girls were

[130] Ibid, p. 92.
[131] 'Other People's Income' No. 4, p. 152.
[132] Humphreys, *New Dubliners,* p. 97.
[133] Ibid, p. 102.
[134] Ibid, p. 124.

normally preferred in the hope of giving them 'a better chance for a good marriage … A boy will get along if he has a good trade and the ability'.[135] It should be noted that Guinness was considered a particularly good employer and that John Dunn may have been at the higher end of the artisan bracket used by Humphreys. In 1949 his weekly wage was £10 3 shillings, which was good for a skilled worker.[136]

There is much less qualitative information available on social hierarchy divisions for rural citizens, especially relating to consumer behaviours. This does not mean, however, that social hierarchy was not a significant factor that shaped the daily consuming lives of rural dwellers. Farm labourers who lived at the farm on which they worked often encountered discrimination expressed through consuming practices.[137] As Bradley highlights, 'They were frequently put at a separate table, given inferior food, different crockery and, in some cases, no cutlery.'[138] The social hierarchy that existed amongst farmers and farm labourers was expressed, in part, through consumption, as labourers were frequently deliberately segregated. 'After the evening meal they were not encouraged to stay in the kitchen', Bradley notes.[139] The same form of discrimination was also experienced by those labourers not living with their employers. Bradley notes:

> Five of ten Cork labourers interviewed by myself recalled that at meal times during threshing an appointed person stood at the door, directing farmers and members of their families into one room and workers into another.[140]

As this example highlights, it is important not only to consider the type of products being consumed but also the way in which they were consumed, and who had over authority such practices. For farm labourers

[135] Ibid, p. 150.
[136] Ibid, p. 101.
[137] Maura Cronin, 'Class and Status in Twentieth century Ireland: The evidence of oral history' *Saothar: Journal of the Irish Labour History Society*, xxxii (2008), pp 33-43.
[138] Bradley, *Farm Labourers: Irish Struggle 1900-1976*, p. 19.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

control over the minutia of consuming could be particularly galling, because, as Bradley notes, 'there was little or no cultural difference between them' and their employers.[141]

The Oral History Archive (MIC) provided examples of social hierarchy expressed through consumer behaviours in rural areas and in small towns.[142] The son of a self-described 'merchant family' born in Vicarstown, Laois, in 1953 recalled that the family would travel to Athy to make clothing purchases.[143] The clothing they sold in the shop was unsuitable as 'they were more for working men'.[144]Another woman, who was born and grew up in Bandon, Cork, recalled that in the summer all the local children would go to the bogs with a 'picnic of Mariette biscuits and a bottle of lemonade if you were lucky'.[145] She remembered all the children in the town going to the bogs apart from high status residents like 'doctors and vets', and presumably other professions like solicitors could be added to this list.[146] The higher status residents would travel 'out to Courtmacsherry to the seaside resort. They had houses out there'.[147] As she recalled, 'they never really mixed with an ordinary working class person'.[148] It is likely that these examples were repeated across many small towns and rural areas in Ireland. In many regards they are quite unremarkable, and seem merely as expected everyday behaviour, but it is notable that consumer markers were used to express and understand social status and hierarchy.

Evidence of status divisions in rural areas are also highlighted by McNabb in the *Limerick Rural Survey*. McNabb does not provide insight into differences in consumer behaviour, but his study does highlight that

[141] Ibid.
[142] As was noted above, the barrier between the town and countryside can often be difficult to define.
[143] Interviewer Angela Boland (Mary Immaculate College/Oral History Archive/2011/009).
[144] Ibid.
[145] Interviewer Conail O'Reilly (MIC/OHA/2008/012).
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.

status differences were important in shaping everyday interactions. He noted that large farmers dominated Muintir na Tíre meetings, sitting at the front while the labourers stood sheepishly towards the back of the hall.[149] *The Limerick Rural Survey* did highlight that the structure of social hierarchy in rural areas was being transformed from 'a rigid class structure assented to by all its members' to one that was 'unstable and open with all classes sharing upward mobility'.[150] This was facilitated especially by emigration, which encouraged those on the lowest rungs of the social hierarchy ladder to leave. Their departures were not always permanent, however, and their return or their sending of money and goods back to Ireland could provoke tensions and unsettle social hierarchy structures. This topic will be discussed at greater length in the sixth chapter.

Retailers and Credit

It is difficult to adequately summarise the range of retailing options available to Irish consumers, or the credit or cash facilities used to make purchases. Retail outlets ranged from vast department stores, located not only in Dublin but in market towns across the country, to small shopkeepers or itinerant sellers and open air markets. Consuming decisions often appear to have been shaped by communal, familial and personal connections with retailers. Consumers often seem to have forgone potential bargains for the sake of supporting the retailers with which they had a relationship. Yet, such decisions appear to have been formed by more than merely altruism, as many consumers relied on the credit advanced to them by retailers. This credit appears to have been especially important to rural consumers; many of whom only received cash intermittently. It implies quite a traditional retail and credit system resistant to change. At the same time, there are examples of new retailing outlets, and new systems of credit starting to transform the more

[149] McNabb, *Third Interim Report*, p. 18.
[150] Newman, *Limerick Rural Survey*, p. 196, quoted in Maura Cronin, 'Class and status in twentieth century Ireland: the evidence of oral history', p. 38.

traditional systems, including, increasingly popular instalment credit schemes and new types of retailers such as Woolworth.

The typical image of rural shopping in Ireland is centred on the local cross-roads shop. The phrase 'from a needle to an anchor' was often used to convey the breadth of products on sale.[151] One woman interviewed for the Oral History Archive (MIC) remembered her family's local shop at Dolla, Tipperary, where they sold 'grocery … a certain amount of hardware, you had a small bit of drapery'.[152] As was seemingly very common the shop was attached to a pub. The interviewee explained it was a 'T shaped pub and the groceries and general food as we would call it were kept in one end and you had the beer and cigarettes on the other end but it was all in the one big room'.[153] Most rural consumers seem to have made the majority of purchases in such local all-purpose shops.

Arensberg and Kimball highlighted three major shopping options open to the rural community in Clare. The nearest option was provided by the 'country crossroads shopkeeper' who sold items like flour, tea, sugar, and tobacco, and was often located within a mile radius of farmers.[154] Such shops were often repurposed farmhouses or cottages, and habitually were run by a local woman, quite often a widow.[155] Existing alongside the limited local shop was the larger 'country shop', which is perhaps the 'needle to anchor' shop that is described by the oral history interviewees.[156] In addition to such shops, located within roughly a one to seven mile radius, Arensberg and Kimball also noted that farmers would travel to market towns like Ennis and Limerick, to make larger purchases including boots and clothing, anywhere from once a year to once a month.[157] Oral history interviewees claimed that trips to

[151] Interviewer Laura Lynch (MIC/OHA/2011/094).
[152] Interviewer Teresa Kennedy (MIC/OHA/2005/024).
[153] Ibid.
[154] Arensberg and Kimball, *Family and Community*, p. 295.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid, p. 296.
[157] Ibid, p. 293.

towns for larger shopping outlets were normally only undertaken three or four times per year.[158] It is worth noting that whilst most shopping was done within a limited radius and a limited number of shops, rural consumers were not solely restricted to their own locality. Charleton has demonstrated for the Sligo area that, by the late nineteenth century, 'rural agricultural consumers' had 'emerged as a spending power'.[159] The Sligo department store, Henry Lyons and Co. was dependent on the business of rural consumers in the surrounding hinterland. There is no reason to assume that this trend for Sligo cannot be generalised to many part of the country.

In Dublin, and other large urban centres, shopping practices shared similarities with rural area. Brady has suggested a three-tiered shopping practice for Dublin, with daily shopping for bread, milk and other necessities done in the local area, followed by shopping within larger village centres such as Drumcondra and Ranelagh, and central city shopping, especially on the main thoroughfares of Grafton Street and Henry Street.[160] It is reasonable to assume that for other large urban centres like Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford, there was also a division between local shopping and central city shopping, perhaps without the second tier of the village centre. As urban size decreases one can assume so the division between local and central shopping also diminishes. Arensberg and Kimball suggested that the distance travelled by consumers in Clare was directly related to the importance attached to the product or products purchased.[161] The further someone was willing to travel to purchase an item the greater significance was placed upon it; as is the case today the smaller and more local shops relied upon the convenience they offered to the consumer. Arensberg and Kimball argued that the survival of the smallest shopkeepers rested on the

[158] Interviewer Teresa Kennedy (MIC/OHA/2005/024).
[159] Charleton, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism', p. 2
[160] Joseph Brady, *Dublin 1930 – 1950: The Emergence of the Modern City* (Dublin, 2014), p. 296.
[161] Arensberg and Kimball, *Family and Community*, p. 293.

following principle: ‘though she charges a bit more, she spares one the longer walk to the village centre’.[162]

The more remote a consumer’s location one could reasonably assume the greater value they may attach to convenience when making consuming decisions. One could also assume that consumers in urban areas made decisions based on the same principle, and it is for this reason daily shopping was carried out in the local area. *Family and Community* also highlighted the importance of personal and communal connections when making consuming decisions. The credit system that farmers and shopkeepers relied upon will be discussed later in the chapter, but, it suffices to note for the moment that it relied upon personal and familial connections between the two groups.[163] In a similar vein the smallest shopkeepers were only able to exist because of their position within the community; ‘everyone agrees that the woman subsists only because she is part of the local community’.[164] Shopkeepers occupied a central place within the community, which also afforded them a certain degree of privilege and potential influence. As one interviewed shopkeeper remembered, ‘I would have known everybody, and everybody belonging to them, their mothers and their fathers and their grandmothers … And you would have a lot of their secrets.’[165]

It might be imagined that the importance of a familial or communal connection to consuming decisions diminished in the urban environment, but, it appears that even in large centres the personal connection to a retailer could be a significant factor in shaping consumer decisions. In the 1950s Alexander Humphreys conducted interviews with the Dunn family, for his work *New Dubliners*; they provided a great deal of information on daily consumption patterns. Mrs Dunn revealed:

[162] Ibid, p. 296.
[163] Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman*, p. 155.
[164] Arensberg and Kimball, *Family and Community*, p. 296.
[165] Interviewer Michelle Kennedy (MIC/OHA/2005/008).

> I have been dealing with the same shops since I got married. For example, I have dealt all the time with the same butcher, even though he has moved from one place to another … I would not go to another shop for the sake of a bargain … I don't know – I fell there would be something wrong about that. These people – well, they are our friends.[166]

In a similar manner to rural consumers,it seems apparent that a personal connection with a retailer in one's local area was significant in informing decisions. Outside of the local area, however, the questions of finding quality and value for money became more significant. Mrs Dunn claimed that in the central city 'I am out for bargains and good quality and service. Usually I go where I think I can get the best bargains on a particular day.'[167] Larger stores, especially department stores, which did not offer the same personal connection as a local retailer, had to attract customers based on perceived quality and pricing.

In general, the practice of shopping, even in department stores, involved much more personal interaction than is the case in modern society. Prior to self-service shopping, which did not emerge in Ireland until the 1960s, consumers had to ask to see the items they wanted from shopkeepers or staff. Such items may have been visible in display cases or held behind counters. The transformation from this form of shopping to modern self-service shopping was quite radical. Burt Irwin, an employee at Henry Lyons and Co. department store, Sligo, since the early 1950s when asked by Charleton as part of an oral history interview, what had been the major changes in shopping in his lifetime, mentioned the shift to self-service. He commented:

> The big change was every single item that was for sale was in or behind glass or behind doors or in like cabinet doors … nothing on display whatsoever … If you come in looking for … no matter what it was …

[166] Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, p. 98.
[167] Ibid, p. 99.

drawers were pulled out and if it were a shirt or a blouse, you were shown it.[168]

This form of shopping required much more personal interaction. As Irwin commented 'Everything was shown to you. And really everything was sold to you. Now … they bring it over to the till.'[169]

Personal connection and local knowledge appear to have been especially important in forming decisions on credit. Farmers operated in a largely cashless economy; only acquiring money perhaps yearly or twice yearly after the sale at a mart or fair. As Arensberg has commented: 'the farmer is often chronically in debt to his shopkeeper'.[170] Yet rural shopkeepers were not in a position to refuse the custom of farmers that could not pay in cash; this was the vast majority of their clientele. Farmers would pay down a portion of their debt at regular intervals, perhaps every year, but never dissolve the debt entirely. 'The ordinary small farmer would pay off all his debt only in a fit of anger', Arensberg claimed.[171] The relationship between the farmer and shopkeeper was more than a matter of business; 'customer and retailer are brought together, not primarily through a cheap price nor an eye-compelling package, but through personalities and through blood and marriage bonds'.[172] Farmers and shopkeepers were often linked via marriage, and farmers could expect their sons to find temporary or permanent employment with their retailer.[173] The consuming relationship was highly traditional and parallel credit arrangements can be traced back to the early-modern era. The relationship was one of kinship symbolised by credit; 'To pay off a debt entirely is perforce to dissolve the relationship; to destroy the mutuality of expectations.'[174]

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[168] Interview with Burt Irwin, Muireann Charleton, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism', p. 109
[169] Ibid.
[170] Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman*, p. 155.
[171] Ibid, p. 157.
[172] Ibid, p. 144.
[173] Ibid, pp 145-152.
[174] Ibid, p. 157.

The rural consumer economy was largely dependent on credit. As Walsh comments:

> General traders, grocers, drapers and hardware merchants in Irish market towns had always thrived and survived on giving credit … Local farming communities had no choice but to be reliant on the turn of the seasons for the ebb and flow of incomes.[175]

Charleton demonstrated that the Henry Lyons department store, mentioned above, conducted most business through credit rather than cash.[176] It was compelled to do because such a large proportion of its clientele were rural consumers, without permanent access to cash. Oral history interviewees recalled that both shopkeepers and consumers were dependent on credit; 'there was no such thing as paying cash for anything'.[177] Shopkeepers habitually used a credit notebook to record purchases and some consumers remembered writing down the purchases they were making themselves in the book.[178] One shopkeeper claimed that 'the people got credit because in essence they were honest people', and whilst this is an attractive sentiment it obscures the self-interest of the shopkeeper that was highlighted above.[179] The same shopkeeper went on to note that by extending credit 'the shop gained their loyalty' and 'they stayed shopping there'.[180] Interviewed shopkeepers noted some issues with non-payment of debt, but it seems to have been relatively infrequent.[181] The shopkeepers did not provide information on what steps they took if debts were not repaid. Workers earning a wage typically paid down their debt every week, either on Saturday or Sunday, depending on

[175] Barbara Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good: Woolworths and the Irish Main Street* (Dublin, 2011), p. 73.
[176] Muireann Charleton, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism', p. 62.
[177] Interviewer Aoife Griffin (MIC/OHA/2005/074).
[178] Interviewer Sinead Ronan (MIC/OHA/2005/003); Interviewer Gearóid O'Connell (MIC/OHA/2000/52).
[179] Interviewer Fiona Macken (MIC/OHA/2005/009).
[180] Ibid.
[181] Interviewer Michelle Kennedy (MIC/OHA/2005/008); Interviewer Fiona Macken (MIC/OHA /2005/009).

when they were paid.[182] Farmers probably paid down debt less frequently, as noted by Arensberg.

Credit appears to have been extended based on communal connections and local knowledge. This is also apparent for Dublin, and can be seen in the commentary of Mrs Dunn on the family grocer:

> We know his family and they know ours. You feel that you are helping them a bit by going to them. And we could bank on him to help us out if anything went wrong and we were short of money.[183]

The Dunn family shopped at their grocer with the expectation they would receive credit if they were 'short of money'. In part this relationship was based on a sense of local connection and personal support, but mostly likely it was also dependent on the reputation and standing of the Dunn family in the local area.

Access to higher forms of credit such as department store credit was dependent on social status and reputation. Interviewees for a Bachelor dissertation on Todd's of Limerick remembered that a credit account at the department store was a prized item that was out of reach for the majority of consumers. We have relatively little primary material offering an insight into the reasons department stores advanced credit to consumers. One invaluable resource is offered by the McBirney's Department store ledgers, which record the date when credit was sought at the store as well as a treasure trove of personal information on the individual seeking the credit. McBirney's was located on Aston Quay in Dublin and served a middle class clientele though by no means the elite of Irish society. The McBirney's ledgers reveal the importance of reputation and local knowledge in decisions on credit.

McBirney's ledger: Case One

[182] Interviewer Brigid O'Donovan (MIC/OHA/2006/043).
[183] Humphreys, *New Dubliners,* p. 113.

22/10/23 – Bookkeeper in X Flour Mills for past year. Yearly tenant of furnished private house. Value of furniture about £100. Salary about £4 per week. Prompt in payments and safe for amount £25. Steady. Sober. Married no children.[184]

The above example demonstrates the level of local knowledge gathered in relation to customers. McBirney's knew the customer's job, his weekly salary, his rental status, the value of his furniture and his marital status. The ledger also makes comment on the moral character of the customer, describing him as 'steady' and 'sober'. Many other ledger accounts also comment on moral character and reputation.

McBirney's Ledger: Case Two

18/6/29 Several years at address which he rents and is employed as a salesman by X Ltd. He is said to be highly respectable and nothing is known against him, though his financial position is not regarded as too strong. He has been ill for some time past but is now all right again. Mrs B is said to be living beyond her means and in view of this informants hesitate to advise £50 credit but consider up to £20 a fair trade risk.[185]

In this case it appears that the respectability of the customer was the most important factor in the decision to advance credit. The salesman is described as 'highly respectable', but his 'financial position is not regarded as too strong' and his wife is believed 'to be living beyond her means'. McBirney's hesitated to advance £50, but were content to advance £20, and it appears that respectability was a significant factor in the decision.

McBirney's Ledger: Case 3

28/18/30 Wife of Mr A, at one time employed with the X Co. Very respectable, steady man, said to own his own house, but not regarded

[184] McBirneys Account Ledger, reproduced in I. Jeacle and E. Walsh, 'From moral evaluation to rationalisation', p. 757.
[185] Ibid, p. 758.

> as too strong financially. However, he is very well regarded locally, always pays his way and nothing is known against him.[186]

A similar case is also presented in regard to this customer. Mr A is described as 'very respectable', a 'steady man', and 'well regarded locally', but is also noted as not 'too strong financially'. Again, it appears that respectability was central to McBirney's decision making, though in the case of Mr A, the fact of home ownership may also have played a significant role.

For many working class consumers moneylenders or pawnshops were their best hope of receiving often much needed cash. It may be imagined that their reputation was relatively insignificant in attaining such credit from a pawnshop. In contrast to the McBirney credit system pawnshops demanded an object as collateral; the pawner did not, theoretically, rely on their own reputation but on the quality of the good they were pawning. Peadar O'Donnell in a 1942 edition of *The Bell*, however, claimed that the quality and value of the good was of relatively minor concern in the day-to-day operations of pawnshops; 'The pawnbroker gives scarce thought to the suit. He knows his client. He gives his pound throws a glance. Next. Next.'[187] Again knowledge of the consumer was perhaps more important than the collateral; the likelihood of the consumer reclaiming pawned items was assessed in more detail than the item being pawned. This claim is supported by the oral history interviews conducted by Jim Fitzpatrick in his study on pawnshops in Ireland. A pawnshop customer claimed to Fitzpatrick that 'Everyone went to their own favourite clerk behind the counter, because they knew they'd get more for their pledge off him.'[188] A pawnshop employee also claimed, 'You'd build up a relationship with your customer. There was a

[186] Ibid.
[187] Peadar O'Donnell, 'People and Pawnshops', *The Bell*, v, no. 3 (Dec., 1942), p. 206.
[188] Jim Fitzpatrick, *Three Brass Balls: The Story of the Irish Pawnshop* (Cork, 2001), p. 100.

bond of trust. Once broken by either, that was it.'[189] In this instance again it seems apparent that personal trust and knowledge was central to credit arrangements. The worth of the item being pawned was valued little in comparison to the likelihood of the individual reclaiming it. The most commonly pawned item appears to have been a man's suit, which was common to Britain and Ireland.[190] Other pieces of clothing like communion dresses and suits were also frequently pawned as were pension books according to interviews conducted by Jim Fitzpatrick.[191] The pawning of pension books occurred, it appears, despite the 1932 Pension Books Act, which forbade pawnshop owners from accepting such items.[192]

Poorer consumers had fewer options to attain credit. Perpetual reliance on the pawnshop to make ends meet was not a desirable or logical solution from a long term perspective but it was an absolute necessity in the short-term. Poverty is often very expensive and, as Paul Johnson has suggested in regard to Britain, many consumers viewed pawning as an 'unfortunate necessity'.[193] Whilst poorer consumers did not have as many options or possibilities as their wealthier counterparts it would be mistaken to view them as devoid of agency. One woman interviewed for *The Bell* in 1941 outlined the difficulties her family encountered trying to survive on Unemployment Assistance. 'I have to play a lot of tricks with the pennies', she claimed.[194] The woman revealed the various means by which she raised extra income for her family, including borrowing via multiple lenders, and creating a fake name and identity to acquire funds.[195] Poor consumers could also seek credit of a sort through charitable associations. The woman interviewed by *The Bell* discussed how she sought credit from Saint Vincent de Paul

[189] Ibid, p. 102.
[190] Ibid
[191] Ibid
[192] Ibid, p. 62.
[193] Paul Johnson, *Saving and Spending: The Working Class Economy in Britain 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1985), p. 175.
[194] 'Slum Pennies', *The Bell*, i, no. 4 (1941), p. 75.
[195] Ibid, pp. 75-6.

societies, and the X family, noted above, were reliant for daily meals on a charitable soup kitchen. Lindsey Earner-Byrne has studied the letters written seeking charity from the Dublin Archdiocese in the period 1920-1940; 'The way in which these people sought to beg, bargain, and sell their lives, reveals much about their room for manoeuvre and how they understood and negotiated the power structures that confined them.'[196] To receive charity poor people had to 'perform' their poverty; emphasising not only their need for assistance but also their appropriateness in regard to moral behaviour, and in this case Catholic observance.[197] Charitable gifts appear to have been viewed as a form of credit comparable to a moneylender or pawnbroker. *The Bell* interviewee suggests that she sees little difference between receiving money from a moneylender and receiving bread dockets from Saint Vincent de Paul.[198]

In addition to credit arrangements based on reputation and personal knowledge the period from 1922 to 1960 also saw an increase in more modern and rationalised systems of credit. Instalment and hire purchase schemes were introduced by many retailers across Ireland in the 1920s and 1930s, especially for purchases of furniture, radios and bicycles. Large Dublin department stores, including Brown Thomas and Clearys, offered such schemes but so did much smaller regional stores across the country.[199] Some stores made a point of not offering instalment or hire purchase schemes. Notably, Roche's department store in Cork made a virtue of their 'Cash policy', which they claimed guaranteed the lowest possible price for consumers.[200] This policy, however, was an exception rather than the rule. Indeed the growing popularity of instalment purchase schemes even led the *Irish Industry* journal to criticise the practice in the early 1930s. The November 1932

[196] Lindsey Earner-Byrne, *Letters of the Catholic poor: poverty in independent Ireland, 1920-1940* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 5.
[197] Ibid, p. 91.
[198] 'Slum Pennies', *The Bell*, p. 77.
[199] Advertisement Brown Thomas, *The Irish independent*, 24 May 1934; Advertisement Todd Burns, *The Irish Independent*, 12 Jun. 1928; Advertisement Clery's, *The Irish Independent*, 18 Nov. 1931.
[200] Advertisement Roche's store, *The Limerick Leader*, 09 Feb. 1952; Advertisement Roche's store, *The Irish Examiner*, 26 Nov. 1945.

edition warned of the 'growing danger of instalment buying by the public – an evil which has reared its ugly head in our midst within the past few years', claiming that 'the lure of the small deposit leads our people to purchase what they cannot really afford'.[201]Whilst some decried the growth of such instalment purchase schemes, it would be wrong to imply that a majority of consumers were regularly using such purchasing methods. It was only in the late 1950s that such credit facilities became popular means of purchase in Ireland. From 1958 to 1963 the level of hire purchase and instalment purchase schemes increased threefold, as Irish consumers increasingly bought cars and televisions.[202]

The period 1922 to 1960 also saw numerous developments in Irish retailing. By 1935 Woolworths had opened ten stores in various market towns across Ireland, including some as small as Sligo, Kilkenny and Clonmel.[203] Twenty years later they had opened a further eight, which were spread across the country with the majority in Leinster.[204] As a cut price retailer the store only accepted cash transactions though in contrast to British practice they also offered home delivery for Irish consumers. Woolworths was attuned to the needs and desires of rural consumers. Payantake stores present a further example of retail developments. The stores were not fully self-service but represented a move in that direction; they offered cut-price grocery retail by removing the high cost credit and home delivery options. Payantake stores opened in Dublin in the 1930s, and in the late 1940s an Irish owned competitor was established by Eamon Quinn. There were some significant developments in retailing during the period 1920-1960 but it was really after 1960 that the practice of shopping for the mass of the population was radically altered. In 1959 H. Williams opened a self-service supermarket on Henry Street in Dublin, which would be followed by the

[201] 'Cash or credit?', *Irish industry: The business journal of Ireland*, i, no. 1 (Nov, 1932), p. 11.
[202] Tony Farmar, *Privileged Lives: A Social History of the middle class in Ireland 1882-1989* (Dublin, 2010), p. 199.
[203] Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good*, p. 67.
[204] Ibid.

VG chain introduced by Musgraves and the Mace stores, opened in smaller towns across the country.[205]

Home-made clothing continued to be important for many consumers into the 1950s. In oral history interviews Paula Vallely found that the practice of making one's own clothing was common for women in rural Monaghan into this decade.[206] These women were not detached from the market economy, however. One interviewee recorded that she would make her own clothes, but from the high quality Blaney (Caslteblaney) silk.[207] She recalled that when her grandfather had sold some cattle 'he would give me a few pounds to go into Monaghan and buy a new outfit'.[208] An interviewee for the dissertation on Todd's of Limerick recalled that it was common for country women to travel into the city to purchase material with which they would make their own clothing.[209] As the introduction suggested, it is instructive to see consuming as an ongoing process that does not begin and end in a retailer. The division between shop-bought and home-made clothing might be too restrictive to understand the complexity of consumer behaviours in Ireland. Many consumers engaged in a process of adaption, using international fashions as inspiration for the designs they produced.

Helen Byrne's oral history interviews with female cinema goers in 1940s and 1950s Waterford revealed the resourcefulness of consumers and the influence of foreign fashions. Byrne noted that whilst many interviewees were 'unable to afford the products' they 'concentrated instead on less expensive techniques - a change of hairstyle or way of wearing a scarf – to come close to the screen image'.[210] A number of

[205] Ibid, p. 162.
[206] Paula Vallely, 'Nothing between us but the Holy Spirit: The material culture of dancing in rural Ireland 1935-1960' (MA Thesis, NCAD, 2015).
[207] Anonymous Interview, in Ibid.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Betty Harold, interviewed 22 Oct. 2014, for Noel Dillon, 'Todds: Like Harrods of Limerick' (B.A. dissertation, Mary Immaculate College, 2015), p. 24.
[210] Helen Byrne, 'Going to the Pictures: The Female Audience and the Pleasures of Cinema' in Mary J. Kelly and Barbara O'Connor (eds.), *Media Audiences in Ireland* (Dublin, 1997), p. 99.

interviewed women highlighted a particular example from *Gone with the Wind*. At one point in the film Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh), needed a dress to wear when visiting Rhett Butler (Clark Gable), but following the conclusion of the Civil War clothing and material was scarce. Scarlett decided to turn green velvet curtains into a dress as the best alternative. A number of women remembered the scene and the dress vividly and it seems emblematic of the refashioning and improvisation that characterised much consuming in Ireland.[211] The second chapter will discuss events held by Irish department stores encouraging Irish women to modify existing clothing to match international fashion trends. In addition, magazines like *Women's Life* as well as *Our Girls*, published in the 1930s, gave their readers step-by-step instructions on how to make their own copies of the clothing presented in the publication.[212] For more elaborate designs *Woman's Life* asked readers to send away for instructions and to enclose a fee.[213] Instructions for simpler designs, especially cardigans, jumpers and dresses were included free of charge in the magazine.[214] Rather than thinking in terms of shop-bought or home-made clothing it might often be more appropriate to describe a process of adaptation that involved shaping individual fashions according to international trends.

Irish consumers also received clothing and other products from relatives abroad. This exchange of products will be discussed in the final chapter, but it is worth noting now that the receipt of such gifts was an important means of consumption for many Irish citizens. The gift economy is not frequently discussed in the same terms as the consumer economy, but it might be more beneficial to view them as complimentary and interacting. In addition to gifts Irish citizens frequently received money remittances from relatives abroad. These remittances were often

[211] Ibid, pp 99-100.
[212] *Woman's Life* (23 Jul. 1936), pp 10-11; (14 Aug. 1936), pp 9-10; (14 Nov. 1936), p. 6; *Our Girls*, i, no. 7 (Apr., 1931), p. 15.
[213] *Woman's Life* (19 Sep. 1936), p. 5; (21 Nov. 1936), pp 8-9.
[214] *Woman's Life* (17 Oct. 1936), p. 11; (12 Dec. 1936), p. 14; (06 Feb. 1937), p. 7; (27 Mar. 1937), p. 8.

vital to the survival of many families, especially farm families.[215] The receipt of periodic cash remittances undoubtedly had some impact in the rural consumer economy, which, as was noted above, was often dependent on credit. It proves very difficult to adequately comment on exactly how and to what extent it influenced the credit system.

It is apparent that cash became increasingly important to the rural economy beginning in the mid-1930s. Two pieces of legislation stand out as particularly important in facilitating this development. The Unemployment Assistance Act of 1934 offered an income supplement to those not earning a minimum amount.[216] By 1936 118,000 were claiming, and as Mary Daly comments 'many recipients were small holders, their male relatives and casual rural labourers'.[217] In 1936 the Agricultural Wages Act was introduced, which set statutory wages and working conditions for labourers working on farms.[218] The minimum wage for a labourer became a benchmark by which to assess the standard of living of rural consumers more generally.[219] In addition to these Acts, the 1930s also saw the substantial rise in the numbers employed on relief works, and during the Emergency the numbers employed by government agencies would increase further. Turf schemes and army recruitment meant that hundreds of thousands of young men received a weekly wage, perhaps for the first time, and potentially many miles from their home residence. The increased presence of cash in the Irish economy had significant effects. As Daly comments:

> The experience of receiving a regular weekly wage was hugely important having adjusted the rhythm of farm work to release time for working on the bogs or on regular public works, many farmers became increasingly intolerant of the old patterns of casual work, periods without work, and most importantly; erratic or non-existent cash payments.[220]

[215] Brody, *Inishkillane*, p. 122.
[216] Daly, 'The modernization of rural Ireland, c. 1920-1960', p. 358.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid, p. 356.
[219] Ibid, p. 360.
[220] Ibid.

This had a number of profound effects, especially in regard to family relationships, which will be discussed in the final part of the chapter. For now, it suffices to note that increased cash in the rural economy meant more disposable expenditure and less reliance on established credit networks.

Gender and generation

The final section of the chapter will ask how authority and responsibility for consuming decisions were divided within family structures. It will consider the role of women in everyday consuming decisions, and also ask if responsibility for consumption should be viewed as authority or as a largely unwanted burden. The chapter will also try to ascertain how much freedom adolescents and children had over spending decisions. There are very few sources that offer a direct insight into these questions, especially in regard to adolescents, so there is an element of speculation involved in the commentary.

Consensus opinion understood and depicted women as consumers, in contrast to the male role as producer. Habitually Irish women were described as holding the purse strings. A 1943 Report on Vocational Organisation claimed, 'the housewives hold the purse strings of the community'.[221] Politicians often made demands of women because they were believed to be in charge of household finances. Séan Lemass commented in 1934 'Almost the whole of the national income passes through the hands of the housekeepers … They spend the man's wages.'[222] As the chapter on 'Buying for Ireland' will demonstrate, housewives were often asked to prefer Irish goods with their husband's wages. Studies into the cost of living, mentioned above, invariably sought information from housewives.[223] The 1952 Household Budget Survey even employed some female interviewers in the belief that

[221] *Report on Vocational Organisation* (Dublin, 1943), p. 280.
[222] Sean Lemass, quoted in *The Irish Press*, 20 Mar. 1934.
[223] *Report on the cost of living in Ireland 1922*; *Household Budget Inquiry 1952*.

women might not reveal their true expenditure to a man. Women were viewed as the natural consumers in society. A number of female associations were happy to identify themselves as consumers. The Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA was formed in 1932 specifically to act as a complimentary association to the Industrial Development Association from the viewpoint of the consumer.[224] The Irish Housewives Association (IHA), formed in 1942, likewise argued for the interests of the consumer, and largely viewed them as coterminous with those of women.[225] In this regard Ireland is very similar to other western nations in the early to mid-twentieth century. Internationally women were depicted as natural consumers for political and business interests, but, many women also assumed the designation willingly.[226]

The question remains, however; did the rhetoric conform to reality? Caitriona Clear's questionnaire for her work *Women of the House* provides one of the best insights into the gender division of spending in Ireland. One question asked who made decisions in regard to the spending of money, and the forty responses she received offer important detail.[227] Many respondents identified the mother as in control of spending decisions. Noreen L, who was born in 1939, claimed 'the mother was the financial controller of the home'.[228] Frank Q, from Cork, remembered 'when you got the wage packet you gave it to her [his wife], that was kind of automatic'.[229] Clear identified a general consensus in

[224] *The Irish Independent*, 29 Nov. 1932.
[225] Aisling Farrell, 'Harassed housewives fight the consumer's battler: The formation of the Irish Housewives Association and the campaign for price control, clean food, and equitable distribution in the Ireland of "the Emergency"' in *Saothar,* xvi (2011), p. 50.
[226] Tracey Deutsch, *Building a Housewives Paradise: Gender, Politics and American Grocery in the 20th Century* (Chapel Hill, 2010); Erika Rappaport: *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, 2000).
[227] Caitriona Clear, *Women of the House: Women's household work in Ireland 1922-1961* (Dublin, 2000), p. 220.
[228] Ibid, p. 200.
[229] Ibid, p. 186.

both rural and urban areas that the woman 'was seen as the person who controlled vital resources'.[230]

This hypothesis is supported by the Dunn family, discussed in Humphreys's study. Mrs Dunn was described as being 'the main handler and organizer of the family's finances'.[231] The father of the family noted that he only kept a small amount for himself as pocket money, and that he told his wife 'do what you want with it'.[232] Responsibility over consumption was understood as the female domain, as Mrs Dunn noted; 'I am the one who has to manage, and make ends meet and do most of the saving'.[233] In the case of the K family, from the 1943 Bell article mentioned above, the housewife exerted decision making control over consumption for the family.[234] Primarily, it appears that Mrs X was also given control over consumption decisions for her middle class family. Certainly Mrs X was making decisions on food consumption for the family, and, it also appears that she allocated her husband pocket money for his own personal spending.[235] Mrs K appears to have done likewise in allotting her husband money for cigarettes every week.[236] The allocation of pocket money appears to have been a common practice, which is also highlighted by respondents to Clear's questionnaire. Carmel C, from east Galway, who had previously stated 'the woman was the boss' also noted 'she gave them pocket money if they were going anywhere'.[237] Jack R, from Tipperary also noted that he would hand over his entire wage to his wife, but 'if I wanted a newspaper afterwards she'd made sure I got that'.[238] This is confirmed by the memories of shopkeepers interviewed for the Oral History Archive (MIC); 'it would always be the woman

[230] Ibid, p. 184.
[231] Humphreys, *New Dubliners,* p. 99.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] 'Other People's Income' no. 4, pp. 149-55.
[235] Ibid, 'no. 2', pp 467-73.
[236] Ibid, 'no. 4', p. 150.
[237] Clear, *Women of the House,* p. 185.
[238] Ibid, p. 186.

buying the weekly shopping … The men would only buy the tobacco and cigarettes'.[239]

This evidence would suggest that female control over consumption decisions was common in rural and urban areas. The only significant counter evidence is provided by Arensberg and Kimball, as they suggested small farmers in Clare exerted greater control over consumer decisions.[240] Their study claimed that women made consumer choices in regard to everyday household needs, which they list as 'tallow, candles, oil, sugar, tea'.[241] They also highlight, however, that typically farmers would travel annually or twice annually to market towns in order to make larger purchases.[242] The division in this case appears to have been between expensive and infrequent purchases made by men and the less expensive, everyday decisions made by women.

In general, however, the available evidence suggests that Irish women were in control of day-to-day household consumption decisions though some variation can be noted depending on the different social groups to which they belonged. The urban housewives from *The Bell* series and *New Dubliners* appear to have taken their husband's income and then allotted money. In the case of farm wives it is likely that they relied on their husband's credit to make purchases from local shopkeepers. Clear has argued that 'the smaller the family income, the more likely the woman was to control it'.[243] This comment supports Vivian Zelizer's thesis on American households in the period 1870-1930. Zelizer argued that lower class women generally practiced greater control over consumption decisions and were often given their husband's full pay check.[244] Upper class women, Zelizer argued, were more likely to be

[239] Interviewer Gearóid O'Connell (MIC/OHA/2000/52).
[240] Arensberg and Kimball, *Family and Community*, p. 293.
[241] Ibid.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Clear, *Women of the House*, p. 200.
[244] Vivian A. Zelizer, *The Social Meaning of Money* (New York, 1994), pp 43-7.

given pocket money with which to manage the household rather than the entirety of the husband's income.[245]

Importantly, Zelizer highlights that control over consumption decisions can be viewed as either freedom or responsibility.[246] In one sense control over expenditure gave housewives significant authority, and demonstrated their importance within the household. To take another view, housewives were compelled to make choices on consumption frequently based on very limited resources. Clear has argued that whilst control over household finances 'gave the woman some power, it also gave her a lot of responsibility and did not give her much comfort or independence of movement'.[247] Often, owing to limited resources, the needs and desires of other members of the family were prioritised over theirs. The prioritisation of family consumption over personal spending by women is long established, and is certainly apparent in nineteenth century Britain, where habitually working class women declined meat consumption in favour of their husbands.[248]

In the cases we have of Irish housewives it seems clear that they prioritised the needs and desires of their husbands and children above their own. Mrs K allocated no money for herself out of the household budget, but she spent 1/9d on cigarettes (Kerry Blues) each week, claiming 'sure, you couldn't see a man's tongue hanging out for the want of a smoke'.[249] Mrs K also claimed that money would be allocated for the purchase of necessary school materials for the children.[250] In the case of the X family the husband was also allocated money to spend on cigarettes and 5 shillings per week to cover his bank overdraft.[251] In the case of this family 2/8d was also allocated for their weekly cinema

[245] Ibid, pp 48-53.
[246] Ibid, p. 46.
[247] Clear, *Women of the House*, p. 201.
[248] Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London, 1986), pp 130-45.
[249] 'Other People's Income' no. 4, p. 150.
[250] Ibid, p. 152.
[251] 'Other People's Income' no. 2, p. 471.

trip.[252] In the case of the solicitor's family, the husband clearly had considerable disposable income to spend on pastimes, including golf, but some income was also spent on joint leisure activities including theatre and opera visits.[253] This implies that for the middle and upper classes when expenditure was devoted to female consumption it was often jointly experienced with their husbands, rather than as individual leisure. Clear has argued that many rural women had very limited leisure opportunities once they married.[254] Respondents remembered occasions they left the family house as quite rare, and rural women could not engage in the leisure practices open to their husbands, such as going to the public house or sporting events.

Across income and social class groups a larger proportion of expenditure was also allocated to male rather than female clothing. This disparity is demonstrated both by the statistical information offered by the Household Budget Survey and by the individual examples presented in *The Bell* series. Mr X spent roughly 20% more annually on clothing and shoes than his wife did.[255] In general, Irish housewives were given the responsibility of making household consumption decisions, but this should not necessarily be confused with freedom or authority. Spending on other family members, especially husbands, appears to have been prioritised over spending on housewives. Clear has speculated that most Irish women were more interested in some level of material comfort and leisure than they were concerned by questions of power or control.[256]

It is slightly more difficult to comment on how money was divided along generational lines. It was a commonly expressed view that the increase of cash in the rural economy undermined the authority of fathers over the consumption decisions of the family. Sean MacEntee claimed that Unemployment Assistance was undermining parental

[252] Ibid.
[253] 'Other People's Income' No. 1, pp 290-7.
[254] Clear, *Women of the House*, pp 207-8.
[255] 'Other People's Income' No. 2, p. 470.
[256] Clear, *Women of the House*, p. 201.

authority, and he argued that the payment should be made directly to the head of family rather than being given to sons.[257] Generational control over consumer decisions could often be quite marked. Even in the early 1940s, Reverend T.H. Hall, a Church of Ireland minister, wrote in complaint to de Valera that he 'knew of more than one instance where young men of 25 years still go to their father to ask for the price of a smoke or the cost of a ticket to a dance or cinema'.[258] Mary Daly has argued that 'Once a son or a daughter began to receive their own money, they became less willing to cede financial control to a parent.'[259] It is still possible that many fathers exercised control over the money earned by their children. The sixth chapter will discuss the importance of emigrant remittances and gifts, which continued to be significant especially for rural communities into the 1960s and beyond. Wages earned outside Ireland could flow back to the family head at home. Yet, the chapter will also demonstrate that income earned abroad, even if part was returned as a remittance, did give adolescent consumers greater freedom over consuming decisions.

Evidence from Humphreys's study suggests that children earning an income were expected to contribute to household expenses, but, were not necessarily compelled to do. Humphrey's commented, 'The practice of allowing working children, at least after the age of 18, voluntarily to determine the amount of their contribution is general.'[260] The workers interviewed by Humphreys suggested this represented a change from the general practice when they were children. At that time normally 'children even in their late twenties' were required 'to turn in their entire wage from which they then received an allowance'.[261] Many children were also asked to defer marriage in order to contribute towards the family budget. One interviewed artisan claimed

[257] Sean MacEntee, quoted by Daly, 'The Modernization of Rural Ireland 1920-1960', p. 359.
[258] T.H. Hall to de Valera (1943) (NAI/TAOIS/S13431/Second Homes on Family Farms).
[259] Daly, 'The Modernization of Rural Ireland 1920-1960', p. 359.
[260] Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, p. 154.
[261] Ibid.

> Most children among working class people today will not stand any argument from their parents to postpone their marriage because the family is hard pressed. They feel that if the father can spend a certain amount of money on drink and sports and things of that sort, he can very well give that up and take up the slack.[262]

This comment suggests that adolescents were unwilling to postpone life decisions in order to keep their fathers in the consumer lifestyle to which they had become accustomed. Earning a separate income, Humphreys's study also suggested, allowed adolescents to demand independence to make their own consuming decisions:

> Once the girls start working, even if they are only fifteen or sixteen years old, they demand a good deal of independence and in nine cases out of ten they get it … they are contributing to the income of the household … As a rule, they go wherever they want to go and they go very frequently, sometimes every night in the week. And they are always out to dances and movies … All this is also true of the boys, of course. [263]

The interviewee claimed that increased wages for adolescents changed their ability to demand and attain greater levels of independence. He noted that claims to independence for the preceding generations could not be backed up 'because they were not bringing in the money they are today'.[264]

This material implies that in Dublin adolescents had a reasonable degree of autonomy in their consumption choices. It is probable that working adolescents gave a significant portion of their wages to their parents, but, they were also holding onto a large portion of it to spend on their own consumer choices. It appears this was also the case for many rural adolescents, who increasingly had more cash to spend on consumer

[262] Ibid, p. 155.
[263] Ibid, p. 173.
[264] Ibid.

items and practices. In both rural and urban areas cinema and dance halls were highlighted as important items of expenditure for the adolescent budget. The interviewee in the Humprehys's study, noted above, claimed that in addition to increased wages the greater autonomy of adolescents was related 'the increase in the number of movies and dances and especially the dance halls'.[265] Commentators habitually suggested that adolescent consumers viewed expenditure on such consumer behaviours as necessities rather than luxuries.[266] Many of these issues will be discussed in chapter four, on dance halls, and chapter six on emigration. For now it is only important to note that new consumer behaviours were seen increasingly as necessities for adolescents.

The historiographical orthodoxy suggests that adolescence as a distinct life phase, with its own sub-cultures, only developed in Ireland during the 1960s. Mary Daly has argued:

> It was only in the 1960s as a consequence of economic growth, an extension of schooling and the development of a more urban, non-industrial society, that adolescence came to be viewed as a distinct phase in the life-cycle – with its freedom, distinct leisure and consumer markets.[267]

This idea has been questioned, however. James Donnelly has asked 'just how new and different the much trumpeted youth subculture of the 1960s was'?[268] Carole Holohan's research on youth sub-cultures in the 1960s drew parallels with practices in preceding decades.[269] Eleanor O'Leary's recent work identified shifting youth cultures in 1950s Ireland; many of

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[265] Ibid.
[266] Clair Wills, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge, 2015), pp 70-7.
[267] Mary Daly, 'The Emergence of an Irish Adolescence: 1920s to 1970s', in Susannah Riordan and Catherine Cox (eds.), *Adolescence in Modern Irish History* (Dublin, 2015), p. 199.
[268] James Donnelly, 'Bishop Michael Browne of Galway (1937-76) and the Regulation of Public Morality' *New Hibernia Review,* xvii, no. 1 (2013), p. 37.
[269] Carole Holohan, 'Challenges to social order and Irish identity? Youth culture in the sixties' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxviii, no. 151 (2013), pp 389-405.

which were influenced by international trends.[270] It seems likely that the trend towards greater adolescent independence and spending notable in the 1960s developed from the 1950s and perhaps previous decades.

Commentary on adolescent spending must be suffixed by a discussion of social class and income. For wealthier families in Irish society it is likely that adolescents had disposable income with which to make consumer choices prior to the 1930s. It is also likely that for the poorest families greater claims were placed on any income earned by adolescents even in the 1950s. For the general mass of adolescents, however, it appears that they enjoyed a greater degree of consuming freedom from the 1930s onwards, and especially by the 1950s. The relative freedom of adolescents also depended on factors other than class or status. Eleanor O'Leary has argued that the number of children in the family was important, and the position of the child (if they were the oldest or the youngest).[271] O'Leary suggested that younger children generally enjoyed greater consumer freedom because fewer financial restraints and obligations were placed on them by their parents.[272]

This chapter has attempted to provide a brief introduction to some central aspects of everyday consumption in Ireland. Many topics addressed, such as social status and gendered consumption warrant in-depth studies of their own, and the chapter has merely tried to introduce these issues to provide context for the remaining chapters. The significance of adapting and modifying fashions will be discussed frequently, especially in chapters two and four. These chapters will also emphasise the popularity of foreign goods and trends. The differences between rural and urban Ireland will also be addressed frequently, especially in the third chapter discussing Emergency conditions, and the sixth chapter discussing emigration.

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[270] Eleanor O'Leary, *Youth and Popular Culture in 1950s Ireland* (London, 2018), pp 59-114.
[271] Ibid, p. 59.
[272] Ibid.

Chapter 2

Buying for Ireland: Consumer nationalism in the Economic War

> *Some women might find it a hardship to give up Paris fashions for our own, but greater sacrifices have been made for the preservation of the Irish nation.*[1]

These were the words of Eamon de Valera at the Fianna Fáil Árd Fheis in November 1930. Parisian fashion was a particular bête noire of the future Taoiseach who told Irish women in the same speech that they looked most attractive in clothing suited to 'their climate'.[2] This vitriol towards Parisian clothing was also part of a broader ideology. This involved, to a certain extent, a cultural and moral rejection of luxurious foreign fashions in favour of a more ascetic self-sufficient model.[3] This moral rejection of Parisian fashion was connected to an economic policy aimed at promoting goods manufactured in Ireland. Fianna Fáil and de Valera, especially, have become identified with this economic and social policy. In popular imagination Cumman na nGaedheal (1922-1932) are still largely associated with laissez faire economic policies, and Fianna Fáil (1932-1948) with protection and self-sufficiency, but there is general agreement amongst economic historians that this division is too clear cut.[4] Ó Gráda has emphasised a gradual drift towards protectionist measures in the Irish economy, which owed as much to the changed international system as Fianna Fáil ideology.[5] While many economic and policy issues have been addressed by Irish historiography the social and

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[1] Eamon de Valera quoted in *The Irish Independent*, 1 Nov. 1930.
[2] Ibid.
[3] See de Valera's speech on leaving the mansion to live in the cottage; Eamon de Valera, *Dáil Debate*, vol. 25, no. 3, col. 474, (12 Jul. 1928).
[4] David Johnson, *The Interwar Economy in Ireland* (Dundalk, 1989); J. Peter Neary and Cormac Ó Gráda, *Protection, economic war and structural change: the 1930s in Ireland* (Dublin, 1986); Cormac Ó Gráda, *A Rocky Road: The Irish Economy Since the 1920s* (Manchester, 1997); Kevin H. O'Rourke 'Ireland and the bigger picture' in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda (eds.), *Refiguring Ireland: Essays in honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003); Frank Barry, Linda Barry and Aisling Menton, 'Tariff Jumping Foreign Direct Investment in Protectionist era Ireland', *The Economic History Review*, lxix, no. 4 (2016).
[5] J. Peter Neary and Cormac Ó Gráda, *Protection, economic war and structural change,* p. 5

cultural history of the Economic War has largely been overlooked. Mary Daly's *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity* is an exception; her work moved beyond questions of economic policy towards a consideration of the connection between economics and national identity.[6] Daly argued that Fianna Fáil extended the 'Gaelic, Catholic cultural revolution to the economic sphere'.[7] At the same time, Daly highlighted a number of issues with this revolution; self-sufficiency was achieved in only a few commodity areas; Irish industry was developed with British investment.[8] Daly largely focussed on government records and sources from business associations, which does not offer much insight into how the wider population perceived the 'Gaelic, Catholic cultural revolution in the economic sphere'.[9]

In general, historians have focussed on production at the expense of consumption in their analysis, and the consumer as a figure has been overlooked. What efforts were made by the government, business, or civil society to promote Irish products? How did the Irish consumer react to the new emphasis on 'Irishness' in the economic sphere? How were Irish products viewed by the mass of Irish consumers? These questions have not been explored meaning that the everyday consumer experience of the Economic War has largely been overlooked. There are valid reasons why historians have not broached these issues. As the introduction highlighted, we have very little material offering an insight into what consumers thought about their consuming options. There are some methods by which we might approach this question, however. Advertising sources, as the introduction noted, have largely not been utilised by Irish historiography. Advertisements will not reveal what consumers desired, but they do suggest, at least, what businesses and advertisers believed would be attractive to consumers.

[6] Mary Daly, *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity* (Dublin, 1992).
[7] Ibid, p. 61.
[8] Ibid, pp 169-73.
[9] Ibid, p. 61.

The chapter will draw primarily on advertisements placed in Irish newspapers as source material. Advertisements were obviously placed in numerous locations in the 1930s, including placards, billboards and radio shows, but newspapers offer the only consistent example of advertisements that have been preserved. This source material demonstrates a spike in Buy Irish marketing in the period 1930-1934, with a very dramatic increase in the period 1932-1934. This corresponds quite closely to political and economic developments; the Economic War began in 1932 and the Coal-Cattle Pact was signed in 1935. 'Irishness' became a much more prominent feature of the advertising strategy employed by a wide range of brands and retailers in the early 1930s. Yet the sudden spike in the Buy Irish message faded equally rapidly after 1935.

The chapter is primarily focussed on the period 1930 to 1934 though it will also range in discussion throughout the 1930s. It is important to note that consumer nationalism and Buy Irish promotions existed long before and long after the Economic War. The roots of consumer nationalism can be traced back as far as the early eighteenth century, and certainly at the time of the Volunteer movement, which supported the non-importation and non-consumption of British goods.[10] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a rebirth of consumer nationalism has been demonstrated in the work of Stephanie Rains and Claire Nally and John Strachan.[11] The first decade of the twentieth century saw the intellectual thought and activity of individuals such as Arthur Griffith and D.P. Moran lead to an increasing Buy Irish consciousness amongst the public.[12] The chapter will highlight a spike in Buy Irish advertising in this period. Even in the 1920s, an apparent lull

[10] Martyn Powell, *The Politics of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp 173-97.
[11] Stephanie Rains, *Commodity Culture and Social Class in Dublin 1850-1916* (Dublin, 2010); John Strachan and Claire Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922* (Basingstoke, 2012).
[12] John Strachan and Claire Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922*, pp 75-8; Richard Davis, *Arthur Griffith and Non-violent Sinn Fein* (Tralee, 1974), pp 127-44; Arthur Griffith, *The Sinn Féin Policy* (Dublin, 1906); D.P. Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland* (Dublin, 2006).

period, retailers and firms were still marketing themselves as Irish, as has been demonstrated by Muireann Charleton in her work on Henry Lyons and Co. in Sligo.[13] There were also periodic Buy Irish campaigns organised in the 1940s, 1950s and even the 1960s.[14] It was in the period of the early 1930s, however, that Buy Irish advertising and promotional campaigns reached their greatest height and had their greatest effect on the daily lives of consumers. It is ironic, given this fact, that no work has so far addressed consumer nationalism in this period.

The introduction referenced Dolan's argument that consumption prior to the 1960s was generally viewed as 'a collective, and socially regulated process'.[15] This dissertation views the nation and the state as different concepts of collective identity. For the purpose of the dissertation the nation is defined as citizens acting together to achieve practical aims but for a supposedly higher, historical purpose. It is important for this definition that the citizens act together collectively. The state is defined as something that is separate from, but that can act for the benefit of, society. In this definition of a collective, citizens must call the state to action and have limited options but to rely on it. This chapter will argue that in the inter-war period discourse on consumption centred on the nation, whereas, during the Emergency and after it focussed on the state and this will be discussed in the following chapter.

The first section of the chapter will demonstrate the rise and fall in popularity and visibility of the Buy Irish message in advertisements. The chapter will use three methods to achieve this, involving a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Advertisements

[13] Muireann Charleton, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism: A cocktail for consumer craving in a rural Irish department store 1878-1930' (MA Thesis, NCAD, 2007), p. 1.
[14] *NAIDA Annual Report 1947* (Dublin, 1947), p. 12; *NAIDA Annual Report 1951* (Dublin, 1951), p. 30; George Colley to John Lynch, 25 Feb. 1970 (NAI/TAOIS/2003/16/344).

[15] Paddy Dolan, 'Developing consumer subjectivity in Ireland: 1900–1980', *Journal of Consumer Culture,* ix (2009), p. 125.

are only one source that suggests a peak in the popularity of the Buy Irish message in the early 1930s. The chapter will also discuss promotional shopping drives, such as the Buy Irish weeks, promoted by the *Irish Press* and *Irish Independent*, which reached their peak of popularity in the years 1933 and 1934. 1932 witnessed the foundation of perhaps the first Irish consumer association in the Women's Industrial Development Association; an organisation specifically committed to promoting Irish goods to Irish consumers. The second section will offer some explanations as to why there was a clear rise and fall in the popularity of the Buy Irish message. It is difficult to offer firm conclusions as to why a particular marketing strategy became popular. The chapter will offer some suggestions as to why businesses, advertisers, and stores viewed it as profitable to promote their products as Irish. It will then suggest some reasons why it no longer appeared profitable after 1935 to be viewed as Irish.

The third section of the chapter will examine consumer nationalism in an international context. In many European nations in the 1930s consumer nationalism was advocated as the means to economic development. A national consumer ideal was created and propagated in Britain and Italy.[16] In certain regards consumer nationalism in these nations was similar to the Irish example, but there are also crucial differences concerning the role of the state and the significance of imperial motivations that will be examined in the chapter. Appropriate comparison points for Irish consumer nationalism might be found in

[16] Erika Rappaport 'Drink Empire Tea: Gender, Conservative Politics and Imperial Consumerism in Inter-War Britain' in Erika Rappaport, Sandra Trudgen Dawson and Mark Crowley (eds.), *Consuming Behaviours: Identity, Politics and Pleasure in 20th Century Britain* (London, 2015), pp 140-51; Emanuela Scarpellini, *Material Nation: A Consumer's History of Modern Italy* (Oxford, 2011), pp 87-104; Adam Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity: Italian advertising from fascism to postmodernity* (London, 2003), pp 27-64; Hartmut Berghoff, Consumption Politics and Politicized Consumption: Monarchy, Republic, and Dictatorship in Germany, 1900-1939, in Hartmut Berghoff and Uwe Spiekermann (eds.), *Decoding Modern Consumer Societies* (New York, 2012), pp 125-48.

colonial or semi-colonial contexts like India or China.[17] In these cases consumer nationalism developed as a response to imperialism, and many of the same approaches used and limitations encountered in China and India can also be seen in Ireland. Again, however, differences from the Irish case are also evident. The Irish state enjoyed policy levers enabling it to limit foreign imports and encourage domestic consumption, which was wholly unavailable to Indian consumer nationalists and largely unavailable to Chinese consumer nationalists. The chapter will consider if Ireland is best understood as a hybrid example; not fitting either the imperial European mould or the colonial non-European mould.

The final section of the chapter will consider understandings and definitions of Irish products. Foreign products often had an established air of superiority; Parisian clothing was more fashionable than Irish home-spuns; Virginian tobacco was more flavoursome than Irish-grown varieties. The fact that de Valera felt the need to speak out against the malign influence of Parisian fashion perhaps highlights their popularity. Promoters of Irish goods often had to struggle against the impression of inferiority. Businesses that sought to present themselves as Irish often had to balance this with an air of cosmopolitanism. Despite the restrictions of the Economic War and the inducements to Buy Irish, consumers continued to desire the most fashionable product, which was often foreign-made. Many foreign brands continued to cater to the Irish market, finding it relatively easy to operate behind the tariff walls and Control of Manufacturers Acts. In fact, as the chapter will show, a large number of companies that promoted their goods as Irish were actually British owned. These companies established factories in Ireland but their history and identity was rooted in Britain, supposedly the enemy in the Economic War. This raises the interesting question; what is an Irish product. Contemporaries offered many competing definitions revolving around the issues of capital, management, location, labour and materials.

[17] Lisa Trivedi, *Clothing Gandhi's Nation: Homespun Modern India* (Bloomington, 2007); Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (London, 2003).

The final section of the chapter will probe this issue, highlighting the complexity and elusiveness involved in defining an Irish product.

Source Material

In the period from 1930 to 1934 we can highlight a noticeable rise in the number of brands that promoted their products as Irish in newspaper advertisements. After 1934 the decline in such advertisements is equally notable. To assess the popularity of Buy Irish advertisements the following three methods were used. First, the chapter took a quantitative approach exploiting the search function of the Irish Newspaper Archive. Advertisements in all newspapers (local, national and regional) in the archive were searched for particular phrases that denoted a Buy Irish message; 'Buy Irish', 'Irish Made', 'Irish Goods', 'Made in Dublin', 'Made in Ireland'. This method cannot be exact, as for one thing the number of advertisements is underestimated because the Irish Newspaper Archive cannot always accurately distinguish between an article and an advertisement. This means, if anything, that the numbers of advertisements presented in the charts below underestimate the actual number of advertisements in Irish newspapers. Whilst this method presents numerous problems, it does present a good overview of the general trends.

Secondly, the chapter consulted individual editions of major national and regional newspapers for any advertisements that emphasised 'Irishness'. *The Irish Independent*, *Irish Times* and *Irish Press* (beginning in 1932), were consulted as examples of national newspapers. A major regional newspaper was selected for each province in Ireland; *The Cork Examiner* for Munster, *The Connaught Telegraph* for Connaught, *The Anglo-Celt* for Ulster, and *The Leinster Times* for Leinster. The papers were selected for their significant readership across different counties. In the case of the *Anglo-Celt* this readership reached beyond Ulster and included several counties in Leinster. Four editions of each newspaper were consulted in separate quarters of even years in the period 1926-1936. This method permits a more qualitative approach, which is not reliant on the

advertisements using specific phrases. It is a matter of contention as to exactly what constituted a marker of 'Irishness'. Any of the above terms used in the quantitative approach were accepted, as was any mention of using 'Irish labour', or using Irish products such as 'Irish milk'. Any comment within the advertisement noting that the product was made in Ireland or made using Irish products was taken as evidence that the company was attempting to position itself as Irish. Thirdly, advertisements for specific companies were traced through the 1920s and 1930s. Major brands were selected for examination in two key consumer industries, namely cigarettes and confectionery. Examining the advertisements for individual companies permits us to trace how businesses altered their marketing policy. It allows us to focus on the specific moments at which companies shifted their advertising approach either towards or away from "Irishness". Cigarettes and confectionery were selected as they were two of the most commonly advertised products though the chapter will also reference some other examples. Taken together these three methods demonstrate the surge and subsequent decline in the Buy Irish message that was highlighted above.

The four charts below dramatically represent the jump in advertisements stressing 'Irishness' in the period 1930-1934. In Charts 6 and 7 this period represents the peak in the number of advertisements. The rise in adverts is matched by the equally rapid decline. The two charts below break down this period to offer greater insight. In Chart 8 the three terms all reach a peak in the period 1932-1934. In Chart 9 the terms reach a peak in the year 1931.

Chart 8: 'Buy Irish', 'Irish Made', 'Irish Goods' Irish Newspaper Archive searches 1900-1964.[18]

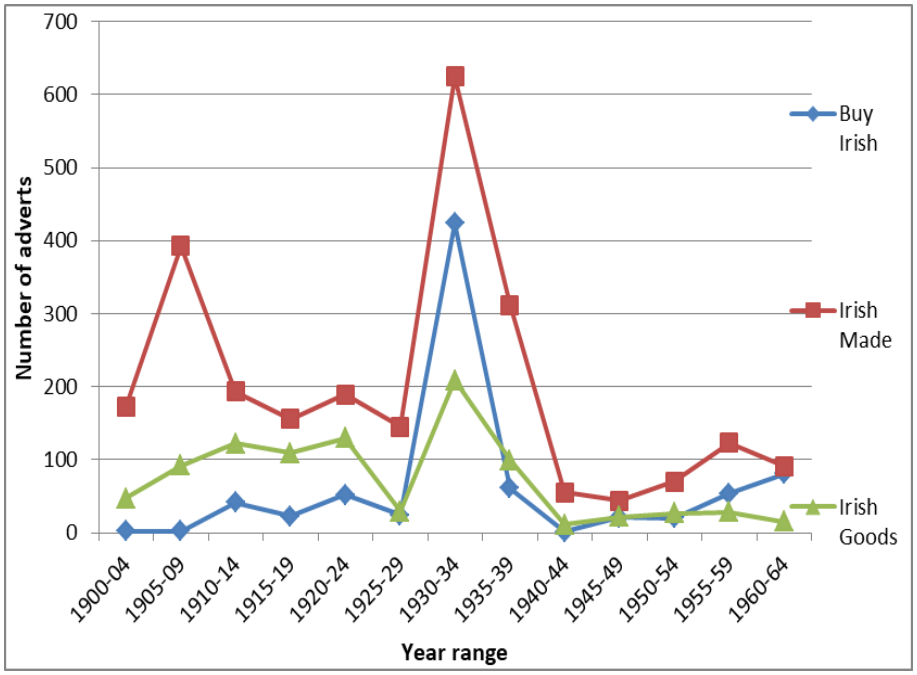
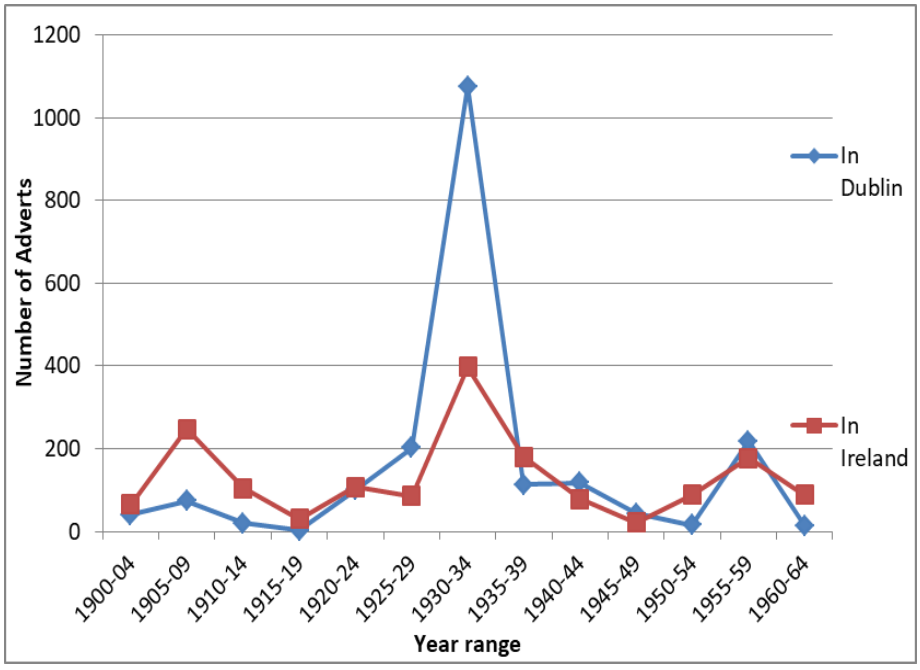


Chart 9: 'Made in Dublin', 'Made in Ireland' Irish Newspaper Archive searches 1900-1964.[19]



[18] 'Irish News Archive', Advertisement only searches exact phrases "Buy Irish" "Irish made" "Irish goods" (http://archive.irishnewsarchive.com) (8 Nov. 2016). The vertical column represents the number of advertisements per time period. Each time series runs from 1 Jan. to 31 Dec.

[19] 'Irish News Archive', Advertisement only searches exact phrases 'Made in Dublin' 'Made in Ireland' (http://archive.irishnewsarchive.com) (8 Nov. 2016).

Chart 10: 'Buy Irish', 'Irish Made', 'Irish Goods' Irish Newspaper Archive searches 1929-1936.[20]

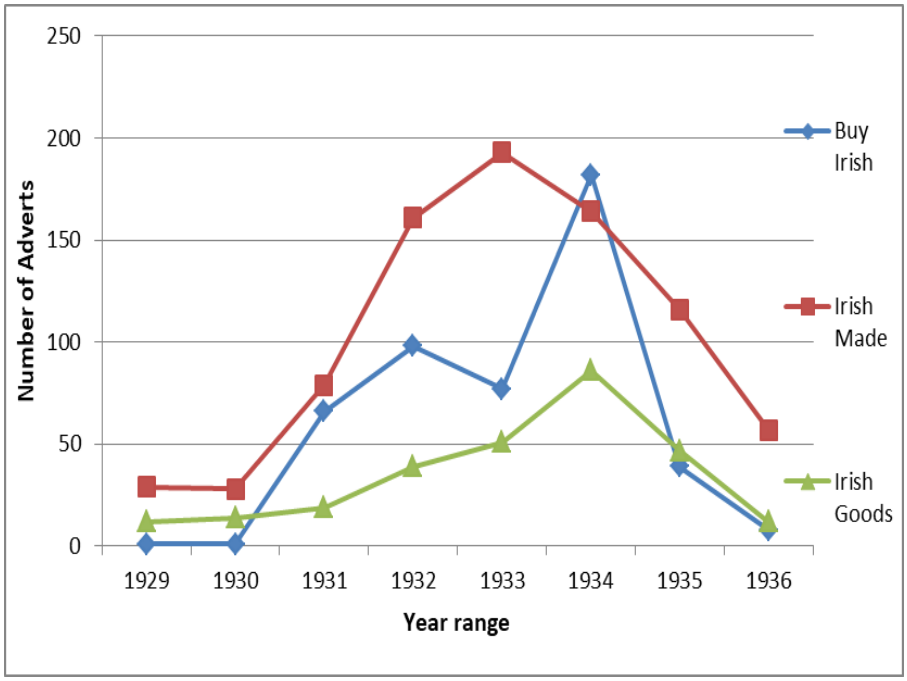
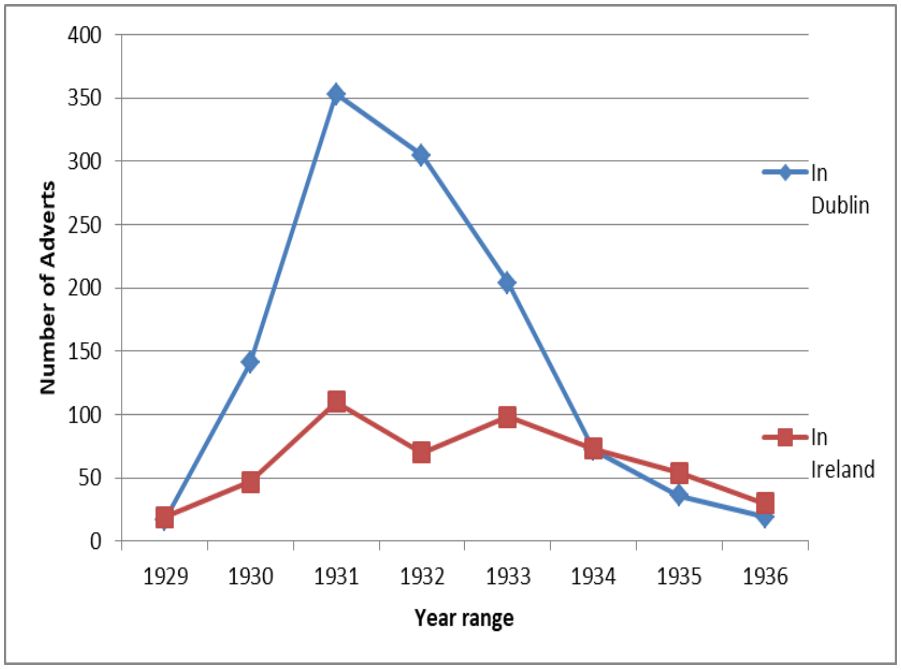


Chart 11: 'Made in Dublin', 'Made in Ireland' Irish Newspaper Archive searches 1929-1936. [21]



[20] 'Irish News Archive', Advertisement only searches exact phrases "Buy Irish" "Irish made" "Irish goods"; Article only searches exact phrases "Buy Irish" "Irish made" "Irish goods" (http://archive.irishnewsarchive.com) (8 Nov. 2016).
[21] 'Irish News Archive', Advertisement only searches exact phrases "Made in Dublin", "Made in Ireland" (http://archive.irishnewsarchive.com) (8 Nov. 2016).

Taken together the four figures above visibly depict the rapid rise and fall of references to 'Irishness' in newspaper advertising in the 1930s. The broad trends identified by this method are supported by analysing individual editions of national and regional newspapers across the 1920s and 1930s, which are outlined in the two following tables.

Table 6: *Independent, Times, Press* Advertisements promoting products as Irish 1926-1936.[22]

Year	Ind.	Times	Press
1926	2	2	NA
1928	6	2	NA
1930	9	3	NA
1932	12	7	10
1934	23	7	16
1936	5	4	11

[22] *The Irish Independent* 1 Jan. 1926; 28 Apr. 1926; 9 Jul. 1926; 19 Oct. 1926; 28 Jan. 1928; 7 Apr. 1928; 18 Jul. 1928; 20 Oct. 1928; 29 Jan. 1930; 21 Apr. 1930; 30 Jul. 1930; 9 Oct. 1930; 30 Jan. 1932; 14 Apr. 1932; 4 Jul. 1932; 20 Oct. 1932; 4 Jan. 1934; 27 Apr. 1934; 14 Jul. 1934; 20 Oct. 1934; 2 Jan. 1936; 14 Apr. 1936; 25 Jul. 1936; 7 Oct. 1936; *The Irish Times* 6 Jan. 1926; 29 Apr. 1926; 15 Jul. 1926; 23 Oct. 1926; 12 Jan. 1928; 3 Apr. 1928; 26 Jul. 1928; 12 Oct. 1928; 30 Jan. 1930; 2 Apr. 1930; 19 Jul. 1930; 30 Oct. 1930; 6 Jan. 1932; 20 Apr. 1932; 12 Jul. 1932; 29 Oct. 1932; 15 Jan. 1934, 28 Apr. 1934, 2 Jul. 1934, 22 Oct. 1934; 27 Jan. 1936; 4 Apr. 1936; 20 Jul. 1936; 09 Oct. 1936; *The Irish Press* 26 Jan. 1932; 7 Apr. 1932; 22 Jul. 1932; 3 Oct. 1932; 8 Jan. 1934; 14 Apr. 1934; 26 Jul. 1934; 23 Oct. 1934; 3 Jan. 1936; 28 Apr. 1936; 8 Jul. 1936; 20 Oct. 1936.

Table 7: *Irish Examiner, Anglo-Celt, Connaught Tribune, Leinster Express* Advertisements promoting products as Irish 1926-1936.[23]

Year	Exam.	Anglo	Trib.	Expr.
1926	5	4	3	2
1928	2	1	12	3
1930	7	15	11	4
1932	14	18	20	13
1934	7	25	26	11
1936	4	5	9	4

In the case of all newspapers surveyed we can highlight an increase in the number of advertisements promoting the product as Irish in the early to mid-1930s. In most instances 1934 is the peak year, though in the case of the *Cork Examiner* and the *Leinster Express* 1932 is the peak. Differences between the various newspapers suggest some interesting tendencies. Fewer 'Irish' advertisements were placed in the *Irish Times* than in the *Press* or the *Independent.* It is notable that the paper follows the same general trend as other national and regional competitors. The paper was certainly perceived as unionist during this period, and this suggests that the Buy Irish message was popular even among groups potentially opposed to Irish independence. Interestingly, the *Press* carried fewer Irish advertisements generally than the *Independent*, which might have been the reverse of expectations, given *Press* links to Fianna Fáil and their broad support of the protectionist economic policy implemented by the party. *The Independent,* however,

[23] *The Irish Examiner* 9 Jan. 1926; 27 Apr. 1926; 7 Jul. 1926; 15 Oct. 1926; 31 Jan. 1928; 4 Apr. 1928; 11 Jul. 1928; 23 Oct. 1928; 3 Jan. 1930; 12 Apr. 1930; 31 Jul. 1930; 8 Oct. 1930; 8 Jan 1932; 4 Apr. 1932; 30 Jul. 1932; 20 Oct. 1932; 20 Jan. 1934, 3 Apr. 1934, 7 Jul. 1934, 26 Oct. 1934; 4 Jan. 1936; 24 Apr. 1936; 30 Jul. 1936; 12 Oct. 1936; *The Anglo-Celt* 9 Jan. 1926; 24 Apr. 1926; 10 Jul. 1926; 2 Oct. 1926; 14 Jan. 1928; 7 Apr. 1928; 28 Jul. 1928; 20 Oct. 1928; 18 Jan. 1930; 5 Apr. 1930; 26 Jul. 1930; 4 Oct. 1930; 9 Jan. 1932; 30 Apr. 1932; 2 Jul. 1932; 15 Oct. 1932; 20 Jan. 1934; 7 Apr. 1934; 28 Jul. 1934; 20 Oct. 1934; 4 Jan. 1936; 18 Apr. 1936; 11 Jul. 1936; 31 Oct. 1936; *The Connaught Tribune* 23 Jan. 1926; 3 Apr. 1926; 17 Jul. 1926; 30 Oct. 1926; 7 Jan. 1928; 28 Apr. 1928; 14 Jul. 1928; 13 Oct. 1928; 4 Jan. 1930; 19 Apr. 1930; 12 Jul. 1930; 25 Oct. 1930; 2 Jan. 1932; 23 Apr. 1932; 9 Jul. 1932; 9 Jul. 1932; 22 Oct. 1932; 13 Jan. 1934; 7 Apr. 1934; 28 Apr. 1934; 20 Oct. 1934; 4 Jan. 1936; 18 Apr. 1936; 25 Jul. 1936; 10 Oct. 1936; *The Leinster Express* 30 Jan. 1926; 10 Apr. 1926; 1 Jul. 1926; 23 Oct. 1926; 28 Jan. 1928; 7 Apr. 1928; 14 Jul. 1928; 20 Oct. 1928; 18 Jan. 1930; 5 Apr. 1930; 26 Jul. 1930; 11 Oct. 1930; 9 Jan. 1932; 30 Apr. 1932; 2 Jul. 1932; 22 Oct. 1932; 6 Jan. 1934; 21 Apr. 1934; 28 Jul. 1934; 6 Oct. 1934; 11 Jan. 1936; 18 Apr. 1936; 4 Jul. 1936; 31 Oct. 1936.

had a long history of supporting Buy Irish drives. William Martin Murphy was a strong supporter of the 1907 International Exhibition held in Dublin, which sought to promote Irish products for a world market.[24]

A large variance in the number of pages per edition of the various newspapers, especially the regional newspapers, should also be noted. *The Anglo-Celt* and the *Connaught Tribune* were usually fourteen to sixteen pages per edition, whereas, the *Leinster Express* was normally only half that size at six to eight pages per edition. It is sensible to make comparisons between the different years for each newspaper than to make comparisons amongst the newspapers. Reading in regional variations would be misleading given the variance in pages per edition that has been highlighted. This method does demonstrate an increasing if uneven trend towards the promotion of products as Irish across newspapers in the early to mid-1930s. We can also highlight a notable decline of Buy Irish promotions in the second half of the 1930s. In some cases the fall off in advertisements is very rapid, as in the case of the *Irish Independent*, and in others it is a slower decline, as with the *Irish Press*. The decline is notable across all newspapers from 1934 onwards.

To further analyse the increasing and then declining promotion of products as Irish, the chapter will now consider individual brands and products across the period of the late 1920s and 1930s. Companies promoting their brand as Irish ranged broadly across all commodity classes. The chapter will focus primarily on confectionery and cigarettes but in addition to these commodities soap, cheese, dresses, insurance, rat poison, blankets, fertiliser, shoes, armchairs, jelly, boot polish, toothpaste, Yorkshire relish, jam, suits, beds and porridge were all marketed as Irish. The tobacco and cigarette industry presents a useful example, as they were perhaps the most commonly advertised commodities and we possess a large source base. The major tobacco companies operating in inter-war Ireland included Wills, Players and

[24] Tony Farmar, *Privileged Lives: A Social History of middle-class Ireland 1882-1989* (Dublin, 2010), pp 93-5.

Gallahers, all based in Dublin, Carreras, in Limerick, and Carrolls, in Dundalk. The first four of these were foreign-owned companies, who had established subsidiary operations in the 1920s and 1930s. Carrolls was the only major Irish owned brand operating at this time. Wills, Players and Carrolls were the most frequent advertisers in Irish newspapers but it is possible that Gallahers and Carreras devoted more attention to non-press advertising. Clarkes's tobacco also frequently advertised in newspapers. In 1929 Clarkes had amalgamated with Wills and they shared a factory in Dublin.

In cigarette and tobacco advertising a clear trend is apparent. In the early 1920s both Wills and Players made occasional reference to their 'Dublin factory' in advertisements.[25] In 1930 and 1931 the phrase 'Made in Dublin' became common in Wills and Players advertisements. By 1933 and 1934 phrases like 'Made in Dublin by Irish labour' or 'Made in Saorstat Eireann by Irish labour' became permanent fixtures in their advertising.[26] Clarke's tobacco also regularly included such lines in their advertisements, and on one occasion 'Made by Irish men and women working under ideal conditions in Dublin.'[27] Wills and Players also featured photographs or pictures of their factories in the years 1933 and 1934. The fictitious Mr Flake asked in a Wills's advertisement in 1933 'Could we find a finer factory in the Irish Free State, Mr Gold?', with Mr Gold replying 'or a happier body of Irish workers, Mr Flake?'.[28] Both Wills and Players have archives held in the U.K., but unfortunately neither offers significant insight into the advertising strategy of the Irish

[25] Advertisement Wills's Gold Flake Cigarettes, *The Irish Independent,* 20 Apr. 1925; Advertisement Wills's Gold Flake Cigarettes, *The Kerryman*, 8 Aug. 1925; Advertisement Player's Navy Cut, *The Connaught Tribune*, 31 Oct. 1925; Advertisement Players's, *The Kerryman,* 13 Dec. 1930; Advertisement Players's, *The Irish Independent*, 26 Jan. 1931; Advertisement Clarkes's Perfect Plug, *Kilkenny People,* 25 Jan. 1930; Advertisement Clarkes's Perfect Plug, *Anglo-Celt,* 7 Feb. 1931; Andy Bielenberg and Raymond Ryan, *An Economic History of Ireland since Independence* (Abingdon, 2013), p. 73.
[26] Advertisement Wills's Gold Flake, *Munster Express*, 3 Mar. 1933; Advertisement Player's, *Longford Leader*, 17 Mar. 1934.
[27] Advertisement Clarke's Perfect Plug, *The Connaught Tribune,* 4 Mar. 1933; Advertisement Clarke's Nugget Plug, *Anglo-Celt*, 13 Jan. 1934; Advertisement Clarke's Perfect Plug, *Kilkenny People*, 8 Dec. 1934.
[28] Advertisement Wills's Gold Flake, *Munster Express*, 3 Mar. 1933.

subsidiary. It is apparent for both, however, that the Irish operation was seen as distinct and that advertising strategy for Ireland had to be amended accordingly.[29] Players's Archive records the separate counter cards and show cards that were produced for the Irish operation.[30] The content of this advertising material had some significant differences from the typical content of British advertisements. Cricket and scenes from British history were replaced with hurling or Irish football and scenes from Irish history.[31] The Players's and Wills's archives demonstrate an awareness of the need to adapt advertising strategy to attract consumers in the Irish marketplace.

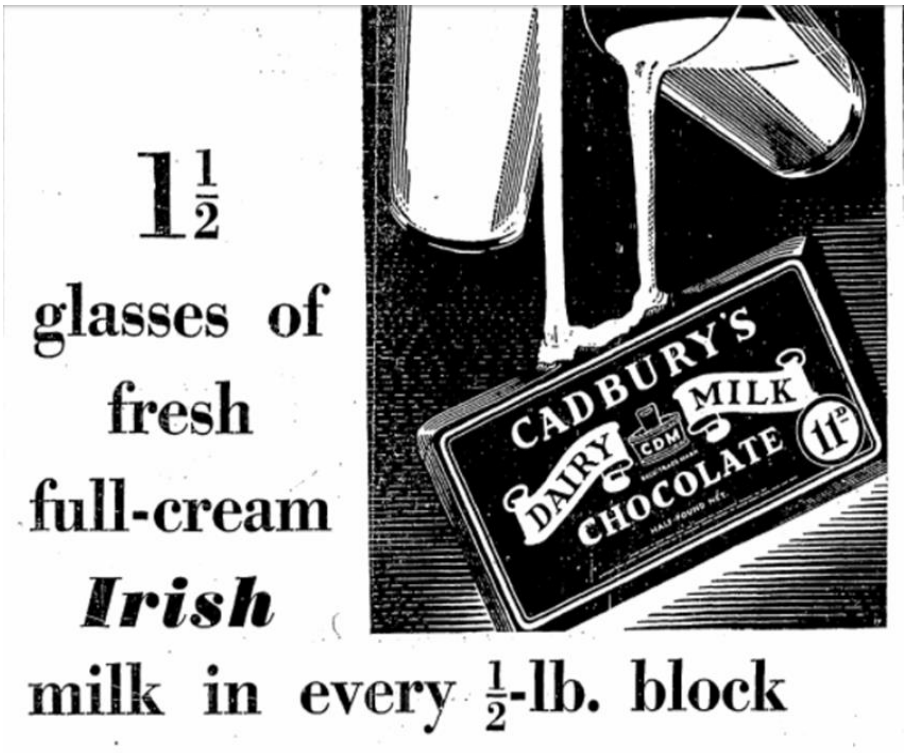
Image 1: Advertisement Will's Gold Flake, *Munster Express*, 3 Mar. 1933.

The trend in cigarette advertising is also mirrored by confectionery advertising. Rowntree's had begun manufacturing in

[29] Players's Advertising Archive (Nottinghamshire Archives/John Player and Son Limited Archive/DD/P/6/22/1); Wills's Advertising Sub-Committee Minutes 1930-1939 (Bristol Archives/ W.D. & H.O. Wills collection/38169/M/10/1-8).
[30] Counter Cards and Show Cards excluding Dublin 1920-1939 (Nottinghamshire Archives/John Player and Son Limited Archive/DD/P/6/22/1)
[31] Ibid.

Dublin in 1926, but prior to 1933 they made no mention of this in their advertisements in Irish newspapers. In the years 1933 and 1934 Rowntree's added taglines to their advertisements, such as 'Made in the Irish Free State' and 'Made in Dublin since 1926.'[32] Cadbury and Fry combined to open a factory in Dublin in 1933 but continued to advertise their products separately. Cadbury's advertisements repeatedly stressed the fact that 'Irish milk' was used in the manufacture of all their chocolate.[33] 'No other kind of milk ever enters the new Fry-Cadbury factory in Dublin', one Cadbury advertisement claimed in December 1933.[34] Urney, a lesser-known but popular chocolate manufacturer that made Tara chocolates, told consumers in advertisements that they were 'the only 100% Irish chocolate'.[35]

Image 2: Advertisement, Cabdury's Dairy Milk, *The Irish Press,* 23 Dec. 1933.



[32] Advertisement, Rowntree's Chocolate, *The Irish Independent*, 21 Jan. 1933; Advertisement, Rowntree's Cocoa, *The Connaught Tribune*, 29 Apr. 1933.
[33] Advertisement Cadbury Dairy Milk, *The Irish Press*, 28 Oct. 1933; Advertisement Cadbury Dairy Milk, *The Irish Independent*, 2 Dec. 1933.
[34] Advertisement Cadbury Dairy Milk, *The Irish Press*, 23 Dec. 1933.
[35] Advertisement Tara Chocolates, *The Irish Press*, 10 Dec. 1932.

Jacobs, manufacturers of biscuits, chocolate and cocoa, did not follow the trend in confectionery advertising. Jacobs did not add in any taglines to highlight where their product was manufactured, and neither did they stress that the items being used for manufacture were Irish.[36] Similarly, Carrolls tobacco company based in Dundalk, whose primary product was Sweet Afton cigarettes, did not emphasise their 'Irishness' to any significant degree throughout the entire period of the 1920s and 1930s. Carrolls's advertising policy relied primarily on the offering of promotions; free gifts and cigarette cards.[37] Both Jacob's and Carrolls were well-established Irish firms, whilst many of the companies noted above were British or British-owned. Urney was a relatively new company that had been founded in 1919 in Tyrone, and had only relocated to Dublin in 1924.

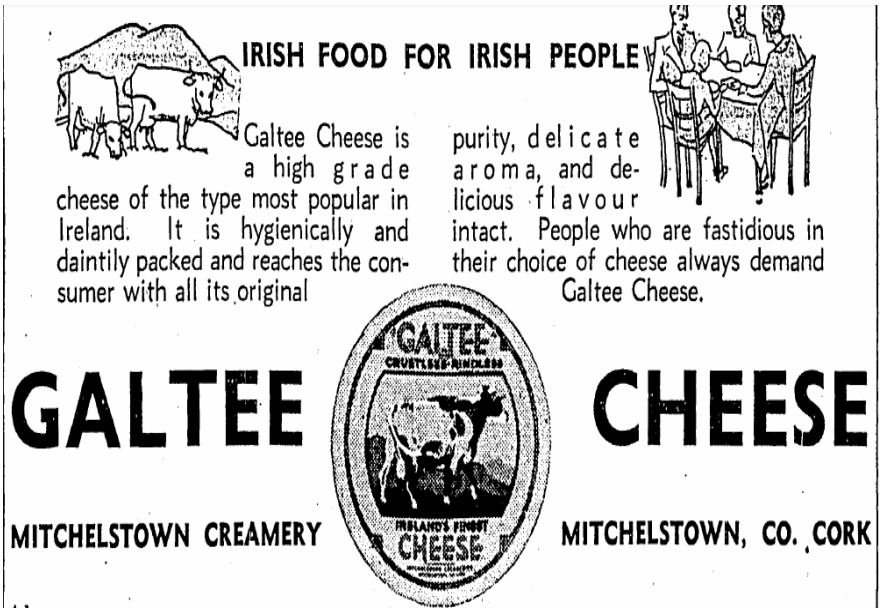
Image 3: Advertisement Sweet Afton cigarettes, *Western People*, 12 May 1934.

[36] Advertisement Jacobs's Cocoa, *The Connaught Tribune*, 03 Jul. 1933; Advertisement Jacobs's Milk Bar, *The Kerryman*, 5 Aug. 1933,
[37] Advertisement Sweet Afton, *The Limerick Leader*, 15 Mar. 1930; Advertisement Sweet Afton, *The Irish Independent*, 1 Jan. 1930.

This raises the interesting question; was it more likely for foreign companies to market themselves as Irish than it was for long-established Irish brands? It is certainly true that foreign brands tended to market their products as Irish. This is also the case for other British brands not mentioned above. Bird's, the custard manufacturer, and Schweppes, the carbonated water manufacturer, both marketed themselves as Irish after opening factories in Ireland in the 1930s.[38] Newer Irish brands also tended to market themselves as Irish in advertisements. One such example was Galtee: a manufacturer of dairy products established in 1933. Consumers were offered 'Irish food for Irish people' and promised that Galtee came from 'Ireland's richest pastures; made in model Irish creameries, from rich full cream Irish milk'.[39] Seemingly it was important for a new company to distinguish itself as Irish in the marketplace, as is also suggested by the example of Urney highlighted above. Cairnes, manufacturers of ale, also frequently marketed themselves as Irish in the 1930s.[40] The firm can trace its heritage back to 1772, but changed the name to Cairnes in 1933. This is another example of a new brand-name initially marketing itself as Irish.

[38] Advertisement Schweppes Table Water, *The Irish Independent*, 14 Jul. 1934; Advertisement Schweppes Table Water, *The Irish Press*, 26 Jul. 1934; Advertisement Bird's Custard, *The Connaught Tribune*, 7 Apr 1934; Advertisement Bird's Custard, *The Connaught Tribune*, 10 Oct 1934.
[39] Advertisement Galtee Cheese, *The Irish Press*, 4 Dec. 1933; Advertisement Galtee Cheese, *The Irish Independent*, 28 Jul. 1934.
[40] Advertisement Cairnes Irish Ale, *The Connaught Tribune*, 13 Jan. 1934.

Image 4: Advertisement, Galtee Cheese, *The Irish Press*, 04 Dec. 1933.



The same companies that took advantage from their Irish heritage in the early 1930s largely abandoned any mention of it in the latter half of the decade. 'Irishness', as a marketing tool, rapidly disappeared from cigarette and tobacco advertising after 1934. In the case of Wills, Players and Clarkes the phrases 'Made in Dublin by Irish Labour' and 'Made in Saorstat Eireann in Irish Labour' were removed from their advertisements in late 1934 or early 1935. Not only did the cigarette companies reduce their focus on 'Irishness' back to the level of 1930 and 1931, but they removed it completely. Tobacco companies generally shifted the emphasis of their advertising after 1935 to market their goods to women. A similar shift is also true of confectionery manufacturers. Cadbury removed mentions of 'Irish milk' from their advertisements and merely promised consumers 'rich creamy milk' instead.[41] 'Made in their Dublin factory since 1926' was removed from Rowntree's advertisements, and both Fry and Urney likewise followed suit after 1934. The reasons why companies removed nods to their Irish nature

[41] Advertisement Cadbury Dairy Milk, *The Irish Independent*, 16 Feb. 1938.

from advertisements suddenly and quite collectively from 1934 onwards will be examined in the following section of the chapter.

Image 5: Advertisement, Will's Gold Flake, *Kilkenny People*, 09 Feb. 1935.

It is important to note that the trends evident in advertisements are also apparent in other forms of source material. Promotional shopping drives, notably the 'Irish week', also encouraged the Buy Irish message. The chapter has previously considered quite large brands and their efforts to promote their products as Irish. 'The Irish Week' also suggests that many retailers, from department stores to fairly small local shops also sought to promote their goods using the Buy Irish message. 'The Irish week' had been a feature of shopping in Ireland since the early years of the twentieth century, organised originally by the Irish Industrial Development Association, mentioned above. Around St Patrick's Day each year consumers were asked to purchase only Irish goods for one week. In 1933 the largest and most widely publicised Irish Week to date was organised. In February of that year *The Irish Press* announced their 'Buy Irish Week' to run from the 9th – 18th March to great fanfare, at

least within their own pages, describing it as 'the most ambitious scheme ever undertaken to promote trade and develop the "Buy Irish" Mentality'.[42] Shopkeepers were to place Shamrocks in their windows as beacons to potential customers. The newspaper published lists of the hundreds of shops who subscribed to the scheme. In total over 1,400 shops across the country signed up. As would be expected there was a preponderance of shops in Dublin, Cork and Limerick, the major urban centres, but Shamrocks could be found across the country from Donegal to Wexford.[43] Indeed, the *Press* boasted that 'the streets will be lined with Shamrocks'.[44] It is difficult to assess the success of the scheme in changing the shopping patterns of individual consumers, but Alex Findlater, proprietor of the famous Dublin trading family, praised the scheme, claiming that it introduced many consumers to Irish goods for the first time.[45]

One measure of its success is the copy-cat scheme introduced by *The Irish Independent* in the following year. In January of 1934 *The Independent* announced an Irish Week aimed at encouraging 'the mass buying of Irish products in every corner of the land'.[46] This scheme would follow closely along the same lines as *The Press'*s 1933 campaign, with the only substantial difference being symbolic. *The Independent* used the Harp symbol to mark out their shops from the Shamrock covered *Irish Press* shops. Again, like *The Press*, *The Independent* bragged of their scheme's success, stating 'the whole country is Buy Irish conscious'.[47] This scheme did not in any way dissuade the efforts of *The Press* to promote their own Irish Week in the same year. In fact, *The Press* may have enjoyed even more success in 1934 than 1933, as they claimed at least, to have 2,700 shops subscribing to their Irish Week.[48]

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[42] *The Irish Press*, 25 Feb. 1933.
[43] More than 150 shops signed up in Dublin, including some large Department stores such as Todd Burns, Cork saw 48 including the Roche store.
[44] *The Irish Press*, 2 Mar. 1933.
[45] *The Irish Press*, 20 Mar. 1933.
[46] *The Irish Independent*, 4 Jan. 1934.
[47] *The Irish Independent*, 21 Feb. 1934.
[48] *The Irish Press*, 28 Feb. 1934.

We should recognise the success of such schemes, given the large number of shops involved and the decision of *The Irish Independent* to mimic the approach taken by *The Press*. As with advertisements, however, we can see that such promotional drives were fleeting manoeuvres by businesses, retailers and the press. *The Press* would continue their scheme into 1935 but at a reduced level from the preceding years. The scheme run by the *Independent* was continued until 1937, but, equally with declining publicity and retailer involvement each year.

The prevalence of the Buy Irish message in advertisements and promotional campaigns may suggest that firms and retailers were reacting to a perceived demand on the part of consumers for Irish goods. We do not have significant insight from individual consumers, but we can conclude at least that advertisers and businesses perceived 'Irishness' as an increasingly attractive marketing message. In addition to advertisements and promotional campaigns we can also highlight evidence of a Buy Irish consciousness in civil society. For example, in November 1932 the Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA) was formed in Dublin. The Association was established to act as the women's branch of the Irish Industrial Development Association, which had operated since the early twentieth century.[49] The WIDA set as its brief the promotion of Irish goods to Irish consumers, which it understood in particular to be women. In this sense it might have a claim to be the first explicitly consumer association to be formed in Ireland. The creation of an association like this in late 1932 is further confirmation of the drift towards a Buy Irish mentality in civil society. The focus on advertisements and promotional drives above demonstrates that Irish businesses saw a marketing opportunity in Irish promotions. The WIDA and other associations suggest a popularity in Irish civil society(a popularity for what?) and their activities and ideology will be discussed later in the chapter.

[49] Strachan and Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922*, p. 4.

Popularity and decline

The two most immediately obvious questions that follow from this source material are why was there an upsurge in the Buy Irish message from 1930 onwards and why was there a rapid decline after 1934? Evidently, the rise in Buy Irish advertising corresponds with the increasing drift towards protectionism and the first two, and most bitter, years of the Economic War. Political and economic developments in Ireland must be viewed as highly significant explanations for the increasing popularity and visibility of consumer nationalism. At the same time, as the chapter argues, offering a comprehensive answer to this question proves challenging if not impossible. The lack of advertising agency sources and useful business records mean it is difficult to trace why advertisers and businesses chose to implement particular advertising strategies. The Wills and Players archives mentioned above do not offer any insight into this question. What follows are suggestions and possibilities rather than certainties.

1930 and 1931 brought changed domestic and international conditions during the Great Depression. Prior to Fianna Fail's coming to office, in February 1932, Cumann na nGaedheal's economic policy had become increasingly protectionist. Daly emphasises a gradual drift towards protection from 1929 onwards, owing in part to internal pressures, but, especially changed external conditions.[50] The move toward protection would intensify following Fianna Fáil's accession to power. Their economic policy has been characterised as one of import substitution, in contrast to Cumann na nGaedheal's more targeted approach to building up existing industries. In reality Fianna Fáil reacted to external pressures as much as they implemented an outlined policy. Their 1932 election manifesto claimed that 'the people of Britain and ourselves are each other's best customers'.[51] By July of that year, however, they were engaged in an Economic War with Britain. The decision of de Valera to withhold land annuity payments to Britain led to

[50] Daly, *Industrial Development and Irish National Identity*, p. 55.
[51] 'Fianna Fáil Election Manifesto 1932', quoted in Ibid, p. 62.

a retaliation by the national coalition government, who introduced a 20% tariff on all agricultural products. Ireland responded with corresponding tariffs on British exports. From 1931 to 1936 the average tariff level increased from 9% to 45%, and by 1937 1,947 articles were subject to some form of import control.[52]

The Economic War introduced a strong anti-British sentiment into much discourse on consumption. The decision of the British government to impose tariffs on Irish agricultural goods was presented as a deliberate and unprovoked act of aggression on their part. In the summer and autumn of 1932 reports of "Boycott British" posters being secretly plastered across walls and windows in Ireland were received from many parts of the country, including Donegal, Kerry and Kilkenny.[53] *The Press* reported that on 17 July symbols of Britishness in Dublin were plastered with boycott posters, including the Kildare Street Club, the Masonic Hall and Trinity College Dublin.[54] A Boycott British Committee, later the Boycott British League, was formed to direct action against British imports. It was led by, amongst others, Maud Gonne MacBride, who can be seen in the photograph below. Public sentiment appears to have been broadly supportive of the boycott British message. *The Irish Press* recorded a crowd of 30,000 people at College Green in July 1932 listening to de Valera's address on government policy, with many carrying banners stating 'Burn everything British, except her coal'.[55] Two thousand 'young men' were recorded as marching through Dublin six deep wearing green, white and yellow favours and carrying 'Boycott British Goods' banners on 11 November (Remembrance Day) 1932.[56]

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[52] Kevin O'Rourke, 'Burn Everything British but Their Coal: The Anglo-Irish Economic War of the 1930s', *The Journal of Economic History*, li, no. 2 (Jun, 1991), p. 358.
[53] *The Irish Examiner*, 18 Jul. 1932; *The Liberator*, 21 Jul. 1932; *The Irish Press*, 15 Aug. 1932.
[54] *The Irish Press*, 18 Jul. 1932.
[55] *The Irish Press*, 29 Jul. 1932; *The Irish Examiner*, 29 Jul. 1932.
[56] *The Irish Independent*, 12 Nov. 1932.

Image 6: Boycott British Goods Protest, O'Connell Bridge Dublin.[57]

Opponents to this combative approach to Britain, including many Cumann na nGaedheal politicians, did raise serious concerns over Fianna Fáil policy. William Cosgrave (President of the Executive Council 1922-1932) described it as 'an anti-national and anti-Irish policy', claiming that it would have 'purely negative effects'.[58] As has been highlighted in previous studies, agricultural exporters were alarmed at the effect British import tariffs could have on them.[59] A wide variety of political organisations expressed these concerns, including Cumann na Gaedheal, but also the National Centre Party, and the Blueshirt movement.[60] Opponents of Fianna Fáil economic policy rarely questioned the idea that Irish products should be supported. When in office, Cumann na nGaedheal, had also encouraged the consumption of Irish goods. To counter Fianna Fáil calls for increased protection in 1927, Cosgrave stated 'my advice to them is to sell the foreign manufacture they have in their homes and buy Irish manufacture'.[61] Their vision of Buy Irish

[57] Taken from 'Dublin pubs and the 'Boycott Bass' campaign (1932/1933)', *Come here to me* (https://comeheretome.com) (accessed 09 Jul. 2018).
[58] *The Irish Independent*, 13 Oct. 1932.
[59] Andrew Orridge, 'The Blueshirts and the 'Economic War': A Study of Ireland in the Context of Dependency Theory', *Political Studies*, xxxi (1983), pp 351-69.
[60] Ibid; Mike Cronin, *The Blueshirts and Irish politics* (Dublin, 1997); Ciara Meehan, *The Cosgrave Party: A history of Cumman na nGaedheal 1923-1933* (Dublin, 2010), pp 171-83; Mel Farrell, 'From Cumman na nGaedheal to Fine Gael: The Foundation of the United Ireland Party in September 1933', *Eire-Ireland*; xlix, nos. 3 and 4 (Fall/Winter 2014), pp 143-71.
[61] *The Irish Independent*, 31 Oct. 1927.

promotion involved cooperation with Britain and inclusion within the imperial markets. During their period of office the party had encouraged the promotion of Irish goods through the Empire Marketing Board, established in 1926.[62] Irish agricultural goods such as butter, bacon and beef were marketed to Empire consumers, but especially to British consumers.[63] Opponents of Fianna Fáil were not opposed to the promotion of Irish products, but rather they expressed the concern that a vital export market was being lost. As Patrick McGilligan, former Minister for Industry and Commerce, claimed 'it was not so much whether the Free State bought British goods but whether Britain bought the goods of the Free State'.[64]

Fianna Fáil, and their supporters, could present their policy as purely defensive; they were simply reacting to British government tariffs on Irish goods with corresponding tariffs on British products. In this sense it is appropriate to interpret language used during the Economic War on the same terms that normal war rhetoric is deployed. Ireland was depicted as the victim of unjustified aggression on the part of the old enemy; England. In October 1932 a statement of the Executive Council of the Boycott British Committee claimed Britain was 'persisting in the waging of an unjust economic war in an endeavour to force the Irish people to surrender themselves into perpetual economic and political bondage'.[65] In this environment it is logical that businesses increasingly promoted their products as Irish. The trend of Buy Irish advertisements can be seen as a reaction to the public sentiment occasioned by the Economic War. The gradual move towards 'Irish' advertising seen in the years 1930 and 1931 increased significantly in 1932 and the succeeding years. Businesses are often motivated as much by a fear of making a loss as by the desire for profit. In the context of the Economic War it certainly

[62] Stephen Constantine, 'Bringing the Empire Alive: The Empire Marketing Board and Imperial Propaganda' in John MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester, 1986), pp 192-231.
[63] Mike Cronin, 'Selling Irish Bacon: The Empire Marketing Board and Artists of the Free State, *Éire-Ireland*, xxxix, nos. 3&4 (Fall/Winter 2004), pp. 132-41.
[64] Patrick McGilligan quoted in *The Irish Independent*, 8 Aug. 1932.
[65] *The Irish Independent*, 29 Oct. 1932.

appears fear might have played a role in shaping the advertising decisions of firms in Ireland.

The Fianna Fáil government was technically committed to the development of Irish industry under Irish ownership, as the 1932 and 1934 Control of Manufacturers Acts demonstrate. The irony of the native control policy is highlighted by Mary Daly, who notes that, in the early years of Fianna Fáil government, there was a wave of British investment into Ireland.[66] This wave followed on an already accelerating trend from the 1920s when a number of British firms also established factories in Ireland.[67] Various industries were boosted tremendously by the establishment of foreign manufacturing concerns. Ireland became more or less self-sufficient in footwear production in the 1930s. This success owed largely to the establishment of a number of large British shoe-manufacturers, largely in County Louth. Jon Press has highlighted that many of these firms including Woodingtons were granted permission to manufacture under relatively stringent conditions, but the Ministry of Industry and Commerce did not impose these conditions.[68] As the above section highlighted many well-known British brands were also granted licences to manufacture, including Fry and Cadbury. Brown and Polson, and A. Bird and Sons were also granted licences, along with Lever Brothers, who opened a factory in 1928.[69]

In August 1932, the Boycott British Committee issued the following circular to traders, 'It is the duty of every section to stand together and not only defeat the unwarrantable economic attack by Britain, but to turn it into an ultimate victory for Irish industry and commerce.'[70] Businesses were, hereby, warned that Britain was concerned an enemy and any association with Britain was dangerous. The Committee organised targeted boycotts against particular companies.

[66] Daly, *Industrial Development*, p. 82.
[67] Barry et al., 'Tariff Jumping Foreign Direct Investment', pp 1287-90.
[68] Jon Press, *The Footwear Industry in Ireland 1922-1973* (Blackrock, 1989), p. 35.
[69] Barry et al. 'Tariff Jumping Foreign Direct Investment', pp 1290-2.
[70] *The Irish Press*, 17 Aug. 1932.

The Cavendish Furniture Company, the largest furniture firm in the Irish Free State, had their Grafton Street store picketed by Boycott British protestors in autumn 1932. Cavendish was incorporated in Britain, and targeted as a non-Irish firm. The Boycott British Committee confined their activity to peacefully picketing retailers. The Irish Republican Army (IRA), however, went much further in their anti-Bass campaign. The IRA had targeted British imports on previous occasions, including burning British newspapers in 1927 and attempting to set a lorry holding Cadbury's chocolates alight in Dublin port in 1931.[71] The anti-Bass campaign was their largest effort to curtail British imports.[72] Publicans in many parts of the country were visited by groups of men and told not to sell 'bass ale in the future as it was a British product'.[73] Reportedly eleven publicans in Dublin asked the Army Comrades Association for protection against 'further intimidation' from the IRA and other figures advocating a boycott on British goods.[74] In addition to visiting public houses and applying intimidation to publicans, the IRA also attempted to destroy stocks of Bass ale before it could be sold. In late November 1932 Thomas Molloy and Donal O'Connor were arrested after attempting to destroy Bass stored on O'Connell Street.[75]

The IRA's campaign was not well received. Opposition deputies in the Dáil heavily criticised the government for failing to safeguard retailers and traders and even implied that Fianna Fáil's disregard for property stemmed from their communist ideology.[76] The Minister for Defence, Frank Aiken, was even accused of banning the sale of Bass ale in military canteens.[77] The Boycott British League was described by former Finance minister, Ernest Blythe, as 'an organised gang of bullies'.[78] In this environment Fianna Fáil also had to be critical of the

[71] Brian Hanley, *The IRA 1926-1936* (Dublin, 2002), p. 57.
[72] Ibid, p. 59.
[73] *The Irish Examiner*, 8 Dec. 1932
[74] *The Irish Press*, 13 Dec. 1932.
[75] *The Irish Examiner*, 28 Nov. 1932.
[76] William Cosgrave, Dáil Debates, vol. 45, no. 7, cols. 981-5 (7 Dec. 1932); Ernest Blythe, Ibid, cols. 999-1005.
[77] *The Irish Independent*, 8 Dec. 1932.
[78] Ernest Blythe, quoted in Ibid.

anti-Bass campaign, as was the *Irish Press*.[79] This criticism related to the methods employed as well as the perpetrators using them rather than the tactic of boycotting British products.

Firms in Ireland were certainly affected by these efforts to boycott British and promote Irish products. Cavendish, prior to 1932, made no reference to Irish products or the company's Irish heritage in advertisements; products were sold on the basis of quality or value. After October 1932, however, every advertisement they placed in Irish newspapers made some reference to the 'Irishness' of the company. One advert in October 1932 promised potential customers:

> It is and always has been the definite policy of Cavendish Furniture Co to encourage the development of the Furniture manufacturing industry in the Irish Free State and no goods are imported if they can be manufactured in the Irish Free State.[80]

The Boycott Committee agreed to lift their boycott on Cavendish when convinced that the company stocked a sufficient quota of Irish made goods.[81] Despite the ending of the boycott in autumn 1932 Cavendish continued to emphasise the 'Irishness' of their brand; in April 1934 customers were asked to buy 'Furniture for Irish homes made by Irish hands'.[82] Cavendish appears to have acted primarily out of fear that their customer base would be eroded. The perception of Britishness, and failing to stock Irish goods, was taken by them as a significant threat to their prospects, given the energy they devoted to presenting the company as Irish.

[79] Brian Hanley, *The IRA*, p. 59.
[80] *Irish Press*, 7 Oct. 1932.
[81] *The Irish Press*, 4 Oct. 1932.
[82] Advertisement Cavendish Furniture, *The Irish Independent*, 23 Apr. 1934

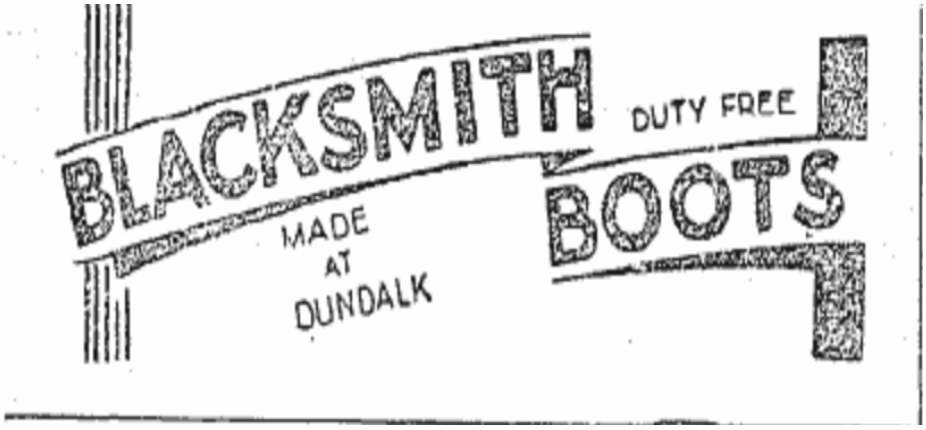
Image 7: Advertisement Cavendish Furniture, *The Irish Independent*, 23 Apr. 1934.

The vast majority of companies in Ireland were not targeted in this direct manner. The example of Cavendish, however, may have offered sufficient cause for businesses to promote their products as Irish. Companies that feared an association with Britain may have been especially keen to promote their brand as Irish. British cigarette brands like Wills and Players, stressed that their products were made in Ireland, as did many confectionery manufacturers. Carrolls, which was an Irish company, perhaps, did not have the same reason to fear such an association with Britain, and did not stress the 'Irishness' of their products to the same extent. Jacobs is another such example that did not feel the need to promote itself as Irish; perhaps assuming that consumers knew it was Irish. Campaigns undertaken by the Boycott British Committee and the IRA, as well, as the wider sentiment towards Britain during the Economic War might explain why British-owned companies were anxious to present their products as Irish. The example of Cavendish or Bass could give other companies pause, especially as they were quite established brands in the Irish marketplace. Newly established firms like Galtee, or re-named firms including Cairnes may also have seen it as advantageous to emphasise their Irish heritage. Consumers

unaware of the new brand or new name were reassured that they were not supporting British firms.

Terms such as ‘Buy Irish’ ‘Irish made’ or ‘Made in Dublin’ spoke to more than just the patriotic sensibilities of Irish consumers. By labelling a product as Irish businesses were also telling potential customers it was tariff-free and likely to be cheaper than the imported article. This became especially true after 1932 when the price of many imported goods increased appreciably. A few advertisements were even explicit in these terms; Blacksmith advertised their boots as ‘Duty free’.[83] The majority of adverts merely noted where the product was manufactured or stressed that Irish goods were used in the manufacturing process. These messages offered a clear code to Irish consumers. In the 1920s Irish products were often more expensive than imported articles; many firms had not achieved comparable economies of scale to British or American competitors. In the 1930s, however, this was dramatically reversed. Irish now meant cheaper.

Image 8: Advertisement Blacksmith Boots, *The Connacht Tribune*, 20 Oct. 1934.



Businesses and advertisers were offering consumers more than simply the patriotic sacrifice that was so often endorsed by politicians and Buy Irish promoters. ‘Irish made’ meant value for money. It meant a direct and practical benefit for those who were less concerned by

[83] Advertisement Blacksmith Boots, *The Connacht Tribune*, 20 Oct. 1934.

nationalism and sacrifice. Arvidsson has noted in Italy that advertising campaigns promoting 'national products' tended to emphasise personal benefit to the consumer, rather than sacrifice for the nation.[84] Irish advertisements also emphasised the personal advantage the consumer would derive from the product. A lower cost compared to imported goods was one benefit, but there was also the question of quality. Here too consumers were reassured that only Irish products offered sufficient quality. Dairy products promised they were made from 'rich, full-cream Irish milk', Irish made furniture guaranteed 'happy Irish homes', and insurance companies warned customers that they could only feel secure with Irish insurance.[85] Irish products, many advertisements claimed, were specifically suited to meet the needs of Irish consumers. This has its own logic after all; how could a foreign company understand what an Irish consumer wanted or needed?

Buying Irish was not solely presented as a sacrifice, but also a positive benefit to the consumer. Indeed, often advertisements would stress the personal benefits offered by the product above the Irish nature. 'Irishness' was frequently just an additional selling point. Wills cigarettes made for happy smokers, Cadbury chocolate provided a half pint of milk in every bar. This is how these products were sold throughout the 1920s and 1930s. From 1932 to 1934 their advertisements merely pointed out Irish workers making the cigarettes, and that Irish milk was used for the chocolate. The confusing question, however, is why the popularity of the Buy Irish message declined so rapidly after 1934. Political and economic developments may certainly have had an effect. In early 1935 the Coal-Cattle pact was signed by the Irish and British governments though discussions had been underway since October 1934.[86] This agreement removed tariffs on the two largest exports from both nations, and reduced

[84] Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity: Italian advertising from fascism to postmodernity,* p. 37.
[85] Advertisements, Ellis's Furniture; Galtee Cheese; City of Dublin Assurance Co., *The Irish Independent,* 28 Mar. 1934.
[86] Joseph P. Walshe to Maurice Moynihan enclosing a memorandum on the coal-cattle pact negotiations Dublin, (10 Nov. 1937) (NAI/TAOIS/S10336).

the political tensions in the Economic War. We can highlight a clear decision on the part of many companies to remove 'Irish' labels from their advertisements in late 1934 or early 1935. Clarkes's advertising policy appears to have shifted dramatically following the Coal-Cattle Pact. In December 1934, one of their advertisements promised customers their product was 'Made in Saorstat Éireann by Irish labour'.[87] By 5 January 1935 the same advertisement was placed in a newspaper but with the 'Made in Saorstat Éireann' slogan removed.[88] The Coal-Cattle pact had been signed on 3 January, which suggests a very rapid change in advertising policy. The slogan 'Made in Saorstat Éireann' was not used again by the company in their advertisements.

It is questionable whether advertising decisions could shift so swiftly owing to an inter-governmental treaty. Many companies had already decided to remove Irish slogans from their advertising in 1934. 'Made in Saorstat Éireann by Irish labour' had been a constant fixture on Wills's advertisements since 1931. The last such example of this slogan on Wills's advertisements was placed in the *Sunday Independent* in July 1934.[89] From mid-1934 onwards their advertising policy in Ireland clearly shifted. The brand was no longer identified as distinctly Irish and in 1935 and 1936 it seems that their focus shifted towards attracting female smokers. This was common to cigarette companies in the latter 1930s, all of whom devoted increased attention to the female market. Cadbury likewise appear to have terminated their Buy Irish marketing in the spring of 1934. It is hard to identify a satisfying reason why this shift occurred. Little had changed materially, even after the Coal-Cattle Pact. Tariffs remained on most imported products, and, as Daly has highlighted, even the technical ending of the Economic War in 1938 only reduced tariff levels by 0.5% on average.[90] Irish goods were still, largely, cheaper than imported competitors.

[87] Advertisement Clarke's Perfect Plug, *Kilkenny People*, 08 Dec. 1934
[88] Advertisement Clarke's Perfect Plug, *The Kerryman*, 05 Jan. 1935.
[89] Advertisement Wills's Gold Flake, *The Sunday Independent*, 22 Jul. 1934.
[90] Daly, *Industrial Development*, p. 67.

Not all companies abandoned the Buy Irish message in their advertisements. Cavendish furniture, mentioned above, would continue to market the company as Irish until the end of the 1930s, with every advert encouraging customers to come to Cavendish and 'Buy Irish'.[91] Cavendish represents a special case in that they had been made tangibly aware of the negative consequences that could follow from association with Britain. Even Cavendish's advertisements, however, follow the general trend in moving away from a specific focus on 'Irishness'. Their adverts continued to use the slogan 'Buy Irish' in 1936-1938, but the focus of the advertisements was much less on the Irish-made goods than on the quality of the products. 'Irishness' became less prominent in Cavendish advertisements in the same manner that it became less prominent in advertisements, in general.

There can be no clear answer why 'Irishness' faded from prominence in advertisements and shopping campaigns. Indeed, it is even difficult to offer a definite answer as to why it rose to prominence in the early 1930s. Anti-British sentiment certainly played a significant part. Many of the companies that consistently emphasised 'Irishness' in their advertisements were British. The treatment of Cavendish and Bass was an example of the negative publicity that could result from being viewed as British. Foreign owned companies in addition to fearing a British association might also have taken advantage of a trend in the market. Newly established Irish firms or rebranded firms may also have been aware of the dangers of an association with Britain. The trend toward Buy Irish promotion took in more than simply British-owned firms or newly established Irish firms. In emphasising the Irishness of their product companies were responding to the patriotic sensibility of consumers but were also offering practical benefits. Irish goods, after 1932, meant cheaper prices, and it seems inherently logical that

[91] Advertisement Cavendish, *The Evening Herald*, 11 Jul. 1936; Advertisement Cavendish, *The Evening Herald* 20 May 1937; Advertisement Cavendish, *The Irish Press*, 27 Apr. 1938.

businesses should stress Irishness in advertisements. The decline in prominence of Buy Irish slogans from advertisements and promotional campaigns closely matches the reduced tensions in the Economic War after the Coal-Cattle Pact. Many companies who initially might have feared a British association in 1932 or 1933 felt less anxious about such an association in 1935 or 1936. Advertising decisions cannot always be related to logical concerns and the importance of fashion must be taken into account. 'Irishness' was fashionable in many advertisements and shopping campaigns and it is reasonable to assume that many firms and shops were swept up in the trend.

Consumer Nationalism in International Perspective

Research in other contexts has highlighted the inter-war era as one in which a national consumer ideal was created and propagated. In 1920s and 1930s Britain, as Rappaport and Constantine have demonstrated, there was an effort to fashion an imperial consumer who would purchase goods from across the Empire. As Constantine has noted, 'The notion that citizens of the Empire at home and overseas constituted a single community was a recurrent element' in much imperial propaganda.[92] The boundaries of the nation were extended through consuming. At the same time the discourse clearly focussed on nationalism, as Rappaport has commented, on 'a consumer whose first duty was to the nation'.[93] In many ways the British case bares striking similarity to the Italian example. As Scarpellini has suggested, there was an effort under the Fascist regime to create 'an explicit national consumer ideal'.[94] Italian consumers were encouraged to choose national products that suited autarkic development goals. Rice was encouraged rather than pasta for example as was beer promoted rather than wine, in an effort to re-organise the production aims of the country.[95] Other European empires

[92] Constantine, '"Brining the Empire Alive": The Empire Marketing Board and Imperial Propaganda 1926-1933', p. 217.
[93] Rappaport 'Drink Empire Tea: Gender, Conservative Politics and Imperial Consumerism in Inter-War Britain', p. 151.
[94] Scarpellini, *Material Nation: A Consumer's History of Modern Italy*, p. 88.
[95] Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity,* p. 37.

also used propaganda campaigns and events to encourage the idea of an imperial consumer, which is evidenced by colonial exhibitions in France.[96] The rhetoric present across Europe in this period was also very similar. Rappaport has highlighted that in Britain the Conservative Party sought to associate the idea of citizen and consumer; to ensure that citizens understood the national role they had to fulfil.[97] In Italy, as well, we can witness similar efforts on the part of Mussolini's government. Arvidsson has argued that the Italian administration aimed to make consumers a cog within the national economy, as was also the case with workers.[98] As in Ireland, Italian and British consumers were asked to choose national products merely because they were citizens. Definitions of the 'consumer' in many inter-war societies became closely connected with definitions of citizenship.

Ireland, however, does present some unique features that are worthy of further consideration. In Britain and Italy the state apparatus was the primary promoter of national products. For Italy such campaigns aimed at autarkic preparation for war. In Britain selling drives for home and Empire products sought to re-establish prosperity following the First World War, and later the Great Depression. Government funded institutions were established to encourage patriotic consumption. The Empire Marketing Board is the most obvious example, but autarkic campaigns were also promoted through the State-funded Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (Leisure movement) and Fasci-Feminilli (Women's League) in Italy.[99] In Ireland no such state funded organisations were established to promote patriotic consumption. Politicians, especially in Fianna Fáil, were the first to encourage Irish citizens to purchase Irish goods, but state funding and organisation were not devoted to this purpose.

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[96] Catherine Hodeir and Michel Pierre, *1931, L'exposition coloniale* (Paris, 1991); Odile Georg, 'The French Provinces and "Greater France"' in Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur (eds.) *Promoting the Colonial Idea: propaganda and visions of Empire in France* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp 86-8.
[97] Rappaport, 'Drink Empire Tea', p. 142.
[98] Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity*, p. 37.
[99] Ibid, p. 32.

Civil society associations played a larger role in the promotion of consumer nationalism in Ireland than was true in other European nations. This owes, perhaps in part, to the longer history of consumer nationalism in Ireland as compared to other European contexts. The first local Industrial Development associations had been founded in 1903 to promote Irish industry in part by advertising their goods to Irish consumers. In 1907 they introduced the Irish Trade Mark, which, as Nally and Strachan have suggested, became a 'valuable commercial imprimatur of Irishness'.[100] In addition to the Development Associations a raft of nationalist associations and individuals were committed to the promotion of Irish goods prior to the establishment of the Free State. Arthur Griffith's opposition to British imports through Sinn Féin is well known.[101] D.P. Moran, through the *Leader*, was also an active promoter of Irish products in the first decade of the twentieth century.[102] As the preceding chapter noted, women were viewed as natural consumers in society and Senia Pašeta has suggested that 'buying, wearing and consuming' Irish manufacture became particularly important for advanced nationalist women, who saw it as 'patriotic duty and a social responsibility'.[103]

The Women's Industrial Development Association, noted above, is worthy of mention as it was the first consumer association founded and run solely by Irish women. It was associations like the WIDA that took the lead in promoting Irish goods to Irish citizens. The WIDA regularly held fashion parades and whist drives as well as producing cooking guidebooks that showed women how they could make meals with all Irish ingredients. In 1935 they published the *Women at the Wheel* handbook, which contained a list of Irish manufacturers of food, beauty products, clothes and recipe lists.[104] The handbook claimed that the ideal

[100] Strachan and Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture,* p. 4.
[101] Davis, *Arthur Griffith and Non-violent Sinn Fein*, pp 127-44.
[102] Strachan and Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland*, p. 75.
[103] Senia Pašeta, *Irish Nationalist Women 1900-1918* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 23.
[104] *Women at the Wheel Household Handbook,* (Dublin, 1935).

Irish home 'tis cleansed with Irish goods and therefore clean … hygiene, health and happiness are found in every home where Irish goods abound'.[105] It would be wrong to over-emphasise the effect of the WIDA and similar patriotic consumption advocates. In the case of the WIDA only seven branches were formed; two in Dublin, one in Cork, Galway, Limerick, Cavan and Enniscorthy.[106] Membership rolls are not available, but, it seems that the WIDA engaged mostly upper middle class women, including then Senator Jenny Wyse-Power and Mrs Austin Stack (wife of Sinn Féin TD). Largely the association advocated a kind of philanthropy on the part of wealthy Irish consumers. Buying Irish, in the view of the association, was the best method to reduce unemployment and thereby also lower the level of emigration. At the formation meeting of the Cork branch in 1933 a banner above the podium told attendees - 'Women Who Buy Irish – Helping the Workless'.[107] At a later meeting in Cork that year members of the WIDA were told buying Irish goods 'made existence possible for their less fortunate fellow countrymen and women'.[108] National philanthropy was urged as the best solution to Ireland's economic problems.

Government ministers, too, saw civil society philanthropy as the answer. Sean T. O'Kelly, then Vice-President of the Executive Council, told a meeting of the WIDA:

> While the government had done everything in their power to encourage manufacturers to increase the range and improve the quality of their products the last word as to whether these products would be bought rested with the mass of the people.[109]

[105] Ibid, p. 8.
[106] *The Irish Examiner*, 5 Nov. 1932; *The Irish Independent*, 3 Apr. 1933; *The Connacht Tribune*, 16 Dec. 1933; *The Irish Press*, 28 Jun. 1935; *The Irish Press*, 14 Apr. 1937; *The Irish Press*, 29 Sep. 1936.
[107] *The Irish Examiner*, 3 Apr. 1933.
[108] *The Irish Examiner*, 28 Oct. 1933.
[109] Sean T. O'Kelly quoted in *The Irish Press*, 29 Nov. 1934.

Women in particular were charged with the task of buying Irish to support the nation. As was noted in the previous chapter, Séan Lemass claimed 'almost the whole of the national income passes through the hands of the housekeepers' and called upon women to buy Irish.[110] Consumers were certainly encouraged and cajoled to prefer Irish goods by politicians, but they were not targeted by a government funded marketing campaign, as was the case in Britain or Italy. By imposing tariffs on imported goods the Fianna Fáil administration was limiting consumer choice. Foreign products were made artificially more expensive by protectionist measures. The absence of a state sponsored marketing campaign owed in all probability to the lack of adequate finances rather than the lack of desire on the part of the Fianna Fáil government. The aims and economic policies of the Irish government were certainly similar to many European nations at this time. The difference in Ireland was the greater involvement of civil society associations as well as the preference of advertisers and businesses to market their goods as Irish. This may imply a greater popular enthusiasm for national goods than was the case in Britain or Italy, where governments had to create a new national consumer ideal. In Ireland the concept of the national consumer seems more deeply rooted because of its longer history of consumer nationalism.

The national consumer ideal was significant in constructing and defining the boundaries of the national polity. For Britain and Italy, the boundaries of this imagined polity extended beyond the traditional nation into imperial possessions. The Empire Marketing Board emphasised a community of consumers that stretched across the Commonwealth and colonies of the British Empire.[111] In the Italian case Scarpellini has demonstrated that the 'attempt to create a national consumer space extended to include the colonies too'.[112] In Italy and Britain, consumer nationalism sought to broaden definitions of the national polity. In

[110] Sean Lemass quoted in *The Irish Press*, 20 Mar. 1934.
[111] Constantine, 'Brining the Empire Alive', p. 217.
[112] Scarpellini, *Material Nation*, p. 89.

Ireland we can perhaps highlight an opposite process in which the nation was limited. This limiting process becomes evident if the position of Northern Ireland is considered. Leary has argued that the economic divide between North and South took shape in 1923 with the creation of a customs barrier.[113] Yet, it took a decade for this legal change to become established economic reality. In the 1920s Northern businesses continued to use the Irish Trade Mark certified by the IIDA, and the IIDA even opposed increased protection on the grounds that it would hinder their Northern supporters.[114] With the move towards greater levels of protection the possibility of Northern businesses and consumers remaining part of a wider Irish consuming polity was removed. As the IIDA began to advocate for a protectionist economic policy it became less concerned with Northern users of the trade mark.[115] From mid-1932 onwards tariffs made cross-border trade prohibitively expensive for many consumers and businesses. Correspondingly the volume of legal trade fell rapidly to be replaced by a new normal of cross-border relations; smuggling. Cattle smuggling was the most prominent and notable form this practice took, but, it was not only cattle that were smuggled across the border.[116] As Johnson has highlighted, 'Underwear and overcoats, stockings, socks and shoes, frocks, jumpers and trousers, jam, tea, bread, cakes and sugar, maize and wheat, gramophones and records, cars and boxes of chocolates, all entered into the illegal traffic.'[117]

The exclusion of Northern Irish businesses and consumers was part of the process of defining the boundaries of the ideal national polity. Johnson has argued that 'Thanks to the smuggler the partition of Ireland was never quite the economic divide that the official statistics suggest.'[118] Whilst the border may not have represented such a rigid practical divide,

[113] Peter Leary, *Unapproved Routes: Histories of the Irish Border* (Oxford, 2016), p. 3
[114] Daly, *Industrial Development*, p. 23.
[115] *The Irish Examiner*, 12 Jan. 1932.
[116] D.S. Johnson, 'Cattle Smuggling on the Irish Border 1932-1938' in *Irish Economic and Social History*, vi (1979), p. 58.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.

it did present a critical ideological divide. Northern Ireland became British by default because of the protectionist economic policy implemented by the Fianna Fáil administration. Northern firms had been boycotted before by southern consumers. During the Belfast Boycott 1920-1922 the Dáil targeted Northern companies in response to attacks on Catholics living in Belfast.[119] At this time, however, steps were taken to avoid punishing Catholic firms along with the targeted Protestant companies.[120] By the 1930s all Northern businesses were to be tarred with the same brush. Northern Ireland became British in economic reality, and Northern Irish consumers also became British. The complaints of northern nationalists that they were ignored by the southern government may have been justified at least in this regard.

Ireland as a nation was limited by efforts to promote a vision of consumer nationalism. The nation became smaller, while in Italy and Britain the nation expanded. The differences between Ireland and other European nations in regard to consumer nationalism must be understood in the context of broader differences. Ireland was not an imperial nation and neither did it have imperial aspirations, as was the case with Britain, Italy, France and other European states. In such cases consumption was linked to the wider aims of the Empire and the consumer was enlisted to perform imperial duties. Italy was also a Fascist state in which the extent and agency of civil society was radically reduced. It is unsurprising that in these contexts the State should play the leading role in promoting national products.

In large measure Ireland may not fit the mould of Western European nations that has been outlined above. More valid comparisons may be drawn with colonised or semi-colonised nations, including India or China. In India the Swadeshi movement began in Bengal in 1905, and with notable advocates, including Gandhi, promoted the spinning of

[119] Terence Dooley, 'From the Belfast Boycott to the Boundary Commission: Fears and Hope in County Monaghan 1920-1926', *Clogher Record*, xv, no. 1 (1994), p. 90.
[120] Ibid.

home-grown cloth to facilitate self-sufficiency.[121] In the 1930s a change is notable in the Swadeshi movement, which suggests parallels with the Irish context. Trivdei has claimed that in the 1930s 'Swadeshi proponents set aside the distinction between handmade and industrial systems of production, emphasising instead the distinction between indigenous and foreign production.'[122] The significance of boycotting British-made fabric was increasing for the Swadeshi movement at precisely the same time boycotting British goods was becoming increasingly important for Irish campaigns. In the Indian case the promotion of national products was seen as oppositional to British goods, in the same manner as in Ireland. The Indian Store, located in Dame Street in Dublin, sought to capitalise on the similarities between the Indian and Irish movements. The company placed a number of advertisements in Irish newspapers with the tagline 'Boycott British Goods'.[123] Irish consumers were, in effect, asked to demonstrate solidarity with the Indian struggle for liberation against British imperialism. The Indian Store also proposed some form of link amongst anti-colonial consumers; 'To seek out products in Ireland which would be suitable for the Indian market, and to try to find some way to market them.'[124] Consumers in Ireland and India were asked to unite against imperial control and aggression.

Similar parallels are also evident with China. Karl Gerth has highlighted anti-imperial boycotts in China dating from the first decade of the twentieth century, but continuing into the 1930s.[125] These boycotts 'forced companies to present their products as purely Chinese', and Gerth has noted that even foreign companies tried to present their products as Chinese to avoid a loss of business.[126] This suggests a clear parallel to the Irish case where, as was noted above, British companies marketed

[121] Lisa Trivedi, *Clothing Gandhi's Nation: Homespun Modern India* (Bloomington, 2007), p. 4.
[122] Ibid, p. 34.
[123] Advertisement The Indian Store, *The Irish Press*, 13 Sep. 1932.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Karl Gerth, 'Consumer Nationalism' entry in Dale Southern (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Consumer Culture* (London, 2011) p. 280; Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (London, 2003), p. 4.
[126] Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation*, pp 181-2.

themselves as Irish to escape the boycott British mentality of many consumers. In addition to boycotts Chinese consumer nationalists also organised massive promotional events and exhibitions of national products, which could also be compared to the Buy Irish Weeks discussed above.[127] Gerth has argued that the notion of the modern Chinese nation evolved in tandem with the notion of a national product; 'nationalising commodities played a crucial role in creating nations'.[128] Consumer nationalism was a natural form or protest and organisation in both China and India because neither nation had effective governmental powers to ban or even limit foreign imports. India was a colony within the British Empire, and whilst the Chinese government was theoretically independent its capacity to limit imports was severely curtailed by foreign imperial control.[129] In this regard the position of Ireland is somewhat different. After independence, the Irish state did enjoy significant policy levers through which to limit foreign imports, and these measures were readily adopted by Fianna Fáil in the 1930s.

In regard to consumer nationalism, Ireland inhabited a borderline position. The consumer nationalism of the European empires, whilst presenting some similarities, is marked more by difference to the Irish case. Buying British or Italian goods was encouraged by the respective governments as a boon for the empires, and they sought to create an imperial consumer ideal that broadened conceptions of the nation. In contrast, Irish consumer nationalism may have limited the boundaries of the nation, especially in regard to Northern Ireland. The role of the State as a promoter in the European empires was also much larger than in Ireland, where civil society groups were more important. In this regard, Ireland may be closer to colonised or semi-colonised nations. Boycotting 'enemy' goods was also paramount to consumer nationalist movements in these nations. Yet again Ireland does not exactly fit this mould, as in contrast to the Chinese and Indian movements the Irish government

[127] Ibid, p. 4.
[128] Gerth, 'Consumer Nationalism', p. 280.
[129] Gerth, *China Made*, p. 5.

could use governmental levers to limit imports and encourage home consumption. Ireland's unique consumer nationalism perhaps reflects it peculiar position as a former colony, but also a European, developed nation.

What is an Irish product?

Despite the burst of enthusiasm for Irish goods, in the early 1930s established hierarchies shaped how foreign and Irish made goods were perceived. De Valera's pronouncements on the attractiveness of Irish clothing did not change the widely held perception that Parisian clothing was fashionable and modern. The fact that de Valera felt the need to speak out against the malign influence of Parisian fashion suggests their popularity amongst the consuming public. Repeatedly in newspaper articles and advertisements Parisian clothing was lauded as the highest expression of style and elegance. *The Anglo-Celt* for example in July 1924, claimed that 'the smart Irish woman still follows the Paris fashions'.[130] Frequently, Parisian clothing is described using words like 'luxurious', 'refined', and perhaps most importantly 'latest'. Parisian fashion was very closely associated with not only elegance, but also modernity. The famous Galway hat factory, founded in 1937, would call itself Les Modes Modernes. It promised Irish-made hats but produced by Parisian and Viennese experts using the latest continental styles.[131] When de Valera called on Irish women to go 'back to the old home-spuns that will keep out the cold better' was this seen as ludicrously outdated?[132] Advertisements, after all, continually displayed the latest Paris styles, and newsreels showed film-stars attending gala premiers attired in haute couture.

Parisian fashion is merely one example of the perceived superiority of foreign goods. Daly has highlighted the unpopularity of

[130] *The Anglo-Celt*, 12 Jul. 1924.
[131] Advertisement Les Modes Modernes, *The Irish Press*, 30 Jan. 1939; Advertisement Les Modes Modernes, *The Irish Press*, 29 Jul. 1940.
[132] Eamon de Valera, quoted in *The Irish Press*, 24 Jan. 1933.

Irish-grown tobacco compared to Virginian blends.[133] A Department of Finance memo noted in 1940 that there was:

> No more case for continuing to encourage the cultivation of this crop than there would be for encouraging as a matter of industrial policy the production of a commodity for which there was not only no demand, but towards which there was positive antipathy.[134]

In fact, cigarette manufacturers would even buy Irish tobacco, as required by the Fianna Fáil administration, and then use imported Virginian tobacco in the manufacturing process.[135] Carroll's cigarettes, as was noted above, stressed that only Virginian tobacco was used in their Sweet Afton product. The Irish owned company, a rarity in the tobacco industry, took little advantage from this fact during the 1930s, and instead emphasised that consumers could enjoy full-flavoured Virginian blends rather than disappointingly wet and unpalatable Irish varieties. Irish consumers were also increasingly accosted by new American products and forms of consumption in the 1930s. As the introduction noted, Woolworth stores offered Irish consumers a new form of shopping outlet. The stores also provided new American consumer items: jazz records; magazines; and cosmetics. The number of Woolworth stores on the main shopping streets of Ireland doubled between 1927 and 1939. Irish products were also featured in Woolworth stores, but the attraction it offered was a sense of newness and foreignness. As Walsh has argued, the success of Woolworth was intimately connected to its American modernity.[136]

Irish goods were not always seen as inferior to foreign competitors. Irish agricultural produce was often compared favourably to foreign imports. Certain imported agricultural goods were seen as not

[133] Daly, *Industrial Development*, p. 90.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Barbara Walsh, *When the Shopping Was Good: Woolworths and the Irish Main Street* (Dublin, 2011), p. 68.

only inferior but also potentially dangerous to individual and national health. In the late 1920s and early 1930s there was a persistent and quite peculiar fear of Chinese bacon. It is difficult to find a reason why in the 1920s Irish society should have become concerned by the threat of bacon from China, but it is quite apparent that it was considered a significant issue. Recurrently the Minister for Agriculture and the Minster for Industry and Commerce had to answer accusations in the Dáil that vast quantities of Chinese bacon were being shipped into the country.[137] The Prices Tribunal of 1927 highlighted Chinese bacon as a particular problem. While they found many retailers willing to claim that Chinese bacon was a prevalent menace, they could find only one who admitted to selling it; and in this case only wholesale and not to the general public.[138]

Fears over Chinese bacon also appear to have played a role in the passage of the Merchandise Marks Act (1931), which required imported goods to be stamped with a place of origin. Séan Lemass referenced the problem of Chinese bacon in the debate as precisely the type of product that needed to be kept out of Ireland.[139] There are no figures on the level of Chinese bacon being imported to Ireland, but it seems certain that the fears were paranoid and the threat exaggerated. The Irish bacon industry was happy to play on the paranoia and fear. In January 1930 Donnelly Ltd. placed a full page advertisement on the front-cover of the *Irish Independent* with the title 'Chinese bacon'.[140] 'Danish, Dutch, Latvian, Ukrainian, and Polish' was being imported into Ireland, the advert said, but Chinese bacon was clearly the most threatening; a land 'rife with foot and mouth disease'.[141] Concern about Chinese foodstuffs seems to have been deeply rooted in British culture. Rappaport has highlighted that Chinese tea in Victorian Britain was viewed as 'dirty and fraudulent', which she argues developed in part from an underlying belief that 'the

[137] M.J. Hennesy, Dáil Debates, vol. 26, no. 18, cols. 901-2 (25 Oct. 1928); John F. O'Hanlon, Dáil Debates, vol. 36, no. 2, cols. 303-4 (20 Nov. 1930); Thomas Derrig, Dáil Debates, vol. 35, no. 4, col. 458 (4 Jun. 1930).
[138] *Report of the Tribunal on Prices* (Dublin, 1927), p. 124.
[139] Sean Lemass, Dáil Debates, vol. 40, no. 15, col. 1952 (20 Nov. 1931).
[140] *The Irish Independent*, 13 Jan. 1930.
[141] Ibid.

Chinese were a morally suspect people'.[142] This view of Chinese products may have shaped Irish attitudes in the inter-war period.

The paranoia surrounding Chinese bacon demonstrates that not all Irish goods were viewed as inferior to imports. Even in regard to foodstuffs, however, Ireland was seen to lag behind international competitors. Denmark, a major competitor for the British marketplace, produced higher-quality butter, bacon and eggs than Ireland. One advertisement for Donnelly Ltd. in 1930 told readers of the rigorous inspection process that pigs in Denmark underwent before they could be exported or sold on the home market.[143] The advertisement claimed that Donnelly's factory was 'the first and only' in Ireland 'in which modern and "scientific" inspection is enforced'.[144] Commentators were prone to draw comparisons between Ireland and Denmark. J.P. Beddy conducted a study titled 'A Comparison of the Principal Economic Features of Eire and Denmark', for the *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* in 1943, in which he asked why the Danes enjoyed 'a greater agricultural output' despite geographical, climatic and raw material limitations.[145] Kevin O'Rourke has highlighted that comparisons between Ireland and Denmark were made recurrently from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, and almost invariably Denmark was seen as a better model.[146] Danish butter and bacon symbolised the perceived superiority of Denmark. Even in areas that Ireland might be felt to have had a natural advantage, such as agricultural produce, its products were seen to lag behind international competitors.

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[142] Erika Rappaport, 'Packaging China: Foreign Article and Dangerous Tastes in the Mid-Victorian Tea Party' in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Making of the Consumer: Knowledge, Power and Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford, 2006), pp 136-8.
[143] *The Irish Independent*, 10 Jan. 1930.
[144] Ibid.
[145] J.P. Beddy, 'A Comparison of the Principal Economic Features of Éire and Denmark', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland,* xvii, no. 2 (1943/1944), pp 189-220.
[146] Kevin O'Rourke, 'Late 19th Century Denmark in an Irish Mirror' in John L. Campbell, John A. Hall, Ove Kaj Pedersen (eds.), *National Identity and the Varieties of Capitalism: The Danish Experience* (Montreal, 2006), p. 182.

Foreign goods and foreign styles continued to be valorised by Irish consumers during the Economic War. Tariffs and import quotas did limit the availability of many imported goods, but consumers and businesses found ways by which to imitate foreign fashion trends. Stephanie Rains has highlighted that the imitation of Parisian clothing had been a common feature of Irish department stores stretching back to the mid-nineteenth century.[147] After 1932 when imported clothing became increasingly expensive we witness a boom period for this form of imitation. An advertisement for Cassidy's Department Store, in October 1935, claimed 'no sooner is a model produced in Paris or any other fashion centre, than it is available for reproduction or adoption'; 'Cassidy's brings Paris fashions to your door'.[148] Shelia department store on O'Connell Street, in September of that year, apologised for the delay in announcing their new autumn line, stating 'we were compelled to wait for the latest models from the London and Paris fashion centres'.[149] Irish department stores were responding to the demands of their customers; they wanted Parisian styles not the Irish home-spun that 'kept out the cold better'. Many stores held events offering customers expert advice on how to transform their clothing into something fashionable. Butterick Deltor told consumers 'If you want to know how to give the simplest home-made frock the chic and finish which you see in Paris fashions, come and see Miss Hibberd for a few tips.'[150] As the preceding chapter highlighted, the process of adaptation was significant for many Irish consumers in this period. Retailers were producing imitations of foreign styles for their customers, but consumers were also making their own imitations.

Consumers continued not only to valorise foreign styles in the 1930s but also to create their own approximations of the products. They used Irish made materials to create Parisian, American or British

[147] Rains, *Commodity Culture,* p. 97.
[148] Advertisement Cassidy's Department Store Dublin, *The Irish Press*, 31 Oct. 1935.
[149] Advertisement Shelia Department Store Dublin, *The Irish Independent*, 30 Sep. 1935.
[150] Advertisement Butterick Deltor, *The Irish Press,* 16 Mar. 1936.

imitations. Foreign-owned companies also frequently marketed themselves as Irish, especially in the years 1932 to 1934, as was noted above. Whilst Fianna Fáil was technically committed to a native ownership policy their import substitution model actually led to a wave of foreign, especially British, investment in the country. Irish industrialists and business owners, often under the banner of the National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association (NAIDA) repeatedly pressurised the government to tighten regulations on British concerns entering the Irish market. The driving force behind the second Control of Manufactures Act 1934, which increased the required Irish owned share percentage level from 51% to 66%, did not come from Fianna Fáil but from industrial pressure groups .[151] Yet, the NAIDA were not satisfied even with this legislation, and at the annual general meeting of the association in 1935 they called the attention of the government to 'The widespread evasion of the Control of Manufacturers Act 1934, by foreign firms, who while complying legally with the Act, in fact, retain control of newly established industries.'[152] Opposition politicians also used the issue of foreign investment to criticise Fianna Fáil. Richard Mulcahy claimed in the Dáil in 1934, that 'aliens [were] getting into back-lane industries and undermining industries that were pretty well established'.[153] He asked 'how many of the factories … were opened by persons with the names of Matz, Gaw, Lucks, Galette, Keye, Wigglesworth, Woodington?'.[154]

The fact that Irish business interests were opposed to foreign ownership of industry is hardly a surprising one. It was in their own self-interest to ensure the greatest possible level of native capital control. It does, however, demonstrate that the question, what is an Irish product, was a contested and problematic one. We cannot say that a product was accepted as being Irish merely because a company had acquired the legal

[151] Daly, *Industrial Development*, p. 87.
[152] *National Agriculture and Industrial Development Association Annual Report 1935* (Dublin, 1935), p. 9.
[153] Richard Mulcahy, Dáil Debates, vol. 52, no. 13, col. 1712 (24 May 1934).
[154] Ibid.

right to manufacture in Ireland. Not only was the ownership of the company an issue, but also a range of other issues, relating to management, labour and the materials used. Many similar contradictions were also encountered by other consumer nationalist movements. Orlove and Bauer noted, in regard to their discussion of foreign and domestic products in Latin America, that the notion of a national product is an 'almost infinitely plastic concept'.[155] Karl Gerth has highlighted this as a problem for the Chinese nationalist movement.[156] In 1928 a National Products Grading System was introduced at the request of consumer nationalist associations and with the support of the nationalist administration.[157] The grading system outlined a series of eight product standards, involving various combinations of foreign or domestic capital, management, labour and materials. In general, the grading system tended to penalise most heavily those products using foreign labour more than those reliant on a small number of foreign technicians or those products reliant on investment from abroad.[158] Whilst no such grading system was ever produced in Ireland many of the same concerns are apparent in Ireland at this time.

The employment of Irish labour was one of the most frequently discussed concerns. An advertisement placed by O'Dea and Co. in the *Irish Press* in February 1932 told consumers 'As things stand any article made in Ireland no matter how inferior, by whom made or under what conditions, becomes "Irish".'[159] It went on to ask:

> Why not make it a condition of the use of the term Irish Manufacture that the goods advertised as such must be produced in a factory where at least 75% of the employees are Irish, working under approved conditions?[160]

[155] Benjamin Orlove and Arnold J. Bauer, 'Giving Importance to Imports' in Orlove (ed.), *The Allure of the Foreign: imported goods in postcolonial Latin America* (Ann Arbor, 1997), p. 13.
[156] Gerth, *China Made*, p. 194.
[157] Ibid, p. 196.
[158] Ibid, p. 197.
[159] Advertisement O'Dea, and Co. Ltd. Dublin, *The Irish Press*, 27 Feb. 1932.
[160] Ibid.

Firms were keen to stress that they employed only Irish workers. It was highlighted above how frequently the term 'Made in Saorstat Éireann by Irish labour' was used in advertisements. Companies also used the phrase 'Irish hands', which implies to a certain degree that foreign hands were considered untrustworthy. An element of xenophobia was undoubtedly at work here, but the economic context was probably the main driver of this focus on Irish workers. Given the increased unemployment of the early 1930s, following the Great Depression, a primary concern for the Fianna Fáil administration was to create new jobs. It was a legitimate question to ask whether new jobs in Irish industry were being filled by Irish workers or by foreign specialists brought in by foreign ownership. The WIDA built their appeal to consumers around the argument that they would be helping their unfortunate fellow citizens. One advert placed by the WIDA in the *Irish Press* on 31 December 1932 asked female consumers to make it their New Year Resolution to 'Buy Irish Goods and provide work for our unemployed'.[161] The advert concluded with a series of pleas - 'The plea of the wife and children – "Buy Irish and keep daddy in work"... The plea of the unemployed – "Buy Irish – we need work!'.[162] As was highlighted above, the opening meeting of the Cork branch of the WIDA featured a banner proclaiming 'Women Who Buy Irish – Helping the Workless'.[163] It was a concern of the WIDA that Irish hands were used to make Irish products.

Commentators were especially concerned by the employment of non-nationals in senior or technical positions, which they believed would undermine the confidence of Irish workers and reinforce an already existing sense of inferiority. The NAIDA noted, in their 1937 Report, that 'the employment of nationals in industry', or the lack thereof, was a problem.[164] The Report claimed that 'There are a very large number of

[161] *The Irish Press*, 31 Dec. 1932.
[162] Ibid.
[163] *The Irish Examiner*, 03 Apr. 1933.
[164] *NAIDA Annual Report 1937* (Dublin, 1937), p. 15.

foreign technicians and key men working in this country ... their presence effectively prevents our people from losing their sense of dependence on foreign interests.'[165] It was very common for companies established by foreign owners in the 1930s to employ non-native experts. Irish Leather Goods, which was opened by A. Bayer, a Jewish German national in 1933, is a good example. The company employed a William Porter, originally from Southport, as foreman and this decision caused much frustration in the Department of Industry of Commerce. The company claimed they had 'been trying to find an Irish Foreman skilled in all branches of the trade for this factory' and that they would 'of course much prefer to have an Irishman but that seems impossible at the moment'.[166] Irish Leather Goods claimed that they had to employ a foreign expert because no Irish workers had the technical expertise and experience to produce their products.

It is logical that non-nationals employed in Irish firms attracted criticism when a primary concern politically and socially was to reduce unemployment. The desire to employ Irish workers, however, often competed with the desire amongst consumers for foreign fashions. As was highlighted above, foreign experts were frequently required in the production process to ensure a quality output. The Galway hat factory, Les Modes Modernes, even promised in its advertisements that all their hats were designed by 'continental experts'. [167] Many companies presented contradictory messages. On one hand they wanted their products to be viewed as Irish and to demonstrate clearly that Irish workers were employed in production. At the same time companies also sought to convey an image of elegance and modernity that could only be achieved by reference to foreign styles or foreign experts. The contradictory messaging provided by many companies reflected the perceived contradictory desires of the Irish consuming public. Irish goods

[165] Ibid.
[166] Irish Leather Goods to Department of Industry and Commerce (7 Sep.1936) (NAI/INDC/IND/28/28, Irish Leather Goods Inchicore).
[167] Advertisement Les Modes Modernes, *The Irish Press*, 30 Jan. 1939; Advertisement Les Modes Modernes, *The Irish Press*, 29 Jul. 1940.

were seen as ethically attractive, but in practice they were often unenticing.

Conclusion

The chapter has demonstrated that in the early 1930s, and especially during the years 1932 to 1934 there was an upsurge in the popularity and visibility of the Buy Irish message. This corresponds to the increasingly protectionist measures introduced by Fianna Fáil at this time period. Many members of the Fianna Fáil government were apostles of the Buy Irish message but government funding was not devoted to Buy Irish campaigns as was the case in Italy or Britain. Rather drives to promote Irish goods tended to come from groups in civil society such as the Women's Industrial Development Association or even the Boycott British League, and businesses and advertisers who apparently saw some benefit in marketing their products as Irish.

Many of the companies that promoted their products as Irish were British owned or newly formed Irish firms. As the chapter has shown it was less common for established Irish firms to market themselves as such. The irony is that the great effort to promote Irish manufactured goods appears to have been driven to a significant extent by foreign and particularly British owned firms. The Boycott British Committee and the IRA did not stop consumers buying British brands they merely encouraged these brands to market themselves as Irish. This undermines any idea that Irish consumers were isolated from international trends and fashions in the 1930s. A large number of British firms continued to cater to the Irish market, and advertisers continued to cultivate a cosmopolitan image. Even the Galway Hat factory promised that hats would be designed by continental experts. De Valera's opinions on Parisian fashion were not necessarily representative of Irish society in general.

Whilst there was a brief boom period of popularity for Irish goods in the early 1930s this was relatively short-lived and certainly never

radically transformed how Irish consumers thought about Irish products. In the succeeding period, especially during the Emergency, one would imagine that the conditions for the promotion of consumer nationalism were greater than in the 1920s and 1930s. The limitations of international trade occasioned by the Second World War meant that Irish consumers increasingly had to rely on Irish goods. Yet, as the next chapter will demonstrate, notions of consumer nationalism largely vanished from discourse. The focus on the nation that characterised the inter-war period would be replaced by a focus on the state during and after World War Two.

Chapter 3

State Control and Consumer Demands during and after the Emergency

Image 9: *Dublin Opinion* (Sep., 1940), p. 295.

This chapter will examine the growing influence of the state over everyday consumer decisions in Ireland. The material conditions of the Emergency necessitated Irish administrations to establish greater control over production, distribution and consumption. Few historical studies have addressed the growth of state control over everyday life though it has been considered in the work of Bryce Evans.[1] Apart from the work of Evans and Clair Wills little historical research has addressed the social and cultural history of the Emergency; the focus of much historiography has been on political and diplomatic subject matter.[2] The most enduring commentary was provided by F.S.L. Lyons in his wider study, *Ireland Since the Famine*. Lyons famously deployed the Allegory of the Cave,

[1] Bryce Evans, 'Coercion in the Irish Countryside: The Irish small-holder, the State and compulsory tillage', *Irish Economic and Social History* xxxviii, no. 1 (Dec. 2011), pp 1-17; Bryce Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War: A Farewell to Plato's Cave* (Manchester, 2014), pp 134-76.

[2] Clair Wills, *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War* (London, 2007); Joseph T. Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years 1939-45* (Newtown Abbot, 1975); Brian Girvin, *The Emergency: Neutral Ireland 1939-1945* (Oxford, 2006).

from Plato's *Republic*, to characterise Irish society during the Emergency, claiming Irish people lived in 'total isolation from the rest of mankind'.[3] This comment, though evidently hyperbolic, has nevertheless retained a currency in debates surrounding the Emergency period. Bryce Evans, in his 2014 history of the Emergency selected the title, *Farewell to Plato's Cave*, suggesting the resonance that Lyons's metaphor still had in Irish history-writing. With the publication of Evans's work, along with Clair Wills, *That Neutral Island,* we can note a move away from discussion of political and diplomatic questions and towards the social and cultural history of the Emergency.

Previously many histories of the Emergency had paid rather scant attention to such matters. Tony Gray's comment in, *The Lost Years*, is emblematic of much Irish historiography in this regard:

> While Britain was blacked-out and blitzed, life in Ireland went on in an almost defiantly normal way. There were shortages, of course, but in an agricultural country with a very thriving brewing and distilling industry, there was always plenty to eat and enough Guinness and Irish whiskey to get drunk any time you felt like it.[4]

Much work passed over the effect of the Emergency on Irish society in a few paragraphs. Typically life in Ireland was contrasted favourably with conditions in Britain, which is also the case in Carroll's work.[5] The tenor of much writing implies that Irish consumers were already poor and deprived, and did not experience the Emergency as a major disruption. Both Wills and Evans sought to correct this imbalance by focussing on shortages, rationing and the daily lives of Irish consumers.[6] Evans argues that the Emergency must be understood as a period of radical disruption to Irish life and society, but it has often been included merely as a subset within the era of Fianna Fáil administration, from 1932-1948.[7] The work

[3] F.S.L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine* (London, 1985), p. 557.
[4] Tony Gray, *The Lost Years: The Emergency in Ireland 1939-1945* (London, 1997), p. 6.
[5] Joseph T. Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years,* p. 92.
[6] Wills, *That neutral island*, pp 238-262; Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, pp 44-114.
[7] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War,* p. 5.

of Peter Rigney, on transportation during the Emergency, and Donal Ó Drisceoil and Gerard Fee, on the effect of Emergency conditions on the Dublin working class, support the view advanced by Evans that the Emergency period must be seen as one of fundamental disruption to the Irish economy and to everyday life in the country.[8]

The shift in much historical research on the Emergency in the last decade has moved the debate towards social and cultural questions, opening debates about consumption. This chapter will draw on work by Evans, Wills, Ó Drisceoil, Fee and Rigney to consider how consumers were affected by the Emergency conditions and the decisions taken by the Irish government. During the war years the state came to exert a much greater level of control over consumption as the everyday life of the consumer became defined by rationing, absences, and bureaucratic interfaces with state institutions. The Fianna Fáil administration was often reluctant to adopt the controls over consumption that were taken in other nations. A comprehensive rationing system was not introduced in Ireland until 1942, when it had been introduced in 1939 not only in Britain but also in other neutral countries including Switzerland, Spain and Sweden.[9] The Irish government would always be at the mercy of external developments, to some extent, as the country was largely dependent on imports, especially for industry and transport, but the government did not take proactive steps to limit the worst effects of potential shortages on the country. State failures, in part, led in 1941-1942 to severe shortages and the increase of infectious diseases and infant mortality.

By the years 1941-1942, an increasing number of voices were calling on the government to take more assertive action to ensure fairness

[8] Peter Rigney, *Trains, Coal and Turf: Transport in Emergency Ireland* (Dublin, 2010); Gerard Fee, 'The Effect of World War Two on Dublin's Low Income Families' (PhD Thesis, University College Dublin, 1996); Donal Ó Drisceoil, 'Wartime Politics and the Irish Working Class' in Fintan Lane and Donal Ó Drisceoil (eds.), *Politics and the Irish Working Class 1830-1945* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp 264-71.
[9] Bryce Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 48.

in the system and adequate supplies for the poor and working class. Consumer associations such as the Irish Housewives Association (IHA), demanded greater state intervention in the economy especially in regard to consumption, both during and after the Emergency.[10] The IHA were also insistent that greater attention be paid to equality and fairness in such distribution. The Association, though overwhelmingly middle-class, focussed primarily on poor and working-class housewives and children, demanding subsidies for necessities and clean milk schemes.[11] The State, whilst repeatedly reluctant to introduce such schemes often owing to their cost, was led to the policies advocated by the IHA. The chapter will contrast the IHA to the Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA), mentioned in the previous chapter. A shift from nationalism towards an emphasis on the state can generally characterise discourse on consumption in the 1940-1958 period. The state, in this context, is defined as something above or outside the society, but that can act in the interests of the society. This is in contrast to ideas of the nation, discussed in the previous chapter, which was defined as individuals in society acting together to achieve specified aims for a higher, historical meaning. The definition of the state encompasses legislative, judicial and bureaucratic action by arms of government. Not all voices supported the growth of state intervention and regulation and indeed many groups were opposed to greater state control over consumption. The focus of discourse undoubtedly shifted so that the debate was centred on the state, rather than the nation, as was shown to be the case in the preceding era.

Governmental control over consumption during the Emergency continued largely in the post-war period. Rationing was continued, removed and reintroduced. Subsidies were introduced or maintained for basic foodstuffs such as bread, butter, sugar and tea, and by the early

[10] Aisling Farrell, 'Harassed housewives fight the consumer's battle: The formation of the Irish Housewives Association and the campaign for price control, clean food, and equitable distribution in the Ireland of "the Emergency", *Saothar*, xxxvi (2011).
[11] Ibid; Caitriona Clear, *Women of the House: Women's Household Work in Ireland 1922-1961* (Dublin, 2000), p. 62.

1950s accounted for as much as 3% of Irish GNP.[12] The State increasingly became the guarantor of a basic standard of living. Rural Electrification sought to extend consumer amenities that had become commonplace in urban areas to all parts of the country, and was only possible because of government subsidy. Files held in the Department of Industry and Commerce, known as the Department of Supplies during the Emergency, provide great insight into the development of state control over everyday consumption in Ireland. The Irish Housewives Association Collection, held in the National Archives, provides detail as to methods and the ideology of the Association, which in its early days largely revolved around consumer campaigns. Sources providing an insight into everyday consumer attitudes are not as numerous in the Irish context as they are in Britain. Mass Observation collected wide-ranging information on consumer reactions to rationing, shortages and government controls, largely because the government was concerned to avoid wide-scale public discontent.[13] No similar such resource is available for Ireland, but many primary sources do provide valuable insight into public reactions to shortages and rationing. The IHA Collection, mentioned above, is one example as are the Saint Vincent de Paul Annual Reports, which were collected from different parts of the country throughout the Emergency. The chapter also makes regular use of *Dublin Opinion* cartoons to illustrate some of the reactions to Emergency shortages and restrictions.

The chapter will begin by outlining what effects Emergency conditions had on consuming in Ireland, discussing the consequences of external circumstances, the role of the state, and the ultimate effect upon the Irish consumer. To do so it will focus primarily on two products, tea and bread, which serve to demonstrate the effect of Emergency conditions on consumers in Ireland. Secondly, the chapter will discuss

[12] Patrick McGilligan, Dáil Debate vol. 125, no. 13, cols. 1885 (2 May 1951); Finola Kennedy, *Public Social Expenditure in Ireland*, The Economic and Social Research Institute (Dublin, 1975), p. 5.
[13] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex.

the Irish Housewives Association primarily as a consumer organisation, highlighting the effect the association had on consumer politics in Ireland. Lastly, the chapter will consider consumption in the post-Emergency period, roughly from 1946 to 1958, arguing that the Emergency was vital in shaping state policies regarding consumption in the 1940s and 1950s.

Life in Emergency in Ireland

The chapter will first consider the effect of Emergency conditions on consumption in Ireland. To do so, one must understand the effect of external factors, not only supply shortages, but also British governmental policy towards Ireland. Understanding the role of the state is also vital as decisions on rationing, price controls and provisioning radically altered everyday consuming. These issues have been addressed previously by historians, perhaps most thoroughly by Bryce Evans in his recent work. The primary focus of the chapter, for this reason, will remain on the effect of Emergency conditions on the consumer. Again we should be aware that there is never simply one consumer, but multiple different consumers who had widely divergent experiences during the Emergency. The chapter will draw out the distinctions not only between affluent and poor consumers, but also the different experiences of Emergency life in rural and urban areas. To achieve this, the chapter will focus primarily on tea and bread in particular, which serve to illuminate the broader trends. Both products have been selected because they were central to the Irish diet, and as both demonstrate the importance of external conditions and of state action. The chapter aims to use bread and tea to highlight the broader trends, but, will also discuss other commodities that became significant at certain points during the Emergency. The shortage of clothing, footwear and bedding and its effect on poor consumers in the years 1943 and 1944 will be discussed. Primarily the discussion will focus on the years 1941 and 1942 as these were the years of greatest upheaval and transition for consumers, which is not to claim that consumers did not suffer throughout the Emergency.

Tea was the one major consumer product for which Ireland was completely reliant on imports.[14] The newly established sugar beet factories and the efforts to promote Irish tobacco in the 1930s meant that these apparently foreign goods could be manufactured in Ireland, even if the quality was often derided by Irish citizens. Britain was also reliant on imports to provide tea supplies and was the greatest per capita consumer of tea in the world. Despite introducing a tea ration for British citizens at 2 ounces per head in July 1940 the British government permitted normal tea exports to Ireland until January 1941.[15] The advice provided to consumers by the Department of Supplies until the year 1941 was often unhelpful and confusing. Consumers were told on the one hand to carry on with their normal consuming habits, whilst, at the same time, they were warned that future supply disruptions could force rationing and were encouraged to make bulk purchases. Séan Lemass, Minister for Supplies during the Emergency, sought to create an image of normality even when it was clear that more proactive government action was required. He repeatedly resisted calls for rationing by claiming that the state lacked the resources and administrative capacity.[16] Instead, the government and especially Lemass himself would call for voluntary co-operation from Irish citizens in order to overcome supply crises. In speeches he repeatedly asked patriotic citizens to voluntarily reduce their consumption rather than rely on government control over supply. He called for the 'voluntary assistance of every housewife' in October 1940.[17] Evans has characterised such calls by Lemass as an attempt to figuratively imagine a moral economy.[18]

It may have been possible for some wealthier consumers to purchase bulk supplies of tea in anticipation of a future shortage but this was not a luxury open to all members of Irish society. Most consumers purchased tea weekly or fortnightly. In January 1941 when the Irish

[14] The chapter will refer to tea as a food product.
[15] Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years*, p. 86.
[16] Sean Lemass, quoted in *Meath Chronicle*, 13 Jul. 1940.
[17] Lemass, quoted in *The Irish Independent*, 12 Oct. 1940.
[18] Evans, *Ireland in the Second World War*, p. 183.

government were informed by the British administration that tea exports would be reduced the state was poorly prepared to make an accommodation. In contrast to Britain which had prepared for disruption to the tea supply from 1935, and other countries that had made similar moves to safeguard staple products from 1939, the Irish state had until this point made no effort to source an independent tea supply. It was only in 1941 that the Irish state began to take action, forming Irish Shipping Ltd in March.[19] There was a brief hope that an independent supply could be secured from India, but this belief was quickly dispelled as the war in Asia intensified. For the course of the war Ireland would be totally reliant on the tea supplies that Britain was willing to export.

Prior to 1941, British export policy towards Ireland had been quite benign. Exports had continued at roughly the same levels as peacetime. In late 1940 the British government decided to reduce exports to Ireland in an effort to force de Valera to commit to the Allied war effort.[20] Winston Churchill personally believed in the essential unfairness of Ireland benefiting from the Atlantic convoys without making a contribution to the war effort. In March 1941, the Dominions Secretary, Viscount Cranborne, commented on the purpose of the new British policy towards Ireland:

> Its main object, it will be remembered, was to open the eyes of the Irish people to their true situation. Since the outbreak of war they had been living in a world of illusion … The bubble of Irish complacency has effectively and we may hope finally been pricked.[21]

Lemass echoed the comments of Cranborne by informing the Irish public in January 1941 that they had been 'lucky' for the preceding fifteen months.[22] It was a shortage of fuel that first hit the Irish economy and Irish society. Petrol pumps ran dry at Christmas 1940, and thereafter

[19] Gray, *The Lost Years*, p. 138.
[20] Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years*, pp 78-85.
[21] Cranborne, quoted in Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years*, pp 84-5.
[22] Sean Lemass, quoted in *The Irish Press*, 17 Jan. 1941.

petrol virtually disappeared for domestic use. In January coal was rationed, to be followed by fuel oil in March, kerosene in April and turf in August.

The British government decided to restrict tea exports to Ireland to 25% of normal supplies. In March 1941 Irish consumers were informed that a ration would be introduced at 2 ounces per week per adult and 1 ounce per week for each child.[23] Householders were asked to register with their normal tea retailer, as members of the Local Security Force (LSF) delivered ration cards to consumers following a mini-census. Two ounces was the ration provided to British citizens, as noted above. In April, however, the government announced that tea supplies would only permit a ration of ONE ounce per person, and later in the month it was reduced further to ½ ounce.[24] The tea ration would fluctuate through the course of the Emergency but would never surpass 1 ounce per week, and for long periods it was set at ½ ounce. In Britain the ration allowed for two thirds of pre-war consumption whereas in Ireland consumption reduced to around one quarter to one fifth of the pre-war level.

In much the same manner as tea, the government did not implement bread rationing at a moment in which they were in a position to effectively control the supply. By the end of 1941, Ireland was importing one thousand tons of grain per week, but consumption was one thousand tons per day. Bread was not rationed until March 1942. Prior to this, the government had merely asked for voluntary reductions in consumption, which had proved ineffective. As late as February 1942 Lemass had asked 'all those who can afford other foods' to 'cut out bread almost entirely'.[25] In October 1940 75% wheat extraction became compulsory.[26] As the months went on this percentage increased until

[23] *The Irish Examiner*, 4 Mar. 1941.
[24] *Kerry Champion*, 26 Apr. 1941.
[25] Sean Lemass quoted in *The Irish Times*, 20 Feb. 1942.
[26] Fee, 'The Effect of World War Two on Dublin's Low Income Families', p. 71.

February 1942 when 100% extraction became compulsory.[27] Medical advice given to the government reveals they were aware of the dangers posed by inferior quality bread. A Medical Research Council of Ireland Report in 1943 told the government 'the dangers to health which may arise when bread is made exclusively from such flour are so serious that every step should be taken to effect a serious reduction in the extraction ration'.[28] From 1942 onwards there was a significant increase in the incidence of rickets in children as the bread was devoid of necessary vitamins. Higher flour extraction rates were also linked to an increase in pulmonary T.B., which were significant from 1942 onwards.[29] The government did not fortify bread with calcium and other vitamins until 1944.

By early 1942 reports of bread queues in Dublin were commonplace in the Dáil. Alfred Byrne reported queues of over 500 people on the south-side of the city, in March 1942, highlighting that in many cases bread was supplied 'in insufficient quantities to meet the requirements of the families' queueing.[30] Richard Mulcahy claimed in April that in the poorest parts of the capital consumers were only receiving 20% of their normal bread supply, and that many were turned away without getting any bread whatsoever.[31] The bread supply was so limited in Dublin in 1942 that newspaper reporting on Dáil bread debates was actually banned in March in an effort to prevent further panic by consumers.[32] Lemass, in the Dáil, demonstrated either an ignorance of the supply situation or perhaps a reluctance to admit the failings of the Department of Supplies to guarantee provisions. He stated 'I am satisfied that there is no shortage of bread supplies in the poorer areas of

[27] Ibid.
[28] Oliver Fitzgerald, Sec. Dietetic Council, Memorandum to Government Ministers (4 May 1943) (NAI/TAOIS/3/ S12064 National Nutritional Survey).
[29] Fee, 'The Effect of World War Two on Dublin's Low Income Families', p. 70.
[30] Alfred Byrne, Dáil Debate, vol. 86, no. 1, col. 6 (24 Mar. 1942).
[31] Richard Mulcahy, Dáil Debate, vol. 86, no. 4, col. 432 (15 Apr. 1942).
[32] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 241.

Dublin', at the height of the supply crisis in 1942.[33] At the same time Mulcahy claimed 'the poor are like hunted rats looking for bread'.[34]

The bread crisis was alleviated somewhat by May 1942. The Irish government in March had stopped beer exports, which led to a significant shortage of beer in Belfast and resulting complaints from Allied servicemen stationed there.[35] A hasty agreement was arranged between British and Irish civil servants to exchange beer for wheat, along with agricultural machinery and fertiliser going to Ireland.[36] Combined with the action of Irish Shipping Ltd, that had focussed primarily on importing grain, and the effect of Compulsory Tillage Orders, the bread supply was stabilised by May 1942. Supply levels remained precarious throughout 1942, however, and the refusal of the government to retain the bread ration despite this fact demonstrates their unwillingness to take effective action to guarantee fair shares. Evans has argued that 1942 marked a transition from the policy of voluntary curtailment previously advocated by the government to a full rationing scheme.[37] In that year butter, soap, clothing and footwear were also added to the ration, and a coupon book was issued largely based on the British system. The state was certainly moving towards greater control over consumption. It is worth noting, however, that it was very reluctant to do so. Commodities were only added to the ration list when it became absolutely necessary, as was the case with soap in October 1942, and removed from the ration list as soon as supplies permitted even a temporary respite, as with bread in May. Increasing power was vested in the hands of the Irish state to control consumption despite the apparent unwillingness of the government to accept these powers.

[33] Sean Lemass, Dáil Debate, vol. 86, no. 4, col. 432 (15 Apr. 1942).
[34] Richard Mulcahy, quoted by Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 46.
[35] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 26
[36] Leydon memo (12 Mar. 1942) (Department of Foreign Affairs/P58), referenced in Ibid.
[37] Ibid, p. 46.

The effect of supply shortages, rationing, and significant price increases on Irish consumers was significant, especially as wages were restricted by a Standstill Order in May 1941, and even when wage controls were eased in 1942 they failed to keep pace with inflation. Ó Drisceoil and Fee provide statistical evidence as to what impact shortages and rising costs had on the Irish population, especially on the working-class population.[38] In addition to this statistical information it is also worth considering the symbolic effect of shortages and rationing, in this regard bread and tea were particularly significant. Evans has suggested that the 'hated black loaf', a result of 100% wheat extraction, was the 'most potent symbol of deprivation during the Emergency.[39] Equally emblematic of deprivation and scarcity was the empty tea-cup. The significance of bread shortages and rationing appears immediately understandable. It may, perhaps, be more difficult to explain why the shortage of tea had such a profound impact on Irish society. Since the nineteenth century, tea has been a staple of the Irish diet. By 1904 in rural Ireland tea and sugar accounted for almost 20% of total food expenditure.[40] Tea, when combined with sugar, had the capacity to make almost any meal appetising, even if it was only a hard slice of bread. In itself it offered a minor caffeine boost but with sugar it provided many labourers with the caloric energy they needed to perform exhausting manual work. Sidney Mintz has discussed the material importance of sugar and tea to the diet of the British working classes, and equally this could be applied to the Irish working and farming classes.[41]

The announcement of tea rationing provoked almost immediate anxiety on the part of Irish consumers. *The Irish Press* claimed in March:

[38] Donal Ó Drisceoil, 'Wartime Politics and the Irish Working Class', pp 264-71; Gerard Fee, 'The Effect of World War Two on Dublin's Low Income Families', pp 37-82.
[39] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War,* p. 13.
[40] L.A. Clarkson and E. Margaret Crawford, *Feast and Famine: A History of Food and Nutrition in Ireland* (Oxford, 2001), p. 123.
[41] Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London, 1986), pp 149-52.

> The Subject most talked about at present by all creeds, classes and both sexes is tea – how to replace it and fool oneself, how to eke out one's rapidly vanishing ration, or more simply, how to learn to do without it.[42]

As this article suggests, consumers sought ways to adapt to the new ration, trying to make it stretch as far as possible. The practice of drying out and reusing tea leaves became common, as individuals and families aimed to get the most use possible out of their ration. As can be imagined, tea leaves may only be reused so often before they lose all flavour. Tea, during the Emergency, was usually weak, grey and disappointing, baring little relation to the flavoursome, nostalgic memories consumers had of the beverage.

Image 10: Cartoon *Dublin Opinion* (May, 1941), p. 53.

Consumers also began to use substitute products. As Wills has noted, many rural areas switched to the consumption of dandelion or nettle tea.[43] There was also an increase in the consumption of coffee and

[42] *The Irish Press*, 21 May 1941.
[43] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 239.

cocoa, especially in urban areas. A number of synthetic teas were also produced by several companies. Wills has noted Coffee Éire and Draw Well but there were many such products introduced.[44] In October 1941 an advertisement for 'Café' told consumers 'your worries are over – no longer will the family demand tea and coffee you can't get'.[45] According to the advert the replacement products were 'just as refreshing as the finest tea, and nourishing as well'.[46] A similar advertisement for a substitute made from Irish vegetable products in 1943 advised consumers that 'if taken with milk and sugar, it cannot be distinguished from ordinary tea'.[47] Few Irish consumers were convinced that the synthetic teas provided a drinkable substitute for normal tea. Indeed the search to find a tea substitute of any kind found limited success.

Image 11: Cartoon *Dublin Opinion* (April, 1941), p. 34.

In addition to substitute products consumers also tried to find alternative means of supply. A series of letters written by a father living

[44] Ibid.
[45] Advertisement 'Café', *The Irish Independent*, 06 Oct. 1941.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Advertisement 'Tea Substitute', *The Longford Leader*, 06 Mar. 1943.

in rural Kerry to his daughters living in America reveals the demand for tea in all parts of the country, and the apparent commonness with which it was sent. The father frequently asked his daughters to send tea within their parcels, bemoaning the poor state that the family at home found themselves in without tea. From 1941 to April 1942 he received 5 shipments of tea from his two daughters in America, and many more through the course of the Emergency.[48] Thanking his daughters he claimed that without their tea the family would have been 'nauseated from coffee of an inferior quality'.[49]

Most commonly extra supplies of tea were smuggled across the northern border where the British rations at certain times were four times as much as in Ireland. One British service-woman, while on a trip to Dublin, wrote to her mother saying:

> Tea is the only thing that people are really desperate about, and you can exchange it for practically anything, so we had taken as much as we could get hold of. The tea ration in Eire has been reduced to ½ ounce a week per person.[50]

Various train lines, especially Belfast to Dublin and locations such as Dundalk, became notorious for smuggling activity. In contrast to cattle commonly smuggled during the Economic War the goods in demand during the Emergency like tea and flour could generally be easily concealed. This encouraged a wider range of individuals to become involved in smuggling. Reports suggest greatly increased female involvement in smuggling. A Garda Report in 1941 noted 'housewives … are the principal offenders'.[51] *The Independent* claimed in the summer of 1943 that women 'easily pre-dominate amongst the would-be smugglers'.[52] On one Sunday in August 1941 1,500 to 2,000 individuals

[48] Patrick O' Donoghue to Mary O' Donoghue (May 1942) (MS in the possession of Jo O' Donoghue, Harold's Cross, Dublin).
[49] Ibid.
[50] British servicewoman writing to her mother in 1941, quoted by Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 239.
[51] Breach of Emergency Powers (Control of export) order 1940 (17 Feb., 1941) (NAI/JUS/90/110/4).
[52] *The Irish Independent*, 17 Jul. 1943.

were recorded travelling from Dundalk to Northern Ireland, mostly women.[53] There was a lack of female customs officers to conduct searches on both sides of the border, and as one Garda Report claimed 'men searchers are helpless'.[54] The increased female involvement in smuggling owed in part to the unwillingness of male border guards to conduct searches of women. There is the case of at least one man cross-dressing in order to escape a more thorough search by customs officials.[55] The broader reason is highlighted by Peter Leary as perceived female 'responsibility for provisioning'.[56] As was highlighted in preceding chapters, women were expected to and largely accepted the responsibility of provisioning for their families. Evans has argued that smuggling 'afforded women and girls the opportunity to get out of the house', and there is evidence of women travelling from as far away as South Mayo to Northern Ireland.[57] It is reasonable to assume as well that that there was an element of excitement in smuggling back contraband items. At the same time most women were acting out of a sense of responsibility for their families, and their actions match Clear's characterisation of rural female labour: largely unpaid and centred around the home.[58]

Smuggling across the Northern border was poorly policed throughout the Emergency, and often satirised by *Dublin Opinion*. In general, the Irish state did not take strong or effective measures to limit black market activity. The Inspection Branch of the Department of Supplies had limited means at its disposal and concentrated efforts in urban areas. At its height the Inspection Branch employed only 63 customs officers.[59] Their investigations did frequently reveal that very

[53] Shops (Hours of Trading) Act 1938 (14 Aug. 1941) (NAI/JUS/90/11/5 Smuggling Garda Reports).
[54] Breach of Emergency Powers (Control of export) order 1940 (17 Feb., 1941) (NAI/JUS/90/110/4).
[55] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 91.
[56] Peter Leary, *Unapproved Routes: Histories of the Irish Border, 1922-1972* (Oxford, 2016), p. 139.
[57] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 101.
[58] Clear, *Women of the House*, pp 13-25.
[59] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 49.

many retailers across the country were selling goods beyond the ration, or at excessive prices.[60] The punitive measures handed out to those who contravened rationing in other European nations were not employed in Ireland; individuals did not face prison but received fines, which normally ranged from around 10 shillings to 10 pounds. Irish consumers were certainly freer than most to purchase through the black market.

Image 12: Cartoon *Dublin Opinion* (November, 1943), p. 131.

In other regards too Ireland differed from European counterparts. In Britain as in other nations steps were taken to ensure preferential rations for soldiers, and in Britain there was a particular focus on providing adequate tea supplies to servicemen and women.[61] Army officials were anxious to win further tea rations, as were provided in the United Kingdom. As the Quartermaster General Liam Egan noted in a letter to the Minister of Defence 'in most countries it is implicitly conceded that the average soldier should get special consideration in regard to rations'.[62] Egan went on to claim

[60] Ibid.
[61] Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, 2017), pp 305-334.
[62] Liam Egan to Minister of Defence Oscar Traynor (29 Apr. 1941) (NAI/INDC/EMR/3/2 Tea Supplies in War and Post-War).

> It is no exaggeration to say that the soldier would cheerfully sacrifice any other portion of his ration rather than tea. … No hardship or privation is too severe for him provided an occasional mug of tea is forthcoming.[63]

Lemass did not wish to concede extra rations to the armed forces, however. The Minister for Supplies was adamant that the shift from the 1 ounce to ½ ounce ration applied to the civilian population would be followed by the armed forces despite the considerable opposition that was encountered from the Army. As Lemass wrote to the Minister for Defence, Oscar Traynor, in August 1941, 'there are many people in this country for whom tea is one of the staple items in their diet'.[64]

Tea, whilst seen as a must for everyone in society, was clearly viewed as a necessity for working class consumers. As the above Lemass quote suggests, the significance of tea to the diet of the poorer segments of Irish society was clearly recognised in government circles. Alfred Byrne Junior claimed in the Dáil in May 1941 that for many poorer families tea was the 'principal item of food'.[65] The Mass Observation surveys, mentioned above, found that in Britain the tea ration impacted most heavily on working class consumers, especially on female consumers.[66] In a similar manner a shortage of bread supplies and the deteriorating quality of the loaf was seen to affect poorer consumers more harshly. Working class urban consumers were reliant on bread to provide the majority of carbohydrates within their diet. In a similar manner to tea, bread had become a staple of the Irish diet, especially for the urban working class, and it was difficult for them to make adjustments to the supply shortages. Dublin received most attention within the Dáil because deputies had first or at least second hand knowledge of its plight, but consumers across the country suffered as

[63] Ibid.
[64] Sean Lemass to Oscar Traynor (2 Aug. 1941) (NAI/INDC/EMR/3/2 Tea Supplies in War and Post-War).
[65] Alfred Byrne, Dáil Debate, vol. 83, no. 3, col. 356 (14 May 1941).
[66] Typed and hand written directives on tea rationing carried out in Bourne End (11-13 Jul. 1940) (Mass Observation Archive: Food 67/2/E).

bread deteriorated and supplies contracted. Consumers had little alternative but to turn to the black-market to make up the gap in supply.

Rural consumers often enjoyed greater flexibility to respond to shortages than urban consumers. Food to supplement the ration could be grown in the countryside; potatoes could supplement bread and oats, dandelion tea could be consumed instead of the imported product. In this way even if rural consumers were not happy with the Emergency conditions they were not in as dire a position as their urban counterparts. Rural consumers may also have benefited from what are less immediately apparent advantages. For one thing, as Evans has noted, 'country people were generally at greater liberty to carry out black market activity due to a lack of surveillance'.[67] These comparative advantages enjoyed by rural consumers do not mean that life in rural Ireland during the Emergency was without difficulty. As Evans has noted, the number of people per shopkeeper was lowest in the rural Western counties of Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Donegal, Galway, and Clare, and it is here that the threat of starvation was the greatest.[68] Critics of the government seized upon shortages as evidence of a return of the great famine. James Dillon in April 1942, approaching the hundredth anniversary of the Famine, warned:

> If you create a situation in which there is a famine of bacon in the West of Ireland, accompanied by a shortage of bread and oatmeal, I warn you that the atmosphere will be analogous to that which obtained in the West of Ireland in the year 1847.[69]

It is no surprise that Patrick Kavanagh writing the *Great Hunger* in 1942 should draw on memories and tropes of the famine. As Wills has argued the poem is not merely a longing for meaning and fulfilment in de Valera's stultifying Ireland but one which 'evoked actual starvation and the depopulation of the rural landscape'.[70]

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[67] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 75.
[68] Ibid, p. 75.
[69] James Dillon, Dáil Debate, vol. 86, no. 5, col. 692 (16 Apr. 1942).
[70] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 254.

State initiatives to relieve the worst effects of the Emergency conditions on Ireland's poorest consumers were largely directed towards urban rather than rural dwellers. In 1941 a Food Voucher scheme was introduced so that poor families could still acquire staple foods that had increased dramatically in price in the past two years.[71] The Scheme applied only to families living in Incorporated Towns and Boroughs, however, and not to those living in rural areas. As Evans comments, 'the urban poor were guaranteed at least subsistence by the state'.[72] This was not the case for rural consumers, who were often ignored by government initiatives and negatively affected by the introduction of rationing schemes. Remote islanders were forced to make repeated journeys for meagre supplies in contrast to the pre-war practice of purchasing supplies that could last for months.[73] Perhaps the clearest example of the precarious position of many rural dwellers during the Emergency is demonstrated by the outbreak of typhoid in 1942. In that year soap had to be rationed owing to a reduction of fat and oil exports from Britain. Little fuel meant that heating water became a luxury, and that it became increasingly difficult for doctors to travel, especially to remote areas. The year saw outbreaks of typhoid and typhus in many Western parts of the country including Kerry, Mayo and Galway.[74] In November a 175 square mile area stretching from Furbo to Costello on the Galway coast was closed by the Public Health Authority in an effort to stop the disease spreading.[75] The Registrar General Report for 1942 indicates an increase in typhoid mortality of 65% from the previous year, and indicated that 74% of those deaths occurred in rural districts.[76]

The wealthy and middle class of Irish society were more protected from the worst shortages of the Emergency in large measure

[71] Fee, 'Effect of WW II on Dublin's Low Income Families', p. 21.
[72] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 72.
[73] Ibid, p. 78.
[74] *The Evening Herald*, 21 Nov. 1942.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Annual Report of the Registrar General 1941 (Dublin, 1942), p. xviii; Annual Report of the Registrar General 1942 (Dublin, 1943), p. xviii.

because they were able to purchase extra products on the black market. Working class and poor consumers had fewer options when the cost of staples vastly increased or their availability greatly declined. As Evans has argued, it was only middle class consumers who had the ability to hoard goods or pay exorbitant prices for luxury items.[77] The white loaf and the full tea cup became symbols of luxury in the Emergency, whereas they had once been viewed as necessities. Despite this a certain image of abundance has continued to dominate representations of life during the Emergency. The introduction noted historians such as Carroll and Gray, who suggest there was little significant change to daily life in Ireland during the Emergency. Carroll highlighted the relative abundance of meat, milk and eggs that could be found in Ireland in contrast to Britain.[78] The image of plenty was constructed during the Emergency largely by observers from Britain. Wills has noted the hostile British sentiment towards Ireland, which saw the country as partying while Europe burned.[79] The image was compounded by the fact that British servicemen and women on leave in Dublin could purchase steak, cream and other luxuries no longer available in the United Kingdom.

The reality of the situation was highlighted by Cyril Connolly, an English writer living in Dublin, when he wrote 'The shops are full of good things to eat, the streets of people who cannot afford to buy them … it is important for the English reader to stop thinking of Ireland as an uncharitable earthly paradise.'[80] Wealthier consumers could maintain relatively normal standards of living by purchasing through the black market. In contrast to Britain, where there was a certain equalisation of consumption levels during the Second World War, Ireland, if anything, witnessed a widening of disparities.[81] Middle class consumers were certainly squeezed by the effect of price increases and relative wage

[77] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 86.
[78] Carroll, *Ireland in the War Years 1939-45*, pp 91-2.
[79] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 246.
[80] Cyril Connolly, *Horizon* quoted in Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 245.
[81] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: rationing, controls, and consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford, 2002), p. 256.

stagnation, but the difficulties they experienced could largely be accommodated within their income, which was often not the case for working class and unemployed consumers. *The Bell* articles, 'Other People's Income', referenced in the first chapter, demonstrate this difference most clearly. It is evident that the middle class X family are struggling during the Emergency to 'keep up appearances', whilst the K family are living in poverty utterly reliant on state and charitable support for food and clothing.[82]

Despite increasing government assistance, poor consumers continued to experience severe shortages throughout the Emergency. By 1943 the primary concern, especially of working class and poor consumers, appears to have shifted from food and fuel to the supply of clothing, footwear and blankets. The Saint Vincent de Paul Annual Report for 1943 noted 'the provision of clothes and footwear now present the poor with a problem even more difficult of solution that that of procuring food supplies'.[83] Saint Vincent de Paul volunteers were told to be highly selective in the distribution of charity, because the demand for help was so great; 'carefully select for adoption only those families that seem most deserving'.[84] Volunteers were warned 'the more they try to deal with the more they will receive'.[85] This problem extended to all parts of the country. The Cork Report noted, 'a food ticket no longer solves the problem of relief of a family … clothes, footwear and bedding have become a problem of the first magnitude for every poor person'.[86] The large number of barefoot children seen in the streets was recorded in many reports.[87] It was not only large cities where such problems were witnessed. In the small town of Ballina, Co. Tipperary, to offer one example, the Saint Vincent de Paul society had distributed 150 pairs of boots to children in the town and surrounding areas.[88] Saint Vincent de

[82] 'Other People's Income No. 4', *The Bell* (Oct., 1943), p. 61.
[83] Saint Vincent de Paul Society, *Annual Report 1943* (Dublin, 1943), p. 10.
[84] Ibid, p. 54.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid, p. 29.
[87] Ibid, p. 30
[88] Ibid, p. 110.

Paul reports, moreover, are not the only source that highlighted clothing shortages as an increasing problem. Mrs K noted that clothing her family had become more difficult by 1943.[89] She claimed there was 'no earthly chance' of her purchasing clothes.[90]

The situation had not eased by 1944, and may in fact have worsened. The Cork report of Saint Vincent de Paul noted that the 'material condition of the families visited by the members has in no way improved', as they were still in want of clothing, footwear and blankets.[91] The shortage of clothing, footwear and blankets primarily affected the poorest consumers in Irish society, because often they had been reliant on charitable donations even prior to the Emergency. The 1944 Dublin Report of the Saint Vincent de Paul society noted that previous donators to the society were unwilling to give away 'cast-offs'.[92] Wealthier consumers had to retain their clothing, footwear and bedding for reuse within their family as they could not afford to purchase new items, or at least they had to reduce their clothing expenditure. Mrs K noted that it was impossible for her family to get clothing from neighbours in 1943, on which her family had previously been reliant.[93] There appears to have been a small improvement in the clothing situation by 1945, but shortages continued into 1946 and 1947.[94]

By the end of 1942, the state had taken more effective control over provisioning, distribution and consumption. Home-produced goods managed to compensate to some extent for the absence of imported goods. The state had also begun to provide greater assistance to the poorest consumers, especially in urban areas. This did not, however, mean immediate relief and improvement especially for these consumers. As the supply of food staples improved, other problems worsened , such

[89] 'Other People's Income No. 4', *The Bell* (Oct., 1943), p. 61.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Saint Vincent de Paul Society, *Annual Report 1944* (Dublin, 1944), p. 32.
[92] Ibid, p. 52.
[93] 'Other People's Income No. 4', *The Bell* (Oct., 1943), p. 61.
[94] Saint Vincent de Paul Society, *Annual Report 1945* (Dublin, 1945), pp 56-7; Saint Vincent de Paul Society, *Annual Report 1946* (Dublin, 1946), pp 33+61.

as the lack of clothing, footwear and bedding. The Fianna Fáil administration proved reluctant to establish effective controls over consumption, which is perhaps best demonstrated by the unwillingness of the government to maintain bread rationing. The Minister for Supplies, Lemass, took all possible steps to avoid an advance of state bureaucracy and extra cost to state finances even when it appeared patently necessary. The growth of state control over consumption developed largely from the material conditions brought about by the Emergency. The following section will also suggest, however, that Emergency conditions encouraged a shift in consumption discourse towards a focus on the state.

The Irish Housewives Association

In 1941 and 1942, as conditions for consumers worsened in Ireland, demands for increased state intervention in everyday consumption grew. Such demands were heard both within and outside the Dáil, as new groups were formed to place pressure on the government. The most prominent among these groups was the Irish Housewives Association (IHA). Formed officially in 1942, but active prior to that, the group would demand and win concessions from the government. The emergence of the IHA as the principal voice for consumer demands in Emergency Ireland highlights a shift in the nature of consumer rhetoric. As the second chapter noted, the preceding period can be characterised primarily by nationalism; when the nation was viewed as the best guarantor for consumer protection. The Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA) highlighted in that chapter concerned themselves primarily with promoting consumer nationalism. This was never a major concern of the IHA, who were instead committed to improving basic standards of living, particularly amongst the poor of Irish society. The IHA would come to demand and rely on the state as the guarantor of living standards and would stress the importance of the state rather than the nation as a means to ensure best protection for consumers. The move from the WIDA to the IHA presents in microcosm the larger move from an insistence on the nation to an insistence on the state with regard to consumption.

In May 1941, Hilda Tweedy, who later became chair-woman of the IHA, drafted and presented a memorandum on fuel and food supplies on the eve of the budget. The petition caught the imagination of the press and received national coverage, garnering the title 'The Housewives Petition'. As Farrell summarises, the petition:

> Advocated the national registration of all essential foodstuffs and demanded the introduction of an immediate and effective rationing scheme … which would keep the price of essential commodities within the reach of the average household.[95]

The Petition also advocated special measures to ensure that the poor and unemployed were safeguarded against increasing prices and supply shortages. It received 800 signatories, among them Louie Bennett of the Irish Women Workers Union, which often worked in close alliance with the IHA. Following the opening success of the petition an association was formed a year later in May 1942, with the initial remit 'to investigate living conditions amongst all sections of the community and to be the mouthpiece of the ordinary woman'.[96] Woman, or housewife, could be used almost interchangeably with consumer, by both the IHA and other commentators.

From the viewpoint of the IHA, housewives were consumers. It was Dublin housewives, by and large, who stood in bread queues and who had to adapt household budgets to the supply shortages and rationing more broadly. As the first chapter demonstrated, women were frequently given the responsibility of consumption for the entire family. Indeed, when the government adopted a full rationing scheme two different ration books were created; an individual one and one for the head of the household.[97] The head of the household was permitted to make purchases for the entire house, and almost without exception,

[95] Aisling Farrell, 'Harassed housewives fight the consumer's battle', p. 49.
[96] 'Four Point Programme', July 1942 (NAI/Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/ 3/2).
[97] 'Your ration book', Department of Supplies Handbill (May 1942) (NLI Gift of Kevin Murray, 1/X/70).

women registered as heads of households.[98] This view of women and the family can be seen in other areas of Irish life at the time. In the debate on Children's Allowances in 1944, as Earner-Byrne has noted, 'most deputies and senators that spoke on the matter seemed to prefer the mother as the elected recipient'.[99] Deputy Cogan claimed, 'the mother, without any reflection on the matter, instinctively feels that it is her duty and will make provision for her family without any coercion'.[100] The decision to make the allowance payable to the father resulted from a fear that the father's position as head of the family would be undermined if his wife was in receipt of an independent income source. The image of the father as breadwinner and mother as consumer was reinforced by the debate on Children's Allowances, as Earner-Byrne has highlighted.[101]

The IHA believed that the Irish state should take a larger role in regulating consumption, principally as a means to overcome deprivation and unfairness. For this reason the 'Housewives Petition' demanded a full rationing scheme be implemented in 1941, when the government was only rationing petrol and tea. In September 1942, the IHA, in Dublin, organised what was called the 'Bread and Butter' protest. Protestors marched through the streets carrying placards with the slogans 'Fair Prices' and 'Clean Food'.[102] The demands of the protest included a 1d reduction in the price of the 4lb loaf, state control over vegetable and potato sales, and the provision of free hot meals to children from Dublin Corporation kitchens.[103] In all of these cases the IHA were pushing the state to take a larger role over consumption. There was also opposition to the increasing role of the state in Emergency Ireland, however. Evans has highlighted opposition to Compulsory Tillage Orders amongst farmers, as well as noting criticism from some Catholic social thinkers and

[98] Head of Household Ration Book 1944 Issue (NLI/Mrs Mary Bolger).
[99] Lindsey Earner-Byrne, 'Reinforcing the family: The role of gender, morality and sexuality in Irish welfare policy, 1922–1944', *History of the Family*, xiii, no. 4 (2008), p. 366; Clear, *Women of the House*, pp 53-6.
[100] Deputy Cogan, quoted in Lindsey Earner-Byrne, 'Reinforcing the family: The role of gender, morality and sexuality in Irish welfare policy, 1922–1944', p. 366.
[101] Ibid, p. 367.
[102] Farrell, 'Harassed housewives fight the consumer's battle', p. 50.
[103] Ibid.

advocates of vocational social and economic organisation.[104] The Report of the Commission on Vocational Organisation, in 1943, called for the 'state's despotic control of production and labour' to be replaced by 'vocational collaboration for the good of the nation'.[105] As was noted above, the debate on consumption had shifted to the appropriate role for the state, whereas previously it had focussed largely on consumer nationalism.

The position of poor consumers was particularly worrying for the IHA. As the chapter has already shown, the quality of many working-class diets in Dublin was poor often consisting of little more than bread, tea and jam, and this was only being exacerbated by rising prices during the Emergency. Unlike the British government, the Irish state had not embarked on a programme of large-scale communal feeding, either. The government had authorised county boroughs to establish communal kitchens in September 1941, but no large scale programme was begun.[106] The vacuum had been filled initially by charitable associations. St John's Ambulance established a community kitchen on Merrion Square, catering to 1,500 at nominal charges.[107] A Saint Vincent de Paul society similarly began a smaller operation on Henrietta Lane, charging 1d for meat stew.[108] The IHA, along with other associations, were demanding that the government provide a more comprehensive system of communal feeding for children in Dublin.

Despite having a largely middle-class membership, which will be discussed later in the chapter, the IHA devoted most attention to the conditions of the poorest consumers in Irish society. Not only did they advocate for communal feeding, but also a preferential rationing system for the working class, and an increase in unemployment assistance.[109]

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[104] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, pp 134-76.
[105] *Report of the Commission on Vocational Organisation* (Dublin, 1943), p. 45.
[106] Fee, 'The Effect of World War Two on Dublin's Low Income Families', p. 21.
[107] Gray, *The Lost Years*, p. 149.
[108] Ibid.
[109] 'Housewives Petition 1941' (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/10).

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the IHA pressed for improved standards and lower prices for essential commodities. The association grew out of concerns over urban poverty in Dublin during the Emergency. Most of the policies advocated by the IHA in the 1941 and 1942 petitions were designed to alleviate the worst effects of the Emergency on working class Dublin consumers. Having said this, the IHA did not concentrate solely on poor urban consumers but also on rural poverty in Ireland. *The Irish Housewife*, the annual begun by the association in 1946, consistently ran articles focussing on conditions in rural areas, especially on the lack of consumer amenities. An article titled 'The rural housewife and family', in 1946, told readers, 'many town housewives, who are accustomed to electric light switches and water taps may not realise what it is like without these conveniences'.[110] One photograph in the 1948 edition depicted a young woman wearing rags and barefoot, covered in dirt, the caption read 'Farmer's daughter: Unpaid Servant'.[111] Such a focus on rural poverty was relatively uncommon at the time especially, as Clear has argued, in publications produced in Dublin.[112] The majority of magazines aimed at women in the 1950s showed a shocking lack of awareness of the consumer amenities available to rural housewives at the time.[113] The IHA, along with the Irish Countrywoman's Association (ICA) were also fervent advocates of the Rural Electrification process, both in demanding extensions by the government and proselytising the benefits of electricity to women.[114]

While the IHA were asking for greater state regulation over consumption, they were also seeking more participation in government decisions by Irish citizens. In October 1942, in an open letter to

[110] Ann J. Burke and Robert M. Burke, 'The Rural housewife and family', *The Irish Housewife*, vol. 1 no. 1 (1946), pp 67-8.
[111] 'Farmer's daughter: Unpaid Servant', *The Irish Housewife*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1948), p. 34.
[112] Clear, *Women of the House*, p. 90; Many journalists and editors in Dublin seem simply not to have had much knowledge of everyday life in rural areas.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Diarmaid Ferriter, *Mothers, maidens and myths, a history of the Irish Countrywomen's Association* (Dublin, 1995); Michael Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution: The Electrification of Rural Ireland* (Dublin, 2003), p. 180.

government ministers the association called for the establishment of a Citizen's Supplies Committee to work in co-operation with the Department of Supplies. Such a committee, they claimed, would be able to break down the secrecy the government enjoyed over price-fixing, making the system more transparent and acceptable to the general population.[115] Beyond the period of the emergency the IHA would continue to advocate for both state control over consumption and consumer input to governmental decisions. To provide one example, in January 1947, following the re-introduction of bread rationing the IHA wrote to the Department of Industry and Commerce welcoming the move. The letter stated that bread rationing was 'the only way to conserve supplies and avoid a lot of waste'.[116] The letter, however, also criticised the failure to introduce a differential system of rationing, claiming 'consumer's requirements of rationed commodities vary greatly according to age, work and income'.[117] The IHA asked for greater consumer involvement in governmental decisions to reach more acceptable solutions.

The association repeatedly demanded the establishment of a committee through which consumer representatives could discuss price and supply issues with government and business representatives. Eventually the government would accede to this demand, in the form of the Prices Advisory Body (PAB), established in January 1951. The Body was given the power to investigate the price of any commodity and the profits made thereon, but it did not have the power to fix prices; instead it could only advise the Minister for Industry and Commerce. The first committee of the Body included representatives from business interests, as well as trade unions and civil servants. The IHA were not given a seat on the committee but the inclusion of Miss K. McDowell, from the Irish Women Worker's Union, was intended as a representative for consumers

[115] 'Open letter to Government Ministers' (9 Oct. 1942) (N.A.I., TAOIS/S/3/12959).
[116] Irish Housewives Association letter to Minister for Industry and Commerce (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/5).
[117] Ibid.

and women.[118] Individuals and associations, however, were allowed to make submissions at public meetings of the Prices Advisory Body (PAB), and the IHA would make full use of this forum. The association would invariably make representations to the PAB whenever the price of any consumer commodity was being discussed. Often IHA representatives were lone voices opposing the price increases that were sought by various trade associations. In April 1951 the association claimed, that 'a rise in the price of soap to the consumer … would certainly reduce consumption and have detrimental effects on the health of the people'.[119] The Association were often critical of the rate of profit made on various commodities. At a PAB forum in June 1952 the association claimed that the rate of profit made on sea-fish, between 40 to 70%, was totally unreasonable, and recommended an immediate reduction in price.[120]

The IHA would frequently go to considerable effort in order to collect information to submit to the PAB. As Hilda Tweedy would later remember in her memoir, 'all our investigations traced the product to its source, including costs such as wages, raw materials, transport, and insurance'.[121] In the late 1940s they established a 'Housewives Research Bureau' in order to collect information that could then be presented to governmental bodies and departments.[122] The Bureau sought information on prices and supplies from its members. For example, members were asked to report back to the Association if they noticed that retailers were selling goods beyond fixed prices, and they were also commonly consulted through questionnaires. A 1947 questionnaire collected information on almost every subject, from the cost of meat, to the availability of sweets, and the housing situation.[123] The IHA also sought

[118] *The Irish Independent*, 3 Jan. 1951.
[119] Summary Evidence to be submitted to Price Advisory Council IHA (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/16).
[120] *The Irish Examiner*, 27 Jun. 1952.
[121] Hilda Tweedy, *A Link in the Chain: The Story of The Irish Housewives Association 1942-1992* (Dublin, 1992), p. 105.
[122] Advertisement 'A Housewives' Research Bureau', *The Irish Housewife*, vol. 1 no. 3 (1949), p. 73.
[123] Questionnaire (21 Jun. 1947) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/8).

information from consumers who were not part of the association. The *Irish Housewife* magazine frequently asked readers to provide information on exorbitant prices. Often this meant that the best informed submissions to the PAB came from the IHA, and they became recognised as a significant force within Irish politics. *The Irish Examiner*, in January 1952, described the IHA as 'that gallant body of housewives', who 'fight an almost single handed battle before the Prices Advisory Body in opposing applications for price increases by various trade interests'.[124]

IHA members were keen to emphasise their influence over political matters, claiming in the editorial to the 1949 edition of the *Irish Housewife:*

> To the man in the street she has come to mean the person who constantly chivvies the Powers that Be, from Merrion Street to Moore Street, in the question of the cost of living and the everyday problems of people.[125]

In many ways it proves difficult to assess the impact the IHA had over Irish political and social affairs. Most of the decisions of the PAB actually increased prices or removed price-control orders completely. The Association was largely unable to oppose the demands of trade and manufacturing groups for increased prices though they did have some notable successes including a reduction in the price of bacon and prams.[126] Indeed, the IHA became perturbed by the limited effect they had within the structure of the PAB. In January 1957 the association refused to attend an investigation on aluminium, protesting 'against the treatment of consumer organisations by the Body'.[127] The IHA frequently bemoaned the treatment they received from government departments and official bodies. In 1942, they claimed to have failed 'to secure from the government any serious consideration for the point of view of the small income housewife and mother', and they would make a similar complaint

[124] *The Irish Examiner*, 30 Jan. 1952.
[125] Rosaleen Mills, 'Forward to Edition', *The Irish Housewife*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1949), p. 11.
[126] *The Irish Press*, 3 Mar. 1951; *The Irish Examiner*, 2 Feb. 1952.
[127] *The Irish Press*, 19 Jan. 1957; They would subsequently return to sit on the PAB.

in regard to children in the following year.[128] It is true that successive governments did their best to ignore the submissions they received from the IHA, and the association never had the influence to force action on the government. Sean Lemass tried to dodge any avoidable contact with the group. Having said this, the IHA did have some impact on Irish governments through the 1940s and 1950s. Evans has described them as a 'thorn in the side of Lemass' during the Emergency, consistently criticising his rationing and supply policy.[129] Farrell has suggested that they forced 'the government to play a regulatory role in food production and distribution', and thereby 'helped to alleviate some of the worst effects of the Emergency'.[130]

The IHA were certainly one of the most vocal critics of government policy in regard to consumption both during and after the Emergency. Many of the policies they advocated, whilst not adopted by governments initially, were eventually implemented. As Hilda Tweedy, the driving force behind the association, noted:

> It is no idle boast to say that we have been several steps ahead of the government … We pressed for the rationing of tea, sugar and flour before there was any move from the government, whose policy has always been to wait until the shortage has made itself felt.[131]

The IHA also pressed for greater consumer involvement in governmental decisions, and for improved price-control mechanisms, before they were eventually introduced. The Association also achieved notable successes in regard to improved food health standards. They were significant in pushing forward improvements in milk standards that were achieved in Ireland in the later 1940s and early 1950s.[132] The IHA did not achieve a

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[128] 'Open letter to Government Ministers' (9 Oct. 1942) (N.A.I., TAOIS/S/3/12959).
[129] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 58.
[130] Farrell, 'Harassed housewives fight the consumer's battle', p. 56.
[131] Hilda Tweedy, 'Housewives' *The Irish Housewife*, vol. 1 no. 2 (1948), p. 10.
[132] 'Housewives Petition' (July 1942) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/2); Hilda Tweedy, *Irish Worker's Weekly Review*, vol. 3, no. 3 (Jun. 1945), p. 7; Hilda Tweedy, *Irish Review* vol. 30 (Sep. 1947), p. 15; Tweedy, *A Link in the Chain*, pp 94-9; *Report of the tribunal to inquire into the supply of milk in the area consisting of the County Borough of Dublin, the County of Dublin and Bray* (Dublin, 1947).

revolution in consumption regulation, consumer involvement, or consumer standards, but neither was this their aim nor their method. The Association was built on the best models of reform-minded altruists, seeking to facilitate incremental but important steps to improve the daily lives of the less fortunate.

Whilst the IHA believed in the importance of state regulation and control over consumption, they also sought opportunities wherever available to establish enterprises that did not require government involvement. Perhaps the most notable example was the Producer-Consumer market begun by the association in the late 1940s. The aim of the market was to allow producers to sell their produce directly to consumers, without having to rely on a middleman. During the Emergency the middleman became an exaggerated and hated figure within much Irish social discourse. Those who profited from the black-market were reviled and castigated, despite the fact, as Evans has noted that purchasing from the black market was considered routine and tolerable.[133] For the IHA, the middleman became almost a bogey-figure, and the association often placed the blame for many consumer problems at his feet. From the beginning in their submissions to governments the IHA blamed wholesalers, claiming that many were taking unnecessary profits. In a 1942 petition to the government they recommended purchasing directly from producers and selling to consumers, eliminating the need for any middlemen in the process.[134] In 1947 they complained about 'unrestricted profiteering and black market operations' as the cause of high costs to the consumer.[135] Frequently in the *Irish Housewife*, the IHA advocated that consumers should seek to purchase directly from producers to avoid middlemen.

[133] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 72.
[134] 'Four Point Programme' (Jul., 1942) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/2).
[135] 'Price Control Measures to Stamp out Profiteering', Letter to Department of Industry and Commerce, 1947 (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/5/3/5).

The culmination of this thinking can be seen in the establishment of the Dublin Producer – Consumer Market Public Utility Society in January 1949, formed as a joint operation by the IHA and Dublin Corporation. The Association claimed that 'by supporting this market, housewives will help to bring down prices', and in a later article published in several newspapers Tweedy claimed 'private concerns and vested interests have failed in their duty to provide fruit, vegetables, etc, cheaply to Dublin's citizens'.[136] The Producer-Consumer market was established at the Iveagh Market on Francis Street, and would deal exclusively in fruit and vegetables.[137] Suppliers were guaranteed a 10% margin of profit, which was intended to defray the cost of getting the produce to market. Deliveries were also offered to nearby suburban areas, including Ballsbridge, Donnybrook, Clonskea, Drumcondra, and Clontarf.[138] As the market became more established it also offered deliveries to Crumlin and Drimnagh; areas more associated with working class communities than those listed above.[139] Initially the market proved successful as in the first few years the numbers attending grew steadily, and it received approval from several newspapers, including the *Press* and the *Times* in 1950. *The Times* would claim in September of that year, that the market was becoming a 'feature in the daily lives of hundreds of people in the larger working class districts in the city'.[140] The position of the market deteriorated relatively quickly, however, as by 1953 the IHA were already noting a considerable drop in turnover.[141] The failure is put down by Tweedy to tenement clearances in the areas, combined with increased bus fares, which, she claims, reduced traffic in the market.[142] This may have partly been the reason but, taking a broader view, producer-consumer markets never took hold in Ireland. The IHA failed,

[136] 'Formation of Utility Society' (Jan. 1949) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/6/1/1); Hilda Tweedy, Letter to the Press (5 Nov. 1949) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/6/1/1).
[137] 'Formation of Utility Society' (Jan. 1949) (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Papers 98/17/6/1/1).
[138] Ibid.
[139] *The Irish Times*, 11 Mar. 1950.
[140] *The Irish Times*, 6 Sep. 1950.
[141] Tweedy, *A Link in the Chain*, p. 104.
[142] Ibid.

for example, even to repeat the modest success of the Dublin market in other towns and cities in Ireland. The moral position that the IHA had taken against middlemen, whilst perhaps shared in belief by many Irish consumers, was never shared in practice to the same extent.

Perhaps because of such schemes to remove the "middleman" the IHA was accused on several occasions of being a communist organisation or, at least, of sympathising with communists. In 1950 the magazine *Cavalcade* carried the following title 'An informal and factual article proving there is Communism - but disguised- in Eire!.'[143] The IHA was mentioned, among other groups as being a communist dominated organisation. In April 1952 the *Roscommon Herald* accused the IHA of becoming mixed up with rioting on O'Connell Street, claiming that the association had 'Always been used as a medium of expression' by 'Marxists, communists and fellow-travellers.'[144] Is this view of the association accurate? Clear characterises the IHA as a 'small mostly Dublin-based, largely Protestant, overwhelmingly middle-class organisation'.[145] If we look at the areas in which the first branches of the IHA were formed by and large they were middle class areas. The second branch, following from the initial Dublin city branch, was opened in Dun Laoighaire in 1947, followed in 1948 with branches in New Ross and Mount Merrion, and in 1949 Bray, Skerries and Dundrum.[146] Branches in Drogheda and Cork were formed in 1951.[147] The majority of the members also tended to live in quite affluent areas. In the Dublin branch for example, there was a preponderance of members from affluent areas like Rathgar, Rathmines, Blackrock, and Stillorgan.[148] The leading figures of the association were of middle-class origin, many of whom had much broader horizons to the average Irish housewife. Hilda Tweedy was

[143] Ibid, p. 68.
[144] Ibid, p. 69.
[145] Clear, *Women of the House*, p. 64; all members were women, but not all were married.
[146] IHA Annual Report, 1949 (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Archive/98/17/1/2/2, pp 10-11).
[147] IHA Annual Report, 1953 (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Archive/98/17/1/2/2, pp 12-14); The New Ross branch has already been established at this point.
[148] IHA Annual Report, 1944 (N.A.I., Hilda Tweedy Archive/98/17/1/2/1, p. 3).

the daughter of a Church of Ireland rector, who had lived in Egypt for six years as a young woman. Andree Skeffington (chairwoman and secretary of the IHA) was born in Amiens, France, and married into an established family in Ireland; her husband served as a senator for many years. Both women were educated at university level, with Andree Skeffington receiving a degree from the Sorbonne.

The IHA bears a striking similarity to the Women's Industrial Development Association (WIDA) discussed in the preceding chapter. Like the WIDA the majority of IHA members were relatively economically comfortable, and certainly did not suffer the worst effects of the Emergency. The rhetoric of the IHA, like that of the WIDA, aimed to improve the living standards of the less fortunate. As the WIDA called on consumers to Buy Irish to provide employment for Irish hands, the IHA called for measures to alleviate the conditions of the working class and poor in Irish society. There are, however, a number of fundamental differences between the ideologies of the two associations, which also serve to demonstrate how discourse around consumption and the consumer shifted from the inter-war to the post-war period. The WIDA advocated a method of philanthropy on the part of consumers. Consumers were asked to prefer Irish goods as a means of building up Irish industry and most importantly to provide employment for Irish workers. Ultimately this was framed as an act of charity as consumers would make a sacrifice to help the unfortunate. The IHA were not advocates of philanthropy in the same manner as the WIDA. As the chapter has so far emphasised, the IHA encouraged state regulation and control over consumption as the means of improving the standard of living. When the IHA sought to achieve change they saw the state as the best means of doing so, despite the fact that often the machinery of the state proved itself to be unresponsive. Actions taken without state involvement, such as the Producer-Consumer market, aimed to allow consumers to improve their own situation and can neither be characterised as philanthropic especially as the market was intended to be profitable.

The move from philanthropy to state regulation symbolises a changing conception of the consumer. The consumer for the WIDA was clearly a middle-class woman. For the IHA the consumer remained female but was often seen as working-class or poor. These shifting conceptions of the consumer were informed by changing valorisations. The pre-World War Two focus on consumer nationalism saw the building up of Irish industry and the employment of Irish workers as the most important outcome of consumer action. The effects of the Emergency on Ireland undermined this ideology critically, as increasingly concern shifted from promoting Irish goods to ensuring that Irish citizens had adequate food and fuel supplies. The insistence on consumer nationalism as the best guarantor for the consumer shifted in the 1940s and 1950s to a focus on the state as the protector of Irish consumers. Certain groups opposed the increasing power of the state, but the discourse on consumption had undoubtedly moved from the focus on the nation prominent in the 1920s and 1930s.

State Subsidy Post-Emergency

The preceding two sections have argued that the Fianna Fáil government was led, often reluctantly, towards increasing regulation and control over consumption during the Emergency, there was a corresponding shift in societal thinking, which increasingly valorised state involvement in consumption in an effort to combat poverty. In the post-Emergency period, which the chapter loosely defines as running from 1946 to 1958, the State continued to regulate the daily lives of consumers. Rationing of certain basic goods would continue into the 1950s, before the supply situation returned to relative normality. Even after the end of rationing the government continued to subsidise the price of certain essential commodities in order that they would remain affordable to poorer consumers. The system of price controls that had been established in 1939 would not be removed fully until 1957. The State increasingly took a role for itself in providing essential goods to Irish citizens, especially to poor consumers. This new role for the Irish state can be seen in regard to

other initiatives of the post-Emergency era, as well. Most notably Rural Electrification, conceived during the Emergency period, sought to provide all citizens with an amenity increasingly seen as necessary to modern life, and the government provided a subsidy of 50% to defray the cost to consumers.[149]

The post-war period in Ireland has been highlighted previously as a time of state expansion; Breen et al. noted this in their study of state and class in twentieth century Ireland.[150] Carey's study of social security also highlighted the late 1940s as a key era of expansion, when increasing expenditure was devoted to improving provision, often with Irish legislators paying attention to British welfare developments following the Beveridge Report.[151] The growth of state power and control did not just take place in Ireland but was common internationally post-war and especially in Western Europe, as governments focussed more on economic planning and social welfare. The significance of consumption to the expansion of state control has been noted in other contexts, for example by Zweiniger-Bargielowska in regard to Britain.[152]

The introduction of a general rationing scheme in 1942 marked a move away from the moral economy that had previously been advocated by Sean Lemass in the early years of the Emergency towards an active role for the State in regulating consumption. As rationing measures were introduced, the government also began to institute subsidies for the rationed goods. The policy of subsidising essential commodities was adopted in an ad hoc and piecemeal fashion, according to specific exigencies. Flour had been subsidised in 1941, tea in 1943, and in the later years of the war sugar, butter, margarine and oatmeal were all

[149] Michael Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution: The Electrification of Rural Ireland* (Dublin, 2003), p. 43.
[150] Richard Breen, Damian Hannan, David Rottmann, Christopher Whelan, *Understanding Contemporary Ireland: State, Class and Development in the Republic of Ireland* (London, 1990), pp 32-4.
[151] Sophia Carey, *Social Security in Ireland 1939-1952: The Limits to Solidarity* (Dublin, 2007), p. 208.
[152] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: rationing, controls, and consumption, 1939-1955.*

subsidised. It is with the 1947 Supplementary Budget introduced by the Fianna Fáil administration in October that we can note a shift from an ad hoc development towards a governmental policy. The goal of the Budget, which would more than double government spending on subsidies, was not only to maintain current prices but to effect a reduction in tea, sugar and bread. The Minister for Finance aimed to reduce the cost of living index by 4%, after it had increased by more than 10% in the period August 1946 to August 1947.[153] The looming prospect of the February 1948 election may also have had some impact on the decision. The Inter-Party government, whilst asserting their desire to reduce spending on subsidies, proved unable or unwilling to make reductions through the period 1948-1951. The abolition of subsidies on margarine and oatmeal were cancelled out by increasing expenditure on sugar and bread, in particular.[154] In 1948 the Inter-Party government (Fine Gael, the Labour Party, Clann na Poblachta, Clann na Talmhan, the National Labour Party and one independent James Dillon) established the Flour and Bread Inquiry to come to terms with the most expensive subsidy. The Inquiry recommended the gradual increase in bread prices to reduce the level of subsidy over a number of years, when it reported in 1950.[155] And yet, the cost of subsidies only continued to grow, reaching £13m in 1951, and being described in April as a 'millstone around the neck' of Minister for Finance, Patrick McGilligan.[156]

It was not until 1952 that the first significant action was taken by any government to reduce the cost of food subsidies. In this case it was a Fianna Fáil budget that abolished the subsidy on tea and sugar, whilst vastly reducing the bread subsidy and transferring the cost to the consumer.[157] This decision was taken by the Fianna Fáil administration largely due to immediate considerations; especially the large balance of payments deficit of £150M in 1951. The decision to curtail spending on

[153] *The Irish Press*, 16 Oct. 1947.
[154] *The Irish Independent*, 5 May 1948.
[155] *Flour and Bread Inquiry Interim and Final Report* (Dublin, 1951).
[156] *Connacht Sentinel*, 11 Apr. 1950.
[157] Sean MacEntee, Dáil Debate, vol. 130, no. 8, col. 119 (2 Apr 1952).

subsidies in 1952 would be reversed by the new Inter-Party government of 1954 (Fine Gael, Labour Party, and Clann na Talmhan). This time the government committed itself to reverse Fianna Fáil cuts, whilst in the last incarnation it was committed to undoing Fianna Fáil overspending. Labour during the 1954 election campaign supported the re-introduction of subsidies, and Fine Gael, whilst more equivocal, refused to rule out subsidies.[158] In June the government announced the return of the butter subsidy and an increase in the bread subsidy.[159] Restrictions were imposed following further balance of payments imbalances in 1956, but it was not until the return of Fianna Fáil in 1957 that the policy of subsidy was finally ended. In the May Budget all food subsidies were removed, causing large increases to the cost of bread and butter.[160] De Valera would claim that the subsidy policy had to be ended owing to 'sheer necessity and not on any doctrinaire economic principles'.[161] As can be seen, it proves difficult to establish any clear division between Irish political parties on the question of food subsidies. Fianna Fáil, who eventually would abolish the subsidies, instituted them a decade earlier. Fine Gael and Labour, who had initially advocated their removal, re-instated them in 1954. Political parties never had a clear ideological position on the cost of living or food subsidies, but rather used these issues to tarnish the reputation of their opponents.

The policy of subsidising essential food products developed from the material conditions of the Emergency. Subsidisation of food lasted for over fifteen years, and dominated government policy on consumption in the 1950s. Food subsidies were connected to other governmental controls over consumption; obviously rationing, which continued long after the Emergency, but also the price control system, which was the first measure adopted to regulate consumption in 1939. The system of

[158] *The Irish Independent*, 29 Apr. 1954; *The Irish Press*, 7 May 1954; Costello Reply to *Irish Times* Representative Questions 1954 (U.C.D., Fine Gael Election Archives P39/GE/22).
[159] *The Irish Independent*, 25 June 1954.
[160] *Connacht Sentinel*, 11 May 1957.
[161] *The Irish Independent*, 13 May 1957.

government price controls was not abolished until 1958, following a further decision by the Fianna Fáil administration. The Prices Advisory Body (PAB), mentioned in the preceding section was an effort to encourage agreement on price increases amongst employers, trade unions and consumer groups, but ultimate authority resided, between 1939 and 1958, with the Minister for Industry and Commerce. As the state invested itself with greater regulatory control over consumption, it also found itself having to allocate a larger share of national finances to facilitate programmes. Paying for the food subsidy programme meant devoting increasingly large sums from the social expenditure budget. In 1951 as much money was devoted to subsidies as was to health spending (£13M) and more was spent on subsidies than on education. 3.1% of Ireland's Gross National Product was spent on food subsidies in 1951.[162] After this year, which was the high point of spending on subsidies, there was a reduction in government spending, but it remained significant until 1957.[163]

In addition to policy and programmes, the government, post-Emergency, also collected an increasing level of information on consumption patterns, especially in regard to diet. Evidence collected during the Emergency suggested that many segments in Irish society subsisted on an inadequate diet. In 1940 the British National Food Survey had calculated the income that a family required to support an adequate diet.[164] After investigation, Dr Charles Clancy-Gore claimed, in a speech to the Dublin Rotary Club in 1944, that many Dublin families were surviving on half the income deemed adequate by the British

[162] Patrick McGilligan, Dáil Debate vol. 125, no. 13, cols. 1885 (2 May 1951); Finola Kennedy, *Public Social Expenditure in Ireland*, The Economic and Social Research Institute (Dublin, 1975), p. 5; Figures on spending in previous years are provided here Patrick McGilligan, Dáil Debate vol. 110, no. 9, cols. 1039-1043 (4 May 1948); Patrick McGilligan, Dáil Debate vol. 115, no. 4, cols. 470 (4 May 1949); Patrick McGilligan, Dáil Debate vol. 120, no. 11, cols. 1618 (3 May 1950).
[163] *The Sunday Independent*, 5 Mar. 1953; *The Irish Press*, 25 Jun. 1954; Sean MacEntee, Dáil Debates vol. 145, no. 5, col. 566 (21 Apr. 1954); Gerard Sweetman, Dáil Debates vol. 150, no. 5, cols. 693-700 (4 May 1955); Gerard Sweetman, Dáil Debates vol. 157, no. 1, cols. 31-2 (8 May 1956).
[164] *The Irish Independent*, 13 Jun. 1944.

National Survey.[165] Poorer consumers were also believed to be misspending their income; wasting money either due to frivolous desires, or sheer ignorance of modern nutritional advice. Dr P. Moran, of Muinitir na Tíre, summarised this view when he claimed if families, 'ignorant of household management … waste their money they must be shown to spend it more wisely'.[166] The National Nutritional Survey, established in 1946, was a response to a number of material and ideological factors; an awareness that diets in the Emergency had worsened; a belief that the State had a responsibility to advise consumers on a healthy diet; and anxiety that Ireland was lagging behind international standards, especially British standards. The information collected by the Survey was discussed previously in the second chapter. In general, the survey revealed that the Irish diet was overly reliant on "Bread and spread"; reliant on bread, sugar and tea to make up calories, and deficient largely in meat, vegetables and fruit, which was especially the case for poorer consumers. This dependence on 'bread and spread' was particularly acute for the lower classes in Irish society.

On first glance this makes the decision of the Irish government to subsidise primarily bread, tea and sugar, along with butter, perhaps appear quite surprising. The subsidy policy was adopted prior to the publication of all information from the Nutritional Survey, but even if the information had been available it is doubtful that a different policy would have been enacted. The subsidisation of food was not intended to transform Irish dietary patterns, but rather to ensure that current patterns could continue without major price raises. Subsidies on food were certainly presented to the public as measures to help the necessitous poor. The aim of the policy, often presented to the public, was to ensure that the cost of essential commodities did not rapidly increase in price and thereby become unaffordable especially to those on fixed incomes.[167]

[165] Dr Charles Clancy-Gore, *The Irish Independent*, 13 Jun. 1944.
[166] Dr P. Moran, *The Irish Times*, 22 Aug. 1944.
[167] Eamon de Valera, quoted in *The Irish Independent*, 16 Oct. 1947; William Norton, quoted in *The Irish Independent*, 29 Apr. 1954.

This aim received support from consumer groups like the Irish Housewives Association (IHA), who, in fact, advocated for further subsidies on food products, especially on fruits and vegetables. Manufacturers and traders also benefited tremendously from the policy, as essentially they could take the same profits from artificially reduced prices. Once the subsidisation of food was introduced as state policy it proved incredibly difficult to remove as a wide constituency of connected interests all saw benefit in its continuance; manufacturers, retailers, trade unions and consumer groups.

Governments saw food subsidies as a way of assuaging demands from consumer and other interests, whilst at the same time providing the State with a means to tackle increasing inflation. Timothy Smiddy, in advice to the Fianna Fáil administration in 1946, prior to the introduction of the subsidy programme on a major-scale, warned that allowing wages to increase significantly would lead to an inflationary spiral.[168] Successive governments would use the food subsidy programme as a means to overcome demands for higher wages. Despite subsidising the cost of staple foods, however, the Irish government was unable to stop wage increases after 1946. In fact, wages grew significantly after the Emergency period. Wage growth led to increased consumer spending; as Sean MacEntee commented during his 1952 Budget speech 'advances in incomes in recent years have been accompanied by disproportionate increases in consumption'.[169] Increased consumption led to perceived balance of payment difficulties, which were seen as major issues by all government parties. MacEntee's 1952 Budget and Sweetman's 1956 Budget both imposed strict expenditure cuts for the purpose of reducing the balance of payments imbalance.[170] The necessity of such budget cuts and the role of monetary policy in causing economic problems have been

[168] Timothy Smiddy, Memorandum on Wage Policy (2 Dec. 1946) (NAI/TAOIS/3/S13965A Issues relating to the Cost of Living/Consumer Price Index 1946-1947).
[169] Sean MacEntee, Dáil Debate, vol. 130, no. 8, col. 119 (2 Apr 1952).
[170] Ibid; Gerard Sweetman, Dáil Debates vol. 157, no. 1, cols. 22-4 (8 May 1956).

debated by economic historians.[171] It is clear that the avowed purpose of food subsidisation did not have its desired effect; inflation continued to increase despite the artificially low cost of staple foodstuffs. Irish governments did not have the same ideological commitment to controls and fair shares that Zweiniger-Bargielowska has suggested was the case for the Labour government in post-World War Two Britain.[172] Controls and subsidies were adopted and maintained in Ireland not because of an ethical belief in austerity and equality but largely as a means to halt inflation, whilst at the same time satisfying the demands of diverse, business, trade union and consumer interests.

Having noted this, the food subsidy policy, along with the price control system, and the continuance of rationing, demonstrated a new commitment on the part of the state. An initial reluctance to intervene in matters of daily consumption was replaced by willingness and even a sense of responsibility to do so. In this manner the Irish state bares comparison to many other nations in the post-World War Two environment. The growth of state control and involvement in Ireland was not confined merely to food policy, but can also be noted in the expansion on welfare spending, highlighted by Carey, and the subsidisation of the Rural Electrification Scheme.[173]

The initial plans for the Rural Electrification scheme were muted in the worst year of the Emergency – 1942. An ESB White Paper envisaged 'the extension, on a national scale, of the present E.S.B. network with the object of making electricity supply available to the rural and farming community'.[174] Rural electrification was viewed as a radical means of modernisation and was often discussed in spiritual as well as material terms. James Larkin Junior, in the debate on the Electricity Bill

[171] Patrick Honohan and Cormac Ó Gráda, 'The Irish Macroeconomic crisis of 1955-56: How much was due to monetary policy?', *Irish Economic and Social History*, xxv (1998), pp 52-80.
[172] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 256.
[173] Carey, *Social Security in Ireland 1939-1952*, p. 208.
[174] Electricity Supply Board, *White Paper on Rural Electrification* (Dec. 1942) (N.A.I., TAOIS/3/S13088, p. 2).

1944, claimed 'in our country, electricity is more than merely producing light and power; it is bringing light into darkness'.[175] Especially in the early years of the scheme the first connection to the grid, known colloquially as the 'Switch-On', was a major local event. Typically locals would gather in the local parish hall, where a prayer was by the priest who would often also take it upon himself to flip the symbolic switch.[176]

Rural electrification in the 1940s was seen as necessary to bring Ireland into line with inter-war developments in Western Europe. A 1944 Report for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce revealed that over 75% of rural consumers in France, Germany and Denmark had access to electricity.[177] The government subsidised the scheme by 50% from 1946 to 1954, when the subsidy was removed briefly by the Inter-Party government.[178] In a sense the Rural Electrification subsidy was a further subsidy on consumption, much like the food subsidies, as it allowed rural consumers increasingly to access electrical goods through the 1950s. Electricity was increasingly seen as a necessary component to a decent standard of living. Bringing electricity to rural areas was seen as a way of overcoming increasing barriers between urban and rural life.[179] The ESB white paper, referenced above, claimed electricity would lessen the 'burdens of hard work on the farmer and his family, brightening their lives and reducing the great margin that exists between the amenities enjoyed by the town or city dweller and the rural dweller'.[180] Rural electrification suited the broader social policy of successive Irish governments; to keep farmers and their families on the land.

[175] James Larkin Junior, Dáil Debates, vol. 95, no. 12, col. 1647 (25 Jan. 1945).
[176] Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution*, p. 142.
[177] Electricity Supply Board, Report on Rural Electrification (Aug. 1944) (N.A.I., TAOIS/3/S13088B, pp. 21-3).
[178] Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution*, p. 43.
[179] Whilst most dwellings in urban areas had been electrified by the 1940s there were still many, especially poor consumers, who did not have access to electricity; Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution*, p. 22.
[180] Electricity Supply Board, *White Paper on Rural Electrification*, 1942 (N.A.I., TAOIS/3/S13088, p. 2).

Electricity, in particular, was thought to be attractive for Irish women and would help to keep them on the land. *The Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems,* charged with explaining rural population problems, recommended:

> The provision of electricity for power, light, heating, and cooking, not alone in dwelling-houses, but also in out-houses and farmyards, should revolutionise many habits of rural life, and, in particular, improve the lot of the housewife.[181]

The Irish Countrywomen's Association as well as the IHA were active advocates of Rural Electrification, and the ESB specifically targeted Irish women in an effort to make more connections and sales.[182] For the Irish government the purpose of rural electrification, in part, was to improve the lot of rural consumers and thereby discourage emigration. Some argued, however, that in practice it had the opposite effect.[183] Electricity brought new luxuries and conveniences that made country people less resilient. Washing machines and electric ovens, instead of making the population more content with life on the land, only demonstrated the burden of rural living more clearly. Certainly the extension of electricity did little to reduce the level of emigration from Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s, which will be discussed in more detail in the sixth chapter. The state failed to commit sufficient resources to the scheme, and as Shiel has noted the ESB never believed they had adequate support.[184] As was the case with rationing and food subsides, discussed above, the Irish state recognised a responsibility to support consumers but consistently proved unable or unwilling to make a sufficient contribution.

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[181] *The Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems* (Dublin, 1954), p. 54.
[182] The ESB focus on selling to women can be seen in their trade journal *REO News,* which regularly included advice articles for salespeople; 'The Adventures of Johnny Hotfoot' *REO News,* vol. 4, no. 1 (December, 1950); 'Put the Consumer in the Picture' *REO News,* vol. 11, no. 11 (November, 1958), p15; 'Selling to a Rural Community' *REO News,* vol. 12, no. 1 (January, 1959), p. 4.
[183] Clair Wills, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge, 2015), pp 55-77.
[184] Shiel, *The Quiet Revolution,* pp 43-4.

Conclusion

The daily lives of Irish consumers were increasingly influenced by state intervention and control in the period 1940 to 1958. As this chapter has demonstrated, the causes for this change can be related primarily to the effect of the Emergency on consumption in Ireland. The Irish government in the years 1941 and 1942, especially, was compelled towards greater intervention owing to the supply situation. In the preceding period, discussed in the second chapter, Irish governments had intervened significantly in the economy and affected consumer behaviour. Tariffs and import quotas significantly shaped consumer decisions. In the 1940s and 1950s, however, state involvement in consumer behaviour was more direct and inescapable. Rationing, subsidy and price controls represented a different form of state intervention to that common in the 1930s.

State involvement in everyday consumption was often the last resort for a Fianna Fáil government that was highly reluctant to establish necessary controls. The Emergency conditions led to a shift in thought and action on the part of the Irish state. As de Valera commented, in 1942 'State control and state intervention will tend to remain and entrench itself in many spheres where formerly private enterprise alone held the field. The state will continue to accept responsibility where formerly it accepted none.'[185] From 1940 through to 1958, the Irish state intervened in numerous ways to provide a basic standard of living for consumers. Food subsidies ensured that for a decade the cost of staple foodstuffs remained affordable even to poor consumers. The Rural Electrification Scheme sought to extend what was seen as a vital amenity to a broader section of the population. These policies required significant expenditure on the part of a state that did not enjoy the rapid economic growth occurring in other western European nations at the same time.

[185] De Valera to Dublin Chamber Commerce, 28 Oct. 1942, quoted in R.J. Raymond, 'De Valera, Lemass and Irish Economic Development 1933-1948' in J. O'Carroll and J. Murphy (eds.), *De Valera and His Times* (Cork, 1983), p. 119.

Irish governments remained reluctant to commit fully to policies of state support for consumption. In part this can be explained by the financial restraints imposed on the country, but it is not the full explanation. Irish governments were also limited by what they viewed to be the appropriate role of the state. It was more interventionist than the inter-war era, but in was still less so than other European nations in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Successive Irish government did not share the ideological commitment to equality of consumption that was a significant factor in the post-war Labour government in Britain.[186]

Irish governments were not advocates of increased state intervention in daily consumption. Instead they were led to such actions both by the material conditions of the Emergency and the demands of new consumer interest groups, chiefly the IHA. It be would erroneous to overstate the influence of a group like the IHA, but the majority of the policies they advocated were eventually introduced by the government, as the chapter has demonstrated. The IHA saw the state as the best guarantor of protection for the consumer, and especially for poorer consumers. Their ideology highlights the fundamental shift in thinking on consumption that occurred through the years 1922 to 1958. In the inter-war era consumer nationalism was seen as the best means to ensure protection for the consumer. During and after the Emergency, however, the state came to be seen as the best guarantor for consumer protection.

[186] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 256.

Chapter 4

Consuming the Dance Hall

On 22 August 1943 Inspector O'Brien, from the Kanturk branch of an Garda Síochána, was called to investigate a reported disturbance at a dance hall in Castlemagner.[1] When he arrived O'Brien was refused entry by a group of rowdy young men at the entrance. Fearing for his safety, the inspector decided to flee the vicinity of the hall, running down one of the nearby country lanes to escape. He claimed to have been under such dread of attack that he removed his coat and secreted it beneath a hedgerow, so that he would not be recognised. Eventually O'Brien was able to call for back-up, and when several officers arrived at the hall they all entered to verify that the premises were licenced. After the Gardaí had managed to disperse the attendees O'Brien remembered that he had left his coat under the hedgerow. It was now past midnight and difficult to see along the road. O'Brien walked along the roadside with Sergeant Brennan, who had been sent as part of his request for support. When the pair finally came upon the concealed rain-coat O'Brien reported 'I found a man and a woman actually lying on top of it'.[2] He does not state exactly what the couple were doing, but the tone of the report leaves little room for speculation. O'Brien was evidently horrified by what he encountered in Castlemagner, with one phrase in particular capturing his sense of revulsion – 'I actually handled the pair before I saw them'.[3]

The events at Castlemagner appear to both support and contradict the narrative on dance halls in Ireland. On the one hand the supposed immorality of the dance hall, so prevalent in much contemporary rhetoric and subsequent historiography, is present. This is merely one way to read the narrative, however. In the face of the supposed control of the State or the Church, and the implied immorality of the consumers, one could substitute the freedom and agency of the consumer not only to dance, but

[1] Statement made at request of Inspector O'Brien, Garda Síochana Kanturk (23 Aug. 1943) (National Archives Ireland/Department of Justice/3/90/98/37).
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

even to challenge and undermine the authority of the State. Does one assume the viewpoint of the authority (the State, the Church, the Police), or the viewpoint of the average consumer attending the dance hall?

Much historiography on dance halls in the 1930s has emphasised the expanding influence of the Catholic Church, in regard to both shaping legislation and holding dances in parochial halls.[4] To a lesser extent, the role of nationalist associations, especially the Gaelic League has also been emphasised, as they aimed to exclude foreign music, also associated with immorality. The Irish state, in its legislative, judicial and bureaucratic arms, has been seen as an ally of this effort. This interpretation advanced by Helen Brennan, Jim Smyth, Valerie Austin and Barbara O'Connor has also been supported by local studies such as Foley's study of North Kerry.[5] The image of dance halls in Irish historiography is quite similar to that presented by Ken Loach in the 2014 film *Jimmy's Hall*. The film, based on true events, centred on Jimmy Gralton, an emigrant to America, who returned in 1932 to take over the family farm. Back in Leitrim Jimmy decided to re-open the Pearse-Connolly hall, in Effrinagh, owing to local popularity. As the film suggests, 'the hall' and Jimmy were targeted by the local clergy. Jimmy was eventually deported from Ireland on the pretext that he was an American citizen; ironically the reputed reason that saved de Valera from execution in 1916. The film implies that Jimmy was persecuted for his communist political opinions but also for introducing jazz music and foreign dancing to Ireland. Clerical authorities are depicted as welding immense influence over politics and social life in Ireland.

[4] Valerie A. Austin, 'The Céilí and the Public Dance Halls Act', *Éire-Ireland,* xxviii, no. 3 (1993), pp 7-16; Jim Smyth, 'Dancing, Depravity and all that Jazz The Public Dance Halls Act of 1935', *History Ireland,* ii (Summer, 1993) (http://www.historyireland.com) (24 April 2015); Barbara O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identity 1900-2000* (Cork, 2013), p. 42; Helen Brennan, *The Story of Irish Dance* (Lanham, 2001), pp 123-8.
[5] Catherine Foley, *Step Dancing in Ireland* (Farnham, 2013), pp 160-1.

The Public Dance Halls Act (PDHA) of 1935 has been presented as the culmination of efforts by the Church and State to control dancing.[6] Brennan has suggested that the 1935 Act offered the Church a virtual monopoly control over dance halls in Ireland.[7] Ó hAllmhuráin likewise argued that the PDHA facilitated a move from communal dances held in farmhouses to dances held in parochial halls under clerical supervision.[8] The narrative on dancing has also fed into wider studies on Irish society. Powell et al., in their study of youth policy, claimed that the PDHA was part of a broader trend in which 'Young people's leisure time was to be monitored in a certain kind of Catholic public sphere.'[9] This concept of a 'Catholic public sphere' was discussed in the introduction, especially in regard to the work of Inglis who claimed that Irish Catholics experienced a 'systematic process of socialisation', and Smith who posited the idea of a 'containment culture' to describe the moral order enforced by Church and State. [10] The PDHA, Smith argues, can be located in a list of legislation and official reports aiming to promote a containment culture, including the Censorship of Film (1923) and Literature Acts (1929), and the Carrigan Committee Report (1931). The introduction noted Diarmaid Ferriter's claim that often Irish historiography has been more concerned with what 'people were supposedly not permitted to do as opposed to what they actually did'.[11] This is certainly true of much scholarship on literature and film, which has focussed primarily on censorship. Work by Kevin Rockett and Peter Martin has continued to stress social control by cultural means, emphasising the lack of agency available to consumers in

[6] Hereafter the 1935 Public Dance Halls Act will be referred to as PDHA.
[7] Brennan, *The Story of Irish Dance*, p. 126.
[8] Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935', *New Hibernia Review*, ix (Winter, 2005), pp 9-18.
[9] Fred Powell, Martin Geoghegan, Margaret Scanton and Katharina Swirak, *Youth Policy, Civil Society and the Modern Irish State* (Manchester, 2012), pp 19-20.
[10] James Smith, 'The Politics of Sexual Knowledge: The Origins of Ireland's Containment Culture and the Carrigan Report' (1931), *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, xiii (2004), pp 232-3; Tom Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 1998), p. 64.
[11] Diarmaid Ferriter, *The transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London, 2004), p. 10.

Ireland.[12] The emphasis on control is, in large measure, shaped by the source material available to historians; the reports of censors and the writings of elite critics of popular culture.

Some scholarship has suggested potentially new approaches in considering cultural consumption in Ireland. Elizabeth Russell, in an article on popular reading habits in 1930s Ireland, suggested 'as well as the soft diet of nationalism and Gaelic crosses in the home-produced material, there was a great demand for foreign authors'.[13] Russell argued that 'guns and roses' i.e. cowboy and romance tales, written by authors such as Zane Gray and Charlotte Baume, were the most popular forms for the Irish reading public in the inter-war period.[14] This form of research into the consuming behaviours of the Irish public has largely been absent from Irish history writing. Yet, it can force critical reconsiderations of how societal control is conceptualised. Helen Byrne, whose research was discussed in the first chapter, highlighted, in contrast to the thrust of Rockett and Martin's work, the liberating potential of cinema for female consumers, and described Irish movie-theatres as 'utopian spaces'.[15]

Recent scholarship on dancing has also raised questions of the widely accepted narrative on dance halls. James Donnelly has noted, in regard to Galway, that young dancers often paid scant attention to the moral pronouncements of Bishop Michael Browne on commercial dance halls.[16] Donnelly has also demonstrated that the PDHA was far from draconian, and was even interpreted as a 'failure' by many clerical

[12] Peter Martin, *Censorship in the Two Irelands 1922-1939* (Dublin, 2006) pp 45-228; Kevin Rockett and Emer Rockett, *Film Exhibition and Distribution in Ireland 1909-2010* (Dublin, 2011), pp 299-335.
[13] Elizabeth Russell, 'Holy Crosses, guns and roses: themes in popular reading material' in Joost Augusteijn (ed.), *Ireland in the 1930s* (Dublin, 1999), p. 11.
[14] Ibid, p. 15.
[15] Helen Byrne, 'Going to the Pictures: The Female Audience and the Pleasures of Cinema' in Mary J. Kelly and Barbara O'Connor (eds.), *Media Audiences in Ireland* (Ed.) Mary J. Kelly and Barbara O'Connor (Dublin, 1997), p.
[16] James Donnelly Jr., 'Bishop Michael Browne of Galway (1937-76) and the regulation of public morality' in *New Hibernia Review*, xvii, no. 1 (Spring 2013), pp 25-30.

proponents.[17] Barbara O'Connor highlighted issues worthy of further consideration, including safety concerns and the agency of dancers to disobey Church and State regulations.[18] O'Connor only offered these as suggestions for further research, and in many ways repeated the narrative that has been outlined above. Two recent unpublished theses, Paula Vallely's study of the Monaghan-Armagh border region and Sean Shanagher's study of the Elphin area in Roscommon, also asked pertinent questions of the accepted narrative. Vallely did not find a clerical monopoly on dancing, but rather showed that the vast majority of dance halls were non-parochial.[19] Shanagher demonstrated that "modern" dances and foreign music, if anything, increased in popularity following the PDHA.[20]

David Fowler's broader study of youth culture in Britain included research on southern Irish dance halls and northern Irish YMCA activities.[21] In his conclusion Fowler claimed that 'Youth seem to have been a lot freer in the south of Ireland during the 1920s and 1930s.'[22] In comparison to other contexts Fowler found little evidence that the 1935 Act was 'draconian in the extreme' as claimed by Smyth.[23] The broader perspective offered to Fowler in considering dance halls within the context of Britain and Ireland as a whole suggests an alternative interpretation to what has previously been accepted within Irish historiography. Leanne McCormick's work has also suggested a similar effort to regulate morality in Northern Ireland and the Irish Free

[17] James Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion in Ireland 1930-1960' in Stewart J. Brown and David W. Miller (eds.), *Piety and Power in Ireland 1760-1960: essays in honour of Emmet Larkin* (Belfast, 2000), pp 273-4.
[18] O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing*, pp 57-9.
[19] Paula Vallely, 'Nothing between us but the Holy Spirit: The material culture of dancing in rural Ireland 1935-1960' (MA Thesis, National College of Art and Design, 2015), pp 28-48.
[20] Sean Shanagher, 'Recreational Dance in Ireland 1940-1960: Politics and Pleasures' (PhD Thesis, Dublin City University, 2014), pp 126-9.
[21] David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain 1920-1970* (Basingstoke, 2008), pp 86-91.
[22] Ibid, p. 91.
[23] Smyth, 'Dancing, Depravity and all that Jazz.

State/Éire.[24] Barbara O'Connor has demonstrated that the 'moral panic' directed against jazz music and dancing was common internationally in the inter-war era, and examples can be seen in Britain, Europe and the United States.[25]

The chapter will draw on this recent scholarship but will also utilise primary material that has been overlooked. In particular, it will reference material held in Department of Justice records. In September 1938 the department requested Garda superintendents in all Districts to collect and report on licences granted in that year, and more generally to comment on the effect of the PDHA. [26] At the same time, the Department of Justice also collected information on the conditions stipulated within licences by District Justices. [27] This material does pose certain difficulties. The Garda reports, in particular, often provide opinions rather than factual evidence. The real benefit of both collections is the breadth of information they provide across the entirety of the nation; the Garda reports contain responses from 114 Superintendents, each with responsibility for a separate district.

This chapter will also regularly refer to dance advertisements placed in 1938 in the following newspapers; the *Anglo-Celt*, the *Kerryman*, the *Kilkenny People* and the *Donegal Democrat*.[28] These papers were selected for their relative geographical spread across the

[24] Leanne McCormick, *Regulating Sexuality: Women in Twentieth Century Northern Ireland* (Manchester, 2009), p. 8.
[25] O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing,* p. 41.
[26] An Garda Síochána Circular Report on Dance Hall Licences (Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[27] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to Dec. 1938, (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[28] *The Kerryman*, 8 Jan. 1938; 12 Feb. 1938; 19 Mar. 1938; 2. Apr. 1938; 21 May 1938; 25 Jun. 1938; 02 Jul. 1938; 13 Aug. 1938; 17 Sep. 1938; 1 Oct. 1938; 12 Nov. 1938; 17 Dec. 1938; *The Anglo-Celt*, 8 Jan. 1938; 19 Feb. 1938; 5 Mar. 1938; 23 Apr. 1938; 7 May 1938; 18 Jun. 1938; 30 Jul. 1938; 20 Aug. 1938; 10 Sep. 1938; 22 Oct. 1938; 12 Nov. 1938; 31 Dec. 1938; *The Kilkenny People,* 15 Jan. 1938; 26 Feb. 1938; 5 Mar. 1938; 9 Apr. 1938; 21 May 1938; 4 Jun. 1938; 23 Jul. 1938; 13 Aug. 1938; 5 Sep. 1938; 15 Oct. 1938; 26 Nov. 1938; 17 Dec. 1938; The Donegal Democrat, 29 Jan. 1938; 12 Feb. 1938; 19 Mar. 1938; 9 Apr. 1938; 14 May 1938; 18 Jun. 1938; 23 Jul. 1938; 13 Aug. 1938; 17 Sep. 1938; 15 Oct. 1938; 12 Nov. 1938; 17 Dec. 1938. Hereafter all discussion of dance advertisements relates to these 48 newspapers.

country.[29] The chapter will draw various common pieces of information from the advertisements, including the location of the dances, the type of dance, the bands playing, the hours of dancing and the price of the dance. This approach is based on the method used by Shanagher, of consulting the *Roscommon Herald* across a range of three decades.[30] In this case one day per month in each paper was selected at random and each dance advertisement on that date logged. This method only captures the dances that were advertised and it is clear that the majority of dances were not. Consulting advertisements does offer an insight into the typical conditions of dances, and the methods used to attract potential consumers. This source material allows us to posit national trends and to distinguish for regional peculiarities, which has previously not been possible in the local studies undertaken by Donnelly, Vallely and Shanagher. The chapter is limited primarily to the years immediately after the PDHA, 1935-1938, which are considered by the Garda reports, and has a particular focus on the year 1938 using the advertisement material.

The new information provided by the Department of Justice files, along with the additional source material consulted for this chapter, highlights central flaws in the current narrative on dance halls in Ireland. The chapter will begin by questioning the idea that dancing, and the leisure time of Irish youth more broadly, was organised and controlled solely by clerical authorities. Evidence from the Garda Reports casts major doubt on the claim made by Brennan that dancing moved primarily into parochial halls after 1935. There is also reason to query the suggestion that most dances were supervised by members of the clergy. Catholic Church reactions against jazz music and dancing were undoubtedly fervent, but, as the chapter will demonstrate, Protestant Churches in Ireland could also be zealous in their condemnation of degenerate dancing. The Garda Circular Reports, along with oral history

[29] The *Anglo-Celt* circulated in seven counties: Longford, Louth, Monaghan, Meath, Westmeath, Leitrim, and Cavan.
[30] Shanagher,'Recreational Dance in Ireland 1940-1960', p. 129.

records, raises questions as to how much the behaviour of consumers was constrained by the moral pronouncements of campaigners or even the regulations applied by the PDHA. As the introduction noted, the chapter is more concerned with the behaviours associated with dance hall culture as with dancing itself. Consuming the dance hall often involved much more than dancing; it included travel, alcohol consumption, sexual excitement and perhaps also a sense of generational community. The chapter will show that in a number of areas; from the type of dancing, to the age of the dancer, the volume of alcohol consumed and even post-dance activities, dance hall consumers often enjoyed considerable actual freedom.

The areas to be discussed in the first half of the chapter have perhaps received undue attention in Irish historiography. In the second half the chapter will shift its focus to narratives that have not received sufficient attention. Safety considerations and regulations is one area that has received very little consideration. The Department of Justice files, however, suggest that the physical safety of the dance hall consumers was as important, if not more important than, their 'moral' safety. Most of the regulations introduced by District Justices and enforced by Garda officers were designed to guarantee the safety of the dancers and the local residents. The role of local communities and the importance of status hierarchies have likewise received little attention in scholarship. More frequently, it seems that dance hall consumers were supervised by members of the local community rather than by members of the clergy. This supervision was more common in more remote rural communities, where fears over the 'outsider' helped to shape many of the dance hall regulations that were applied following the PDHA.

A Church Hegemony over Dancing?

The broader historiography on dance halls, as was noted above, has argued that dancing increasingly moved into parochial halls after the PDHA. Ó hAllmhuráin's study of Clare has suggested the 1935 Act

facilitated an increasing move towards parochial run halls.[31] Powell et al. even characterised the 1935 Act as an effort by the Catholic Church to 'colonize' the leisure time of Ireland's young people.[32] While evidently there was a move away from barn or house dances in the 1930s it is not clear that in all areas consumers moved into parochial premises. The chapter will demonstrate the popularity of both associational and commercial dance halls as well as questioning the extent of clerical supervision over dancing. The information offered by the Garda circular reports permits a thorough critique of the current narrative on dancing, but, it does not permit us to proffer concrete national trends. Rather, the reports along with the advertisement source material, suggest, much regional variation meaning that uniform national trends may not be appropriate.

The Public Dance Halls Bill was introduced by the Fianna Fáil administration in June 1934, and passed into law in February 1935, receiving the support of the two major opposition parties, Fine Gael and Labour.[33] Smyth claimed that following the PDHA it became 'practically impossible to hold dances without the sanction of the trinity of clergy, police and judiciary', but, there is little evidence for this in the Act itself.[34] The PDHA gave authority to local district justices to grant or deny dance licences and apply restrictions thereto at licencing sessions throughout the country. The police were given the authority to make inspections of licenced dance halls to assure that the legal requirements were enforced. The Catholic Church was given no authority over dance halls by the Act itself.

A key question is how was the legislation interpreted and implemented? Shortly after the passage of the Act, the *Irish Press* reported Justice Lavery, speaking in Cavan, as saying 'When he found a

[31] Ó hAllmhuráin, 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell', p. 17.
[32] Powell, et al. *Youth Policy, Civil Society and the Modern Irish State*, p. 19.
[33] Dáil Debates, vol. 53, no. 10, col. 1251 (28 Jun. 1934); Seanad Debate, vol. 19, no. 8, cols 791-3 (12 Dec. 1934).
[34] Smyth, 'Dancing, Depravity and all that Jazz'.

clergyman in charge of a hall it was not necessary for him to make restrictions and he would simply grant the licence.'[35] Justice Gleeson, in Clare, went a step further by stating that 'In any parish in which a licence was granted for a parochial hall under the supervision of the clergy he would not grant a licence for any other building in the same parish.'[36] The granting of licences to Church-run halls has been viewed as the overwhelming policy adopted by District Justices following the 1935 legislation.[37] Ó hAllmhuráin has argued that in Clare, where Justice Gleeson was resident, the PDHA marked a transition in dancing from the familial to the parochial domain.[38] Whilst it is evident, nationally, that there was a move away from the home or barn dance in the 1930s it is not clear necessarily that, across the country, dances moved only into parochial halls.

The 1930s and after did witness a growth in parochial hall building. The Catholic Young Men's Society and Muintir na Tíre had both dedicated themselves to a programme of parochial hall construction by the late 1930s.[39] Rynne even claimed 'in the muddled mind of the public Muintir na Tíre [was] often mistaken for a hall-building association'.[40] It is assumed that parochial halls replaced commercial ones, but there is evidence that the number of commercial halls may also have expanded. Indeed, the number of commercial halls was sufficient for moral campaigner, Richard S. Devane, to pen an article in 1938 lambasting their effect on Irish youth, claiming they were 'the source and font of passions for wild and giddy, whirling pleasures', and blaming them for the recent increase in emigration.[41] Dance licences,

[35] Justice Lavery, *The Irish Press*, 9 Sep. 1935.
[36] District Justice Gleeson, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to December 1938 (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[37] Brennan, *The Story of Irish Dance*, p. 126.
[38] Ó hAllmhuráin, 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell', p. 17.
[39] Eoin Devereux, 'Saving Rural Ireland-Muintir na Tire and Its Anti-Urbanism, 1931-1958', *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* xvii, no. 2 (Dec., 1991), pp 25-7; James Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion in Ireland 1930-1960', p. 275.
[40] Stephen Rynne, *Father John Hayes: Founder of Muintir na Tíre, People of the Land* (Dublin, 1960), pp 168-9.
[41] *The Irish Press*, 5 Jan. 1938; Susannah Riordan, '"Storm and Stress": Richard Devane, Adolescent Psychology and the Politics of Protective Legislation 1922-

unfortunately, do not distinguish between parochial and commercial halls. Vallely has demonstrated, however, that along the Monaghan-Armagh border there is little evidence that parochial halls pre-dominated following the PDHA. Out of a total of 46 halls near the border 34 were recorded by Vallely as 'secular', 3 as 'unknown', and only 9 listed as parochial halls.[42]

In the Garda circular reports we find incomplete but significant commentary on the ratio of parochial to commercial halls, offering a reliable insight into the national picture. Superintendents suggested that the move towards parochial dance halls was not universal across Ireland. In Kildare district, Superintendent Flynn claimed that parochial halls were 'rapidly falling out of the picture from the point of view of dancing, the commercial dance hall being substituted'.[43] In Mayo, commercial dance halls certainly predominated over parochial run halls. Chief-Superintendent O'Halloran of Mayo region, outlined the number of dance halls throughout the county as 95, 80 of which he described as commercial premises and 15 as parochial run halls.[44] Indeed, the surfeit of commercial halls in Mayo is noted as a problem by all Superintendents in their reports. P. Heydon, of Castlebar district, claimed 'It was wrong to do away with country house dances and give commercial halls the monopoly.'[45] J. Dunning, of Swinford district, echoed Heydon's comments:

> I would respectfully suggest that the Act be amended to permit of public dancing in dwelling houses. Paralysing commercial dance halls as the young

1935', in Riordan and Catherine Cox (eds.), *Adolescence in Modern Irish History* (Basingstoke, 2015), pp 129-50.

[42] Valley, 'Nothing between us but the Holy Spirit: The material culture of dancing in rural Ireland 1935-1960', p. 47.

[43] Superintendent Flynn, Kildare district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).

[44] Chief-Superintendent O'Halloran, Mayo region, Gardaí circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

[45] Superintendent Heydon, Castlebar district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

> people will in a good deal of places remain at the local farm house dances to which they are admitted free instead of patronising the commercial hall.[46]

Some regions, inlcuding parts of Wexford and Carlow, appear to have had a preponderance of parochial halls. Enniscorthy and Gorey districts reported that all halls within the two districts were parochial-run.[47] Superintendent Chambers of Muine Bheag district in Carlow likewise reported that both halls in his remit were run by parochial committees.[48] In other regions such as Galway, there appears to have been relative parity in the number of commercial and parochial halls. In Ballinasloe district 6 of 10 halls, and in Athenry 4 of 7 halls, were described as parochial.[49] In general, it was rare for a district not to have had at least one commercial hall, even if parochial halls tended to dominate in that area. In Boyle, Roscommon 7 out of 8 halls were described as parochial, but there was one commercial hall.[50]

The division between parochial and commercial halls, moreover, does not capture the full complexity of the issue. In addition to such premises, many halls were operated by associational clubs, political parties, or trade unions. In many areas such halls seem to have pre-dominated. The majority of clubs in Vallely's study were neither strictly commercial nor parochial, but run by associations.[51] Superintendent Jackson, of Ballyconnell district, Cavan also claimed that many halls in his area were run by associations, including the Orange Order, the Ancient Order of Hibernian, and Fianna Fáil, which existed alongside parochial and commercial halls.[52] Associational halls of course were not

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[46] Superintendent Dunning, Swinford district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[47] Superintendent Ryan, Enniscorthy district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938); Superintendent Murray, Gorey district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[48] Superintendent Chambers, Muine Bheag district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[49] Superintendent Tobah, Ballinasloe district, Gardaí circular reply (15 Dec. 1938); Superintendent Kelly, Athenry district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[50] Superintendent O'Suillivan, Boyle district, Gardaí circular reply (12 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[51] Paula Vallely, 'Nothing between us but the Holy Spirit', p. 48.
[52] Superintendent Jackson, Ballyconnell district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).

limited to the border area, but common across the country. In Blarney district two halls were run by local GAA clubs, two by Fianna Fáil party branches, one by a Harrier Club branch, with only one parochial and one commercial hall in the area.[53] It is also likely that various associations rented parochial and commercial halls for dance events. Whilst we can definitively say that in the 1930s familial and communal dances declined, we cannot say that dancing moved solely under parochial control.

This hypothesis, drawn from the Garda Reports, is largely supported by material from dance advertisements. Advertised dances in parochial halls or spaces belonging to subsidiary Catholic associations like the Catholic Young Men's Association were in the minority. In the *Kilkenny People* a third of dance advertisements referred to parochial or Catholic spaces, but the other newspapers suggest a much lower proportion. For the *Donegal Democrat* and the *Anglo-Celt,* the proportion was 18% and 14% respectively and in the *Kerryman* it was as low as 8%. Secular public spaces, which include town halls, libraries, schools and theatres, accounted for 23% of *Kerryman* dances; 16% in the *Kilkenny People*; 14% in the *Anglo-Celt*; and 0% in the *Donegal Democrat*. Associational spaces, including sports clubs, political clubs, and fraternal associations, especially the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Orange Order in Monaghan and Cavan, accounted for 4% of dances in the *Kerryman*; 17% in the *Anglo-Celt*; 6% in the *Kilkenny People* and 0% in the *Donegal Democrat*. The last extractable category from the advertisements encompasses specifically constructed dance spaces, which also includes hotels. For the *Kerryman* these spaces account for 12%; for the *Anglo-Celt* 2%; the *Kilkenny People* 8%; and 12% for the *Donegal Democrat*. Across all areas, however, many halls could not be accounted for because the advertisements did not provide specific information. For the *Kerryman* this amounted to half of all dances; for the *Anglo-Celt* 53%; the *Kilkenny People* 36%; and 70% for the *Donegal Democrat.* It is therefore probable that more parochial halls

[53] Superintendent Ó Rioghardáin, Blarney district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

were used for dances, but it is equally probable that more secular public spaces, associational spaces and privately owned dance halls were being used. The variance highlighted in dance spaces across different regions suggests that dances were held in the structures available in the local area whether they were parochial, associational or commercial.

Licenced halls were not the only locations in which dances were held, moreover. Licences could also be granted for dance platforms, which remained popular into the 1940s.[54] In some areas communities continued to hold unlicensed dances in barns or houses, and the Gardaí were required to police this illegal activity.[55] Dances could be held without a licence, however, if attendees were not charged for entry and were asked to attend via invitation. This form of invitation only dance may have been an important means of maintaining communal identity amongst minority groups, especially Protestants. Vallely has highlighted that in Monaghan, an area with a large Protestant population, certain halls were clearly associated with the Protestant community, including Orange Order halls. [56] In areas where the population was more diffuse it seems likely that invitation only dances were organised.

The Catholic Church in Ireland was certainly not the only religious institution to express revulsion and contempt for jazz music and modern dancing. In 1927 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland claimed that a 'fruitful source of temptation was found in dancing halls', stating that 'young people were thrown together without adequate responsible supervision'.[57] Jazz music and dancing often received criticism from figures within the Protestant establishment in Ireland. Hurbert Rooney, speaking at a Plainsong event of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin, in November 1932, described jazz as

[54] Shanagher, *'Recreational Dance'*, p. 74.
[55] Ó hAllmhuráin, 'Dancing on the Hobs of Hell' p. 13.
[56] Vallely, 'Nothing between us', p. 48.
[57] *The Irish Independent*, 9 Jun. 1927.

an ‘abomination of desolation’, saying it was ‘a relic of barbarism, fitted only to express the jerks of negroes and people of similar mentality’.[58]

The moral panic surrounding jazz music and dancing was not unique to the Catholic Church, and neither was it unique to Ireland. O’Connor has highlighted similar anxiety across Europe and in the United States.[59] Irish nationalist and Catholic campaigners often blamed jazz imports on Britain or the United States. ‘The vilest dens’ of London, Paris and New York exported ‘evil desires’ to Ireland, according to the Bishop of Galway’s Lenten Pastoral in 1924.[60] *The Leitrim Observer* proudly exclaimed ‘Let the pagan Saxon be told that we Irish Catholics do not want and will not have the dances and the music that he has borrowed from the savages of the islands of the Pacific.’[61] Many cultural commentators in Britain responded with similar revulsion towards what had been ‘borrowed from the savages of the islands of the Pacific’.For example, in the 1920s *The Daily Mail* described the Charlestown as ‘reminiscent of Negro orgies’.[62] Pugh has highlighted the revulsion with which British newspapers reacted to dance clubs, reporting with horror that white girls were found sitting on the laps of black men after police raids.[63]

O’Connor, despite highlighting the evident similarities between Irish and British reactions to jazz music and dancing, goes on to assert the uniqueness of the Irish experience, as is common to much Irish social and cultural historiography. O’Connor suggests that the state did not become involved in dance regulations in Britain, in contrast to the Irish case, where the state and Catholic Church acted in concert to regulate dancing.[64] This thesis is certainly open to challenge. We can highlight,

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[58] Hurbert Rooney, *The Irish Press*, 18 Nov. 1932.
[59] O’Connor, *The Irish Dancing*, pp 40-42.
[60] *Irish Catholic Directory* 1924, cited in Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin ‘Dancing on the Hobs of Hell’, p. 11.
[61] *The Leitrim Observer,* 20 Jan. 1934.
[62] *The Daily Mail*, quoted in Martin Pugh, *We Danced all Night: A Social History of Britain between the Wars* (London, 2009), p. 219.
[63] Ibid.
[64] O’Connor, *The Irish Dancing*, p. 42.

for example, efforts in Britain to eradicate jazz dancing, including Home Secretary Joynson-Hicks's crackdown on jazz clubs in London.[65] We can also question how actively engaged the Irish state or the Catholic Church were in regulating dancing. The chapter has already thrown doubt on the established narrative that dancing moved primarily into parochial halls after the PDHA. In addition to ownership, we must also ask if Catholic moral teaching affected the regulations around dancing.

The times at which people could dance were influenced by Church teaching. In many districts dancing was banned on the eves of Catholic Holidays, or through the periods of Advent or Lent. District Justice Walsh stipulated for Donegal that no Catholics were permitted to attend dances throughout the course of Lent, or on the eve of any Catholic holiday though Protestants and other faith members were still permitted to attend.[66] A similar stipulation was applied by Justice Goff for Monaghan, and whilst throughout the rest of the country dancing during Lent was still possible, many areas saw bans on dancing for the eves of Catholic holidays.[67] These regulations were designed to ensure that appropriate Christian behaviour was encouraged for important liturgical events, such as Easter or Christmas. They were also designed to ensure that parishioners did not arrive to mass hungover after a night of revelling. These limitations support Powell et al.'s notion of a 'Catholic public sphere'.[68]

If we analyse such bans more closely it is clear that controls were not as harsh as might be imagined. District Justice Little, in Dublin, stipulated within dances licences that no dancing could take place between Passion Sunday and Good Friday. This ban could be superseded, however, if St Patrick's Day happened to fall between the two dates 'or

[65] F.M.L. Thompson, 'Essay on Joynson-Hicks' in Colin Matthew (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), p. 39.
[66] District Justice Walsh, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938, (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37, p. 2).
[67] District Justice Goff, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938, (Ibid, p. 3).
[68] Powell, et al. *Youth Policy, Civil Society and the Modern Irish State*, p. 19.

any day upon which an inter-county, inter-provincial or international sports event recognised as such by the Ruling Authority'.[69] Limits on dancing according to the liturgical calendar could therefore be over-ridden quite easily if a more important event were to take place, such as St Patrick's Day or a county GAA match. It might be expected that more leeway was offered to dancers in Dublin than in smaller towns or rural areas in the rest of the country. Even when we consider the national picture, however, we cannot identify a uniform trend, as was the case in regard to the ownership of dance halls. In Cork , for example, District Justice Crotty banned dancing during Lent and on Church holidays.[70] The other six District Justices in Cork County, however, applied no such restrictions in their dance licences.[71] In Kerry, District Justice Johnson did not apply Lent or Church holiday restrictions and while District Justices Connor and Kenny did so they did not apply them to all dance halls in their districts.[72] Indeed District Justice Connor permitted dancing on Church holidays in ten out of the fifteen halls over which he had jurisdiction.[73] In certain counties , for example Longford and Leitrim, dancing followed the rhythms of the liturgical calendar.[74] More commonly, however, regulations varied within counties, and there were usually at least a certain number of halls within a county that permitted dancing during Lent and on Church holidays.

In addition to controlling the time when dancing was permitted, it has also been claimed that Church dances were habitually supervised by members of the clergy. The Garda reports reveal that occasionally some form of parochial supervision was exercised even over halls that were commercial or associational. Indeed, some superintendents suggest that such supervision was encouraged by the owners of commercial halls in

[69] District Justice Little, Annual Liquor and Public Dance Halls Licensing Sessions Dublin Metropolitan Division (9 Sep. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[70] District Justice Crotty, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938 (Ibid, p. 5).
[71] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938 (Ibid, p. 5).
[72] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938, (Ibid, p. 14).
[73] District Justice Connor, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938 (Ibid).
[74] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts, 1938, (Ibid, p. 10+14).

an effort to cultivate an image of respectability.[75] For dance hall owners it made good business sense that their hall was seen to be supervised by the local priest. It is not clear, however, that this practice was generally adopted across the country, and, indeed, some Superintendents make it clear that no such parochial supervision was established in their districts.[76] It is very difficult to provide a definitive comment on the supervisory power of the clergy because of a lack of material, but also, because of variance from region to region and even from parish to parish. Foley has argued that in North Kerry priests had extensive powers of supervision, and on occasion even chased dancers from halls.[77] Vallely's study of Monaghan-Armagh does not support this thesis, however, with one interviewee claiming that the influence of the Church over dancing was 'largely over-hyped nonsense'.[78]

Supervision even in parochial halls could often be lax. Many superintendents noted that profit was often an over-riding concern for both parochial and commercial halls.[79] Superintendent Heaphy, of Buncrana district, claimed that parochial committees and priests could often lapse in their supervisory role for the 'purpose of raising funds for Church restoration'.[80] As Heaphy's comment suggests, frequently parochial committees supervised dance halls rather than priests themselves, and many Superintendents make it clear that supervision by parochial committee was most common.[81] Therefore it was not always the clergy who supervised dance halls but also members of the local

[75] Superintendent Reynolds, Baltinglass district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938); Superintendent Chambers, Muine Bheag district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[76] Superintendent Keyes, Abbeyleix district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[77] Foley, *Step Dancing in Ireland*, pp 160-1.
[78] Vallely, 'Nothing between us', p. 26.
[79] Superintendent Heron, Newport district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938); Chief Superintendent Quinn, Tipperary region, Gardaí circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[80] Superintendent Heaphy, Buncrana district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[81] Superintendent Jackson, Ballyconnell district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938); Superintendent Ryan, Trim district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

community. The question of local community involvement in dance halls will be addressed later in the chapter. For now it suffices to note that supervision was not always or even often exercised by clerical authorities. Additionally, the level of supervision, it appears, varied depending on the region or the parish concerned. We cannot draw uniform conclusions in regard to the level of supervision. The picture is complicated and certainly we cannot say there was a consistent national trend.

Consuming Behaviours

Having discussed dance hall ownership, supervision and dance times, the chapter now will consider the behaviour of consumers. Immorality was frequently decried from pulpits and by newspapers, but what effect did such denunciations have on consumers? Did young consumers allow clerical authority and Church teaching to define and limit their leisure time? Many District Justices were certainly happy to indulge the wishes of anti-dance hall campaigners by curbing the freedom of consumers. Yet, as the chapter will demonstrate, many of these restrictions were quite easily flouted by dancers. The choices of dance hall consumers, in regard to alcohol consumption, and dance and music styles, were not effectively limited by PDHA restrictions. Irish consumers adapted foreign 'jazz' music and dancing to create a consuming behaviour that was peculiar to Ireland.

One of the primary fears of moral campaigners was the effect that dance halls had on the youth of the nation. 'Many foreign and imported dances were a menace to the morals of the youth', the *Irish Independent* claimed in 1925 despite featuring advertisements for such dances in the newspaper.[82] In Section 2 (E) of the Act District Justices were told to pay regard to 'the probable age of the persons who would be likely to make use of such place for public dancing'.[83] The *Independent* claimed, in an editorial shortly after the passage of the Act that 'In the mind of the

[82] *The Irish Independent*, 01 Sep. 1925.
[83] *Public Dance Halls Act 1935*, Section 2(E).

general public the Justices have been constituted as, in practice and in fact, to a very considerable extent, the guardians of the morals of the youth of the nation.'[84] The vast majority of dancing licences granted across the country after 1935 included restrictions limiting the age of those who could attend. It was perhaps the most uniform regulation applied to dancing nationwide following the PDHA. In almost every district locality entry to dance halls was prohibited for those under 18. This did not quite amount to a national ban on dancing for anyone under 18 years. In some regions for example in certain parts of Galway the age restriction was set at 16 years of age.[85] In Mayo, under the regulations of District Justice Coyne, the restriction was only applied to women; only girls under the age of 18 were prohibited from attending dances.[86]

We can certainly question how thoroughly age restrictions were policed. Young people, after all, were the primary customers of dance halls across Ireland. Several organisations raised complaints about the age restrictions that were applied following the PDHA. The Dublin County committee of the Gaelic League in October 1935 passed a motion condemning the implementation of the new dance hall legislation. Sean Lucas speaking for the committee claimed that the League had 'to rely on the young but many of the District Justices made it a condition of the granting of a licence for dances of céilidhs that no persons under eighteen should be admitted'.[87] Superintendent Heron, of Newport district, suggested that the age restrictions were not always rigorously enforced by Garda officers. Heron claimed that an age restriction of 18 years usually meant that only adolescents under 15 years of age would be excluded.[88] Oral history records suggest that young adolescents frequently attended dance halls. Josie Machin, who lived in Ferns Lock, Kildare, recalled the dancing habits of her friend Rita Quinn. Josie

[84] *The Irish Independent*, 14 Sep. 1935.
[85] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to December 1938 (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37, p. 12).
[86] Ibid, p. 8.
[87] Sean Lucas, *The Irish Press*, 28 Oct. 1935.
[88] Superintendent Heron, Newport district, Gardaí circular reply (13 Dec 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).

remembered that 'Rita was dance mad, and from the time she was 13 or 14 she was going to all the dances, she could get her leg at.'[89] Mary Galvin, who lived in Waterford City in the 1930s, recalled the ease with which SHE and her friends could enter dance halls. Mary and her friends would frequently go to a hall on New Street in the City, and 'if we hadn't the four pence to get in we'd ask the chap on the door to let us in on credit, which we never paid'.[90] These oral history sources suggest the ease with which young dancers were able to enter dance halls despite the age restrictions.

Superintendent Murphy, of Mohill district, noted the frequency with which young people in his area requested money from their parents in order to attend the dance hall.[91] He claimed that many parents found 'it hard to provide money for grown up members of the family to enable them to attend those dances', but also stated that 'there was no question of forbidding them to attend'.[92] It is difficult to ascertain the average cost of attending a dance in 1930s Ireland. Dance advertisements suggest there was considerable variation in their cost, which normally depended on the location, size of the hall and popularity of the band playing. The lowest advertised ticket price found in the collection of 320 dance advertisements was 4d, and the usual price was 1/6d or 2s though prices went as high as 10s. It is reasonable to assume, however, that advertised dances would be at the higher cost range, given that the organisers had spent money to advertise.

The root of immoral temptation, according to anti-dance hall campaigners, resided in the foreignness of the 'jazz' music and dancing. District Justices were usually happy to oblige in the fight against such immorality, by stipulating certain restrictions in their dance licences.

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[89] Josie Machin interview, in Pam Schweitzer (ed.), *Across the Irish Sea: An Age Exchange Publication based on memories of Irish pensioners* (London, 1989), p. 117.
[90] Mary Galvin interview, in Ibid, p. 70.
[91] Superintendent Murphy, Mohill district, Gardaí circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[92] Ibid.

Often dance hall licences required that a certain number of dances be 'Irish'. District Justice Walsh of Donegal left this up to the discretion of the hall proprietors by stipulating that a reasonable number of dances be ceilidhs.[93] District Justice Forde in Galway made the required provision more concrete by demanding that half of all night dances were to be ceilidhs.[94]. Flann O'Brien satirised this tendency in his article on dance halls, published in *The Bell* in 1941:

> Some district justices have a habit of taking leave of their senses at the annual licensing sessions. They want Irish dancing and plenty of it … They believe that Satan with all his guile is baffled by a four-hand reel and cannot make head or tail of the Rakes of Mallow.[95]

Many District Justices sought to encourage Irish dancing in their areas, but, this did little to curtail the popularity of foreign dances and jazz music.

Consumers, by and large, sought fashionable music and dancing. The actual ratio of Irish to non-Irish dances is estimated by O'Brien to have been roughly 1:20, as he claimed that Irish dances were almost incompatible with modern consumer desires: 'the foxtrot and the fairy reel are mutually repugnant and will not easily dwell under the same roof'.[96] The advertisements consulted for this chapter suggest a relatively small percentage of dances were marketed as specifically Irish; using terms like 'Ceili' or 'Irish'. In the *Kerryman* only 4% of adverts did so, which was also the case for the *Anglo-Celt*. The figure was 6% for the *Kilkenny People*, but 24% for the *Donegal Democrat*. This suggests the possibility for some regional variation, but implies that the vast majority of advertised dances were not marketed as Irish. This is also confirmed by Shanagher's study of the *Roscommon Herald*, which found 10% of

[93] District Justice Walsh, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to 1938, (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37, p. 2).
[94] District Justice Forde, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to 1938 (Ibid, p. 12).
[95] Flann O'Brien, 'The Dance Halls', *The Bell*, i, no. 5 (February 1941), p. 51.
[96] Ibid, p. 49.

advertisements in the year 1930 promoted Irish dances, and by 1940 this figure had fallen to 7%.[97] As is usual consumers desired the contemporary and fashionable product, which was not the ceilidh. Julia Griffin, who lived in Athlone during the 1930s, remembered that her preference for Irish dances put her firmly in the minority; 'all the rest of the boys, and my sister, they preferred what was called the modern dance, the waltzes and the quickstep'. [98]

Superintendent J. Kelleher, of Tralee district, claimed that dance hall attendance in his locality paid no attention to the Irish/non-Irish question. Kelleher believed that the number of dancers was always directly relatable to the quality of the band playing, as he comments; it was a 'question of getting the best value for money'.[99] The advertisements consulted for this chapter cannot offer an insight into why consumers preferred a particular hall or dance, but they do suggest that national and regional bands were performing across the country. To assess the travelling range of dance bands they were labelled as either local (playing in one county), regional (playing in a range of nearby counties), or national (playing across the country). Many bands could not be assigned to any category, because their name did not place them geographically; for example, the 'Tralee dance band' or 'Loughduff melody' or because they did not appear often enough either in the same locality or across different localities. The method is certainly not exact but it does offer a rough insight into the travelling range of dance bands. In the *Kerryman* at least 20% of the bands were regional, the same percentage as the number of local bands, while 12% of bands were national (usually from Dublin). In the *Anglo-Celt* at least a third of bands were regional, much higher than the 8% that could be established as local, with 4% that could be established as national. The *Kilkenny People* had a higher percentage of established local bands at 41%, compared to

[97] Shanagher, *Recreational Dance,* p. 129.
[98] Julia Griffin interview, in Schweitzer (ed.) *Across the Irish Sea,* p. 80.
[99] Superintendent J. Kelleher, Tralee district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).

8% regional and national. *The Donegal Democrat* demonstrated similar trends; 47% of bands were local, while no bands could be established as regional or national. It is logical that a higher proportion of travelling regional bands would be found in the *Anglo-Celt* given that it covers seven counties and is located in the centre of the country. Conversely it is also logical that more local bands were found in Donegal; a relatively isolated county. It is apparent that regional and national bands were touring large areas of the country, with certain acts, such asBert Flynn's band appearing in Kerry, Cavan and Kilkenny.

O'Connor has sought to distinguish between ballrooms in urban areas, which she claimed played modern music, and the smaller rural halls, which played traditional music.[100] It is questionable, however, if the division is clear-cut. Chief Superintendent Ó Dubhthaigh, of Waterford-Kilkenny district, claimed that 'Even in rural areas a taste has been developed for the modern types of dancing … and for up to date music.'[101] The penetration of modern 'jazz' music into remote areas is also suggested by the reaction against it. The anti-jazz campaign in Leitrim saw three thousand people marching against foreign and degenerate music in Mohill in 1934.[102] As was highlighted above, Shanagher's study of Elphin confirms the popularity of modern music and dances even in rural locations.[103] Ballrooms in urban areas certainly offered a more refined and elegant atmosphere than many rural halls; O'Connor has characterised them as 'utopian spaces'.[104] This does not mean, however, that modern music, often labelled as 'jazz', was not played in rural dance halls. Céilí dances were still performed but they were gradually declining in popularity through the 1930s and 1940s. Indeed it was not until the 1960s that there was a significant revival in Irish dancing; Shanagher demonstrated that in 1960 20% of

[100] O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing*, p. 78.
[101] Chief-Superintendent Ó Dubhthaigh, Waterford-Kilkenny district, Gárda circular reply (16 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[102] *Leitrim Observer*, 6 Jan. 1934, cited Cathal Brennan, 'The Anti-Jazz Campaign', in *The Irish Story* (http://www.theirishstory.com) (31 Mar. 2015).
[103] Shanagher, *Recreational Dance*, p. 129.
[104] O'Connor, *The Irish Dancing*, p. 78.

advertisements promoting dances in the *Roscommon Herald* were for ceilidh dances.[105] Some District Justices sought to promote Irish dances, but many showed little concern over the type of dance performed. In 1935 the Gaelic Athletic Association in Waterford when applying for a dance hall licence claimed that they would hold only old-fashioned waltzes and ceilidhs.[106] The District Justice who granted the licence informed the Association that they could 'dance whatever dances they wished'.[107] Even some of the most demanding licences for example those set by D.J. Forde in Galway, allowed half or more of dances to be non-Irish.[108]

'Jazz' music, as Cathal Brennan has highlighted, was a catch-all term used to describe any vaguely modern imported sound.[109] Irish consumers were not dancing to the music heard in New Orleans or New York dance halls. A process of consumer adaptation occurred in many European countries; adjusting American cultural forms to local conditions and desires. As Horn has demonstrated in regard to Britain, imported popular culture was always mediated through 'social, economic and cultural conditions to create style fusions' that were 'distinctive and particular' to that society.[110] Irish consumers were not replicating American or British jazz music but rather adapting it in their own ways. This process of adaptation has been highlighted in preceding chapters, and the creation of a consumer dance hall culture is a further example. Indeed, at dance halls the music and the dancing was not necessarily the most important attraction. O'Brien noted:

> The dancing itself is of the most perfunctory order. If the hall is small and the crowd enormous (and this is the normal situation) the parties quickly

[105] Shanagher, *Recreational dance,* p. 129.
[106] *The Irish Independent*, 14 Sep. 1935, quoted in David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain 1920-1970*, p. 90.
[107] Ibid.
[108] District Justice Forde, Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to 1938 (Ibid, p. 12).
[109] Brennan, 'The Anti-Jazz Campaign'.
[110] Adrian Horn, *Juke-Box Britain: Americanization and youth culture 1945-1960* (Manchester, 2009), p. 4.

> lock themselves into a solid mass and keep shuffling and sweating for ten minutes in the space of a square foot, like a vast human centipede marking time. [111]

For many young people dance halls offered a sense of unity and closeness that has always proved important in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. 'Nobody is self-conscious about sweat. It rises profusely in invisible vapour from all and sundry and there is no guarantee that each cloud will condense on its true owner', O'Brien went on to claim.[112]

Alcohol was intimately linked with foreign dancing as a root cause of immorality in the minds of many moral campaigners. District Justices applied stipulations banning the sale of alcohol in dance halls. It is questionable, however, how far the consumption of alcohol was actually reduced by the PDHA. A number of Garda superintendents noted the futility of banning the sale of alcohol. Superintendent Murray, of Gorey district, and Superintendent Glynn, of Sligo district, both noted the tendency for consumers to leave the dance hall in order to purchase alcohol in a nearby pub.[113] Many Superintendents noted the proximity of dance halls to public houses, and the frequent tendency for the local publican also to own the local hall. Bergin, of Naas district, suggested that many such publicans 'serve drink indiscriminately, even to persons who are already intoxicated'.[114] There was no overall consensus in regard to alcohol prohibition in the Garda reports, as some superintendents suggest that the regulations had generally reduced the level of consumption. Many, however, took the opposite view, suggesting that the 1935 Act encouraged increased alcohol consumption. W.P. Quinn, Chief Superintendent of Tipperary district, noted:

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[111] O'Brien, 'The Dance Halls', p. 49.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Superintendent Murray, Gorey district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (NAI/JUS/3/90/98/37).
[114] Superintendent Bergin, Naas district, Gárda circular reply (16 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

> The absence of a Bar to sell intoxicating liquor has caused persons who incline to drink to bring intoxicants with them and it has been suggested that this type of conduct leads to more abuses than were intoxicants openly sold in a bar at the dance.[115]

Chief Superintendent MacCartaigh, of Longford and Westmeath district, claimed that the banning of alcohol actually caused greater problems; 'The signs of intoxication are less notable at dances where intoxicating liquor is allowed for sale.'[116] MacCartaigh stated that dancers were far more likely to become intoxicated when they were forced to leave the hall and quickly ingest alcohol at a nearby pub.[117] Flann O'Brien claimed 'nearly every male who goes to the dances likes drink and takes plenty of it', commenting with admiration on the 'craft of going out for twenty separate drinks to a pub 400 yards away without ever appearing to have left the hall at all'.[118]

It was not only men, however, who flouted the prohibitions on alcohol consumption. E.A. Reynolds, Chief Superintendent of Bray district noted that, where previously women would not purchase or allow themselves to be given alcohol at the bar, owing largely to shame at drinking in public, now that consumption was secretive they felt much freer to have a drink. [119] Reynolds claimed that whilst 'women will not leave the dance hall for the purpose of obtaining drink in convenient public houses', they will take a drink from men in the hall.[120] Superintendent MacCartaigh, referenced above, noted that as long as alcohol consumption was secretive there was little check on the amount women were consuming. 'Females, who desire a drink, as a rule, will not stay too long at a dance hall bar', he stated, but they would happily

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[115] Chief-Superintendent Quinn, Tipperary region, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[116] Chief Superintendent MacCartaigh, Longford-Westmeath region, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[117] Ibid.
[118] Flann O'Brien, 'The Dance Halls', p. 48.
[119] Chief Superintendent E.A. Reynolds, Wicklow region, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[120] Ibid.

accept alcohol from other sources.[121] From the reports of the Superintendents involved in policing the dance halls we have considerable evidence that the consumption of alcohol was not reduced by the 1935 Act. Indeed, in a number of locales the prohibitions on alcohol appear to have increased consumption, and the Garda reports certainly suggest increased alcohol consumption by female consumers. The legislation may in fact have made women feel less constrained in their drinking habits though this was certainly not the intention.

The regulations introduced by District Justices to prevent 'moral lapses'appear not to have been as rigorously enforced as previously believed. This interpretation is certainly supported by the introductory story discussing the events at Castlemagner. Catholic campaigners, along with the Irish State, were not always able to enforce their vision of morality. It should not be assumed, however, that dance halls were loci of immorality, as many campaigners claimed. The Garda reports are generally in agreement on this issue, as the conclusion to the report stated; 'The tendency to blame public dancing as a primary cause of the alleged lowering of the standard of public morality is not well founded and is not borne out by the facts as known to officers.'[122] Whilst many Superintendents highlighted cases of sexual crimes or 'immoral actions' that had occurred in their area few could relate them to dance halls, and even then only tenuously.

Some superintendents remained unconvinced, even by the evidence collected by their own officers. E. Ó Dubhthaigh, the Chief Superintendent of Waterford-Kilkenny district stated that

> Although the records seem to contradict the suggestion that sexual offences evil can be attributed to Public Dancing I feel that the crime statistics cannot be accepted as a true index in this connection … The pronounced opposition

[121] Chief Superintendent MacCartaigh, Longford-Westmeath region, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[122] Summary Conclusion to Gardaí Circular Replies, 20 Dec. 1938 (Ibid, p. 5).

> from the Church has not taken shape without some very good reason and it can be assumed that the insight that they have gained through the secrets of the Confessional and which must be considered fairly convincing.[123]

Ó Dubhthaigh was persuaded that clerical authorities would not take such a vocal stance against dancing without very good reason. Superintendent Flynn, of Naas district likewise claimed that police records could not be used as reliable evidence as individuals would fail to report the full particulars of sexual misconduct.[124] Taken together these comments imply that records of confessionals would provide more reliable material than police records. Perhaps Ó Dubhthaigh and Flynn were not willing to question the opinion of Church authorities in a document that would be read by their superiors. There comments are not representative of the Garda reports, however, which are captured more accurately by the conclusion given above.

Many Superintendents were much more critical of Church and moral campaigners' comments on dance halls. F.J. Tobah, of Ballinasloe district, claimed that the 'press agitation in respects of Dance Halls is only a "stunt" and is being worked for what it is worth'.[125] N. Murphy, Chief Superintendent of the Kildare-Offaly district, likewise stated that there was 'too much propaganda made by objectionists [sic] out of isolated cases'.[126] Even Superintendents who were convinced there had been a 'degradation of morals generally during the past 20 years', as Chief-Superintendent M. O'Loinghsigh, Wexford region, claimed, did not believe that dance halls were responsible.[127] Perhaps the most salient comment on the issue was offered by the Chief Superintendent of Kerry region when he noted that officers in his districts 'found couples to admit

[123] Chief Superintendent E. Ó Dubhthaigh, Waterford-Kilkenny district, Gárda circular reply (16 Dec. 1938) [Ibid].
[124] Superintendent Flynn, Naas district, Gárda circular reply (12 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[125] Superintendent F.J. Tobah, Ballinasloe district, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[126] Chief Superintendent N. Murphy, Kildare-Offaly district, Gárda circular reply (19 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[127] Chief-Superintendent O'Loinghsigh, Wexford region, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

that on their way home from Dance Halls they adjourned to hay-barns where misconduct occurred'. The Chief Superintendent, though went on to note 'We have got similar admissions from young men and women who were on their way home from a Mission.'[128]

Dance halls afforded young people a space to meet in which they constructed their own consumer behaviour. Foreign 'jazz' music, despite the lamentations of moral campaigners, was popular in most halls. This music was not simply copied from America or Britain, but rather adapted according to Irish conditions and desires. Efforts by authorities to limit alcohol consumption may in fact have led to increased drinking, especially amongst women. As O'Brien commented often 'the dancing itself [was] of the most perfunctory order'. It was the behaviours associated with dance halls that was often more significant.

Safety regulations

The narrative of dance halls as degenerate spaces, as 'vile dens' of immoral behaviour, has attracted more attention in the historiography perhaps because it is a titillating narrative. The image of the over-bearing priest, dressed in black, chasing his lust-filled parishioners from their den of inequity is an understandably compelling one. Health and safety regulations are much less exciting. Who is moved by fire code specifications? Yet, regulations aiming to improve the safety of dance halls for consumers were an important aspect of the PDHA. Many dance halls across Ireland were associated with physical danger, normally due to fire, but also the danger of fights between political parties or local gangs. The PDHA did not eliminate these dangers; many dance halls remained dangerous fire traps, but, it was a significant attempt by the state to improve safety regulations.

P.J. Ruttledge, Minister for Justice, when introducing the second reading of the Bill to the Séanad, stated:

[128] Superintendent Ó Meadhra, Kerry district, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

> Many dance halls are considered by the authorities to be quite unsuitable for the purpose, and it is deemed necessary that power should be given to the Garda Síochána to supervise and have some control over them.[129]

Ruttledge was referring to the physical layout and structure of halls. The Attorney General, Conor Maguire, raised the same concern and used the same language in the Dáil, claiming, 'public dancing is organised for profit in places which are quite unsuitable for the purpose'.[130] In the years preceding the first introduction of the Act in 1934, and thereafter, very many dance halls across Ireland caught fire and often were completely destroyed. To provide just a few examples, a dance hall near Kanturk in Cork was destroyed by fire in June 1932; in April 1933 a hall in Abbeydorney, Kerry, was totally gutted as was another hall in Ballycotton, Cork, in December of that year.[131] These fires appear to have been accidental, but some halls were also deliberately set on fire. One of the most interesting cases in this regard involved a hall at Castlemaine, in Kerry, which was burned to the ground in June 1933.[132] It became apparent in the following year that the fire was deliberate and had been set by one Edward Flynn, who was in the employ of George Boyle and Thomas Knightly; owners of a rival dance hall in the locale. Flynn claimed that he received a total of £2 5 shillings to burn down the rival hall.[133] Irish society was very aware of the potential effect of a fire in such structures after the Drumcolgher fire in 1926, when 48 people died following fire in a temporary cinema.[134]

The connection between fire and dance halls was clearly established in the public mind, and there was public concern about the

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[129] P.J. Ruttledge, Seanad Debate, vol. 19, no. 8, cols. 791-2 (12 Dec. 1934).
[130] Conor Maguire, Dáil Debate, vol. 53, no. 10, col. 1251 (28 Jun. 1934).
[131] *The Irish Examiner*, 18 Jun. 1932; *The Irish Examiner*, 29 Apr. 1933; *Belfast Newsletter*, 4 Dec. 1933.
[132] *The Kerryman*, 24 Jun. 1933.
[133] *The Irish Independent*, 10 Apr. 1934.
[134] Liam Irwin, '"The calamitous burning": the Drumcollogher disaster of 1926', in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, liii (2013), pp 241-65.

poor conditions of many dance halls, especially in rural areas. O'Brien described the typical rural hall in his article:

> Most of the halls I have seen are old school-houses or new timber structures with a tin roof … Light is provided by large paraffin lamps suspended from the roof, less frequently by incandescent paraffin installations on the walls.[135]

Vallely claimed that in many halls in the Monaghan-Armagh area paraffin oil was spread on the floor to make it slippery and therefore better for dancing.[136] Fire damage was not contained to such evidently ill-suited facilities, however. A hall in Monkstown, described by the *Irish Press* as a 'comparatively modern place', caught fire in October 1934 and was only saved from destruction by the proximity of the Dun Laoighaire fire service.[137] The PDHA was designed in part to improve safety features and overall facilities for dancers attending halls. Of the seven matters District Justices were asked to pay consideration to when granting a licence five related to the suitability and safety of the hall, that of the surrounding area, and current dancing facilities in the area.[138] The physical health and safety of the consumer was considered as important as their moral and spiritual safety.

Many District Justices believed that the suitability of the physical location and layout of the hall was a paramount consideration when deciding on licences. District Justice Little demanded, prior to the granting of a licence, that he be satisfied as to the 'floor space, height and ventilation' of the hall, and that 'sanitary office and cloakrooms' be provided aand suitable 'firefighting appliances'.[139] Such demands from District Justices seem to have been quite common. If licences were granted to premises lacking in adequate facilities and consumer

[135] O'Brien, 'Dance Halls', p. 49.
[136] Vallely, 'Nothing between us', p. 51.
[137] *The Irish Press*, 13 Oct. 1934.
[138] *Public Dance Halls Act, 1935*, Section 2 (2) (1935).
[139] District Justice Little, Annual Liquor and Public Dance Halls Licensing Sessions Dublin Metropolitan Division (29 Sept. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37 p. 2).

safeguards many Justices required that alterations would be made for the licence to be renewed at the following session. Superintendent Murray, of Gorey district, reported that one hall in Ballymoney had closed the previous year as it had failed to make adequate alterations to improve its physical structure.[140] Murray also recorded that the Gardaí in his district intended to oppose the renewal of licence for Spencer's Dance Hall in the upcoming session for similar reasons.[141]

According to Garda reports filled before 1938 much police work involved assessing the appropriateness of the building in which the dances were held, rather than the moral behaviour of the dancers attending. Many reports provided detailed outlines of a dance hall's structure and facilities. In one report made on a specific Ancient Order of Hibernian Dance Hall in Millstreet, Cork, the Garda officer provided a thorough account, including the physical dimensions of the Hall, the fact that there was 'no sanitary accommodation for women', but a 'gentleman's dry lavatory in the yard at the rear'.[142] The report outlined the number of windows in the hall – 5 as well as the fact that electric lighting had been installed. Information was also given as to the facilities for entering and exiting the hall – 'three ordinary sized doors, two at the front, and one at the rear'.[143] Such thorough reporting on the facilities and size of a dance hall appear to have been common whenever the Gardaí were asked to inspect a particular dance hall. When investigating a complaint made against a National School used to hold dances in Kilmurray, Co. Clare the assigned Garda officer provided the length and width of the building in his report as well as the fact that 'separate sanitary accommodation is available in separate yards for both sexes'.[144] When asked to offer his opinion on dance halls in Waterford City Officer P. Kilroy stated that six out of seven halls were unsuitable from the

[140] Superintendent Murray, Gorey district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[141] Ibid.
[142] Garda Report, Complaint of Unlicensed Dancing Ancient Order of Hibernian Hall Mill street Cork (4 Sep. 1934) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/1).
[143] Ibid.
[144] Garda Report, Complaint regarding dances held in Kilmurray – McMahon National School (24 Aug. 1936) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/1).

viewpoint of consumer safety and facilities.[145] Kilroy noted that in the Royal Dance Hall 'there was only one exit in the building'.[146] He likewise objected to the Redmond Hall for a lack of exits, and the lack of gentleman's toilet facilities. For similar reasons he opposed four further halls in Waterford City; stating 'in two cases the dance halls are located over garages in which are stored petrol and other combustibles'.[147]

Local residents could become concerned by such fire-risk halls, as a fire begun by a poorly equipped hall could spread quickly to residential buildings. In addition, to the threat of fire many complaints were also made in regard to noise levels and subsequent disturbance to the local community. In December 1935 the Gardaí objected to the renewal of the dancing licence for the Cliff Castle Hotel in Dalkey on the grounds that numerous noise complaints had been received from local residents.[148] In August 1936 residents in the Killester area of Dublin complained of the disturbances they suffered from the British Legion and Abbey dance halls located there.[149] The residents complained of the noise emanating from the halls, claiming that it disturbed their sleep patterns. One lady even submitted in evidence a hand-drawn map, showing her house in relation to the British Legion dance hall, which indicated that her child's bedroom window was located closest to the hall.[150] As well as noise, complaints were also received that 'undesirable persons congregate on the roads near the Dance Halls and fights have been known to have occurred within the Dance Halls'.[151] The issue of noise complaints appears to have been a recurrent one within larger urban centres like Dublin. In his report as part of the 1938 Garda circulars the Superintendent of 'B' district in Dublin city claimed that the only complaint he had received regarding dance halls was the 'annoyance

[145] Complaints regarding Dance Halls Waterford City (24 Jun. 1936) (Ibid).
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Garda Report, Complaint regarding the Cliff Castle Hotel, Dalkey (12 Dec. 1935) (Ibid).
[149] Garda Report, Complaints from local residents about British Legion Hall and Abbey Hall Killester (24 Aug. 1936) (Ibid).
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.

caused to residents by patrons shouting and singing at the break-up of dances at the Shelbourne Hall, Merrion Row'.[152] The fact that reported complaints came from residents on Merrion Row and Dalkey suggests perhaps that more credence was given to the upper-class residents in the more desirable parts of the city and the suburbs. Noise complaints were problems for many Garda departments across the country. Superintendent S. McCairbre, of Thomastown district, lamented what he described as 'the abominable practice of "making whoopee"', which he goes on to characterise as 'singing, shouting and cat-calling'.[153] McCairbre claimed that 'much annoyance has been experienced by citizens' owing to this practice of "making whoopee".[154]

Dance halls could also be the sites of political or gang violence. In 1934 many dancing spaces became battle zones in the conflict between League of Youth and Fianna Fáil supporters. Halls and dance platforms in Donegal, Cavan, Tipperary, Mayo, and a large number in Cork, appear to have been targeted because the League of Youth or Fine Gael had held dances there previously or because they had scheduled future dances.[155] Whilst the majority of attacks were perpetrated against League of Youth dance spaces, the League did carry out some retaliation against Fianna Fáil. In urban areas, especially Dublin, dance halls were often associated with working class 'Animal Gangs'; local groups of young men who were usually seen as nuiscances rather than serious threats. Timmy "Duckegg" Kirwan, a former member of an 'Animal Gang' in north inner-city Dublin during the 1930s, reported in an oral history interview that 'the animal gang around here … had their own dance hall called the

[152] Superintendent B District Dublin City, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[153] Superintendent McCairbre, Thomastown district, Gárda circular reply (18 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[154] Ibid.
[155] Burning Hall Ballinagh, Cavan (3 May 1934) (NAI/JUS/8/4); Burning of dance platform Ballyday Cork (31 May 1934) (NAI/JUS/8/17); Alleged Destruction of dance platform Turgay, Cork (14 Oct. 1934) (NAI/JUS/8/17); Burning Hall Kerrykeel, Donegal (NAI/JUS/8/48); UIP Dance Damage to Property Ardfinnan, Tipperary (NAI/JUS/8/154); League of Youth dance Kilmovee, Mayo (NAI//JUS/8/134).

Ardee in Talbot Street'.[156] In inner-city Dublin various dance halls were understood as residing within the territory of a particular Animal Gang. Often fights would occur because gangs would stray over the borders of their "turf", and such fights would often break out in dance halls or in cinemas.[157] The association of dance halls with this type of violence is perhaps a further explanation for the PDHA and especially its concern with greater policing and safety regulations.

In the Garda reports many Superintendents emphasised the importance of safety regulations. Superintendent O'Neill of Gort district recommended that 'no hall or place be licenced until the requirements of the Public Health Acts are first complied with'.[158] O'Neill objected to Garda assessments of consumer safety standards, as they lacked the requisite qualifications to do so.[159] Instead he suggested that a 'qualified engineer and local sanitary authority' be asked to inspect each hall prior to the granting of a licence'.[160] Chief Superintendent Doyle stated that only 'experts' should be allowed to decide on issues such as 'structural soundness'.[161] Such comments suggest how seriously the regulations regarding the safety of consumers were taken by members of the Gardaí, who, it appears, often felt inadequate when judging the facilities or structural integrity of a dance hall. Assessing the physical safety of the dance hall was a tangible act that could be carried out by a single Garda officer during the morning or afternoon. Fulfilling this duty was often the most practical action that the Gardai could take to enforce the PDHA. Conducting checks on physical safety during the day also removed the responsibility of night-time checks when dances were taking place.

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[156] Timmy Duckegg Kirwan, quoted in Kevin Kearns, *Dublin Tenement Life: An Oral History* (Dublin, 1994), p. 67.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Superintendent O'Neill, Gort district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Chief-Superintendent Doyle, Galway district, Gárda circular reply (15 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

The introduction of the PDHA did not rectify the standards of dance halls across Ireland overnight. Superintendent Heron, of Newport district, highlighted one of the problems limiting the potential effectiveness of the 1935 Act. 'In country halls a lower standard of facility can be accepted', he claimed, noting how difficult it was to insist on safety standards when the facilities were inadequate.[162] Superintendent Murphy of Mohill district likewise expressed concern that a number of halls in his area were corrugated iron structures, but doubted what better facilities could be made available.[163] In remote rural areas demanding particular features, especially fire safety provisions, were often not feasible. Whilst this was the case it is evident that safety provisions were a significant aspect of the PDHA and the subsequent regulations instituted by District Justices.

Threat of the Outsider

If the power of the Catholic Church in Irish society has been over-estimated then the importance of local communities and the role that status hierarchies played within them has perhaps not received the attention it warrants. Undoubtedly many priests across Ireland were influential figures in their local communities, but, how significant were other figures in the community, and the community itself in imposing certain standards of morality and behaviour? Evidence from the Department of Justice files suggests that fears regarding outsiders to local, especially rural, communities, played a significant part in shaping dance hall restrictions. Communities could, to a certain extent, shame local residents if they were deemed to have acted inappropriately. This was much more difficult for strangers to the area, who could arrive for a dance one night by car or bicycle and then never return.

[162] Superintendent Heron, Newport district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[163] Superintendent Murphy, Mohill district, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

Many District Justices applied restrictions within dancing licences limiting how far someone could travel to attend a dance hall. These restrictions ranged from a two to ten mile radius, and were applied widely in western counties such as, Mayo, Limerick, Clare and Kerry, as well as Waterford, Cavan, Monaghan and Kildare.[164] Travel restrictionswere not enforced in all areas, or by all District Justices. Justice McCann, in the Galway region refused to apply such restrictions claiming they were 'against the liberty of the subject'.[165] Limits were also often placed on the practice of 'Sitting Out'; referring to dance hall attendees leaving the hall to sit outside the premises often within cars. In 1932 the Gardaí were given powers to inspect activity inside motor vehicles. Prohibitions against 'Sitting Out' often complemented travel restrictions, but were also applied even in districts without travel restrictions. In Meath and Donegal prohibitions on 'Sitting Out' were enforced without corresponding limitations on how far someone could travel to the dance.[166]

These travel restrictions could appear baffling especially in rural areas where travelling distances of five plus miles was commonplace. Comments made by the District Justices help to explain why such restrictions were enforced. District Justice Cahill, when refusing the licence for a dance hall at Eyrecourt in 1936, cited as justification the fact that 'some of the people attending there were undesirable characters who came from outside parishes'.[167] As this suggests, not only were travel restrictions applied, but occasionally licences were not granted. Justice Johnson in the same year, at a licencing session in the Lispole, Kerry district, explained his decision to impose a three mile distance restriction: 'because "buchoes" in motor cars from Tralee were frequenting these dance halls'.[168]

[164] Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to December 1938, (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37, pp 1-16).
[165] Ibid, p. 12.
[166] Ibid, pp 2-6.
[167] Justice Cahill, *The Connaught Tribune*, 12 Jul. 1936.
[168] Justice Johnson, *The Irish Independent*, 2 Nov. 1936.

The Garda circulars provide significant commentary on the necessity of introducing travel restrictions. Peter Fahy, Superintendent of Sligo district, claimed that dance halls provided a meeting place for 'undesirable people'.[169] 'There would be no problem if dancing could be permitted only for people in the local area', Fahy argued.[170] Superintendent Flynn, of Kildare district, claimed 'The District Justice imposed an area limit, to prevent undesirables from outside areas, who were chiefly the cause of trouble, from being admitted.'[171] Superintendent J. Kenny, of Carrickmacross district, noted as part of his response that 'decent people are entitled to dance if they so desire'.[172] The 1935 legislation, as interpreted by the District Justices, acted to ensure that the 'decent people' would be provided a space safe from the undesirable elements. Superintendent J.J. Moore, of Cahir district, explained that 'The majority of participants' at dances in his area 'are Farmer's sons and daughters who have little money to spend on drink and who are of good moral character'.[173]

The Garda circulars, as was noted above, generally suggest little evidence for the supposed connection between sexual offences and dance halls. This trend changes, however, whenever an 'undesirable' outsider figure is discussed. Superintendent O'Reilly, of Bray district, stated that in his area there had been no problems whatsoever except for a hall in Newtownmountkennedy, run by one John Egan, who 'ran cheap dances for busloads of people from the poorer quarters of Dublin City'.[174] The only case of immorality he highlighted within his report occurred at this hall.[175] He claimed to have received 'complaints from local people of

[169] Superintendent Peter Fahy, Sligo district, Gárda circular reply (16 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[170] Ibid.
[171] Superintendent Flynn, Kildare district, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[172] Superintendent J. Kenny, Carrickmacross district, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[173] Superintendent J.J. Moore, Cahir district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[174] Superintendent O'Reilly, Bray district, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[175] Ibid.

persons fornicating in the fields in the vicinity' after dances had been held in the hall.[176] Many Superintendents highlighted particular 'problem' dance halls catering for outsiders. Breathnach, of Dungarvan district, mentioned Poke Amusement Hall, Killineen, as persistently troublesome.[177] He highlights the problem that 'people have come from Waterford City and Carrick-on-Suir to dance in the hall' and claims rumours have circulated that as many as ten girls were seduced by such outsiders.[178] Superintendent Devine, of Ballymote district, claimed:

> In most towns, say of a population of 200 upwards, at the present time, my experience shows that there is a certain section of the population both male and female nearly always of a low class, who carry a bad reputation, and their appearance at dances, in neighbouring towns is generally for no good purpose.[179]

The Garda reports repeatedly associate undesirable behaviour with outsiders, especially low status outsiders. The purpose of the travel restrictions was to keep out these 'undesirable' elements.

The regulations against 'Sitting Out' were an important corollary to the travel restrictions. Both aimed to protect the local community from undesirable outsiders. Whilst the level of car ownership in Ireland at the time was low, comparative to other European contexts, cars were frequently rented or perhaps stolen. Chief Superintendent Fahy noted:

> It is a common practice for young people living in towns to hire cars and travel long distances to dances held in remote areas, and it is not unusual for them to visit more than one rural dance in one night.[180]

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[176] Ibid.
[177] Superintendent Breathnach, Dungarvan district, Gárda circular reply (12 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[178] Ibid.
[179] Superintendent Devine, Ballymote district, Gárda circular reply (14 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).
[180] Chief-Superintendent Fahy, Sligo region, Gárda circular reply (19 Dec. 1938) (Ibid).

One scene in *Jimmy's Hall*, indeed, depicts the arrival of a group of 'Outsiders' to the dance hall by motor car where they passed the dismayed parish priest.[181] Superintendent Ua Ceallaigh, of Letterkenny district, suggested that the willingness to travel owed to the availability of motor transport and a changed mind-set amongst young people. Whilst in the past it may have involved a day's journey and corresponding loss in income, he claimed 'today attendance at such a dance is looked upon as a matter of course'.[182] Dancers not only travelled to halls in motor cars, but also used bicycles. Oral history interviewees claimed that cycling fifteen to twenty miles to a dance hall or cinema was commonplace.[183] Walking to nearby dance halls, within a five mile radius, was also a very common practice. Patrick McNabb, in research for the *Limerick Rural Survey*, undertaken in the early 1960s, found that the propensity to travel had most likely increased. 'Most young people preferred to dance outside their own immediate neighbourhood', McNabb noted, and 'boys and girls gave the explanation that "you could let you hair down" in outside dance halls.'[184] Travelling to dance halls outside their local areas gave these consumers the freedom to let their hair down.

The fear of outside individuals or groups travelling long distances may have been exaggerated but it does not appear to be a wholly fictitious one. Groups would often travel to nearby dance halls because the licencing restrictions were different from county to county or even parish to parish. In some districts dance halls were licenced to stay open late into the morning, while in others dance halls closed at 11pm or midnight. Superintendent Ward, of Manorhamilton district, claimed:

[181] *Jimmy's Hall* Dir. Ken Loach, Film 4 Production (2014).
[182] Superintendent Ua Ceallaigh, Letterkenny district, Gárda circular reply (13 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[183] Schweitzer (eds.) *Across the Irish Sea*, pp 26-7.
[184] Patrick McNabb, *The Limerick Rural Survey III: Social Structure* (Dublin, 1962), p. 48.

> Much dissatisfaction amongst the dancing public in District owing to the fact that a licence will not be issued to permit dancing later than 11pm while in adjoining areas dancing is licenced to continue until a much later hour – 6am in some cases.[185]

Advertisements suggest considerable variation in the hours of dancing across regions and even in local areas. The closing time was not always given in an advertisement, but commonly it was listed. In the *Kerryman* 90% of advertised dances listed a closing time at 2am or later, with 27% closing at 4am or later. Similar trends are also apparent in the *Kilkenny People* with 77% of dances closing at 2am or later, and 23% closing at 4am or later. In the *Donegal Democrat* likewise 90% of dances finished at 2am or after. In the *Anglo-Celt* the typical closing hour was 11pm in winter (Oct-Mar) and 12pm in summer (Apr-Sept). Only 18% of dances listed in the *Anglo-Celt* finished after 2am, which is almost the reverse of the trend in other areas. Even in this case, however, a number of dances listed closing hours at 4am or 5am. It seems likely that in many areas there was a range of dance hours, often as late as 5am or as early as 12pm. This offered considerable scope for consumers wishing to travel to multiple dance halls in a single night.

The conclusion to the Garda reports claimed that outsiders were 'less sensitive to public opinion as to their conduct in the areas in which they are not known and in the absence of such a restraining influence excesses are likely to occur'.[186] It was the parents of local dancers who had the most to fear from 'outsiders'. Their daughters could be tainted by an unwanted association, and if they became pregnant this posed greater problems. In a context where arranged marriages and the paying of dowries were common the threat of the outsider could be a menacing one for many communities. [187]

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[185] Superintendent Ward, Manorhamilton district, Gárda circular reply (12 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37).
[186] Summary Conclusion to Gárda Circular Replies (20 Dec. 1938) (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37, p. 4).
[187] Conrad Arnsberg, *The Irish Countryman: An Anthropological Study* (Prospect Heights, 1968), pp 77- 84.

It is reasonable to assume that the drive for travel restrictions came from local communities. District Justices, when applying restrictions, often referenced the particular difficulties that were reported from residents near the dance halls in question.[188] These restrictions also had to be enforced by the local community itself because Garda officers could not monitor all rural dance halls. Local clergy may have enforced the travel restrictions but most likely it seems that community groups took the lead. As was noted above, parochial committees more commonly took responsibility for supervision, rather than the local priest. It is very doubtful that travel restrictions were applied to the letter of the law. Could someone prove how far they had travelled? The distance someone had travelled to attend the dance could be exaggerated or reduced according to the desirability of the attendee. There is an element of speculation but it seems more appropriate to view travel restrictions as mechanisms for local community control over dance halls rather than strictly enforced legal stipulations.

Conclusion

The P.D.H.A. did more than simply facilitate indirect clerical control over the leisure time of young people. As the chapter has shown, dancing was not confined to parochial halls and neither was the nation's youth forced into ceilidh dances, as has often been claimed. It is certainly possible that local priests in certain areas were enforcing strict supervisory control over dancing, but there is no evidence that this extended to a national or even regional level. It is equally possible, as the chapter has suggested, that local communities assumed a supervisory role and enforced dancing restrictions for the purpose of safeguarding their own areas. The influence of local communities has been overlooked previously, however, as have the importance of health and safety regulations following the PDHA. The Act did not immediately rectify the

[188] Justice Cahill, *The Connaught Tribune*, 12 Jul. 1936; Public Dancing Licences Granted by the Courts up to December 1938 (NAI JUS/3/90/98/37, pp 1-16).

structural quality in dance halls, but it represented an effort by the state to assume authority and responsibility for the safety of its citizens.

The lacunae in the historiography of dance halls in early twentieth century Ireland, which have been highlighted, are emblematic of gaps in Irish historiography more generally. There has been a tendency to stress the uniqueness of the Irish experience, especially in regard to the influence of the Catholic Church. In regard to cinema and literature in Ireland historians have largely focussed on censorship and control, using official documents and the writings of moral campaigners.[189] The top down approach has, almost naturally, led to an emphasis on the distinctiveness and harshness of the Irish experience. Yet in other European nations we can witness similar fears over new cultural forms and similar efforts to control them.[190] Britain was often blamed as an exporter of foreign and degenerate music to Ireland. As the chapter noted above, we can highlight similar fears over jazz music and dancing and efforts by the government to crackdown on these new cultural forms including that attempted by Joynson-Hicks in the 1920s.[191] Structures to regulate morality were common to both the Catholic and Protestant Churches on each side of the border, as McCormick and D'Alton have suggested.[192] Focussing on the distinctiveness and homogeneity of Catholic Ireland can be problematic as often the similarities to other European contexts are more striking.

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[189] Martin, *Censorship in the Two Irelands 1922-1939*, pp 45-228; Rockett and Rockett, *Film Exhibition and Distribution in Ireland 1909-2010*, pp 299-335.
[190] Adam Arvidsson, *Marketing modernity: Italian advertising from fascism to postmodernity* (London, 2003), p. 27; Bianca Gaudenzi, 'Press Advertising and Fascist Dictates', *Journalism Studies* xiv, no. 5 (2013), pp 676-77; Hartmut Berghoff, 'Consumption Politics and Politicized Consumption: Monarchy, Republic, and Dictatorship in Germany, 1900-1939,' in Hartmut Berghoff and Uwe Spiekermann (eds.), *Decoding Modern Consumer Societies* (New York, 2012), pp 132-133.
[191] Pugh, *We Danced all Night*, p. 219.
[192] McCormick, *Regularity Sexuality: Women in 20th Century Northern Ireland*, p. 8; Ian d'Alton, 'A Vestigial Population? Perspectives on Southern Irish Protestants in the Twentieth Century', *Éire-Ireland*, xliv, no. 3-4 (2009), p. 33.

Young Irish people engaged in their own consumer behaviour through the space afforded by the dance hall. Imported forms of music and dance seem to have increased in popularity in the 1930s, but these were adapted according to local conditions and desires. The 'jazz' music that outraged moral campaigners would have been unrecognisable to jazz aficionados in America or Britain. Travelling, often quite considerable distances, to dance halls afforded consumers a large degree of freedom providing the local community did not enforce a travel restriction. Alcohol consumption may have increased following the PDHA, especially amongst female consumers, who appear to have been strangely liberated by the need to conceal their drinking. All of these activities coalesced in the creation of a consuming behaviour that went far beyond dancing.

Chapter 5

The Pilgrimage as a Leisure Pursuit

> *The Impression of total Catholicism can begin on the flight to Dublin, for if it is an Aer Lingus plane it will be named after a Saint … A visitor to Ireland notices that the bookshops are full of religious works and that Catholic publications are thick on the newsstands … Volunteers of the Saint Vincent de Paul and other Catholic charities collect contributions on the streets. The newspapers tell of thousands of pilgrims who have claimed Croagh Patrick or of the hundreds flying off to Lourdes and other holy places on special pilgrimage flights.*[1]
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> ***Donald Connery, The Irish (London, 1972).***

'Total Catholicism' is often understood as a form of semi-authoritarian Catholic government in Ireland. Historical research has emphasised the Church-State historical nexus, as was discussed in the introduction and in the preceding chapter.[2] Undoubtedly Church authorities were able to exert influence over politicians and also shaped certain pieces of legislation.[3] The control of the Catholic Church over the population has also been emphasised. Smith has proffered the concept of a 'containment culture' to describe the efforts of the Church and State to limit and confine the behaviour of Irish citizens.[4] Inglis has argued that Irish Catholics underwent a 'systematic process of socialisation' disseminated from the central authority of the Church.[5] 'Being a Catholic in Irish social life', according to Inglis, 'is to know the rules, regulations and permutations of what can and cannot be done'.[6] The period from 1850 to 1960, in particular Inglis argues, was characterised by a legalistic

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[1] Donald Connery, *The Irish* (London, 1972), pp 152-3.
[2] J.H. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland 1923-1979* (Dublin, 1980); John Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland* (Dublin, 1999); John Cooney, *The Crozier and the Dáil: Church and State in Ireland 1922-86* (Dublin, 1986).
[3] The actual extent of Church influence has been questioned, however, by recent research such as David Doyle 'Sexual crime and the formulation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1935: a quantitative, historical and legislative analysis' (PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland Galway, 2009).
[4] James Smith, 'The Politics of Sexual Knowledge: The Origins of Ireland's Containment Culture and the Carrigan Report (1931)' in *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, xiii (2004), pp 232-3.
[5] Tom Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 1998), p. 64.
[6] Ibid, p. 10.

adherence to the rules propounded by the Church.[7] The sense of a legalistic or insincere adherence merely to the rules of the Catholic Church has been observed by many commentators on Irish society. Connery claimed 'You notice that much of the famous piety of the Irish Catholics is often a matter of lip service by people going through the motions.'[8] Fuller argued that a 'legalistic approach was also applied to general moral issues' by the Church and laity in the 1950s and 1960s.[9] 'People sought reassurance on how far exactly they could go without committing sin', Fuller claims, querying how late one could arrive at Mass before it qualified as a sin.[10]

The legalistic adherence to Church authority was undoubtedly a prominent tendency in Irish social life. Focussing solely on this aspect of lay engagement with the Church, however, ignores the widespread and intense devotion to religious practice amongst the Irish laity. Surprisingly little research has examined lay practice in the twentieth century, but there are some examples.[11] Maurice Hartigan has written on 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940' focussing specifically on associations such as the confraternities and sodalities, which were attached to every parish in Dublin, and many across the country.[12] We can add to the confraternities and sodalities the formation of new organisations: the Catholic Young Man's Society, the Legion of Mary, the Catholic Boy Scouts and Guides as well as the mass displays of devotion, notably, the centenary of Catholic Emancipation in 1929 and the Eucharistic Congress of 1932, as proof of vibrant and popular religious devotion in 1920s and 1930s Ireland. James Donnelly has also highlighted the popularity of mass pilgrimages especially the Irish

[7] Ibid, p. 22.
[8] Connery, *The Irish*, p. 156.
[9] Louise Fuller, *Irish Catholicism since 1950: The Undoing of a Culture* (Dublin, 2002), p. 35.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Arguably there has been more interest in laity of other denominations rather than the Catholic Church: Raymond Gillespie and W.G. Neely (eds.), *The Laity and the Church of Ireland 1000-2000* (Dublin, 2002).
[12] Maurice Hartigan, 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940' in James Kelly and Daire Keogh (eds.), *History of the Catholic Diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), pp 331-349.

fascination with Lourdes, increased interest in Fatima post-1945, and the establishment of new shrines in Ireland including the Lourdes replica at Inchicore in 1930. [13]

Pilgrimage travel became a hugely popular practice for Irish Catholics in the twentieth century. A survey undertaken in the early 1970s found that half of all respondents had been on pilgrimage, and this survey probably underrepresents the numbers who travelled to holy shrines though not officially designated as pilgrimages.[14] Despite the incredible popularity of the practice, however, very little historical research has considered pilgrimages or travel to holy sites. The only historian to address pilgrimages in any detail has been James Donnelly. Donnelly has written on the establishment of the shrine at Knock in the 1870s, and on the difficulties that the shrine encountered in the 1940s.[15] He has also discussed the Lough Derg religious site in Donegal.[16] No work, as yet, however, has sought to offer an analysis of the pilgrimage market in Ireland in its entirety. This is a significant lacuna in our knowledge of Irish lay behaviour.

Internationally, historical and sociological research has considered pilgrimage travel. In this research the issue of commercialism and materialism has been to the fore. Lourdes is the subject of two works, one by Ruth Harris, the other, Suzanne Kaufmann, discussing the commercialisation of, and modern mass engagement with, a site of religious devotion. The conclusions reached in the two works could hardly be more divergent. Harris, whilst noting that, 'At first glance Lourdes seems to epitomise packaged piety and rampant consumerism',

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[13] James Donnelly Jnr., 'The Peak of Marian Devotion in Ireland 1930-1960' in Stewart J. Brown and David Miller (eds.) *Piety and power in Ireland 1760-1960: essays in honour of Emmet Larkin* (Belfast, 2000), p. 252.
[14] National Survey 1973-1974, quoted in Máire Nic Ghiolla Phádraig, 'Religion in Ireland: Preliminary Analysis', *Social Studies,* v (1976), pp 116-19.
[15] James Donnelly Jnr., 'Knock Shrine: The Worst of Times—The 1940s', *Éire-Ireland*, xlviii, (Fall/Winter 2013); James Donnelly, Jnr., 'The Marian Shrine of Knock: The First Decade', *Éire-Ireland,* xxviii (Summer, 1993), pp 54–99.
[16] James Donnelly Jnr., 'Lough Derg: the making of the modern pilgrimage' in William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, and Mairead Dunlevy (eds.), *Donegal: History and Society - Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County* (Dublin, 1995), pp 491-508.

goes on to claim that this interpretation 'hardly does justice to the complex reality of the pilgrimage phenomenon, for Lourdes differed greatly from the mass political and leisure movements of the 19th century'.[17] Kaufmann, on the other hand, argues that 'commercialisation … was central to the development of the Lourdes pilgrimage site'.[18] Lourdes involved 'remaking Catholic devotional activities within an emerging commercial culture' thereby producing 'distinctly modern forms of popular religiosity', according to Kaufmann.[19] Antón Pazos has argued that 'traditional pilgrimages have undergone a systematic process of change, as if they were in fact industrial products, to adapt to new times'.[20] As David Gitlitz noted, modern pilgrimages eliminated 'the lengthy, arduous, uncomfortable and sometimes risky journey of traditional pre-modern pilgrimages'.[21]

Interpreting pilgrimages and travel to holy shrines in this manner seems to rob them of their spiritual importance. To describe an act of religious devotion as part of a 'commercial culture' or an 'industrial product' seems to debase its spirituality. This is an issue that certainly seems to trouble Harris in her analysis of the Lourdes shrine. To ignore the commercialisation of the pilgrimage, however, is to ignore its adaptation to modern times. As Kaufmann notes, in the modern world the commodity form is a dominant means of social interaction, and, for this reason it shaped 'the cultural activities and meanings attached to Catholic pilgrimage'.[22] If we return to Connery, it is apparent that the most immediately noticeable markers of Irish Catholicism are signs of a consumer culture: 'The bookshops are full of religious works', 'Catholic

[17] Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 2000), p. 11.
[18] Suzanne K. Kaufman, *Consuming Visions: Mass Culture and the Lourdes Shrine* (Chicago, 2005), p. 1.
[19] Ibid, p. 5.
[20] Antón M. Pazos, 'Introduction' in Antón Pazos (ed.) *Redefining Pilgrimages: New Perspectives on Historical Change* (Farnham, 2014), p. 1.
[21] David M. Gitlitz, 'Old Pilgrimages, New Meanings; New Pilgrimages, Old Forms: From the Ganges to Graceland', in Pazos (ed.), *Redefining Pilgrimages,* p. 42.
[22] Kaufman, *Consuming Visions*, p. 12.

publications are thick on the newsstands' and even the Aer Lingus planes were named after saints.[23]

The pilgrimage is only one way of exploring the vast consumer culture of Irish Catholicism in the twentieth century. The material culture of Catholicism offered consumers a wide array of products, from rosary beads, to religious pictures, prayer books, missals, medals, brooches and pins, to name a few. Catholic publications were also highly popular. *The Irish Catholic* and *The Standard* were weekly Catholic newspapers with wide circulations; *The Standard* claimed a circulation of 80,000 in the late 1930s.[24] In addition journal publications like the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, the *Irish Rosary* and the *Catholic Bulletin* were popular. Pilgrimages offer a valuable insight into this broader consumer culture. Many sites offered religious souvenirs for sale, and, indeed, were frequently condemned as crassly commercial because of this practice. The *Lourdes Messenger* and the *Knock Shrine Annual* offered an insight into the pilgrimage experience perhaps for those unable to travel to the shrines themselves. The fact that these two publications existed suggests the evident interest in religious sites, and the desire for up to date news. Film and radio broadcasts of Lourdes and Knock were also popular ways to connect with the pilgrimage experience.[25]

The chapter will use a relatively broad definition of the term 'pilgrimage'. The technical definition of a pilgrimage according to the Catholic Church required certain rigid rules be fulfilled. A pilgrimage, to be official, required the approbation of an ecclesiastical authority. An individual or small group travelling to the shrine at Knock would not have qualified as a pilgrimage, and, indeed, may not have even thought they were making a pilgrimage. The term pilgrimage, however, was in wide usage in Irish society. Woods has highlighted the example of the Bodenstown pilgrimage to Wolfe Tone's gravesite, popular until at least

[23] Connery, *The Irish*, pp 152-3.
[24] Peter O'Curry, *Irish Times*, 8 Apr., 1977.
[25] Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion', p. 257.

the 1930s.[26] Writers often used the term pilgrimage in contexts that would not have been accepted by Church authorities. A journalist writing in *The Standard* in 1928 talked of making a pilgrimage to the gravesite of Matt Talbot at Glasnevin.[27] Given the wide usage of the term to refer to travel to a site believed in some sense to be sacred it is appropriate to use pilgrimage to denote travel to all shrines. The chapter will focus solely on travel to Catholic sites though the term pilgrimage was also used for non-religious journeys.

The first section of the chapter will demonstrate the popularity of pilgrimages in Ireland. The 1930s saw significant growth of the pilgrimage market, with the establishment of new shrines like the Lourdes Replica at Inchicore and the expansion of existing sites especially Knock. The market was very negatively affected by the Emergency in the 1940s and did not recover until the 1950s. When the market did recover, however, it expanded rapidly witnessing both increased domestic and international pilgrimage travel. The second section will tackle the issue of what control the Catholic Church attempted and was able to exercise over pilgrimages. To do so it will consider the local, national, and international authority of the Church. Whilst the Church might have sought to strictly limit the pilgrimage market, the chapter will argue that its power was circumscribed. The third section will attempt to reconstruct the experience of travelling on a pilgrimage or visiting a holy shrine. There were vast differences between the various holy sites in Ireland and abroad for example between Lough Derg and Knock. The section will also highlight the additional methods by which individuals could consume the pilgrimage experience: subscribing to publications, watching films or listening radio shows, and contributing to pilgrimage travel funds. The final section of the chapter will demonstrate the value of conceptualising the pilgrimage as a leisure

[26] C.J. Woods, 'Pilgrimages to Tone's grave at Bodenstown, 1873–1922: Time, place, popularity', *History Ireland*, xxiii, no. 3 (May/June 2015).
[27] Hartigan, 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940', p. 13.

pursuit. To do so it will use the voices of pilgrims that travelled to the sites. This section will suggest that pilgrimage travel may have been a particularly significant form of leisure for Irish women in this period. It will also argue that viewing the pilgrimage as a leisure pursuit permits a useful comparison between Ireland and other contexts.

Popularity in Ireland

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, despite or perhaps in reaction to the so-called 'Devotional Revolution' there was a revival of popular interest in religious shrines in Ireland.[28] At Knock, a village in Co. Mayo, in 1879 several villagers claimed to witness apparitions of the Virgin Mary and other saints at the gable wall of the Parish Church. Their testimony was accepted by a Commission of Inquiry established by the Church, and the village became a site of pilgrimage.[29] Internationally, as well, the pilgrimage increased in popularity in the second half of the nineteenth century. The most obvious example is the incredible growth in attendance at the Lourdes shrine following the 1858 apparition. In 1883 Father Ring led the first group organised Irish pilgrimage to Lourdes.[30] 1913 saw the first 'National pilgrimage' from Ireland to Lourdes led by the Bishop of Derry, Dr. Charles McHugh.[31] A second 'National pilgrimage' was undertaken in 1924.[32] In addition to Lourdes, Rome and the Holy Land were also popular sites of devotion for Irish Catholics.

The real growth in popularity of the pilgrimage as a social practice in Ireland occurred in the 1930s. In 1930 the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, based at Inchicore in Dublin, erected an exact replica of the Grotto at Lourdes. The opening ceremony for the Shrine attracted a crowd of 80,000 devotees.[33] The Oblate Fathers who established the Inchicore shrine began to publish the *Lourdes Messenger* in 1931, which

[28] Donnelly, 'The Marian Shrine of Knock: The First Decade', p. 97.
[29] Ibid, p. 96.
[30] Michael F. Buckley, *Oblate at Inchicore, First Fifty Years* (Inchicore, 1980), p. 14.
[31] J.J. McNamee, *First Irish National Pilgrimage to Lourdes*, September 1913, Official Record, (Dublin 1914), p. 5.
[32] *Second Irish national pilgrimage to Lourdes*, Oct. 1924 (Dublin, 1925).
[33] *Evening Herald*, 14 May 1930.

provided information on both the Dublin and Lourdes shrines. The Knock Shrine Society (KSS) was established in 1935, and began to publish the *Knock Shrine Annual* in 1937. The *Annual*, which may have been somewhat biased, estimated a dramatic rise in attendees at the Shrine over the 1937-1940 period; from 80,000 pilgrims in 1937, to 120,000 in 1938, 170,000 in 1939 and 250,000 in 1940.[34] In addition to the larger shrines smaller sites of devotion also became popular in the 1930s. In July 1930 the first organised pilgrimage to the gravesite of Matt Talbot, who died in 1925, was led by William and Francis Larkin, of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart and Apostleship of Prayer.[35] We do not have attendance figures for this pilgrimage but in June 1935 it was recorded that 500 pilgrims journeyed to Glasnevin to honour the life of Matt Talbot.[36]

International pilgrimage travel also increased in the 1930s. In the 1920s the cost of travelling to Lourdes was quite prohibitive for most Irish Catholics. The 'National pilgrimage' in 1924 offered a means of subsidised travel for a larger segment. In the 1930s greater possibilities were offered by new organisations and by new means of travel. The Dublin Saint Vincent de Paul Society organised their Ozanam Pilgrimage to Lourdes yearly during the 1930s, apart from 1934.[37] Usually between 300 and 350 pilgrims would travel to Lourdes via this means, and occasionally as many as 400.[38] The Oblate Fathers at Inchicore also organised a regular pilgrim tour to the Lourdes shrine. In 1934 1,100 Irish pilgrims travelled from Dublin to Le Verdun in Bordeaux, where they then took the train a short journey to Lourdes itself.[39] The organisers

[34] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1940), p. 4; (Galway, 1941), p. 3.
[35] Hartigan, 'The religious life of the Catholic Laity of Dublin 1920-1940', p. 337
[36] *The Irish Press*, 10 June 1935; Matt Talbot was a reformed alcoholic known for his asceticism, piety and charity, see Joseph Glynn, *The Life of Matt Talbot* (Dublin, 1928).
[37] Ozanam Pilgrimage to Lourdes, Information collected by the Archbishop of Dublin's office, (Dublin Diocesan Archives/Archbishop John Charles McQuaid Correspondence/xlvii Lourdes: ii 1949-1950).
[38] Ibid.
[39] Buckley, *Oblate an Inchicore, First Fifty Years*, p. 21

claimed that this was the first cruise liner tour from Ireland to Lourdes.[40] The ticket cost £10, which was cheaper than the majority of Lourdes tours in the 1930s; normally £12 to £15.[41] Prior to cruise liner travel pilgrims travelled via train to London, then Paris and onto Lourdes, and, indeed, this method of travel would remain popular into the 1950s.

Reduced cost meant that a wider segment of the Irish population was able to travel internationally on pilgrimage. Travel to Lourdes in the 1930s became increasingly affordable for middle class consumers; poorer consumers could also find ways of travelling abroad on pilgrimage. Dublin Saint Vincent de Paul would subsidise the travel of both 'invalid' and poor pilgrims.[42] Through the late 1920s and early 1930s they claimed to have covered all or a substantial portion of the travel fee for 210 'very poor' pilgrims.[43] To raise money for this form of subsidised travel, tickets were also raffled off not only by VDP but many associations that organised pilgrimages to Lourdes. There were means by which poorer consumers could travel to foreign sites. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the vast majority of those travelling to Lourdes in the 1930s were relatively affluent. Travel to national sites such as, Knock, Inchicore, Lough Derg or Croagh Patrick were more feasible and affordable for lower income pilgrims in Ireland.

The rapid growth in the pilgrimage market in Ireland during the 1930s was severely affected by the Second World War. Pilgrimages abroad, to Lourdes or Rome, were made impossible by the conflict. Travel within Ireland was also severely disrupted by the effect of wartime scarcity, as was discussed in the third chapter. Donnelly has noted the effect of such disruptions to the Knock shrine.[44] By 1941 the

[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid; Advertisement 'Pilgrimage to Lourdes', *Lourdes Messenger* (Jan., 1931); Advertisement 'St Bernadette Pilgrimage to Lourdes', *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun., 1938).
[42] Ozanam Pilgrimage to Lourdes, (DDA/ McQuaid Correspondence/xlvii Lourdes: ii 1949-1950).
[43] Ibid.
[44] Donnelly, 'Knock Shrine: The Worst of Times', p. 219.

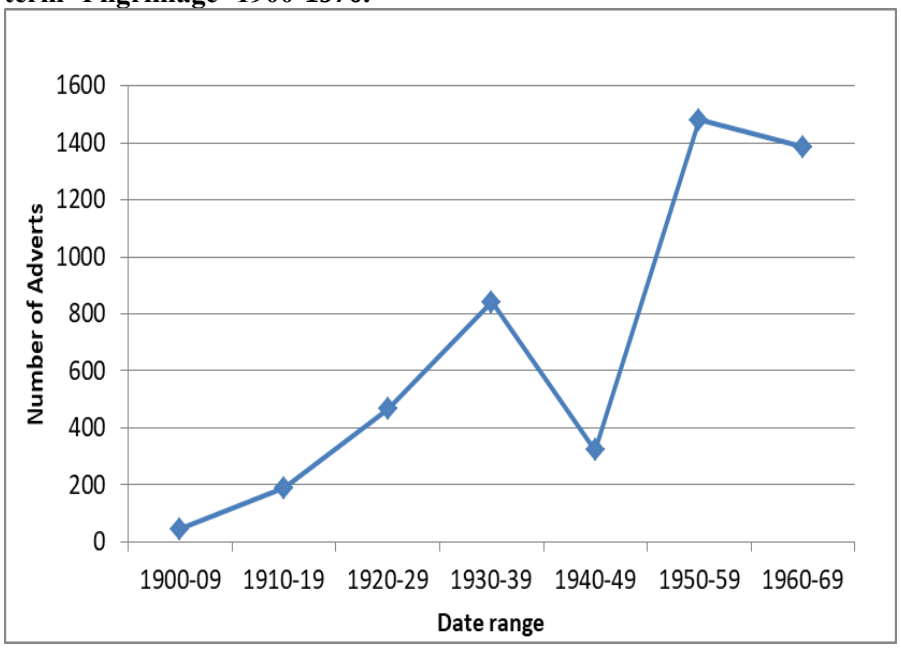
Great Northern and Southern Railway Companies were no longer running train or bus services to the site on Sundays and the following year even the weekday services were critically curtailed.[45] As Donnelly highlights, 'By 1942, what had been a one-day pilgrimage from Dublin before the imposition of railway restrictions had to be extended over three days.'[46] Pilgrimage travel largely became localised. *The Knock Shrine Annual* no longer took the trouble to estimate the numbers travelling to the site. They did record a dramatic fall in attendees on the Feast of the Assumption, 15th August. Attendees in the 1930s normally reached 25,000 - 30,000, but by 1942 the numbers had fallen to 15,000.[47] Most pilgrims were travelling from nearby areas primarily in Connaught, though it was recorded that one cyclist undertook the 250 mile round trip from Dublin.[48]

The disruption to the market caused by the war was not immediately ended following the conclusion of conflict. The first Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes was not organised until 1949. The Oblate Fathers at Inchicore did not offer their first post-war pilgrimage to Lourdes until 1951.[49] Attendance figures at Knock did not begin to reach their 1930 levels until the early 1950s. If it took time for the pilgrimage market to recover post-war it then grew rapidly in the 1950s. Indeed, it might even be appropriate to discuss the 1950s as the apogee of the pilgrimage market in Ireland. Chart 10 below shows the number of advertisements featuring the term 'pilgrimage' across all titles (national, regional and local) of the Irish Newspaper Archive in the period 1900-1970.[50] This search includes local and national newspaper advertisements for pilgrimage travel. The information is broken down according to decade. The chart dramatically represents the fall off in the number of

[45] Peter Rigney, *Trains, Coal and Turf: Transport in Emergency Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), pp 55-9.
[46] Donnelly, 'Knock Shrine: The Worst of Times', p. 220.
[47] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1941), p. 32.
[48] Ibid.
[49] *Lourdes Messenger* (Oct. 1951).
[50] 'Irish News Archive', Advertisement only search "Pilgrimage" (12 Jun. 2016) (http://archive.irishnewsarchive.com).

advertisements during the 1940s and the equally rapid rise in the 1950s, from 322 to 1,481 advertisements. As was noted in the second chapter this method almost certainly underestimates the total number of pilgrimage advertisements, but it does offer a good indication as to the overall trends.

Chart 12: Irish Newspaper Archive Search; Advertisements featuring the term 'Pilgrimage' 1900-1970.



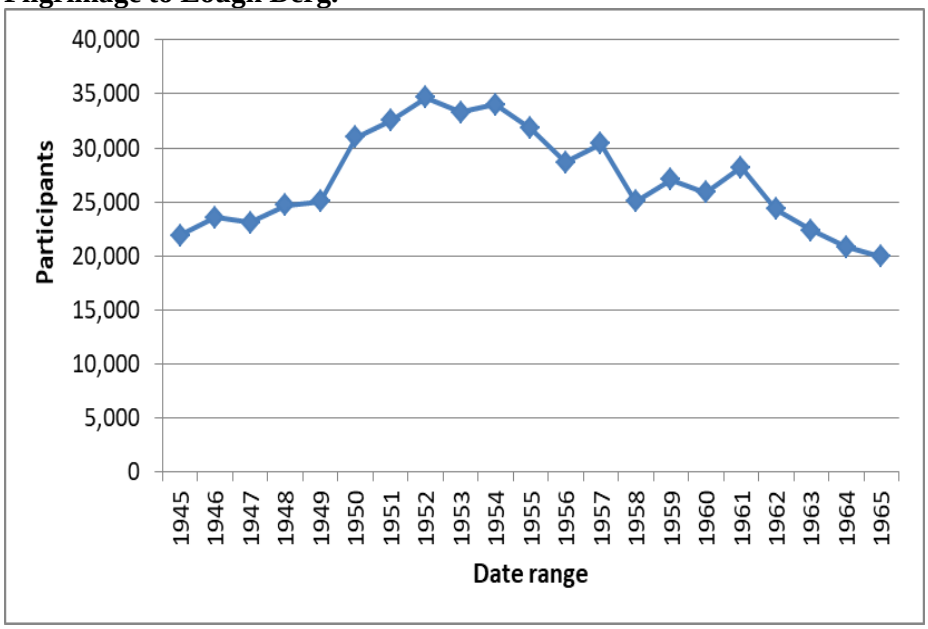
The *Knock Shrine Annual* estimated that over one million pilgrims visited the shrine in 1954.[51] Attendance during 1954 was obviously boosted by the fact Pope Pius had designated it a Marian Year, but large numbers were travelling to Knock throughout the 1950s. The Feast of the Assumption regularly attracted 25,000 to 30,000 pilgrims and other pilgrimage days like Children's Day also attracted large numbers.[52] Children's Day was usually held on the second Sunday in May and normally saw 20,000 to 25,000 children attend.[53] The pilgrim estimates are based only on Sundays or Feast day attendees, as the *Knock Shrine Annual* only counted pilgrims on such days. In the second half of

[51] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1955), p. 3.
[52] 'Diary of Pilgrimages 1954', Ibid, p. 59; 'Diary of Pilgrimages 1955' *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1956), p. 88.
[53] 'Diary of Pilgrimages 1952', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1953), p. 67; 'Diary of Pilgrimages 1954', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1955), p. 51.

the 1950s, however, KSS noted an increase in travel on weekdays, and even out of season travel.[54] Traditionally pilgrimages had only been made to Knock between May and October but increasingly in the 1950s individuals and families were travelling at the times that suited them.

The rise in popularity of pilgrimage travel in Ireland is also suggested by figures from less popular shrines. Chart 11 below shows the swift increase in popularity of pilgrimages in the early 1950s.[55]

Chart 13: Statement of Yearly No. Pilgrims who participated in 3-day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg.



Pilgrimage travel abroad also increased in the 1950s. The Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage would regularly take 400 to 600 pilgrims to Lourdes annually.[56] This is only the tip of the Irish pilgrimage market, however. Tens of travel agencies both in Ireland and abroad, especially in Britain, offered numerous pilgrim tours to Lourdes and other destinations every year. Michael Walsh Tours, Dublin, took a total of 1,000 pilgrims

[54] 'Editorial', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1956), p. 3; 'Editorial', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1957), p. 2.
[55] 'Statement of Yearly No. Pilgrims who Participated in 3-day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg' in Fuller, *The Undoing of A Culture*, p. 271.
[56] Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (16 May 1949) (DDA/Archbishop John Charles McQuaid Correspondence/xlvii Lourdes: i 31 Oct. 1948 to 26 Dec. 1949).

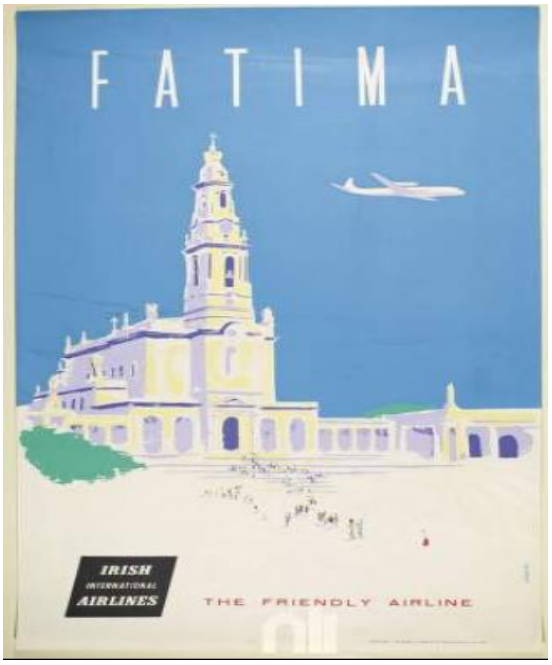
to Rome for the Holy Year in 1950 in the course of five trips.[57] By 1952 it is clear that the scope of Walsh's operations had expanded. He offered four separate journey options to Lourdes, in addition, to Rome, the Holy Land and Fatima tours.[58] After the conclusion of the Second World War Fatima, a site outside Lisbon in Portugal, became increasingly popular for pilgrims. In 1946 it received a canonical coronation from Pius XII, but it may also have been popular immediately after the war because transport facilities in Portugal were less disrupted than in other parts of Europe. Most pilgrimage travel agents offered tours to Fatima, including Cathedral Travel Ltd, based in Dublin. In 1956 they provided a tour to Fatima and Rome as well as offering five different Lourdes options, ranging in price from 33Gns to 54Gns for the total cost, and taking the pilgrims variously from Loyola to San Sebastien and Barcelona.[59] The most direct journey to Lourdes left three times weekly between July and September using Aer Lingus.[60] In addition to advertising directly to the public, Irish travel agents also sought lucrative contracts from Diocesan pilgrimages. George Stokes, founder of the Irish and Continental Travel Agency, wrote to John Kyne, Bishop of Meath in 1952 outlining the company's ambition 'to establish ourselves as the leading agency in Ireland for Pilgrimages to Lourdes, Fatima etc.'[61] Stokes offered the services of his agency for the 1953 Meath Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, promising 'entire satisfaction' for all pilgrims.[62] He was also careful to point out 'that the Agency is all Irish and all Catholic'.[63]

Aer Lingus quite quickly identified pilgrimage travel as a target market. In 1946 they introduced their Dublin to Paris flight, which many tour operators combined with a train journey on to Lourdes. Paris and London also served as hub destinations for further travel to Rome. In the

[57] Michael Walsh to Archbishop McQuaid (23 May 1951) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxv Travel Agencies).
[58] Michael Walsh Tours 1952 Brochure (Ibid).
[59] Cathedral Travel Ltd Brochure (March 1956) (Ibid).
[60] Ibid.
[61] George Stokes to John Kyne, Bishop of Meath (3 Oct. 1952) (Meath Diocesan Archives/John Kyne correspondence).
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid

Holy Year, 1950, Aer Lingus offered a thirty day return ticket to Rome from Dublin or Shannon airports for £54.[64] By the later 1950s the company also offered flights to Lisbon, and in their advertisements featured images of Fatima, clearly suggesting that this was the intended destination of most travellers.[65] The airline did not concentrate solely on the pilgrimage market. Paris, Rome and Lisbon also attracted non-religious travellers. Their winter schedule 1950/1951 reveals that most flights were made to the United Kingdom rather than the continent.[66] It is clear, however, that Aer Lingus saw the pilgrimage market as especially important and directed their advertising posters primarily towards this market.

Image 13: Advertisement, Aer Lingus (Dublin, 1954) (NLI/ Department of Ephemera).



1954 saw the introduction of the first direct flight to Lourdes, to take advantage of increased traffic during the Marian Year.[67] Garret

[64] *Aer Lingus Irish Air Lines timetable winter 1950/51* (Dublin, 1950) (NLI/Department of Ephemera, p. 4).
[65] Aer Lingus Poster, 'Fatima: Irish International Airlines: the friendly airline' (Dublin, 1954) (Ibid); Aer Lingus Poster, 'Lisbon by Aer Lingus' (Dublin, 1959) (Ibid).
[66] Ibid, p. 3.
[67] Advertisement Aer Lingus, *The Irish Catholic*, 5 Feb. 1954.

FitzGerald, who worked for Aer Lingus in the 1950s, recorded in his autobiography that by the latter 1950s the Irish company had become 'the largest operator of both charter and scheduled services, with routes not merely from Dublin to Lourdes, but onwards, with traffic rights, to Barcelona and Rome'.[68] Indeed FitzGerald would even claim some personal responsibility for the success of Aer Lingus's pilgrimage market. In 1958, the Lourdes Centenary, he claimed to get agreement to defer the sale of two Viscount 700 aircraft until after the May – October pilgrimage season. FitzGerald claimed 'The two aircraft were used on that route twenty hours a day on every single day of the five month period, and we carried 81 of the 82 pilgrimages from Ireland and Scotland to Lourdes that summer.'[69] The Lourdes Centenary year, 1958, was a boon not only for air travel to Lourdes. The O'Scannlain travel agency offered daily overland departures to Lourdes throughout the 1958 season.[70] Their overland service was provided in addition to a thrice weekly air service.[71]

Pilgrimage travel remained popular in Ireland and abroad long after the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s travel to Lourdes or Rome became even more affordable to lower income consumers in Ireland. The cost of air travel was reduced and wage levels increased in these decades, making it much more affordable to a wider range of Irish consumers. Increasingly there was more option in the marketplace. Aer Lingus offered a broader range of tourist destinations abroad. In Ireland traditional sites of pilgrimage declined in popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. Lough Derg which had seen a steady decline since the mid-1950s reached a nadir in the 1970s, with attendance around 15,000 for the three day pilgrimage.[72] There was, however, a recovery in the market in the

[68] Garret FitzGerald, *Just Garret: Tales from the Political Front Line* (Dublin, 2010), p. 58.
[69] Ibid.
[70] O'Scannlain Travel Agency Lourdes Centennial Pilgrimages Brochure 1958-1959 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxvi O'Scannlain Travel Agency).
[71] Ibid.
[72] 'Statement of Yearly No. Pilgrims who Participated in 3-day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg' in Fuller, *The Undoing of A Culture*, p. 271.

1980s, and in 1985 for example more than 28,000 people made the three day pilgrimage.[73] In the same year Knock International Airport was opened to facilitate increased international travel to the Shrine, and today one and a half million people travel to Knock each year.

Influence of Church Authorities

Church authorities sought to exercise control over the organisation and behaviour of pilgrimages. This was attempted by Papal authorities in Rome, by bishops and archbishops including John Charles McQuaid of Dublin and Michael Browne of Galway, and even parish priests at shrines like Knock. Various regulations theoretically restricted the behaviour of pilgrims, and Archbishop McQuaid certainly sought to limit the number of pilgrimages undertaken from Dublin. It is questionable, however, how successful Church authorities were in their attempts to exercise control.

In 1936 the Congregational Council of Rome outlined regulations to apply to all pilgrimages. They are listed below in their entirety:

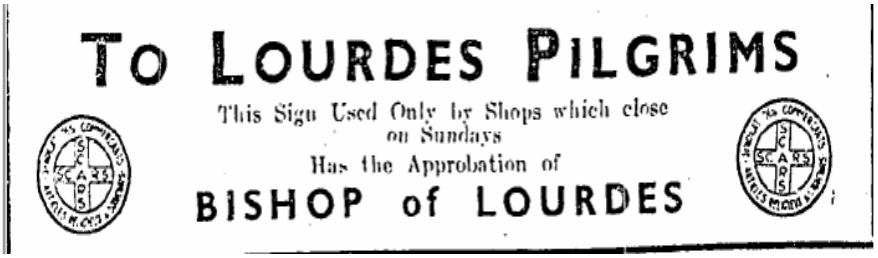
1. Pilgrimages must constantly maintain their essentially religious character and must not be confused with excursions or pleasure trips.
2. Ecclesiastical authorities alone have the right of promoting and directing pilgrimages.
3. Nobody, even if directed by religious institutions can therefore constitute, organise or direct pilgrimages if they be not promoted or at least approved by ecclesiastical authorities.
4. Each pilgrimage should have its proper preparation and a spiritual director must never be wanting.
5. In arranging prices it should be borne in mind that these journeys ought to be possible even for people of modest means, and that only what a prudent administration requires should be asked from the pilgrims, and every idea of gain must be put aside.

[73] Ibid.

6. The technical organisation is not to be done by the clergy, either secular or regular, it is to be entrusted to laymen who are honest and capable, and for whom the ecclesiastical authorities are to require that all be done in a way benefiting the religious motives of these holy undertakings.[74]

The regulations outlined by the Congregational Council assert ecclesiastical control over pilgrimages. Authority was retained in the hands of ecclesiastical powers alone to promote and direct pilgrimages, and only the technical organisation placed in the hands of laymen. The need to assert this authority implies an anxiety that ecclesiastical control over pilgrimages was weakening. The regulations also avowed the 'spiritual character' of the pilgrimage and demanded that unfair profits not be extracted from pilgrims of modest means. Perhaps these regulations were introduced because the 'spiritual character' of some pilgrimages was being lost. The Congregational Council were aware that certain pilgrimages were 'pleasure trips' and that time spent at shrines was being commercialised. Kauffman highlighted Church tirades against materialism at the Lourdes shrine from the late nineteenth century onwards.[75] In the 1930s a sign was produced for shops giving the approbation of the Bishop of Lourdes to sell religious items, or use the Lourdes name.[76] To gain this advantage shops had to close on Sundays and stop selling on other Holy Days and at times of procession.

***Image 14: Advertisement The Irish Independent*, 10 Sep. 1937.**



[74] 'Sacred Congregation of the Council', extract from *The Canon Law Digest,* ii (Feb. 1936), pp 285-6.
[75] Kaufman, *Consuming Visions*, p. 71.
[76] *The Irish Independent*, 10 Sep. 1937.

Complaints of materialism could be levelled at Irish shrines as well as international sites. *The Knock Shrine Annual* went to some efforts in order to deflect criticism of crass materialiam. The 1939 editorial stated:

> While we agree that overt commercialisation or exploitation of devotion is to be deplored it is hardly possible to hold anyone responsible for those abuses that may arise through unfair dealing by some unnamed individuals … there is nothing wrong with fair trading kept within legitimate bounds … trading in souvenirs will take place and is regarded as part of the normal needs of crowds out on pilgrimage. [77]

The article concluded by blaming undesirable trading such as the holding of stalls too close to the Church on un-Catholic and un-Irish behaviour, specifically blaming 'The Jews'.[78] The publication would also frequently remind its readers of the obligations attendant on all pilgrims attending the shrine, including reprinting the 1936 Congregational Council rules.[79]

These efforts, however, were not sufficient to avoid attracting the opprobrium of many Church officials, even their own local priest, Father Grealy. In 1942 Grealy wrote to the Archbishop of Tuam, Joseph Walsh, criticising the overt and untrustworthy commercialisation of the Knock shrine. He claimed 'the latest practice is to buy large quantities of rosaries from the manufacturer, get them blessed in Knock, & then send them all over Ireland'.[80] Grealy only began to publicly criticise the KSS after they interrupted the trade of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, who had sold rosary beads outside the Church at Knock since 1931. In 1942 KSS began to sell their own rosary beads believing that VDP were over-charging pilgrims. Grealy went on to state in his letter to the Archbishop that the KSS had interfered with the

[77] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1939), p. 5.
[78] Ibid.
[79] 'Rules for Pilgrims', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1940), pp 4-5.
[80] Fr. Grealy to Archbishop Joseph Walsh (May 1942) quoted in Donnelly, 'Knock Shrine: The Worst of Times: The 1940s', p. 237.

> Poor people who have to depend on the sale of such things, & especially the Sisters [sic] of Charity who are really very poor. There can be no true religion in people who use it to injure others. It is a negation of religion.[81]

Grealy's objection was not with the commercialisation of the Shrine. Rather he was anxious that control was being removed from subsidiary Church associations and placed into the hands of laymen. Grealy had not raised concerns when the Daughters of Charity had sold rosary beads, only when the KSS moved into competition with them.

The commercialisation of religious goods was also a concern for the highest officials in the Catholic Church in Ireland. In 1957 the office of the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid (1940-1971), conducted an investigation into the selling of statues containing Lourdes water. Northside Wholesale Company, Dublin, admitted to the sale of 4 inch statuettes of Our Lady of Lourdes containing Lourdes water, which they had primarily sold to shops in the West of the country.[82] The firm was willing to discontinue the sale of these statues on the request of the Archbishop, but they asked for, and were granted, the right to dispose of their remaining stock. The Northside Wholesale Company, not content to accept all the blame in this matter, also identified other wholesale traders selling such statuettes. They claimed that Bassi, of Wellington Quay Dublin, Freedman, of Merchant's Quay Dublin, and Guys, of Cork, had also sold statuettes purporting to contain water from Lourdes in the past few years.[83] The office of the Archbishop received confirmation from sources in Knock that Bassi had sold statuettes there within the past two years.[84] John Concannon, at Knock, also informed the Archbishop that three to four stalls were selling rosary beads that purported to contain

[81] Ibid, p. 238.
[82] J. O'Regan to Archbishop John McQuaid (24 July 1957) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: vii 1956 – 1957).
[83] Ibid.
[84] John Concannon to Archbishop John McQuaid (26 July 1957) (Ibid).

Lourdes water.[85] Bassi and Freedman sent assurances that they would discontinue the sale of such items purporting to contain Lourdes water.[86]

In these cases the authority of Archbishop McQuaid, and, by extension, the Catholic Church in Ireland appears quite powerful and overwhelming. When questioned the firms selling these items all decided to discontinue their sale rather than potentially incur the censure of the Archbishop. We should ask whether this investigation by the office of the Archbishop merely identified the tip of the iceberg. How many other firms, either Irish or foreign, were trading in statues or rosary beads purporting to hold Lourdes water, or water from another shrine? The criticism directed at Knock vendors would certainly imply that the sale of such goods was common to many traders in the vicinity. The wholesalers and retailers may have attempted to deliberately deceive consumers by selling an item they knew to be fabricated. It does not seem that this was usual, however. The Northside Wholesale Company, in a letter to Archbishop McQuaid assured him 'the sale of these statuettes was undertaken in all good faith and with the conviction that a very popular and laudable demand was being catered for'.[87] Kauffman highlighted that Church tirades against commercialism often confused faithful believers, who saw 'the buying and selling of religious souvenirs to be a normal part of the pilgrimage journey'.[88]

Archbishop McQuaid was anxious to assert his authority over many aspects of life in Ireland. This fact has been highlighted previously in regard to a number of areas, including, healthcare and family life.[89] Cooney has described McQuaid as an 'authoritarian prelate who used fear as an essential instrument'.[90] Certainly in regard to pilgrimage travel

[85] Ibid
[86] Bassi and Son to Archbishop John McQuaid, (6 Aug. 1957); Freedman and Co. to Archbishop John McQuaid (6 Aug. 1957) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: vii 1956 – 1957).
[87] Northside Wholesale Company to Archbishop John McQuaid, (24 July 1957) (Ibid).
[88] Kauffman, *Consuming Visions*, p. 71.
[89] Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland*, pp 252-76.
[90] Ibid, p. 16.

McQuaid acted zealously to protect his prerogatives and demonstrate his authority. For several years the Archbishop refused to give his blessing to any pilgrimage undertaken from Dublin to Lourdes other than the official Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage. In fact, McQuaid even refused the request of Saint Vincent de Paul to undertake a Lourdes pilgrimage. As highlighted above, Dublin Saint Vincent de Paul had organised a regular Lourdes pilgrimage in the late 1920s and early 1930s. When they sought the blessing of the Archbishop to do so again in 1951 they were refused permission. A secretary from the Archbishop's office informed the President of Saint Vincent de Paul of his grace's decision; 'if pilgrimages from Dublin are allowed to increase without limit, the result will be prejudicial to all the pilgrimages'.[91]

Other Church authorities also sought to safeguard their prerogatives. Bishop Michael Browne of Galway (1937-1976) presents a good example. Browne was perturbed by other religious associations infringing on his domain. In 1954 Eugene Doherty, of the Auxiliary Association of the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, wrote in apology to Browne for the distribution of material relating to the upcoming Oblate Pilgrimage to Lourdes within the Galway Diocese.[92] Whilst the letter does not survive in the archive it is clear that Browne had previously written to Doherty protesting the distribution of this material, claiming that it interfered with efforts to promote the Galway Diocesan pilgrimage. Doherty was profuse in his apologies and even provided a list of the ten addresses to which the material was sent.[93] The LEP Travel agency also wrote to Bishop Browne in 1959 to inform him that the company had distributed promotional material for an upcoming pilgrimage to St Gallent and Oberammergau to various religious houses and parish residences in the Galway Diocese.[94] The agency was clearly

[91] J. O'Regan to E.J. Duffy President of St Vincent de Paul Society (15 Feb. 1951) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: ii 1950 – 1951).
[92] Eugene Doherty to Bishop Michael Browne (3 May 1954) (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence/B/12/310).
[93] Ibid.
[94] LEP Travel Agency to Bishop Michael Browne (6 May 1959) (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence /B/12/313).

concerned that the Bishop would be unhappy with their actions and claimed that they expected any priests who promoted the pilgrimage to first have sought the 'permission of his Bishop'.[95]

Bishop Browne could certainly be a combative figure. When haggling over the cost of the Galway Diocesan Pilgrimage scheduled for 1952 he told Mr B. Graves of the Veritas company 'you are really too innocent for this wicked world'.[96] Browne corresponded directly with the travel agents and religious associations who wrote to him. Archbishop McQuaid on the other hand, always used an intermediary; usually J. O'Regan or Major Glennon who worked within his office. McQuaid appears to have received much more correspondence from travel agents, probably because the majority of pilgrimages departed from Dublin. The Archbishop was unwavering in his refusal to support private travel companies. Michael Walsh, mentioned above, wrote to the Archbishop in 1951 seeking his blessing for further tours he had scheduled for that year.[97] Walsh was initially refused any approval from McQuaid because his pilgrimages did not have a 'Spiritual Director' which was a requirement of the 1936 regulations.[98] Two weeks later Walsh was informed that he could continue with his scheduled pilgrimages provided he did not advertise them any further and did not accept any further fares.[99] Walsh provided no indication that he accepted these terms, and, indeed, in the following year wrote to the Archbishop again seeking further approval. As noted above, his operations had expanded by 1952, and he claimed that he offered an important service to many Irish Catholics in facilitating their travel to holy sites. 'Many people wish to travel to Lourdes with me and the dates of the large Irish pilgrimages do

[95] LEP Travel Agency to Bishop Michael Browne (1 Jun. 1959) (Ibid).
[96] Bishop Michael Browne to Mr B. Graves Veritas House (29 Jan. 1951) (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence /B/12/309).
[97] Michael Walsh to Archbishop John McQuaid (23 May 1951) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxv Travel Agencies).
[98] Major Glennon to Michael Walsh (29 May 1951) (Ibid).
[99] Major Glennon to Michael Walsh (10 Jul. 1951) (Ibid).

not suit them', Walsh wrote to the Archbishop.[100] The answer from McQuaid's office was the same as it has been in the previous year.

Walsh included one phrase in his letter that betrayed his lack of understanding of how Church authorities viewed pilgrimages. He told the Archbishop's office that one of his tours was 'essentially a holiday party'.[101] 'A holiday party' was a serious affront, at least, in the mind of Archbishop McQuaid. In 1957 the American Express Company, who organised cruises from the United States that took in Ireland and Lourdes, wrote to the Archbishop seeking his approval and an Irish Spiritual Director for the cruise.[102] The firm was refused on both grounds and told that approval would never be given 'for such a tourist cruise cum pilgrimage'.[103] A total of six travel agencies are recorded as having written to the Archbishop between 1951 and 1961 seeking his blessing for their organised pilgrimages. This, indeed, may have been a small number of the total travel agencies servicing the Irish market, as those who wrote to the Archbishop seem to have been most unaware of Papal regulations.

In 1954 Pilgrim Tours, based in London, wrote to the Archbishop asking for fifteen nominations for Spiritual Directors for the scheduled air pilgrimages to Lourdes that summer.[104] The proposed Spiritual Directors were offered free return travel to Lourdes and £1 per day expenses. In response the Archbishop requested to know which ecclesiastical authority had given approbation for the pilgrimage.[105] Pilgrim Tour's reply highlights their ignorance of the papal regulations. They claimed to be unaware that 'ecclesiastical permission was required' and offered their apology.[106] Pilgrim Tours claimed to have a Spiritual Director in Lourdes and merely sought Irish priests because of the large

[100] Michael Walsh to Archbishop John McQuaid (4 Mar. 1952) (Ibid).
[101] Ibid.
[102] American Express Co. to Archbishop John McQuaid (23 Oct. 1957) (Ibid).
[103] Archbishop's office to American Express Co. (26 Oct. 1957) (Ibid).
[104] Raity, Manager, Pilgrim Tours to Archbishop John McQuaid (Jan. 1954) (Ibid).
[105] Major Glennon to Raity (6 Feb. 1954) (Ibid).
[106] Raity to Major Glennon (18 Feb. 1954) (Ibid).

number of Irish people who had previously travelled with the company.[107]

It was not only travel agents who appear to have been ignorant of the regulations regarding pilgrimages, but also members of the priesthood. Cathedral Tours Dublin, mentioned above, received a letter from the Archbishop's office in 1956 questioning the ecclesiastical authority for the pilgrimage tours that the company organised. In response the manager of the travel agent informed the Archbishop's office that every year the company received 'numerous letters and visits from priests throughout Ireland, who state that they wish to offer themselves as Spiritual Directors'.[108] In fact, he stated that the company received more applications than they had vacancies to fill, and claimed that it would be inappropriate for them to refuse the polite offers of help they received from priests.[109] Cathedral Tours highlighted for Archbishop McQuaid that Irish priests were either ignorant of Papal laws or were deliberately disregarding them for their own benefit.

McQuaid sought to impose his authority on pilgrimage travel from Ireland and could perhaps be described as overly zealous in his efforts to do so. It is very debatable, however, what effect his efforts had, and even if many people working in the pilgrimage market were aware of what he desired. Archbishop McQuaid could not ban travel agents from organising pilgrimage tours; he could merely withhold his ecclesiastical approval. As the above examples have demonstrated, travel agents continued to organise tours even though they were aware they were acting outside the Archbishop's authority. Attempts by Archbishop McQuaid to impose his control over the pilgrimage market were limited and even petty. He could compel travel agents not to use particular terms in their advertising material, such as 'Pilgrimage' and 'Spiritual

[107] Ibid.
[108] O'Connor, Manager, Cathedral Tours Ltd to Chancellor O'Regan (7 May 1956) (Ibid).
[109] Ibid

Director'. To remove this obstacle travel agents simply changed their terms to 'Pilgrimage tour' and 'Spiritual Leader'. It is very doubtful that consumers were aware of or concerned by the minutia of these distinctions. If a brochure described a pilgrimage as a pilgrimage tour, and promised a spiritual leader, rather than a spiritual director, how many consumers were deterred?

The attempts by Catholic authorities to control the pilgrimage market were severely limited. Church authorities could assert any rules they desired but they had very little power to enforce these rules on private tour operators. The value of the pilgrimage market in Ireland was ultimately so enticing that it could not be ignored by private business. Many travel agents wished they could win the approval of clerical authorities, especially Archbishop McQuaid, to operate their tours but they would still run them without their approval. As has been shown, Church authorities at both local and national level may have been motivated as much by a desire to ensure their own authority as by any concern that religious sites were being commercialised.

The Pilgrimage Experience

There were many different options available within the pilgrimage market. Consumers, firstly, had options in regard to foreign or domestic travel, but, this was limited according to income. In the 1920s and 1930s foreign pilgrimage travel was likely only open to more affluent consumers though the travel of some poorer consumers was subsidised. By the 1950s foreign travel was open to a wider range of society. The Dunn family, discussed in Alexander Humphrey's work, travelled to Rome in 1951.[110] Still at this time it is unlikely that the unskilled working class and agricultural labourers could have travelled abroad unless their ticket was greatly subsidised. Domestic pilgrimage travel, however, was open to essentially all segments in Irish society. By the 1950s many pilgrims were travelling to domestic sites either by train, bus or

[110] Alexander Humphreys, *New Dubliners: Urbanization and the Irish Family* (London, 1966), p. 102.

increasingly car. In addition to differing income related markets consumers also had decisions to make in regard to the type of pilgrimage experience they desired. Knock required much less physical and mental exertion than pilgrimages to Lough Derg and Croagh Patrick for example. Some preferred more physically and spiritually demanding pilgrimages. Pilgrimages organised by Church Dioceses, or subsidiary associations, focussed more consistently on spiritual duties than was the case with many private travel agency tours. The vast range of Irish pilgrimage experiences cannot be captured in this section. It will focus primarily on the most popular domestic and international shrine for the Irish market, Knock and Lourdes, but will also use examples from various sites.

The first fundamental element of any pilgrimage was travel. The vast majority of pilgrims who travelled to both Lourdes and Knock during the period under consideration did so as part of an organised group tour. At Knock largely these tours were facilitated by the subsidiary associations of the Catholic Church; Saint Vincent de Paul societies, the Children of Mary, the Legion of Mary, the Catholic Young Men's Society, and various sodalities and confraternities. Diocese-wide pilgrimages were also organised from many counties in Ireland. The most common Diocesan pilgrimages came from the nearby areas: Tuam, Achonry, Elphin. Group pilgrimages often brought huge numbers to the Knock Shrine. The Elphin Diocesan pilgrimage regularly saw 8,000 pilgrims travelling to the Shrine.[111] Facilitating the movement of groups on this scale evidently required a considerable level of organisation and co-ordination. Reputedly, the Children of Mary Loughrea required 103 buses to transport 3,000 pilgrims in September 1939.[112] Pilgrims were transported to the Shrine via train and bus. Knock did not have a train station of its own, but the nearby stations of Ballyhaunis, Kiltimagh, and Claremorris were all close enough to service the Shrine. Indeed, the

[111] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1940), p. 33; *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1941), p. 44; *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1950), p. 44.
[112] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1940), p. 50.

Knock Shrine Annual even printed an illustrated map demonstrating where pilgrims travelling by rail should disembark.[113] From the nearby train stations pilgrims were then transported on the final leg of the journey to the shrine via bus.

Religious observance often began on the journey to the shrine. On the buses and trains travelling to Knock the religious organisers said prayers and devotions, and hymns were also sung by the pilgrims. In the 1950s the 'Radio Train' was introduced to make the process easier for those in charge of the spiritual direction of the pilgrimage.[114] On the 'Radio Train' prayers and devotions were said over the intercom for all carriages, which meant that individual priests were not needed in every carriage of the train. In the 1950s, as was noted above, it became more common for families or small groups to travel to the shrine at Knock via motor car. The level of car ownership in Ireland was increasing in the 1950s. Over 150,000 motor licences were held in 1959, compared to 50,000 in 1938 for example.[115] Cars were also available for hire and some firms even specifically targeted the pilgrimage market. Paddy Farrell, in Longford offered special rates for pilgrims travelling to Knock or Lough Derg.[116] Travelling via car gave greater individual autonomy to the consumers. One was not compelled to engage in the prayers and devotions often common to bus or train travel.

Travel to the Knock Shrine took, at a maximum, five or six hours from any part of Ireland. For many pilgrims it only involved travelling for an hour or two, and, in all cases it was possible for travellers to make the journey and return on the same day.[117] Travelling abroad, to the Lourdes shrine, was a more time consuming and expensive endeavour. Typically the overland route took ten to twelve days, involving train and

[113] Ibid, back page.
[114] 'Pilgrimages by Radio Train', *Knock Shrine Annual* (Dublin, 1953), p. 4.
[115] *Statistical Abstract 1939* (Dublin, 1939) (OPIE/STAT/3, p. 191); *Statistical Abstract 1960* (Dublin, 1960) (OPIE/STAT/3, p. 301).
[116] Advertisement Paddy Farrell, *Longford Leader*, 3 Jul. 1948.
[117] This was not always the case in during the Emergency period as was highlighted above.

boat travel from Dublin to Lourdes, taking in London and Paris along the way.[118] Cruise travel offered slightly reduced journey times; perhaps around seven days return.[119] In the 1950s with the advent of air travel the journey time was reduced even further to three days at a minimum if only the Lourdes shrine was visited.[120] It proves more difficult to estimate figures travelling to Lourdes from Ireland. Typically Diocesan organised pilgrimages took roughly four hundred to six hundred pilgrims, and by the 1950s there were usually at least five or six Diocesan pilgrimages each summer. In addition to this were the privately organised pilgrimage tours. Garret FitzGerald claimed that 81 pilgrimages travelled to Lourdes via Aer Lingus in summer 1958.[121] Assuming a figure of three hundred pilgrims per pilgrimage, that would equate to over twenty four thousand pilgrims carried by Aer Lingus in one summer.

There were so many different options and travel routes taken on the Lourdes pilgrimage that it is impossible to offer a picture of the typical Lourdes experience. The overland journey often involved a one night stay in London, followed by two or three nights in Paris, and then perhaps three days in Lourdes, followed by a night in Paris and London on the way back to Ireland.[122] Pilgrimage tours also frequently stopped at Lisieux in Normandy; home to the Basilica of St Thérèse, and occasionally at Loyola in the Basque Country; birthplace to St Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus.[123] San Sebastian and Barcelona were also popular cities for pilgrimage tours to Lourdes, as was the Costa

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[118] Advertisement Fifth Oblate Pilgrimage to Lourdes, *Lourdes Messenger* (Jan. 1931); Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage Booklet 9-19 Aug. 1955 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: iii 1950-1951); Advertisement Veritas Inter-Diocesan Pilgrimage, *Sunday Independent*, 20 Feb. 1958.
[119] Buckley, *Oblate an Inchicore, First Fifty Years*, p. 21.
[120] Michael Walsh Pilgrimage Brochure 1952 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxv Travel Agencies).
[121] FitzGerald, *Just Garrett*, p. 58.
[122] Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage Booklet 9-19 Aug. 1955 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: iii 1950-1951); Advertisement Veritas Inter-Diocesan Pilgrimage, *Sunday Independent*, 20 Feb. 1958.
[123] Advertisement Pilgrimage to Lourdes, *Lourdes Messenger* (Apr., 1938), p. 103; Michael Walsh Pilgrimage Brochure 1952 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxv Travel Agencies).

Brava.[124] All of these locations had sites of religious veneration that could be visited by the pilgrims. It is somewhat questionable, however, that this is the reason they were preferred by tour operators and consumers alike.

The amount of time spent at each destination perhaps highlights what was considered important. A 1951 pilgrimage scheduled three and a half days in Lourdes, but a full five days in Biarritz.[125] Biarritz holds La Igelsia de San Martín and La Chapelle Imperiale, but it was and is known more for its seaside tourism and aristocratic highlife than religious veneration. The O'Scannlain tourist agency, mentioned above, organised a pilgrimage tour in 1958 that spent three days in Lourdes and three in St Jean da Luz, another tourist resort along the Basque coast in France. Moira O'Scannlain sent a circular letter to priests across Ireland seeking 'Spiritual Directors' for the pilgrimage.[126] In it she told them that the tour permitted 'the Pilgrims who wish to visit Lourdes to enjoy the benefits of a sunny holiday in the south of France'.[127]

The option existed to merely visit Lourdes via plane on a short four day trip. It is interesting to note that despite the advent of air travel the longer, more luxurious overland route remained popular even into the late 1950s. There were differences, however, between the typical privately arranged pilgrimage and those organised by Church Dioceses or subsidiary religious associations. Church authorities were keen to ensure that pilgrimage travel maintained its essentially religious character. Bishop Browne, speaking to a meeting of past pupils at the Presentation School Galway, stressed the spiritual character of the 1952 Galway Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. 'People do not go there just to see it',

[124] Michael Walsh Pilgrimage Brochure 1952 (Ibid).
[125] Advertisement G.A.A. Pilgrimage to Lourdes, *The Sunday Independent*, 29 Apr. 1951.
[126] Moira O'Scannlain circular letter to Irish Priests (12 May 1958) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: xxvi O'Scannlain Travel Agency).
[127] Ibid.

Browne told the pupils.[128] On Diocesan pilgrimages the pilgrim's time was often minutely planned and ordered. A manual created for the 1955 Dublin Diocesan pilgrimage outlined the daily order anticipated from the pilgrims.[129] They were expected to rise early for mass and communion before breakfast, to be followed by a Solemn High Mass after breakfast. Pilgrims were then expected to assist 'Invalids' at the baths to join in prayers. After lunch time was set aside to visit the Museum at Lourdes before the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament at 4pm. This was followed by the Stations of the Cross and a Torchlight procession at 8pm. Given the constant activity on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage it is perhaps not surprising that an *Irish Press* reporter in 1951 detected 'weariness in their singing of the Lourdes Hymn' on the return to Dublin.[130] Similar schedules were also planned for the various Galway Diocesan pilgrimages undertaken throughout the 1950s.[131]

Tours organised by private travel companies were much less ordered than Diocesan pilgrimages. Pilgrims had more free time on their hands to explore Lourdes town. Masses and processions were still organised for the pilgrims, but they also had more time for their own individual activities. Shopping was certainly one activity that many visitors to Lourdes enjoyed. A vast array of religious items was available to pilgrims. A Centenary Souvenir Guide Book, printed for the Irish market in 1958, told pilgrims travelling to Lourdes what souvenirs to look out for at the shrine. Their list included 'small wooden crucifixes, medals, rosary beads, liturgical books, vestments, small pictures, and miraculous water'.[132] This list only represents a small portion of the religious items sold in Ireland and abroad. In 1958 Philips Electrical

[128] Bishop Michael Browne speech to Past Pupils Presentation Convent Galway (21 Sep., 1952) (GDA/Browne Correspondence/B/12/309).
[129] Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage Manual 1955 (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: v 1954-55, p. 24).
[130] *Irish Press*, 7 Sep. 1951.
[131] Galway Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 1952: Itinerary 25 Aug – 4 Sep 1952 (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence/ B/12/309); Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 1958: Itinerary 8 Sept – 18th September (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence/ B/12/312).
[132] *Lourdes Centenary Souvenir Standard* (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence/xlvii Lourdes: viii 1957-1958, p. 23).

Ireland advertised their 'Lourdes Centenary Lamp', containing a representation of the Virgin Mary, which would become luminescent when connected to an electrical supply.[133] The product was marketed as a memento of the occasion, namely the centenary anniversary of the first apparitions at the Lourdes shrine. The high electrical quality of the lamp was also placed to the forefront in advertising as consumers were assured that the product had a long-shelf life and would not break easily.[134] To distinguish oneself in a competitive marketplace it was necessary to offer something additional.

In addition to the vendors selling religious souvenirs there were also a range of cafes and restaurants that pilgrims frequented. Some even appear to have specifically catered to the Irish market. The Little Flower Shop, owned by a Mrs J. Abbadie, frequently advertised in the pages of the *Lourdes Messenger*. In 1935 the shop promised 'All Religious Souvenirs, Best Quality and Lowest Prices.'[135] More specifically for Irish customers the Little Flower Shop offered 'Irish assistants', and claimed that all workers would be 'pleasant to the Irish'.[136] The Little Flower Shop also claimed to be 'The only shop that has a TEA ROOM attached. Real Irish tea served. Home Made Cakes.'[137] Similar advertisements appeared in the *Lourdes Messenger* throughout the later 1930s. One advert in 1939 promised Irish pilgrims to Lourdes that they would find a 'Home from home' in the shop.[138] In 1951, at the time when the package pilgrimage tour to Lourdes was gaining again in popularity after the Second World War, the Little Flower Shop began to advertise again within the pages of the *Lourdes Messenger*. In June of that year the shop promised 'our Irish assistants will give céad míle fáilte', meaning

[133] Advertisement Philips Electrical Ireland Lourdes Centenary Lamp, *Irish Catholic*, 31 Jul. 1958.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Advertisement The Little Flower Shop Lourdes, *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun., 1935), p. 224.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Advertisement The Little Flower Shop and Tea Rooms, *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun., 1939), p. 165.

literally ‘A hundred thousand welcomes’.[139] The Irish market in Lourdes was evidently quite large and a lucrative one for the numerous vendors and café owners in the town.

The Knock shrine offered similar consuming outlets to Lourdes. The St Anthony Tea Room and Gift Shop is quite famous and still in operation today. It benefited from its advantageous position, only 100 yards from the Church at Knock. Even in the 1930s the Tea Room advertised in local and national newspapers. Consumers were offered ‘Careful and prompt attention … under the personal care of Mrs P. O’Reilly’.[140] The ‘Grotto House’ was in operation at Inchicore shrine from at least 1932, less than two years after the replica was first opened to the public. It would advertise in almost every addition of the *Lourdes Messenger*, mentioned above. The adverts told pilgrims ‘When visiting Irish Lourdes Grotto call at Grotto House … For religious goods, Irish grotto souvenirs’, but ‘Also Teas, Ices, Fruit, Confectionery, and Tobacco.’[141] One advertisement in December 1948 suggested as potential Christmas presents ‘Religious Pictures, Prayer Books, Statues, Beads, Calendars, Altar Lamps, Crosses, Holy Water, Fonts.’[142] The advert went on to remind pilgrims, if none of those religious items took their fancy, that the Grotto House also held ‘toys of every description’. In essence the Grotto House aimed to be a “One-Stop Shop” for Pilgrims at the Irish Lourdes, ‘where a large assortment of religious and fancy goods can be inspected’, but also where pilgrims could find ‘cigarettes and confectionery’.[143]

Mixing the commercial and the sacred irritated ecclesiastical authorities and laymen alike. Yet, this intermingling undoubtedly occurred at sites like Lourdes, Knock and Inchicore. Lough Derg and

[139] Advertisement The Little Flower Shop and Tea Rooms, *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun., 1951), p. 257.
[140] Advertisement St Anthony’s Tea Rooms, *Anglo-Celt*, 9 Jul. 1938, p. 6.
[141] Advertisement The Grotto House Lourdes, *Lourdes Messenger* (Sep., 1933).
[142] Advertisement The Grotto House Lourdes, *Lourdes Messenger* (Dec., 1948).
[143] Ibid.

Croagh Patrick were not commercialised in the same manner as the aforementioned shrines. At Croagh Patrick pilgrims climbed the Reek, 762m above sea level, which normally took around two hours to complete. Some pilgrims even chose to perform the pilgrimage barefoot as a sign of their penitence. At Lough Derg the traditional three day pilgrimage was even more austere. Pilgrims began fasting on the Friday and maintained the fast until midnight on the Monday morning. On arrival at the island pilgrims were expected to remove their footwear and socks, before walking the island saying vocal prayers. It is difficult to accuse Lough Derg or Croagh Patrick of being commercialised in the same manner as Knock or Lourdes. The souvenir shops, the ice cream and the tea were notably absent from both. Pilgrimages such as Croagh Patrick or Lough Derg were still products that attracted consumers. Cafes and other businesses within reach of both sites advertised their goods and services to potential pilgrims. The Atlantic Hotel Bundoran claimed to cater specially for pilgrims travelling to Lough Derg.[144] The Cairo Café, Sligo, likewise told pilgrims to Lough Derg to stop there on the way to the site.[145]

There were many different pilgrimage experiences available to Irish consumers in the twentieth century. Travelling on pilgrimage, moreover, was not the only means through which Irish Catholics could consume the pilgrimage experience. Individuals could contribute towards the pilgrimage in numerous ways. Donations were sought to fund the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. For the 1949 pilgrimage 40,000 children and 40,000 adults were listed as associate members.[146] In total the donations provided by the associate members raised over £2,260 for the pilgrimage.[147] Associate members in exchange would have their names brought before the Grotto at Lourdes. Other Diocesan pilgrimages to Lourdes also sought financial support from ‘associate members’. The

[144] Advertisement ‘The Atlantic Hotel’, *Connacht Tribune*, 26 Jun. 1937.
[145] Advertisement ‘The Cairo Café’, *Limerick Leader*, 14 May 1955.
[146] Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes Estimated Expense (16 May 1949) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: i 1948-1949).
[147] Ibid.

Inter-Diocesan pilgrimage of 1956 (encompassing Galway, Achonry, Elphin, Killala and Clonfert) asked for donations of 1 shilling from associates.[148] KSS sought donations towards the upkeep of the shrine and the various medical and transport services designed to aid 'invalids' travelling to the shrine. In 1954 the *Annual* listed over 350 contributors who provided at least 5 shillings or more towards the Shrine.[149] The largest individual contribution was £50 and any contributions less than 5 shillings were not recorded in the *Annual*.[150]

Irish Catholics could also engage with the pilgrimage in other forms. As Donnelly has noted, members of the clergy, lay associations, and other commercial interests were quick to appreciate the potential of the new mass media outlets to promote Lourdes and other pilgrimage sites.[151] Films showing footage of the Lourdes shrine were regularly screened across Ireland. Donnelly has highlighted a number of such films screened in Dublin and Cork.[152] From the 1920s film footage of Lourdes was shown across the country in provincial towns and even in villages, through travelling, mobile cinemas.[153] Consumers could attend such screenings for as little as 9d.[154] *The Song of Bernadette*, a book by Franz Werfel, turned into a Hollywood film in 1943, proved incredibly popular in Ireland.[155] In fact, it was still being shown in smaller mobile cinemas in the early 1950s, five years after its first release in the country.[156] Other media forms were also used to promote the pilgrimage and provide a consumer outlet for those unable to travel. Radio broadcasts were regularly made from shrines like Knock or Inchicore on Holy Days or for

[148] Associates of Pilgrimage Regulations 1956 (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence/B/12/311).
[149] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1954), pp 78-84.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion', p. 257.
[152] Ibid, p. 258.
[153] Advertisement Electric Cinema Newport Mayo, *Mayo News*, 21 Apr. 1928.
[154] Advertisement Gaiety Theatre, *The Sunday Independent*, 22 Sep. 1935.
[155] Donnelly, 'The Peak of Marian Devotion', p. 258; Kevin Rockett, *Irish Film Censorship: A Cultural Journey from Silent Conema to Internet Pornography* (Dublin, 2004), p. 121; Even though the film was received well in Ireland it was still censored for a line that suggested a modicum of doubt regarding the Immaculate Conception.
[156] Advertisement, *The Kerryman*, 17 Jun. 1950.

special one-off events, and well-known personalities such as Maura Laverty presented radio programmes like ‘Famous shrines of Our Lady’ on 2RN.[157]

Newspapers and magazines also devoted considerable attention to pilgrimages within Ireland and abroad. *The Irish Catholic* in the 1930s carried a section titled ‘Notes from Lourdes’, *The Standard* also provided regular information on pilgrimages both abroad and in Ireland. This is not to mention the major Irish newspapers, which also often carried articles and images featuring pilgrimages to Lourdes, Lough Derg, Knock and other sites. *The Lourdes Messenger* and the *Knock Shrine Annual*, mentioned above, offered consumers even greater insight into the pilgrimage experience. *The Lourdes Messenger* detailed events at the French shrine and at Inchicore, often reprinting sermons given by Bishops and Archbishops at the shrines.[158] The *Knock Shrine Annual* reproduced pilgrimage events for the reader. Each *Annual* carried the section ‘Diary of the Pilgrimage Calendar’ in which the events of each Sunday and Holyday at the shrine were outlined.[159] Again often sermons were reprinted for the readers.

Both publications also focussed on the ‘miracle cure’. *The Lourdes Messenger* almost always carried an article detailing the miraculous cures attained at Lourdes. In 1933 the publication claimed that as many as 88 ‘invalids’ from across the world had been cured at Lourdes within the year. Perhaps most miraculously one article in 1939 highlighted the case of Germaine Bristen, a pilgrim who ‘was cured whilst still a *Protestant*’.[160] *The Knock Shrine Annual* devoted even more attention to miracle cures than the *Lourdes Messenger.* Each edition featured a section called ‘Favours Attributed to Our Blessed Lady’, in

[157] Donnelly, ‘The Peak of Marian Devotion’, p. 258.
[158] *Lourdes Messenger* (Mar., 1932), pp 78-9; *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun., 1932), pp 86-7; *Lourdes Messenger* (Apr., 1933), pp 113-6; *Lourdes Messenger* (Jan., 1936), pp 8-9; *Lourdes Messenger* (Jul., 1936), p. 224.
[159] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1939), p. 19; *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1954), p. 68.
[160] *Lourdes Messenger* (Jun. 1939), p. 168.

which readers would send their thanks for various events. The 1954 Annual carried nearly thirty pages of these favours featuring contributors from 21 counties in Ireland, both north and south.[161] Favours were even sent to the *Annual* from London and other English cities.[162]

The most common favours related to health issues, ranging from serious illnesses including tuberculosis and cancer to more trivial conditions such as warts.[163] All manner of favours were reported in the *Annual*. The Blessed Lady was often thanked for securing employment for individuals. Various types of business difficulties were resolved thanks to the help of Our Lady. Farmers often thanked the Blessed Virgin for the recovery of sick animals or saving crops or hay from destruction owing to bad weather.[164] Mothers wrote to the *Annual* because of the birth of their children.[165] Some of the favours requested sound more ridiculous than others. In 1950 one woman from Cork claimed to have travelled

> On pilgrimage to Knock Shrine to ask our lady to direct me regarding my future partner in life … when I returned from Knock Shrine that evening a young man called at our home and asked me marry him [sic].[166]

The genre of the miracle cure was incredibly popular for Irish consumers in the twentieth century. Yet this focus on miracle cures jarred with the desired 'spiritual character' of the pilgrimage. In 1951 the Bishop's Counsel declared that 'Lourdes should not be visited as a place where miraculous cures occur but mainly as a place of repentance and penance'.[167]

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[161] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1955), pp 9-37.
[162] Ibid, p. 9.
[163] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1956), p. 25; (Galway, 1957), p.74.
[164] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1955), p. 23.
[165] Ibid, p. 22.
[166] *Knock Shrine Annual* (Galway, 1950), p. 59.
[167] *Irish Catholic*, 16 Aug. 1951.

Undoubtedly, however, very many pilgrims were attracted to Lourdes and other sites by the hope of a miracle cure or the granting of some other favour. This was a major factor behind the strong appeal of such pilgrimage sites. It is very difficult to identify this as the primary motivation for pilgrimage travel, however, because few, if any, pilgrim accounts admit this as a reason. Those writing pilgrimage accounts in Catholic newspapers and journals almost universally followed the Church line that it was inappropriate to travel in search of a miracle cure or a favour. One pilgrim writing for the *Lourdes Messenger* in 1951 virtually parroted the Church line on the topic: 'cures are not the most important thing about Lourdes … the principal object of a pilgrimage is to comply with Our Lady's request to do penance'.[168] There appears, however, to have been general societal awareness that many pilgrims travelled in the hope of cures or favours. The pilgrim mentioned above was prompted to make this assertion because of a question put to her by an 'older gentleman' travelling on the train alongside the tour: 'are we all going to ask for a cure?'.[169] The miracle cure was part of the attraction of many religious shrines, especially Lourdes and Knock. Even if pilgrims did not have personal favours they hoped would be blessed at the shrines the fact that miracles were associated with religious sites must have widened their appeal.

The chapter has highlighted the numerous ways in which diverse consumers experienced the pilgrimage. The market provided various options catering to different income brackets, but also catering to different interests. Travelling to a shrine could be undertaken as a serious spiritual undertaking, but it could also be part of a leisure trip. In addition to making the actual journey itself a wide array of media catered to the Irish interest in the pilgrimage. Radio, film and periodicals gave consumers who perhaps could not travel an insight into events at shrines, and also catered to their interest in miracle cures and favours.

[168] *Lourdes Messenger* (Nov., 1951), p. 27.
[169] Ibid.

The pilgrimage as a leisure pursuit?

The chapter has already demonstrated travel agents, airlines, and numerous other firms in Ireland and abroad treated the pilgrimage as a marketable commodity. There is also evidence that consumers viewed the pilgrimage in the same manner. Travelling on pilgrimage, either in Ireland, or abroad, was a leisure outlet for many consumers at a time when such outlets were circumscribed. Pilgrimage travel may, indeed, have been a particularly important leisure outlet for Irish women, who as Clear has noted, often had few such opportunities.[170] The spiritual aspect of the pilgrimage cannot be denied or reduced, but clearly it was more significant for some pilgrims and less so for others. For some the pilgrimage was a 'pleasure trip', while for others reducing the pilgrimage to this level was sacrilegious. The types of pilgrimages available also varied, meaning that consumers had the option to choose a pleasure trip or a spiritual retreat.

Relatively few accounts offer an insight into the average experience of pilgrimage travel. One interesting account is provided by Father Michael Buckley, an Oblate Father at Inchicore. In the 1980s he authored *The First Fifty Years*, ostensibly as an account of the Inchicore Lourdes's replica. Buckley began the account with his own personal experience of travelling to Lourdes on a schoolboy pilgrimage in 1928. 'It was his first time going as far as even Dublin, let alone France', he notes.[171] It is what we might describe now as his tourist experience that takes up most of the account. He writes of arriving in Paris 'in the dark of a spring evening, a restaurant and (thank heavens) a meal to fill an aching, empty stomach. We sat around tables and were *waited* upon. This was really living it up!.'[172] He was immensely impressed by his first encounter with a French restaurant describing how 'the platters arrived full and overflowing'.[173]

[170] Caitriona Clear, *Women of the House: Women's Household Work in Ireland, 1926-1961* (Dublin, 2000), pp 207-212.
[171] Buckley, *Oblate at Inchicore*, p. 6.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.

Father Buckley was disappointed and slightly bemused by the breakfast provided in Paris on the following morning; 'no rashers and eggs – no sausages – no tea! We would surely die of starvation before we ever reached home again.'[174] The absence of these home comforts was soon eclipsed he explained by the encounter with a new consumer commodity; 'we discovered lemonade – clear, tasty, satisfying, so much more titillating and satisfying than the yellow and rose coloured stuff we knew at home. We lived on it and squandered meagre resources on it.'[175] Father Buckley also detailed his experiences at Lourdes itself. His experience at the shrine was very important in his life, as later he joined the priesthood. 'I was hooked on an experience that would and did leave a lifelong scar', he wrote on his time at Lourdes.[176] The tourist experience in Paris, however, reads as equally exhilarating to the young Buckley. Buckley seemed to remember the French lemonade most vividly, more than fifty years after the event.

The theme of French food and drinks ran through very many accounts of Lourdes pilgrimages. Many pilgrim travellers seem to have been apprehensive regarding the food they would receive when abroad. One anonymous writer in the *Lourdes Messenger* described their experience of visiting the shrine in the 1930s: 'get it out of your head that the French cannot make tea. Tea was served in all the Paris and Lourdes hotels to those who wanted it, and it was very good.'[177] As was suggested in the third chapter, the Irish were often most obsessed by tea. One pilgrim who recounted her experience to the *Lourdes Messenger* explained 'some people must have tea, no matter where they are, even when it is served with hot milk, as is the case here. Me, I love tea, but prefer good coffee to bad tea.'[178] The Little Flower Shop, mentioned above, always mentioned their tea room, but also the Irish assistants

[174] Ibid, p. 7.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] *Lourdes Messenger* (Sep., 1938), p. 269.
[178] *Lourdes Messenger* (Dec., 1951), p. 54.

working there. Perhaps this was intended to remove any apprehension regarding the poor quality of French tea.

Pilgrimage accounts are a curious hybrid genre. They are half religious epiphany and half travelogue. Another pilgrim writing in the *Lourdes Messenger* recounted how she spent her free time in Paris on the journey back from Lourdes. She visited a 'small Breton restaurant' where

> The food was delicious, and the service, by one young girl was faultless. There was nothing extraordinary on the menu, but there was that subtle perfection of flavouring and tenderness that puts a whole world of distance between an omelette or a grilled chop in this country and in our own.[179]

As was the case with Father Buckley above, her account of the restaurant stands out as much or more than her time at Lourdes. An account of a pilgrimage to Fatima by a Cork Legion of Mary member was printed in the *Irish Catholic* in 1948. The story was intended to be about both the pilgrimage and new mode of air transport used to travel to Portugal. The pilgrim described his encounter with 'a very nice young lady attendant, who handed me a packet of chewing gum'.[180] In a similar vein an account of two Belfast men who climbed Croagh Patrick in 1945, published in the same paper, explained that at Westport 'in the shop, which had a neat arrangement of tables, we had delicious fare while we talked the pleasant talk which one can always find for a pretty female attendant'.[181] Encounters with pretty female attendants or waitresses were not necessarily exclusory to pilgrimage journeys.

John H. Guinan wrote to Archbishop McQuaid in 1950 describing his outrage at the activities that occurred on a Dublin Saint Vincent de Paul pilgrimage to Lourdes in the 1930s. Guinan informed the Archbishop that in Paris the pilgrimage group had been booked into

[179] *Lourdes Messenger* (Apr., 1952), p. 180.
[180] *Irish Catholic*, 7 Oct. 1948.
[181] *Irish Catholic*, 26 Jul. 1945.

separate hotels, with many of the pilgrimage leaders unable to supervise the 'common herd', as Guinan described them.[182] Owing to the lack of supervision the manageress at one hotel booked in several guests to a showing of the Folies Bergére: a cabaret house known for a looser moral fortitude than Archbishop McQuaid.[183] Guinan wrote, with an evident sense of indignation, 'Mixed parties of girls and young men from Catholic Ireland went together to the Folies … We were as sheep without a shepherd.'[184] Guinan was undoubtedly over-emphasising the moral lapses for the sake of appealing to McQuaid, but there is no reason to assume that the events did not occur. Indeed, it is likely that very many pilgrims staying in Paris took advantage of all the city had to offer.

The danger associated with travelling abroad to cities like Paris was well established but Irish shrines were thought to offer greater spiritual reflection. As was noted above sites like Lough Derg or Croagh Patrick undoubtedly had a different character to Knock or Lourdes. We can assume a more penitential atmosphere at the former sites. We should be careful, however, not to draw an unbridgeable divide between different pilgrimage sites. A good example is offered by George O'Brien in the *Village of Longing*. In the book O'Brien discusses the religious practices of his aunt, explaining:

> Like most women of the town, and to a greater degree than a lot of them, Chrissy was involved in the Church's elaborate network of subsidiary devotional obligation, participation in which, as we were frequently reminded from the pulpit, was the true mark of a real Catholic.[185]

Regularly Chrissy would undertake the journey up the mountain at Lough Derg to St Patrick's Church. Notionally Chrissy had observed the demands made on "true Catholics" by the Church in Ireland. The young

[182] John H. Guinan to Archbishop McQuaid (23 May, 1950) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence/ xlvii Lourdes: ii 1949-50).
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] George O'Brien, *The Village of Longing: An Irish Boyhood in the Fifties* (Dublin, 1989), p. 107.

O'Brien was appalled, however, at the manner in which Chrissy would habitually describe this pilgrimage in a light-hearted and joking way; 'I couldn't understand how she could come from Lough Derg and sit at the kitchen table light-heartedly telling us about it, mimicking this one and ridiculing that, as though nothing had happened'.[186] O'Brien explains that 'for her, the whole experience was not a solemn sobering' one, and that sitting at his family's kitchen 'her piece de resistance was an imitation of someone either sneaking a cigarette or cadging a drag'.[187] O'Brien was dismayed by the behaviour of his aunt, but it is reasonable to assume that Chrissy was not alone in approaching the Lough Derg pilgrimage in this light-hearted attitude. We can certainly assume, given the easy manner in which Chrissy discussed her joking on pilgrimage, that this behaviour was seen as normal and acceptable. Even at Lough Derg, which certainly was not like the Costa Brava, pilgrims could create their own leisure practices.

Travelling on pilgrimage, along with other leisure outlets provided by the subsidiary associations of the Catholic Church, may have offered a particularly significant form of leisure for many Irish women. O'Brien notes that most women of the town were engaged in the 'network of subsidiary devotional obligation', and whilst he notes that they were encouraged to do so from the pulpit perhaps this was not the only reason why so many were active. Caitriona Clear has highlighted that very often women, especially if they were married, had limited leisure opportunities outside the family house.[188] One of the attractions of the pilgrimage may have been that if offered women in particular time away from their homes. Travelling on pilgrimage would also have given many women the chance to visit locations that would have been unimaginable otherwise, such asParis or even Biarritz.

[186] Ibid, p. 109.
[187] Ibid, p. 110.
[188] Clear, *Women of the House: Women's Household Work in Ireland, 1926-1961*, pp 207-212.

It is difficult to assess the gender breakdown of pilgrims, but it is a reasonable assumption that women usually predominated. Diocesan pilgrimages occasionally produced booklets that listed the names of all pilgrims travelling. In the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage of 1955 of the 582 total pilgrims who travelled, 76% were women.[189] In the Galway Diocesan Pilgrimage of the same year 81% of all pilgrims were women.[190] Photographs of pilgrim parties almost universally show a mass of women, with a few men, normally in clerical attire, scattered throughout. Many female pilgrims were nuns, but most were lay travellers. It is a reasonable assumption that travelling on pilgrimage, combined with engagement in the subsidiary organisations of the Catholic Church, offered a form of leisure outlet. This was certainly the case for Chrissy mentioned above. The pilgrimage was one of the few leisure opportunities that she could anticipate. Importantly, however, travelling to a religious site or engaging with Church associations also fulfilled the demands requested by the Catholic Church. Women could engage in this form of leisure easily, and without any shame from wider society.

Today very many consumers choose to spend their leisure time engaged in pursuits that might not be described as pleasurable. In the post-modern worldmfasting and meditation have again become popular. Traditional pilgrimages such as the Camino de Santiago have also seen a great resurgence in popularity in recent years.[191] It is recognised that few pilgrims undertake the journey for spiritual reasons but rather for health or leisure purposes. Even in Ireland the Croagh Patrick pilgrimage has increased in popularity since the period under consideration. Today 25,000 pilgrims can be anticipated on Reek Sunday every year, in comparison to roughly 2,000 in the 1940s. It is somewhat prejudicial to

[189] Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage Booklet (9-19 Aug 1955) (DDA/McQuaid Correspondence, xlvii Lourdes: v 1954 – 1955).
[190] Diocesan Pilgrimage Fund Instructions and List of Pilgrims (1955) (GDA/Michael Browne Correspondence /B/12/310).
[191] Linda Kay Davidson, 'Reformations of the Pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostella' in Pazos (ed.), *Redefining Pilgrimages*, pp 159-81.

assume that only post-modern consumers seek out mental and physical tests for the sake of leisure.

Pilgrimage travel was popular across Europe and further afield in the 1922 to 1960 period, and was certainly not simply an Irish phenomenon. *The Lourdes Messenger* frequently reported on the many pilgrimages from different nations, primarily from Europe, but also internationally, especially from South America.[192] It is useful to understand pilgrimage travel as part of a wider and expanding mass leisure market in inter-war and post-war Europe and the Western World. The late 1930s saw French and British workers guaranteed a two-week paid vacation. [193] Irish industrial workers were also granted the right to one week paid annual leave in 1936 under the Conditions of Employment Act.[194] In Germany and Italy mass leisure associations provided recreation opportunities to lower-class German and Italian consumers. Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro primarily focussed on organising sporting activities, while Kraft durch Freude organised package tours and holidays, especially cruises.[195] Official statistics show that by 1938 over 10 million Germans had taken Kraft durch Freude holidays.[196] The Fascist organisations were specifically committed to the promotion of national community belonging through leisure activities. In Britain mass leisure in the 1930s, and later, was facilitated by the holiday camps operated by Harry Warner and Billy Butlin, amongst others. The holiday camps provided a form of communal leisure outlet. Holiday makers slept in individual 'Chalets' but the rest of their time at the resort was

[192] *Lourdes Messenger* (Oct., 1933), p329-30; *Lourdes Messenger* (Aug., 1936), p. 260; *Lourdes Messenger* (Nov., 1936), pp 363-4.
[193] Julian Jackson, *The Popular Front in France: Defending Democracy 1934-1938* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 265; Sandra Trudgen Dawson, 'Working-Class Consumers and the Campaign for Holidays with Pay', *Twentieth Century British History*, xviii, no. 3 (2010), p. 277.
[194] Section 26, Conditions of Employment Act 1936.
[195] Victoria de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organizations of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge, 1981), pp 60-93; T.W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the 'National Community'* (Oxford, 1993).
[196] Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich*, p. 160.

organised around a communal schedule.[197] Meals were served at a canteen and organised recreation took up most of the day. 'Concerts, fancy dress competitions, beauty pageants, plays and physical culture classes' encouraged holiday makers to relax communally.[198]

The growth of mass pilgrim travel in Ireland occurred at the same time as the development of mass leisure associations and private business concerns in the rest of Europe. Both were made possible because of new technological developments and the declining cost of mass transportation. Communal activities, rather than individual leisure time, were central to both pilgrimage travel and tourism. The communal processions, songs and devotions organised at Knock or Lourdes followed the same trend as the communal games and activities organised at British holiday camps. Pilgrimages are different in many regards from holiday camps but the commonalities are worthy of note. Instead of viewing the growth in pilgrimage travel as something that separates Ireland from international developments it might be useful to understand it as part of a transnational trend. In the latter 1950s, as has been highlighted, the collective nature of the pilgrimage was giving way to individual and family participation. Group travel to Knock was gradually being replaced by individual and family travel to the shrine.

Conclusion

Irish people travelled on pilgrimage for various reasons. For many travelling to a holy shrine in Ireland or abroad was an expression of their sincere spiritual devotion. For others the pilgrimage may merely have been an excuse to travel, to relax, to enjoy oneself. For most Irish pilgrims the truth of their experience probably lay between these two extremes. The pilgrimage offered the chance for both spiritual fulfilment and leisure. It was a form of leisure that was socially acceptable and even laudable. Women, in particular, may have been attracted by pilgrimage

[197] Trudgen Dawson, 'Working-Class Consumers and the Campaign for Holidays with Pay', p. 296.
[198] Ibid.

travel because it was seen as praiseworthy. Pilgrimages offered female consumers a leisure outlet at a time when relatively few were available, especially to married women. This is not to assert that the leisure time of all Irish Catholics had to be organised by or through the Church. The previous chapter has already highlighted the popularity of dance halls, and we could add to this cinema, and sporting events.

Church authorities often presented leisure as fundamentally contradictory to the spiritual demands of the pilgrimage. We have little evidence to show that most pilgrims viewed the pilgrimage through this dichotomy, however. We also have little evidence that the rules imposed by ecclesiastical authorities were observed or enforced by pilgrims or tour operators. Chrissy's casual talk of 'cadging a drag' suggests how commonly the spiritual demands of a pilgrimage were undermined. Travel agents were not prepared to forego the lucrative pilgrimage market merely because they did not have the correct ecclesiastical authority. 'Pilgrimage tours' and 'Spiritual Leaders' proved suitable substitutes capable of attracting consumers. The supposedly overbearing influence of the Catholic Church in Irish society was rather impotent in regard to pilgrimages. The Church was impotent, that is, in an area over which it should have been able to exercise direct authority.

The concept of a legalistic adherence to Church regulations, which has been propounded, to some degree, by both Inglis and Fuller may have some merit, but, also needs to be correctly nuanced and placed in context. Lay religious practice like pilgrimage travel was not directly opposed to institutional expressions of faith. A more meaningful understanding of popular and institutional devotion can be reached by exploring the relationship between both expressions, mediated according to the obvious power dynamic at work.[199] Irish pilgrims were monitored and controlled by Church authorities and influenced by the wider Catholic ethos dominant in society. This does not mean that they could

[199] Ellen Badone, 'Introduction' in Badone (ed.), *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society* (Princeton, 1990), p. 4.

not form their own interpretation of appropriate pilgrimage behaviour despite the commands of Church authorities. It does not mean that some pilgrims deliberately undermined what they knew to be the demands of the Church for their own sense of enjoyment.

Chapter 6
Consuming and Emigration

On 6 January 1952, six year old, Gearoid Ó Cathain received his Christmas gift.[1] His present had arrived at Dunquin post office in Kerry two weeks previously, but because of a particularly harsh storm his parents on the Great Blasket Island were unable to reach the mainland. The Blasket islands are located in the Atlantic Ocean, around 12 miles from the coast of Kerry, and by the early fifties their population had shrunk to around 50 people, who had collectively demanded to be rehoused on the mainland.[2] The Blaskets were perhaps the most remote community in Ireland, and the population had to leave the island for shopping, for medical services and to reach the post office. By 6 January the weather had abated sufficiently for Gearoid's father to travel to the post office and collect his son's gift from the boy's uncle in America. The Blasket islanders regularly received gifts from relatives in America, and the felt proximity of the United States is captured by the phrase 'Next Parish Boston'; often used to describe the island.[3] As William Glynn, who produced a report on the island, commented 'there is no brightly lit shop nearer than Tralee which is, practically speaking, no nearer than Boston or Dublin'.[4]

Glynn's comment is perhaps more revealing than he intended. To a certain extent consumers on the Blasket islands and other remote parts of Ireland were as connected to America as to towns and cities on the mainland. The broader historiography has tended to stress their isolation and deprivation, which is certainly valid, given the conditions that are described in several reports on such remote islands.[5] Their interaction

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[1] *The Irish Independent*, 6 Jan. 1952.
[2] Appendix to the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Great Blasket Island (1947) (National Archives Ireland/Department of the Taoiseach /3/S14122B, p. 27).
[3] Joan and Ray Stagle, *The Blasket Islands: Next Parish America* (Dublin, 1980).
[4] William Glynn, Submission on the Blasket Islands and Dingle Peninsula (T.C.D./Manuscripts Library/Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8305).
[5] Conditions on the Great Blasket Memorandum (6 Aug. 1947) (NAI/TAOIS/3/S14122A); A. Gallagher, Report on the Blasket Islands (3 Sep. 1947) (NAI/TAOIS/3/S14122A); Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Great Blasket Island (1947) (NAI/TAOIS/3/S14122B); Migration of the Population of

with relatives abroad, however, as well as the circulation of material goods sent by these relatives has largely been overlooked. In general, there has been a lack of research into consuming behaviours and their importance to emigration from Ireland. The significance of consumer aspirations as a motivation for emigration is addressed by Enda Delaney, especially in his work, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*.[6] Clair Wills has also discussed such motivations in her recent book; *The Best are Leaving*, focussing on the condemnations of such motivations directed primarily at Irish women.[7] Few studies have addressed the importance of consumer goods to the interaction of migrants and their families and communities. Ann Schofield highlighted the importance of consumer goods as markers of difference and separation between returned emigrants and their local communities, drawing primarily on the research of Arnold Schrier conducted in the 1950s.[8] Hilary O'Kelly has written on the 'American parcel': the sending of consumer goods from America and other locations back to Ireland.[9] The topic was also briefly addressed in Meaney, O'Dowd and Whelan's *Reading the Irish Woman*, drawing primarily on O'Kelly's research.[10] Irish consumers were made aware of the difference between the consumer culture and material items available at home and abroad, but, many also received such goods, in addition to cash remittances, from family members who had emigrated. This process highlighted the difference between Ireland and other nations, but also served to undermine and reduce the difference.

Great Blasket Island to the mainland at Dunquin, (27 Sep. 1949) (NAI/TAOIS/3/S14122B).

[6] Enda Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain* (Oxford, 2007).

[7] Clair Wills, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration and Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge, 2015).

[8] Ann Schofield, 'The Returned Yank as Site of Memory in Irish Popular Culture', *Journal of American Studies*, xlvii (2013), pp 1175-95; Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration, 1850-1900* (Minneapolis, 1958).

[9] Hilary O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America: American Clothes in Ireland c1930-1980', in Alexandra Palmer and Hazel Clark (eds.), *Old Clothes, New Looks: Second Hand Fashion* (Oxford, 2005).

[10] Gerardine Meaney, Mary O'Dowd and Bernadette Whelan, *Reading the Irish Woman. Studies in Cultural Encounter and Exchange, 1714–1960* (Liverpool, 2014), pp. 118-120.

Whilst the broader historiography on emigration has largely ignored the significance of consuming, recent scholarship has shown greater interest in the trans-national dimension of Irish migration and communication between migrants and the home community. This interest can perhaps be traced back to Kerby Miller's *Emigrants and Exiles*, despite the limitations of the work for which it received criticism.[11] David Fitzpatrick's work on emigration to Australia stressed the importance of interaction between the diaspora and home community.[12] Letters from abroad provided information across oceans, but also helped to maintain familial bonds. Fitzpatrick has also emphasised the importance of the "network" in understanding emigration from Ireland, and this concept has become increasingly important to the historiography on Irish migration.[13] The network, according to Fitzpatrick, was 'open and optional rather than exclusive and fully reciprocal', meaning it offered vital support structures, but did not necessarily lock Irish migrants into obligations. [14] The previous focus on the more impersonal forces of history has shifted towards the individual, the family, and the community. Enda Delaney has further advanced this approach by stressing that emigration should be viewed as both an economic and a socio-cultural phenomenon, and his emphasis encourages a greater focus on the everyday experience of emigration.[15] Recent research by Jennifer Redmond has shown that Irish female emigrants had more agency in

[11] Kerby Miller, *Emigrant and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford, 1985); Donald Harman Akenson, 'The historiography of the Irish in the U.S.A.' in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish in the New Communities* (Leicester, 1992), p. 117; Patrick O'Sullivan, 'The Irish in the New Communities: Introduction' in O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish in the New Communities* (Leicester, 1992), p. 9.
[12] David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal accounts of Irish migration to Australia* (Cork, 1994); David Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain: Settlers or Transients?' in Patrick Buckland and John Belchem (eds.), *The Irish in British Labour History* (Liverpool, 1993).
[13] David Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain: Settlers or Transients?'; Enda Delaney and Donald MacRaild (eds.), *Irish Migration, Networks and Ethnic Identities since 1750* (Abingdon, 2007).
[14] Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain: Settlers or Transients?', p. 7.
[15] Enda Delaney, 'Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration from Post-War Ireland' in Delaney and MacRaild (eds.), *Irish Migration, Networks and Ethnic Identities Since 1750*, p. 282.

making decisions to leave the country than has previously been believed.[16]

This increased interest in the everyday experience of migrants, however has largely bypassed consumer behaviours presenting a significant lacuna. Reports into the reasons for emigration often stressed the significance of consumer aspirations, laying the blame either on the failure of Irish society or on the individuals who were seduced by the bright lights and big city. Commentary from migrants themselves also suggests the importance of consumer desires, which often melded with other aspirations especially the desire for increased independence or to marry. The consumer products and consumer behaviours of their new locations provided emigrants with a language to describe differences between home and abroad. Differences between Ireland and Britain were understood via descriptions of competing consumer opportunities. Networks of Irish support were established around consumer spaces especially pubs and dance halls but many migrants chose to avoid such spaces in an effort to integrate into British society. Contact with Ireland did not end when a migrant decided to leave home. Emigrants frequently returned, either permanently or on holiday. Back in Ireland these migrants were often characterised according to the consumer items they carried, or the new consumer possibilities their wealth offered. Money sent back by emigrants abroad was vital in helping communities to survive in rural areas, and to transition to a modern consumer economy. In addition to money emigrants also frequently sent consumer goods, especially clothing, to their families.

This chapter will focus primarily on the post-second World War era. In this period the level of emigration was consistently increasing, as the number of Irish citizens travelling, normally to Britain, continued to rise year on year until the later 1950s.[17] Whilst emigration had habitually

[16] Jennifer Redmond, *Moving Histories, Irish Women's Emigration to Britain from Independence to Republic* (Liverpool, 2018), p6-14.
[17] Enda Delaney, *Demography, State and Society: Irish Migration to Britain 1921 – 1971* (Liverpool, 2000), p. 164.

been figured as a "problem" for Irish society it was in the post-war period in which it was seen as a potential threat to the state and nation. Numerous reports undertaken in the 1950s and 1960s tried to explain the reasons why so many Irish people were flocking out of the country. *The Vanishing Irish*, published in 1954, captured an apparent sense of hopelessness and despair.[18] In 1956, following more than a decade of increasing emigration, the Census revealed for the first time a decline in population from pre-independence levels.[19] This was taken as a tragic and momentous failure on the part of the Irish state; freedom from Britain had not brought prosperity, but rather an apparently terminal decline. Emigration was not seen as the only problem, but at the root of many inter-connected issues, including attitudes to marriage, the division of land-holdings, and the class structure. Indeed, as the introduction noted, the 1950s gained the name the "lost decade" owing to the perception of stagnation and decay, of which emigration was a central aspect.[20]

Irish society became deeply concerned by the effect emigration was having on the country. *The Report of the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems* provides fascinating insight into how Irish society and the Irish state conceptualised the "problem" of emigration in the mid-1950s.[21] The Commission was the first effort by an Irish administration to study population trends, and as Connolly notes, to date the only one to do so with a 'particular emphasis on emigration'.[22] It collected an incredible volume of material providing an unprecedented insight into the factors leading to emigration from Ireland. Of particular interest to this study are the interviews that were conducted with intending emigrants at Employment Exchanges across the country as well

[18] John O'Brien (ed.), *The Vanishing Irish* (London, 1954).
[19] *Census of Population 1956 Vol. 1* (Dublin, 1956).
[20] Dermot Keogh, Finbarr O'Shea, Carmel Quinlan (eds), *The Lost Decade: Ireland in the 1950s* (Cork, 2004).
[21] *The Report of the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems* (Dublin, 1954).
[22] Tracey Connolly, 'The Commission on Emigration 1948-1954', in Keogh, O'Shea and Quinlan (eds.), *Ireland in the 1950s*, p. 87.

as the information collected on life for emigrants in Britain, largely through liaison with authority figures including employers, welfare officers, priests and nuns.[23] It can be difficult to access the voice of the emigrant within this material as interviews were filtered through the mediating influence of the interviewer, and his or her attendant prejudices. They do offer some insight into the motivations of individual migrants, however. The chapter will also draw upon more specific, regional reports, which nonetheless serve to highlight some of the wider trends. *The Limerick Rural Survey*, published in the 1960s provides a detailed snapshot into many of the factors encouraging emigration within one county.[24] Hugh Brody's study of Inishkillane offers an even more telescopic view, focussing on one parish in County Clare.[25] The study was published in the 1970s, based on research conducted in the mid to late 1960s, but the issues raised are equally relevant to the period under consideration in this chapter. In both studies we get a more intimate view of the effect emigration had on local communities and both highlight the importance of changing consumer desires as well as social stigmas and identities that were expressed via consumer behaviours.

Additionally, the chapter will draw on Irish literature, memoirs and oral history collections. Donall MacAmhlaigh's *An Irish Navvy* published in 1964 and based on the personal experience of MacAmhlaigh as a migrant worker in Great Britain through the 1950s have proved useful.[26] Many oral history projects have been undertaken to record the experience of Irish emigrants who settled in Great Britain. Most are regionally specific, and the chapter will utilise oral history interviews of emigrants living in London and Lancashire.[27] Memoirs and oral history

[23] This material is only available today for the historical record thanks to the conscientious cataloguing of Arnold Marsh and the preservation work of the Trinity College Manuscript and Research Archive Library.
[24] Patrick Mc Nabb, *The Limerick Rural Survey: Interim Reports I-V* (Dublin, 1965).
[25] Hugh Brody, *Inishkillane: Change and Decline in the West of Ireland* (London, 1973).
[26] Donall MacAmhlaigh, *An Irish Navvy: The diary of an exile* (London, 1970) (trans. Valentin Iremonger).
[27] Sharon Lambert, *Irish Women in Lancashire 1922-1960: Their Story* (Trowbridge, 2001); Catherine Dunne, *An Unconsidered People: The Irish In London* (Dublin, 2003); Anne Lynch, *The Irish in Exile: Stories of Emigration* (London, 1988).

collections offer a direct insight into the individual perspective of a migrant. This raises problems as well as offering benefits. There is the danger of extrapolating too much from individual experience. There is also the opposite problem; the shaping of personal experience around an already established narrative. Many memoirs and oral history interviews perpetuate the narrative of exile from the homeland. Within Donall MacAmhlaigh's account for example we encounter the almost classic image of the exiled emigrant, reluctantly engaging with a society understood as foreign. Oral history interviews were also evidently shaped by the questions asked. Questions frequently focussed on the isolation experienced as a result of migration, the trauma of leaving the home country, the challenges presented by life in Britain. Phrasing questions in this manner must, to some extent, induce a particular response from the interviewee. The frequency with which the tragic exile narrative is undermined by the answers of many interviewees is quite remarkable.

The chapter will divide into three sections according to what may be described as the "life-cycle" of the migrant. The chapter will begin with the decision to leave Ireland. How and why was this decision arrived at by individual migrants? How was this decision understood by the wider society and the reports which documented the reasons for emigration? Were Irish citizens lured by unrealistic promises of a consumer lifestyle in Britain, and who was particularly attracted by such promises? The chapter will then consider what life was like in the new centre for the migrant. Emigration was often conceptualised by the migrants themselves according to the consumer facilities and the consumer lifestyles they encountered in both locations of their domicile. Were social and consumer amenities superior in Britain than in Ireland? What level and what form of discrimination did Irish migrants encounter? Did Irish migrants associate largely primarily with other migrants from the homeland? Lastly, the chapter will consider the interaction between emigrants and the home community remaining in Ireland. The division often established between both groups should be queried, as both were dependent upon each other for material, emotional,

and psychological support.[28] The chapter will pay particular attention to the exchange of consumer goods, which helped to bond families. It will suggest that the exchange of goods should be understood as a form of communication similar to the sending of letters, but will also focus on the products themselves. Historians have largely ignored this method of communication between emigrants and the home community.

The decision to leave Ireland

The Commission on Emigration, noted above, claimed the 'two fundamental causes' of emigration were 'the absence of opportunities for making an adequate livelihood, and a growing desire for higher standards of living on the part of the community, particularly the rural community'.[29] At a structural level the reasons for mass emigration from Ireland through most of the period under consideration appear obvious. Irish citizens experienced the push factor of structural unemployment at home, combined with the pull factor of an expanding British economy. Delaney, however, highlights a number of lacunae that are not satisfactorily answered through such an analysis of Irish emigration; 'there is a tendency to instinctively think of migrants as simply passive actors responding with reflex actions to wider economic trends'.[30] The second fundamental cause highlighted by the Commission, 'a growing desire for higher standards of living', places economic determinants within the context of individual decision making on the part of emigrants. The search for employment opportunities abroad was motivated in large measure by the desire for a higher standard of living than that available in Ireland. Yet, the desire for an enhanced standard of living, which in a post-War era meant new consumer practices, and new consumer facilities, is often submerged beneath the search for employment within a structural analysis of emigration.

[28] Enda Delaney, 'Directions in historiography: Our island story? Towards a transnational history of late modern Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies* xxxii, no. 148 (Nov. 2011), p. 602.
[29] *Report of The Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems* (Dublin, 1954), p. 135.
[30] Enda Delaney, 'Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration from Post-War Ireland', p. 281.

The Commission revealed that unemployment, strictly speaking, was not the motivating factor for many emigrants. Interviewed migrants frequently claimed that their difficulty was in finding permanent and secure employment, providing a regular cash wage each week. Dr Beddy, chairman of the Commission, encountered several intending female emigrants who had been employed at a thread factory in Westport. He noted that higher wages could hardly be the attraction, estimating the increase in Britain to be 10s or less, which would have been offset by the cost of lodgings.[31] Work in the Westport factory, however, was intermittent, and did not provide a steady income, and this appears to have been a principle factor inducing the women to emigrate.[32]

W.A. Holohan encountered similar issues for intending emigrants at Clonmel. He claimed 'none had any really long stretch of unemployment and it looked as if they were really ready to sign on for work in Britain as soon as they were knocked off'.[33] Dr Lucey and Professor McCarthy, who conducted interviews at an Employment Exchange in Cork claimed three men they talked to were 'technically "unemployed" here but it looked from their accounts as if they had deliberately lost their jobs'.[34] In fact, a number of emigrants explicitly stated to their interviewers that they would not accept work in Ireland even if they could find it. Two out of seven intending emigrants interviewed at Manorhamilton stated that they would not stay to work in Ireland if a job became available for them.[35] At many of the interviews conducted for intending emigrants at least one person would claim they had no desire to remain at home, even if a good employment opportunity opened for them in Ireland. In Drogheda a 20 year-old single man stated

[31] Dr Beddy, Rural Survey: Mayo and Sligo (Oct. 1948) (TCD Manuscripts/Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S1).
[32] Ibid.
[33] W.A. Holohan, Rural Survey: Clonmel, Arklow and Wexford (Sep. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S5).
[34] C. Lucey and M.D. McCarthy, County Cork Employment Exchanges, (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S10).
[35] R.C. Geary and F. O' Leary, Rural Survey: Leitrim and Donegal (Oct. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S2).

that he 'would not stay in Ireland even if he got a good job'.[36] Many men of course did state that they would remain in Ireland if opportunities were provided. All the men interviewed at Tuam claimed that they would remain in Ireland at lower wages than in Britain if they could find permanent employment.[37]

A large number of interviewed migrants, however, stated quite assuredly that they would not remain in Ireland, and neither would they seek to return to their home country. In Longford nine of fifteen interviewed men stated that they intended to remain in England provided they found employment and accommodation there.[38] Of the remaining six men most expressed no preference on remaining in England or returning home, with only one stating explicitly he hoped to return to Ireland.[39] In Newbridge, a town described, in a report prepared by the Secretariat of the Commission, as 'flourishing and prosperous' three of three intending emigrants expressed a desire to remain in England provided they liked it on arrival.[40] Many migrants were exasperated with the lack of opportunities in Ireland and the sense that such opportunities were hoarded by the Dublin-based middle class elite.[41] In the reports their exasperation melds with the implied and sometimes directly stated condemnation of the interviewers who generally portrayed emigration as acceptable only as a last resort.

The search for employment alone appears not to capture the complexity of emigrant motivations. The Commission, indeed, would lay quite considerable stress on consumer desires and aspirations as a motivation to emigrate throughout their Report. The Report noted that 'it

[36] J.J Byrne and F. O'Leary, Rural Survey: Louth (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S14).
[37] McElhinney, Rural Survey: Galway (Ibid).
[38] J.J Byrne and F. O'Leary, Rural Survey: Longford (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S15).
[39] Ibid.
[40] F. O'Leary, Rural Survey: Newbridge (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S18).
[41] Diarmaid Ferriter, '"The Stupid Propaganda of the Calamity Mongers"? The Middle Class and Irish Politics, 1945-97' in Fintan Lane (ed.) *Politics, Society and the Middle Class in Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), pp 276-7.

is not actual want of poverty … which urges such people to seek the apparent attractions of a changed environment', and that there was greater realisation 'among people living in the more rural areas that they have to contend with many hardships and that modern services and amenities are to a large extent not available to them'.[42] Young people, especially, the Commission argued, viewed new consumer products and practices as increasingly important. According to the Report young people were no longer satisfied with a subsistence life on the land, which they perceived as 'dull, drab, monotonous, backward and lonely'.[43] Consumer items and experiences were now seen by many young people as necessary to a decent standard of living; 'expenditure on such conventional necessities as cigarettes, cinemas and dances is now regarded as inevitable'.[44]

Patrick McNabb noted a similar trend in the *Limerick Rural Survey* published in 1962 (eight years after the Commission). 'The individualistic urban approach to leisure' was highlighted by McNabb as popular amongst young people in rural Limerick and likely to expand further in coming years.[45] By this 'individualistic urban approach' McNabb meant, in particular, attending dance halls and cinemas, also highlighted by the Commission on Emigration.[46] The popularity of dancing in previous decades was noted by the fourth chapter. Such consumer desires were not new to Ireland and commentators for decades had criticised tastes for 'unnecessary' products and practices. Padraig Collum for example criticised the tendency for young Irish women to buy shop bought luxuries in a 1926 book.[47] There are many such examples that imply moral decline on the part of the rural population for choosing luxurious living.[48] Consumer aspirations were not new to rural

[42] *Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems*, p. 137.
[43] Ibid, p. 136.
[44] Ibid.
[45] McNabb, *The Limerick Rural Survey: Third Interim Report,* p. 52.
[46] Ibid, pp 47-53.
[47] Padraig Collum, *The Road Round Ireland* (New York, 1926), p. 11.
[48] See Wills, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration Post-War Irish Culture*, pp 52-77.

consumers but there is reason to believe that such aspirations were increasingly regarded as necessities.

'By the late 1940s a regular money income was seen as essential to meet new consumer needs', as Mary Daly has argued.[49] The second chapter highlighted the increased importance of cash within the rural economy, leading to greater opportunities for spending amongst rural adolescents. As the above comments from the intending migrants demonstrate, many viewed the regular cash wage as fundamental to a modern standard of living. Holohan, mentioned above summarised their attitude in the following comment:

> In the past, when standards were lower and perhaps opportunities for spending money were not so great in certain areas (no cinema, no dance hall, not so much smoking) many of those now emigrating were satisfied with work in large or short spells from time to time … the modern requirement, however, is a pay packet of definite dimensions every week.[50]

The 'pay packet of definite dimensions' was available every week in British cities, and was desired to facilitate a consumer lifestyle that was unavailable to many Irish emigrants at home. As Delaney has commented 'the leisure activities on offer to the young Irish migrant in Britain were an embarrassment of riches to the generation who arrived after the end of the Second World War'.[51] Many Irish emigrants, as Delaney suggests, 'quickly became consumers of commercialised leisure or purchased luxuries that they could never afford in Ireland'.[52]

Larger British companies advertised the consumer amenities they offered directly to Irish citizens, producing promotional material printed

[49] Mary Daly, 'The Modernization of Rural Ireland 1920-1960', in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda (eds), *Refiguring Ireland: Essays in Honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003), p. 357.
[50] W.A. Holohan, Rural Survey: Clonmel, Arklow and Wexford (Sep. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S5).
[51] Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*, p. 174.
[52] Ibid.

in Irish newspapers and even available at Irish Employment Exchanges. One produced by M. Howlett and Co. of Birmingham outlining in detail on the food and drink that will be provided to its workers, laying out typical lunch and dinner menus, as well, as noting the factory had 'a library, games room and entertainments'.[53] Another 18 page illustrated booklet created by the British Bata Shoe Company highlighted the various amenities and events that a worker in the company could anticipate; 'concerts, dances, parties, games … a first class canteen and restaurant'.[54] Dr Beddy, who encountered this promotional material in the Westport Employment Exchange, claimed it suggested 'a holiday camp atmosphere rather than that of a factory'.[55] Perhaps there was a certain level of exaggeration in such leaflets, but, they were not that far from the truth as evidenced by S. Lyon's memorandum for the Commission. After visiting the Firestone tyre factory at Brentford he claimed the 'firm provided very elaborate social amenities by way of club premises, billiard tables, canteens etc, which were free to all employees and who make use of them extensively'.[56]

Perhaps the most important source of information would come from the migrants themselves either in letters or through their own bodies if they returned to Ireland on holiday.[57] The chapter will later consider the figure of the returned migrant in detail, demonstrating that migrants were often understood according to the consumer possessions with which they would return. For the moment it is only necessary to highlight the importance of the migrant in spreading information on consumer amenities in Britain. McCauley, referring explicitly to Ballintra, Co. Donegal, noted that letters from migrants were vital in inducing more

[53] Dr Beddy, Rural Survey: Mayo and Sligo (Oct. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S1).
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] S. Lyon, Report on Survey Covering Employment, Social and Living Conditions of Irish Emigrants to Great Britain (Nov. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S24).
[57] Brody, *Inishkillane: Change and Decline in the West of Ireland*, p. 11.

Irish citizens to leave.[58] He claimed that girls in particular were won over by the 'city attractions' that could not be provided in rural Donegal.[59] Lyon, who interviewed intending female emigrants in the Waterford area, claimed that 'the lure of England' was 'emphasised by the "grand" appearance of the returned emigrants when they come home for their holidays'.[60] Lyon believed that women 'did not fail to exaggerate the multitude of attractions of "life" in England'.[61] Hugh Brody claimed that the reports of migrants presented 'urban life safely flowing with milk and honey'.[62]

The Report of the Commission was relatively ambivalent towards the "attractions" of life in England; towards the consumer lifestyle depicted in brochures and reported by migrants themselves. Much of the material collected for the Report is much more condemnatory in tone, however. The Revered Lucey, who served as part of the Commission, wrote his own Minority Report in dissatisfaction with the majority opinion. In it Lucey criticised what he described as the 'materialistic spirit of the age', which he outlined as attaching 'more importance than ever before to material comforts, the pleasures of the moment and the good things of the world generally'.[63] Lucey, who was the Archbishop of Cork, viewed such an outlook as inherently destructive to society, and certainly to the interests of the Catholic Church. He argued that such materialistic people will not have large families, claiming that

> having a good time and looking after a family are incompatible in their way of thinking … They saw no sufficient reason why they should give up going out to pictures, dances, races, clubs, or perhaps jobs for the sake of children.[64]

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[58] E. McCauley, Submission to the Commission on Emigration (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8305).
[59] Ibid.
[60] S. Lyon, Rural Survey: Waterford, Dungarvan, New Ross, Carrick-on-Suir, Enniscorthy, Carlow and Bagenalstown (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S8).
[61] Ibid.
[62] Brody, *Inishkillane*, p. 7.
[63] Dr. C. Lucey, 'Minority Report', *Report of the Commission on Emigration*, p. 341.
[64] Ibid.

Presenting consumer desires and motivations to emigrate as inherently selfish and damaging was a common strain in Irish society at the time. Even at a local level this was the case, as highlighted by the Limerick Rural Survey. McNabb noted that the local large farmers, who dominated the Muinitir na Tire meetings, shaped the way emigration was understood in the community.[65] The Limerick farmers, according to McNabb, depicted emigration as not only selfish, but unpatriotic, and claimed, 'if people were to work as hard at home as they do abroad, emigration would cease'.[66]

The chapter has so far largely discussed emigration in relation to individual decision-making, which is also primarily the way it was framed by the Commission on Emigration. It is important to remember, however, that often the individual decision to emigrate was made within the family context and the needs and desires of the family were significant in encouraging many young adults to leave Ireland. Donald Akenson, largely in relation to an earlier time period, has highlighted the importance of family as the backdrop for the decision to emigrate.[67] Irish migrants frequently returned remittances and other gifts that were important in maintaining many families at a standard of living that would have been impossible without the migration of their children. This will be discussed in the final section of the chapter, but for now it is important to place the condemnation of individual consumer aspirations in the context of familial decision making. The picture was often more complicated than commentators allowed.

Women especially were presented as being too easily won over by the consumer products and lifestyle available in Britain. According to Delaney, The Commission on Emigration understood that 'male migration to Britain was for purely economic reasons – and by

[65] McNabb, *Third Interim Report*, p. 18.
[66] Ibid, p. 18.
[67] Donald Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Belfast, 1996), p. 161.

implication comprehensible – whereas female migration to Britain was for altogether different reasons'.[68] Clair Wills has noted that the motivations of Irish women were associated especially with the desire for consumer goods.[69] Women, according to Wills, were seen as too easily swayed by consumer luxuries, as defined by traditionalists.[70] There was no shared understanding of what defined a necessity, however, and there were particular divides along generational lines. A memoranda on the Congested Districts for the Commission reported that 'coming to be regarded as necessities are bicycles, cinemas, cosmetics, professional hairdressing, factory-made clothing, bakers' bread, tinned food, radios, and reading matter'.[71] It was not only personal consumer goods increasingly seen as necessities but also larger household conveniences like electric irons, washing machines and ovens. These items required not only money but also social amenities especially electricity. This entailed a wider transformation of rural society, which as the third chapter noted proceeded slowly largely due to inadequate state support. Wills suggests 'the basic critique of women's consumerist desires was that they were unrealistic – but this was primarily a response to the fact that it was not possible to accommodate these desires in the small farms and townlands of the West'.[72] To facilitate these desires significant changes had to be facilitated in rural parts of the country.

The consumerist desires of women were also frequently connected with other motivations for emigration, especially the desire to marry. Numerous women interviewed as part of the Commission outlined marriage as a dominant or at least contributory factor leading them to emigrate.[73] This trend was also highlighted by other studies, including the *Limerick Rural Survey*, and is discussed in Caitriona Clear's article

[68] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society: Irish Migration to Britain 1921 – 1971,* p. 184.
[69] Wills, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration Post-War Irish Culture*, p. 70.
[70] Ibid, p. 72.
[71] Summaries of Memoranda, Congested Districts (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8301).
[72] Wills, *The Best are Leaving*, p. 77.
[73] R.C. Geary and F. O' Leary, Rural Survey: Leitrim and Donegal (Oct. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S2).

'Too Fond of Going'.[74] The decision to marry was itself often depicted as a consumer choice on the part of Irish women. McNabb claimed:

> The wealth of the prospective husband, although still important, is not so decisive as his personal appearance, his manners, and the kind of home he can provide … She objects to the "muck and dirt" of farm life and would prefer to marry a professional man or even a white collar worker, provided he is secure and can guarantee a reasonably comfortable standard of living.[75]

Women again often received blame for not being willing to accommodate to the 'muck and dirt' of farm life though often the decision to emigrate owed to a desire to set up a home with one's partner.

Wills has argued that women were made the symbolic scapegoats for the wider failure of rural Ireland.[76] In large part this is true; women often received unfair criticism for wider social problems. At the same time, however, much criticism was also directed towards men, especially at their unwillingness to marry. Many essays in the *Vanishing Irish* collection for example are condemnatory and even abusive in tone towards Irish men. Maura Laverty stated 'the great majority of Irishmen are completely indifferent to sex in any shape or form', and she went on to describe 60% of Irish men as 'auld Mary Annes'.[77] Consumer desires were again blamed for the unwillingness of Irish men to marry. Sean O'Faolain, in his article in the *Vanishing Irish*, voiced what he perceived to be the dissatisfaction of young Irish women: 'It is not that the young man in modern Ireland cannot afford to get married. It is that he cannot get married and still afford his car, his club, his betting, his poker, his golf and his holidays'.[78] Whilst it is unlikely that the average male rural

[74] McNabb, *Third Interim Report,* p. 31; Caitriona Clear, 'Too fond of going": female emigration and change for women in Ireland, 1946-1961' in D. Keogh, F. O'Shea, C. Quinlan (eds.), *The Lost Decade: Ireland in the 1950s* (Cork, 2004), pp 142-6.
[75] McNabb, *Third Interim Report,* p. 31.
[76] Wills, *The Best are Leaving*, p. 100.
[77] Maura Laverty, 'Woman-Shy Irishmen' in John O'Brien (ed.), *The Vanishing Irish*, p. 59.
[78] Sean Ó Faolain, 'Love Among the Irish' in Ibid, p. 116.

consumer was an avid golfer, O'Faolain's comments capture the widely expressed opinion that new consumer aspirations were undermining traditional marriage and family patterns. Wills is right to highlight the frequent connection made between women and consumer products and desires. Commonly men were blamed also for the same desires and it would be misleading to focus all attention on Irish women.

The search for motivations especially in regard to a multi-faceted decision such as emigration will always prove illusive. It is clear that consumer desires were a factor of significance for many Irish migrants in the post-World War Two era. These aspirations may have often melded with other factors especially the desire to marry or the longing for increased independence. The decision to emigrate cannot be figured solely as an individual choice, moreover, but must be placed within the familial context. For Irish society consuming behaviours provided a language to describe and conceptualise emigrant motivations. Condemnation of consumer desires by many commentators sat alongside a more pragmatic realisation of the failures of Irish society, especially rural society. The supposedly frivolous luxuries desired by Irish women, especially, spoke to a decline in the moral frugality of the Irish people. At the same time, the Commission on Emigration recommended the extension of electricity and running water to rural areas in an effort to combat the desire of many citizens to leave. Blame could be attached to individuals or groups for failing in their responsibility to the nation, but the nation was also frequently blamed for failing in its responsibility to its citizens.

Life Abroad

The Irish migrants who arrived in Britain and other locations consistently used consumer productss and practices to describe differences between their home country and their new destination. British consumer culture was often seen as superior to the Irish alternative though this was not always the case and a debate over living standards for Irish migrants

occurred in Ireland during the 1950s. Migrants undoubtedly encountered discrimination and racism in the United Kingdom in regard to the consumer spaces they could inhabit, but this was not necessarily the defining experience for many Irish migrants. Migrant networks could be used to overcome discrimination in Britain, and often these were focussed around consumer spaces, especially the pub and the dance hall. This chapter will also suggest that it is important to look beyond Irish networks and associations to understand migration to Britain.

Kathleen Morrissey, who left rural Galway in the 1950s, recounted her initial experience of London as part of an oral history interview:

> I thought it was absolutely fantastic! Everything was just wonderful! My brother and sister met me and took me shopping to the Edgware Road. There was a big market on Parade Street. Of course, I had no money. My sister Bridie, I remember, bought me a lovely handbag and I was so excited.[79]

One of Kathleen's first experiences in London was to go shopping. Evidently it provided a strong and lasting memory for her, and the handbag was a lasting symbol of her decision to leave Ireland. Certainly her comments do not suggest a sense of unbearable exile from her homeland – 'It was absolutely fantastic! Everything was just wonderful!'.[80] Many emigrants would describe similar such initial encounters in Britain, as they marvelled at the consumer possibilities on the streets of British cities. Christine Pamment, who emigrated to London in 1946, explained within an oral history interview, what she did with her first month's salary:

> We bought what we called 'styles' … I remember buying a coat with my first month's wages, the first new coat I ever had. It was a lovely mulberry

[79] Kathleen Morrisey, interviewed as part of Catherine Dunne's oral history collection, *An Unconsidered People: The Irish In London*, p. 81.
[80] Ibid.

> colour, though with my red hair it wasn't the right colour. And I bought an orange lipstick.[81]

The freedom to consume in England could be a dramatically liberating experience for Irish emigrants. As Pamment noted herself 'Don't forget that I'd been working as a maid before that, and wearing hand-me-downs, I'd been made to feel ugly.'[82] The ability to purchase her own clothes – even if 'it wasn't the right colour' – marked a significant moment of emancipation. She did not have to accept clothing from someone else but made her own decisions, even within the limited frame of consumer choice in post-war Britain, and the limitations of her salary. For both Pamment and Morrisey the ability to consume the products they wanted marked a central moment in their lives.

Not all consumer experiences on first arrival were as enjoyable. Some migrants expressed their dislike for the products available in England as compared to what they were accustomed to in Ireland. Donall MacAmhlaigh, noted above as the author of *An Irish Navvy* expressed a marked preference for the Irish consumption practices. He wrote, on his first experience drinking ale in an English pub, 'I didn't very much care for this drink: it didn't stand up very well in comparison with a pint of porter'.[83] In general, MacAmhlaigh expressed his displeasure with the British pub, stating his dislike for the 'games going on all the time in the pub – darts, skittles and suchlike with a duke box screeching away all the time'.[84] He contrasted this to 'Larry's pub back home', where he found, 'good wise chat and the manliness I shared with those drinking there'.[85] MacAmhlaigh was also unhappy that women frequented English pubs, claiming they were 'as plentiful in the pubs here as there are fleas on a goat and no man can be at ease wherever they are'.[86] The superiority of

[81] Christine Pamment, interviewed as part of Pam Schweitzer, *Across the Irish Sea: an Age Exchange Publication based on memories of Irish pensioners,* p. 149.
[82] Ibid, p. 150.
[83] MacAmhlaigh, *An Irish Navvy: The diary of an exile,* p. 7.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

the Irish pub over the British variety is perpetually repeated in *An Irish Navvy*, almost as a refrain. MacAmhlaigh evidently viewed the consumer space of the pub as a highly important one, which marked out important cultural differences between his homeland and Britain.

Many young Irish emigrants encountered feelings of loneliness and isolation upon arrival in their new centres. The pub as a consumer space offered some outlet from lodging accommodation away from one's family and friends. Father Seamus Fallon, who was an Irish Catholic priest in London throughout the 1950s and 1960s, commented on the situation of many young men he encountered:

> There was one big problem which most young Irish men had to face, and that was isolation. They would come home from work, get their dinner and then have to sit there looking at the four walls. There was no television, maybe just a radio … The natural thing was to go out to the pub.[87]

The public house could act for some emigrants as a form of refuge from relative isolation in their lodgings. Mary Walker, who travelled to London in 1959, explained that 'most of those young fellows didn't have a drink problem when they came to London first – they developed it afterwards, looking for company in the pub'.[88] As Walker comments, 'they had landladies who didn't want them in their room – where else could they go'.[89] This was a problem highlighted by a number of emigrants, and in a number of reports; many migrants could not return to their lodgings until quite late at night, making the pub an obvious location in which to pass time. It was a problem that was perhaps even more acute for migrants to particular parts of Britain, especially in the Midlands region, where the demand for labour was not matched by suitable housing provision.

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[87] Seamus Fallon, interviewed as part of Dunne's oral history collection, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 137.
[88] Mary Walker, interviewed in Ibid, p. 104.
[89] Ibid.

A number of Irish reports would highlight the inadequacy of living standards for emigrants in Britain. The Lyon Report on Employment and Living Conditions, referenced above, is one such example. Lyon recorded the comments of many authority figures, including priests, nuns, doctors, and managers of employment exchanges. Reverend Harold, of St Joseph's Retreat Highgate claimed that 'the living conditions of many Irish girls in the Parish were appalling'; they were 'content to put up with conditions in their living room and general accommodation which they would not tolerate at home'.[90] A number of figures consulted suggested that the poor living conditions were a particular strain on Irish girls. Hickey in a 1960 Report, claimed, many young Irish women, under the age of twenty, were forced to walk the streets of England late at night because they were not permitted to return to their lodgings until a specified hour.[91] There seems to have been particular interest in the living conditions of Irish women; a fear they might slide into immorality owing to the temptation of the modern city. Canon Browne, who set up a bureau for Catholic Irish emigrants in London, claimed 'the girls were good enough for a while but their poor living conditions contaminate them'.[92] The threat of immorality in the modern city was frequently connected to consumer behaviours. Girls wandering the streets at night, it was feared, would find their way to inveterate dance clubs and lounge bars.

The debate over living standards in Britain was a live issue in Irish politics. One report on Birmingham, published in 1951, would gain notoriety after de Valera used it as evidence that Irish citizens were better off at home. In a speech made in Galway in August 1951 he claimed 'There is no doubt that many of those who emigrate could find

[90] Reverend Harold, quoted in S. Lyon, Report on Survey Covering Employment, Social and Living Conditions of Irish Emigrants to Great Britain (Nov. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S24).
[91] J.V. Hickey, *The Irish Rural Immigrant and British Urban Society* (London, 1960), pp 25-7.
[92] Canon Browne, quoted in S. Lyon, Report on Survey Covering Employment, Social and Living Conditions of Irish Emigrants to Great Britain (Nov. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S24).

employment at home at as good, or better wages – and with living conditions far better than they find in Britain.'[93] It proves very difficult to assess the quality of living conditions for Irish migrants in Britain given the variance in experience according to region, according to income and the social class of the emigrant. Undoubtedly many emigrants were forced to lodge in poor quality housing often at extortionate prices. Many were also forced to accept humiliating conditions by their landlords. Anne O'Neill, who lived in a lodging house in London with her husband, remembered with consternation the rules enforced by her landlady: 'we had to make an appointment to have a bath … We had to be in by a certain time at night, too, even though we were married.'[94] Such rules, which regulated the minutia of daily existence, could be the most psychologically disturbing and controlling. At the same time we should be aware that some of the regulations enforced on emigrants by their landlords or landladies were not necessarily experienced as such. Arlette, who migrated from Wicklow to London in 1953, provides one example:

> We had quite a good social life. We went out dancing on Saturdays if we could get a late pass … You had to always ask for a late pass to get a key and they only seemed to have one or two so you had to book early. They would lock the door if you were late and wouldn't let you in, so we'd wander round all night or go to the clubs.[95]

Life in Britain, even if it entailed apparently close regulation by a landlord or landlady, could still offer a sense of consumer liberation. Mary Mason, employed in a house in London, was frequently asked to remain at home in order to answer potential phone calls. As, she explained, however, she did not always abide by the wishes of her

[93] Eamon de Valera, speech at Galway, Aug. 1951, quoted in Mary Daly, *The Slow Failure: Population Decline and Independent Ireland, 1920–1973* (London, 2006), p. 270.
[94] Anne O'Neill, interviewed as part of Dunne's oral history collection, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 13.
[95] Arlette, interviewed as part of Anne Lynch's, *The Irish in Exile: Stories of Emigration*, p. 21.

employer: ‘I couldn’t bear to be inside when I thought of the dances, so I used to go out.’[96]

Irish migrants also encountered frequent discrimination, such asthe infamous ‘No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs’, signs. There has been much debate over the discrimination faced by Irish emigrants across the world, as evidenced by the furore over Richard Jensen’s ‘No Irish Need Apply’ article.[97] Undoubtedly in post-Second World War Britain Irish migrants frequently encountered discrimination, probably in regard to housing and other consumer amenities more so than employment. It is questionable, however, if this discrimination had a profound psychological effect upon the majority of Irish migrants living in Britain, as has been suggested by several sociological studies.[98] Whilst many migrants may have encountered such forms of discrimination in regard to housing and other consumer facilities like shops or public houses it is not clear that they experienced such discrimination as especially troubling or highly significant. Kathleen Morrissey, referenced above, stated as part of her interview, ‘they’d have notices up on boards outside shops and places like that, not in the newspapers, saying ‘No Irish, No Blacks! We seemed to just accept it, somehow. It was normal. It didn’t bother us a bit’.[99] The subjective experience of one migrant is also borne out by quantitative studies. In the mid-1960s Jackson conducted a study of Skibbereen residents who had migrated to Britain. Of all those surveyed only 11% reported that they had encountered any discrimination of any kind after emigrating.[100] Whilst there is limited evidence available on this

[96] Mary Mason, interviewed as part of Schweitzer, *Across the Irish Sea*, p. 123.
[97] Richard Jensen, ‘“No Irish Need Apply”: A Myth of Victimization’, *Journal of Social History* xxxvi, no. 2 (2002); Rebecca A. Fried, ‘"No Irish Need Deny": Evidence for the Historicity of NINA Restrictions in Advertisements and Signs’, *Journal of Social History*, xlix, no. 2 (Spring, 2016).
[98] Mary Hickman and Bronwen Walter, *Discrimination and the Irish Community in Britain: A Report of Research undertaken for the Commission for Racial Equality* (London, 1997); Mary J. Hickman, ‘Reconstructing deconstructing ‘race’: British political discourse about the Irish in Britain’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, xxii, no. 2 (1998).
[99] Kathleen Morrissey, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 81.
[100] John Jackson, *Report on the Skibbereen Social Survey* (Dublin, 1967), p. 41.

topic, the material we do possess seems to contradict as much as confirm the narrative of discrimination.

Many migrants only recall discrimination as a significant factor in their lives from the 1970s onwards, at the time of the Troubles. Kathleen Morrisey claimed 'During the Troubles perhaps 15 or 20 years ago I found over here that our neighbours' attitude towards us changed.'[101] She recounted some of the insults she heard during the 1970s; 'You should go back to where you came from … You Irish shouldn't be here.'[102] Tony Maher, who migrated to Coventry in the 1950s, confirmed this experience, 'During the 70s, when things were bad, in the North, there was a change in attitude. But none of it was ever directed at me, personally.'[103] This is not to imply that discrimination against Irish migrants in post-World War Two Britain was insignificant prior to the Troubles, or that some Irish migrants did not suffer psychological distress because of the discrimination. Rather, it is to suggest that the experience of Irish migrants cannot be characterised simply by discrimination.

As has been highlighted by the historiography on Irish migration, the "network" of migrants was of considerable importance in providing mechanisms to overcome discrimination encountered in Britain.[104] Maher explained the benefits provided by established networks of Irish migrants:

> There were so many Irish around Coventry that you were automatically steered in the right direction when it came to looking for digs. You'd go into an Irish pub, and someone would always let you know where you could go and be welcome. There was prejudice against the Irish, of course there was, but with so many of your own around you were able to avoid it.[105]

[101] Kathleen Morrisey, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People,* p. 83.
[102] Ibid, p. 84.
[103] Tony Maher, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People,* p. 171.
[104] Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain: Settlers or Transients?', p. 7.
[105] Ibid, p. 169.

For Maher the support of the network was utilised to overcome any prejudice or discrimination he encountered in England. The Irish pub in Britain became a focal point vital in establishing links to a wider Irish community. Rex and Moore, who carried out a study of race issues in the Sparkbrook area of Birmingham in the mid-1960s, outlined the experience of walking into an Irish pub:

> One may buy draught Guinness and Sweet Afton cigarettes. A notice tells of a cheap weekend trip to Dublin arranged by the pub's own social club and it is not uncommon for someone to come round selling Irish political newspapers or tracts.[106]

The Irish pub in Britain allowed emigrants the opportunity to consume the same products they were accustomed to in Ireland – pints of Guinness, Irish cigarettes and publications. Perhaps more importantly even than this, as MacAmhlaigh above suggests, it represented a reassuringly familiar socio-cultural space, where the customs and mores were well known and observed by all. Numerous historians, including Ryan and Delaney, have noted the vital importance of the Irish pub to Irish migrants and Irish communities in Britain.[107] Such pubs performed many functions. Donal Foley has noted that Irish publicans in Britain habitually functioned as bookmakers, often 'because there were no licenced shops'.[108] Irish men could bet on British sporting events – football, horse racing or home sports such as Gaelic football or hurling, which were frequently followed by Irish emigrants living in Britain. The pubs were primarily consumer spaces but they provided a variety of other services for Irish communities.

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[106] John Rex and Robert Moore, *Race Community and Conflict: A Study of Sparkbrook, Birmingham* (London, 1967), p. 148.
[107] Liam Ryan, 'Irish Emigration to Britain Since World War Two', in Richard Kearney (ed.) *Migration: The Irish at Home and Abroad* (Manchester, 1988); Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*, pp 170-175.
[108] Donal Foley, *Three Villages* (Dublin, 1977), p. 62.

The pub was not the only consumer space of importance to the identity and communal structures of the emigrant community in England. Rex and Moore noted that there were many Irish cafes and restaurants in Sparkbrook, where one could find an emigrant 'eating a huge steak and a pint of milk', surrounded by Irish Tourist Board advertisements.[109] The dance hall was an important space for Irish migrants, providing a leisure pursuit and social outlet. Lyon found in London, as early as 1948, there were some eighteen commercial halls catering specifically for Irish people, of these, perhaps the best known were the Garryowen hall in Hammersmith, and the Galtymore hall in Cricklewood.[110] For women especially, the dance hall appears to have been a symbolically important consumer space, and is remembered as such by many in later interviews. Kathleen Morrissey referenced above recalled 'on Friday and Saturday we'd go dancing to the Galtymore or the Garryowen in Hammersmith'.[111] Attending the dance hall at the weekend was obviously a significant focal point of her week, as she notes the clothes she would buy and save for to wear at the halls; 'something nice, something dressy', and the excitement and ceremony involved in getting dressed for the dances.[112] Indeed Kathleen highlighted the sacrifices she would make so that she could go to the dance hall each weekend: 'we'd walk everywhere. We were saving our money, so we couldn't afford to go by bus.'[113]

Orsi has argued, in regard to Italian migration to New York, such immigrant spaces were an effort to 'recreate the familiar whilst in the midst of change'.[114] Delaney has characterised such spaces as 'islands of Irishness' within Britain, as he argues 'Predominantly young emigrants

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[109] Rex and Moore, *Race Community and Conflict,* p. 148.
[110] S. Lyon, Report on Survey Covering Employment, Social and Living Conditions of Irish Emigrants to Great Britain (Nov. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S24).
[111] Kathleen Morrissey, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 79.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid, p. 80.
[114] Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem 1880-1950* (New Haven, 2002), p. 162.

sought out other Irish exiles to socialise with in their hard-earned leisure time, in pubs, sporting venues and dancehalls across Britain.'[115] Ryan has characterised Irish migrants in this period as 'lonely people who followed their own kind wherever they may be … to Camden Town and Cricklewood, in the Irish communities, Irish dancehalls and Irish pubs'.[116] Whilst it is true that many Irish migrants preferred consumer spaces that were specifically Irish, many others preferred those less firmly rooted within an Irish community. Mary Walker, referenced above, noted

> Our social lives revolved around dancing … I loved the Hammersmith Palais, which was a long way away. Joe Loss was my favourite: if I didn't get a fix of Joe Loss on a weekly basis, I'd be in very bad form. Because of the long hours I worked, I really didn't have time for any other sort of social life, other than dancing.[117]

Again the importance of the dance hall as a consumer outlet is evident. The Hammersmith Palais, though, in contrast to the Galtymore or the Garryowen was not a specifically Irish dance hall. The most popular star of the early 1960s was Joe Loss, a British singer. Arlette, mentioned above, frequented the Palais to hear Joe Loss sing, citing a preference for it over the Irish dance hall 'I don't know if we went to the Irish clubs much, although we sometimes went to the Garryowen in Hammersmith. We went to the Hammersmith Palais an awful lot, when Joe Loss was playing there.'[118]

If Irish migrants could chose the "English" dance hall over the Irish one, the same was also true of English consumers preferring "Irish" dance halls. Thomas O'Donnell who emmigrated from Kerry to London

[115] Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*, p. 170 +175.
[116] Ryan, 'Irish Emigration to Britain Since World War Two', p. 50.
[117] Mary Walker, interviewed as Dunne, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 99; It should be noted that Joe Loss was also a very popular singer in Ireland. The popularity of Loss in both nations is further proof that consumer spaces and practices were not harshly segregated according to ethnicity.
[118] Arlette, interviewed as part of Anne Lynch, *The Irish in Exile*, p. 21.

in 1948 explained that at many of the supposed "Irish" dance halls he attended in London there was a broad group of attendees. 'There was a big section of English, because they were working with Irish, and they were friends, with one another', O'Donnell claimed.[119] The binary division into Irish and British consumer spaces may not be an accurate picture. Irish migrants frequently attended non-Irish consumer spaces, and it seems that British consumers frequently attended Irish dance halls. If Irish migrants were segregated in terms of accommodation, this was not the case for all consumer amenities in Britain.

Whilst specifically Irish consumer spaces especially pubs and dance halls were certainly important to many Irish emigrants many others chose to move beyond the homeland associations. This may have been especially the case for middle class Irish emigrants, who as Blessing suggests made up perhaps 20% of Irish migrants to Britain in the post-Second World War period.[120] As Ryan highlights, the Irish middle class emigrant tended to reject the ghettoization of Irish people living in Britain and sought closer integration within British society.[121] Some did prefer to form Irish only consumer spaces for migrants of higher social standing including the Irish Club founded in London in 1951. Many, however, deliberately chose to integrate themselves into British society as quickly as possible. One advertising executive who had emmigrated to London in 1954, claimed, as part of an oral history interview, 'Camden town and Hammersmith were two areas of London that I determined not to live in when I came to London in 1954. I didn't want to be identified with "The Paddies".'[122]

The middle-class Irish emigrant, despite, making up a significant section of total migrants, has received little attention within the

[119] Thomas O'Donnell, interviewed as part of Schweitzer, *Across the Irish Sea*, p. 145.
[120] Patrick Blessing, 'Irish emigration to U.S. 1800-1920' in P.J. Drudy (ed.), *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation and Impact* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 16.
[121] Ryan, 'Irish Emigration to Britain Since World War Two', p. 60.
[122] Advertising Executive interviewed for Kevin O'Connor, *The Irish in Britain* (London, 1972), p. 87.

historiography. It has been and will be easier to trace those migrants who remained within the "Irish" consumer spaces – the Irish pubs, dance halls as well as the sporting associations. It is more difficult to trace the Irish emigrants who did not join or remain part of such associations, or part of the wider Irish communities. No study exists on the movement of Irish emigrants to British suburbs, or their joining "British" associations such as tennis, golf or rugby clubs but such work might be quite revealing as to the assimilation of Irish migrants. Beyond this one should also consider the even more elusive assimilation involved in attending "British" pubs, cafes or restaurants. Evidently this was often a matter of class, as those advancing within British society sought to demonstrate their success through the associations they joined, and the consumer spaces they frequented, but we cannot always attribute such decisions to class belonging. Stephen Crogan, who could hardly be described as middle-class given that he was worked as a navvy for the British railway system, made a similar decision not to associate with the Irish migrant communities. When asked, as part of an oral history interview, 'You didn't mix much in the established Irish communities like Kilburn and Cricklewood, did you?, he could hardly have given a more emphatic answer, 'No, no, no, no, no – I didn't get into that'.[123]

It appears valid to nuance Ryan's claim that Irish migrants were simply lonely young people who flocked together because they knew no other options.[124] Even Delaney's claim that associating in consumer spaces was 'an inevitable stage in the process of adjustment' does not adequately capture the experience of Irish migrants.[125] The idea of the network may be useful in understanding such consumer decisions. As Fitzpatrick has commented, such networks were 'open and optional, rather than closed and fully reciprocal'.[126] In Britain, at least in larger urban centres, Irish migrants had options to engage in leisure practices

[123] Stephen Crogan, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People*, p. 127.
[124] Ryan, 'Irish Emigration to Britain Since World War Two', p. 50.
[125] Delaney, *The Irish in Post-War Britain*, p. 175.
[126] Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain: Settlers or Transients?', p. 7.

amongst their compatriots. Many migrants though seem to have had the option to engage in consumer spaces outside the Irish community, and British consumers might often have preferred supposedly 'Irish' spaces. Many migrants deliberately sought out Irish consumer spaces on first arrival in order to ease their transition to British life, but many then moved away from such Irish networks, and some did not even rely that heavily upon them in the first place. The source material perhaps naturally leads to a greater focus on the associational nature of Irish migrants abroad, as many were clustered into easily identifiable groups. The migrant who chose consumer spaces outside of the homeland community, however, is more difficult to trace, which does not mean that he or she is not deserving of consideration.

Emigrant and Home Communities

A connection with Ireland did not end once migrants had left the country. Significant numbers returned permanently, but even more returned temporarily on holiday. These returned migrants were often understood and characterised by the new consumer goods and behaviours they brought back. The perceived differences between migrants and the home community were expressed by reference to these goods and behaviours. They marked out migrants as exotic and novel, which acted as the source of attraction to many, but also had the potential to generate friction in local communities. Knowledge of consumer behaviours popular abroad as well as foreign consumer goods were spread throughout Ireland by the return of such migrants. In addition to this, consumer goods were also sent back to Ireland from emigrants abroad. The diffusion of goods and knowledge highlighted the separation between consumer cultures in Ireland and abroad, especially Britain, but it also helped to undermine this separation. Many families seem to have become reliant on the goods and money that was returned by migrants to Ireland.

In 1955 Arnold Schrier conducted questionnaire interviews with hundreds of elderly residents largely located in the west of Ireland, seeking information on return migrants and what was thought of them in

Ireland.[127] As Schofield has suggested, many interviewees characterised the returned migrants according to the consumer items they possessed, including gold pocket-watches, and bright modern clothing.[128] Both Schofield and Schrier, noted that the interviewees were often most impressed by the quantity as by the quality or the style of the clothing.[129] Stories were recounted of groups gathering to watch a woman heading to Church on Sunday mornings merely to see if she would have on a different dress that day.[130] The consumer possessions brought back by emigrants were evidently important in signifying the difference between migrants and the community remaining in Ireland. Returned migrants in a sense were marked out as different from their family and friends who had remained in Ireland, and the difference was expressed via the medium of consumer objects. Schrier's study though ranging quite broadly chronologically, focussed mostly on the early decades of the twentieth century. In the post-war period, if anything, there was an amplification of the process described by Schrier. Returned migrants created a tangible aesthetic, as was noted by Holohan in his report on Carrick-on-Suir. There he encountered a returned migrant who had spent 6 years working in a bank in England; the women happened to arrive at the Exchange while he was conducting the interviews. Holohan describes her as being 'attractively dressed and wearing a string of pearls, face well made up in chocolate box fashion etc., and as the Gárda remarked to me privately afterwards "Isn't she a good advert for emigrating to England?' [131] This woman was wearing the physical success of her migration on her face and on her body.

The idea that such encounters with returned migrants and their consumer markers would have a profound impact on the young Irish

[127] Schrier's notebooks are held in the National Folklore Collection, University College Dublin (UCD/CBE/MS/1408-14).
[128] Ann Schofield, 'The Returned Yank as Site of Memory in Irish Popular Culture', *Journal of American Studies*, xlvii, no. 4 (Nov. 2013).
[129] Ibid; Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and the American emigration, 1850-1900*, (Dublin, 1970), p. 133.
[130] Ibid.
[131] W.A. Holohan, Rural Survey: Clonmel, Arklow and Wexford (Sep. 1948) (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S5).

people who remained at home is frequently repeated within material collected for the Commission on Emigration and in other reports and studies. *The Limerick Rural Survey* claimed that returned migrants 'make a great display of independence and material well-being' flaunting 'it before the stay-at homes, who are made to feel inferior and boorish'.[132] Brian MacMahon, in his essay in the *Vanishing Irish* collection, records seeing at church 'a young girl faultlessly dressed' seated beside 'her young, well-dressed husband'. He continues:

> She was a maid who had left our town for England some years before, then being gawkish and shy. To all intents she was now a lady! As she passed the pews the young girls of our town became brilliantly alert. The incident was a sermon without words.[133]

His phrase 'a sermon without words' captures the effect that the consumer possessions brought back by returned migrants could have upon the home community. Many reports would claim that such encounters provided younger Irish citizens with a false impression of life abroad, a mirage of gleaming consumer goods. Father Seamus Fallon, who acted as a priest to Irish migrants in London, claimed as part of an oral history interview, that 'sometimes … there were unrealistic expectations of what life in London could offer', because of 'so many fellows who'd go back to Ireland for Christmas and they'd pull a twenty quid note out of their pocket and treat everybody in the pub to a drink'.[134] To a certain extent suspicion over the honesty of such depictions of the consumer lifestyle on offer in Britain stemmed from distaste for such a lifestyle itself. McNabb described such consumer behaviours in the *Limerick Rural Survey* as the 'superficial culture of industrial towns'.[135]

[132] McNabb, *Third Interim Report,* p. 55.
[133] Bryan MacMahon, 'Getting on the High Road Again' in John O'Brien (ed.), *The Vanishing Irish,* p. 207.
[134] Seamus Fallon, interviewed as part of Dunne, *An Unconsidered People,* p. 141.
[135] McNabb, *Third Interim Report,* p. 55.

Returned female emigrants were normally depicted as wearing their success on their bodies; in the clothes they wore and especially in their make-up. It is often implied by descriptions of returned female migrants that they have been made more physically attractive by leaving Ireland. Male returned migrants were often described as carrying their success in stacks of money, as Father Fallon's above comment implies. Men returned from abroad were often figured in the pub, where they used their fat rolls to purchase rounds of drink for the companions, as is also suggested in Keane's play *Many Young Men of Twenty*, when he writes 'they'll buy porter for the men when they return on holidays. They'll buy Porter for anyone.'[136] Returned male migrants were also characterised by their clothing and appearance, as the cartoon below demonstrates.[137]

Image 15: Cartoon *Dublin Opinion* (Dec., 1954), p. 314.

The young man is wearing clothing associated with the 'Teddy Boy' fashion popular in Britain in the mid-1950s. 'Those stupid modern lads in drain pipe trousers of turquoise and out-size shoulder pads … Tony Curtis haircuts and shoes with soles so thick' as one article in the *Drogheda Independent* described them.[138] Commentators in the 1950s

[136] John B. Keane, *Many Young Men of Twenty* (Cork, 1961), p. 28.
[137] *Dublin Opinion* (Dec., 1954), p. 314.
[138] *Drogheda Independent*, 29 Oct. 1955.

claimed that the 'Teddy Boy' fashions seen on the streets of Irish cities and towns had been brought back by returned migrants from Britain.[139] Teddy Boys in Ireland, as in Britain, were associated with hooliganism and delinquency. Numerous press reports across the country recorded assaults and destruction caused by 'Teddy Boy' gangs.[140] The best known was perhaps the disturbance near Christchurch cathedral on New Year's Eve 1954; six people were injured and shop windows were broken.[141] This behaviour, associated with consumer products, was presented as something that had been imported into Ireland.

The unwanted return migrant has been the subject of many films and pieces of literature, where they often interfered with the economic interactions and established hierarchies of a local community. In *The Quiet Man* for example Sean Thornton returns to purchase his family farm and birthplace thereby upsetting the present socio-economic balance within the fictional community of Inisfree.[142] Thornton on numerous occasions within the film demonstrates a notable ignorance of local socio-economic customs and practices. Initially he refuses to confront his love interest's brother, Will Danaher, when he denies his sister a dowry. *The Quiet Man*, a Hollywood film after all, eventually moves to a happy conclusion when Thornton is integrated within the community. In *The Field*, a play by John B. Keane, the carefully laid plans of Thady "The Bull" McCabe, to purchase a plot of land he has been working for five years and feels a right of ownership over, are undermined by the actions William Dee, an emigrant who has only recently returned from England.[143] Dee bids against "The Bull" for the land, planning to turn the agricultural land into a gravel quarry, and eventually is murdered by the McCabes for this unwanted intrusion in the local community. The true story, which provided the basis for the play, involved no "outsider", no

[139] *The Irish Times*, 13 Aug. 1955.
[140] *The Irish Press*, 7 Oct. 1955; *The Irish Press*, 10 Oct. 1955; *The Sligo Champion*, 8 Jan. 1955; *The Irish Times*, 6 Aug. 1955.
[141] *The Sligo Champion*, 8 Jan. 1955; *The Irish Times*, 1 Jan. 1955.
[142] John Ford (director), *The Quiet Man*. 1952.
[143] John B. Keane, *The Field* (Cork, 1991); first performed 1965.

unwanted return migrant. Instead, apparently, it involved a dispute between two Kerry-born men over the positioning of a fence.[144] It is interesting that Keane chose to include a returned migrant within the story, highlighting that often such figures were seen as "outsiders", who made unwanted intrusions into communities they no longer understood.

Hugh Brody, in his study of Inishkillane, identified a clear social cleavage running through the town between the older members who had made a definite decision to remain and the young people, who had already left or who planned to leave. 'Just as the older farmers next door gather together with glasses in hand, so the younger men and women are holding their bottles of Lucozade or coco-cola', Brody commented.[145] It was through this consumer behaviour that the broader social cleavage in the community was expressed. The older men congregated in the public house and drank alcohol. This was the meeting place for those who had committed themselves to the community in its more traditional and idealised sense. The young people refused to enter the pub and made a display of preferring the local shops where they drank soft-drinks rather than alcohol. Indeed they would make a virtue out of this abstinence. It was 'part of their identification with the forces opposing the traditional patterns of social life and social authority', according to Brody, for the same people talked 'as connoisseurs of the best 'Irish' pubs in London'.[146] The consumption of alcohol, for the people of Inishkillane, became a symbol associated with the traditional life of the village, and a commitment to remain on the land. Alcohol seems to have been associated with lethargy or a lack of ambition. McNabb, in the *Limerick Rural Survey*, also highlighted changes along generational grounds.[147] While older farmers generally travelled to town alone for shopping or sporting events McNabb suggests that younger farmers were much more likely to bring their wives and children for shopping or to go to the

[144] *Fuil agus Dúch*, Broadcast on TG4 (22 Mar. 2007, 10pm).
[145] Brody, *Inishkillane*, p. 162.
[146] Ibid, pp 173-4.
[147] McNabb, *Third Interim Report*, p. 44.

cinema.[148] Friction in local communities could be generated by changing norms of consumer behaviours and likewise consumer behaviours could be used to symbolise changing outlooks on life.

Interactions between emigrants and their families and friends in Ireland were not limited to the physical return of the migrant on holiday. Letters, telegrams and phone-calls were used by migrants to keep in contact with their families in Ireland. One of the most socially significant and yet least understood form of contact between emigrants and their families in Ireland was the exchange of consumer goods. This form of communication, which was crucial to the maintenance of familial bonds, has largely been overlooked to this point by historians. Arensberg and Kimball noted the exchange in their study of Clare in the 1930s, highlighting the frequency with which relatives abroad, especially in America would send back consumer goods to Ireland. 'Gifts of money, clothing and presents of all descriptions are sent back', they claimed.[149] Hilary O'Kelly has written a short article on the sending of parcels from America in the period 1930 to 1980 for a book on second-hand fashion.[150] O'Kelly's source material included oral history interviews held within the National Folklore Collection, of which the Emigrant Questionnaire 1955 was perhaps the most significant. Nearly all respondents to this questionnaire indicated that money was very frequently sent from emigrants in America back to their relatives in Ireland. Fewer provided details on the material objects, which were also sent, and this may owe in some degree to the manner in which the question was framed, as Schrier asked specifically about exchanges of money, and did not ask for detail on other objects interchanged. At the same time a considerable number of interviewees did provide information on objects that were sent across the Atlantic.

[148] Ibid.
[149] Conrad Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (Ennis, 2001), p. 145.
[150] O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America: American Clothes in Ireland c1930-1980'.

Clothing, it appears, was the most commonly sent item from America to Ireland. One Mrs Byrne, living in Malin Town, Donegal, stated 'Money was not the only thing that came though and even more regular than the letter came the American parcel.'[151] Mrs Byrne explained that clothing was most commonly sent in such parcels; 'sometimes new and sometimes second-hand'.[152] William Byrne, living near Edenderry, Offaly also commented 'not alone was money sent back from America, but also clothes in every form'.[153] Clothing could travel long distances without suffering much damage, and was immediately useful to families in Ireland, which would not necessarily have been true of all consumer gifts. As O'Kelly commented, 'sometimes the parcels contained little extras like tea or tobacco'.[154] Typically, she explained, the parcel itself would be a large cardboard box around three feet long and about two feet wide.[155]

Receiving the American parcel could be a moment of tremendous excitement for many Irish citizens. Several interviewees recounted the anticipation that was felt when they received parcels from their relatives. Mrs Byrne explained that 'The evening the parcel arrived there was great excitement, with each one (member of the family) shouting what had been put in for themselves.'[156] Mary, who was born in Cork in 1948 explained that she would 'come flying home every day to see if they parcel had arrived'.[157] The parcel represented a tangible physical connection with family members who had emigrated abroad. Words written in a letter, evidently had the power to stick in the mind of recipients, but the American parcel offered the potential for an even more profound sensory experience. The sensory power of the parcel could

[151] Mrs Byrne, Malin Town, Emigration to America Questionnaire 1955 (U.C.D./National Folklore Collection/CBE MS 1411).
[152] Ibid.
[153] William Byrne, Edenderry, Emigration to America Questionnaire 1955 (U.C.D./National Folklore Collection/CBE MS 1408).
[154] O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 86.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Mrs Byrne, Malin Town, Emigration to America Questionnaire 1955 (U.C.D./National Folklore Collection/CBE MS 1411).
[157] Mary, quoted in O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 91.

resonate through decades. Mary Coyle, born in Buncrana, recalled the smell of the parcels her aunt in American would send - 'not mothballs, not perfume, but between the two, it was tangy', claiming she would 'love to get that smell again'.[158]

The importance of a physical, sensory connection to one's relatives abroad should be understood as an important aspect of American parcels, but this does not represent the entirety of their meaning. Irish families and individuals were also excited about the goods included within the parcels. It can prove difficult to encounter records of gifts sent by emigrants to their families at home, but an insight is offered by some literary works. In Maura Laverty's novel, *Never No More*, the central character Maggie Doyle receives a very attractive dress from her sister Lizzie in America.[159] The dress is very important to Maggie in the novel, but not because it is a gift from her sister. Maggie instead appreciates the practical benefits of the dress: 'It was an American frock that first made Denis Carroll take notice of Maggie.'[160] American clothing had an air of exoticism and novelty. As O'Kelly notes, American parcels usually contained 'industrially manufactured clothes, in man-made fabrics with bright colours, fancy patterns and zips'.[161] These clothes obviously stood out in Ireland and could make a strong impression, as was the case with Laverty's character Maggie Doyle.

Not all items were welcomed as warmly, however. John Healy in *Nineteen Acres* remembered the frequency with which his aunt Kit would send his cousin Junior's second-hand clothing. Whilst Healy did enjoy receiving many items of clothing from Junior, some were remembered less fondly:

> Junior's two toned brogues might be big in the snazzier spots around uptown New York but in downtown Charlestown in the 1940s it took a lot of

[158] Mary Coyle, quoted in Ibid, p. 86.
[159] Maura Laverty, *Never no more* (London, 1992), p. 70.
[160] Ibid.
[161] O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 84.

> courage to walk up Chapel Street in those chocolate brown and cream brogues.[162]

O'Kelly suggests that women were happier recipients of clothing from America than men, because the often garish clothing was not enjoyed by retiring Irish men.[163] This division might be a little too rigid, as it implies that men did not adopt foreign fashions. The 'Teddy Boy' example discussed above suggests this was not the case. It is not apparent that all 'Teddy Boy' clothing came from abroad, but one Dublin tailor proudly proclaimed to the *Irish Times* 'no reputable Irish tailoring establishment' would make 'Teddy Boy' clothing.[164] The key word in this comment is perhaps 'reputable' as it seems likely that at least some tailors or retailers would have sold clothing they knew to be profitable. It is probable that much of the 'Teddy Boy' clothing was brought back by emigrants or sent back as gifts to their families. The fashion undoubtedly spread beyond simply returned migrants themselves, as many 'Teddy Boys' were recorded as being under sixteen, and unlikely to have emigrated to Britain and returned.[165] It was not only the 'Teddy Boy' fashion, moreover that spread rapidly from Britain to Ireland, but also the 'Rocker' and 'Mod' fashions that became popular in the early 1960s, as can be seen by the photographs recorded by Gary O'Neill.[166] The process of adaptation also involved encountering such fashions in films, newspapers and magazines, but the physical return of migrants or the sending of gifts must be seen as an important part of the process.

Gifts from abroad also had the potential to disrupt Irish society in other ways. While emigrants in the mid-twentieth century came from all classes of society there was large scale emigration from the small farmer and agricultural labour class.[167] Since most of these families would

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[162] John Healy, *Nineteen Acres* (Galway, 1978), p. 62.
[163] O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 87.
[164] *The Irish Times*, 13 Aug. 1955.
[165] *The Irish Press*, 7 Oct. 1955.
[166] Garry O'Neill, *Where were you?: Dublin Youth Culture and Street Style 1950-2000* (Dublin, 2011), pp 22-37.
[167] McNabb, *Third Interim Report*, p. 49.

receive gifts of both money and clothing from relatives abroad, however, the class divides were somewhat undermined by American parcels. Katherine Hurley, of Galway, remembered that the rural middle class struggled to dress their children as befitted their rank but that the sons and daughters of what she describes as 'working men and small farmers' got their clothes second hand and these 'clothes excelled in cut and finish'.[168] She commented with some annoyance that 'the daughter of a labourer, drawing the dole, and an expense on the rates, was smarter dressed than the daughter of the Large farmer who kept up the country'.[169] Hurley may have exaggerated this complaint for effect in order to make a larger point about the industrious middle class and the feckless labourers. It is unquestionable that many labourers received clothing from relatives abroad, and that their appearance served to undermine some established social hierarchies in rural society. McNabb noted that returned migrants, who were often the children of labourers, usually had more money to spend at dances as well as a 'superficial polish which is attractive even to the farmer's daughter'.[170] Returned migrants undoubtedly had the ability to unsettle hierarchies within local communities.

While the receipt of parcels from abroad often left a vivid impression in the minds of many Irish people it is more difficult to find source material from the senders of parcels. One insight is provided by Eleanor, who moved to London, from Cork, in 1958 when she was 8 years old.[171] Eleanor recounted, as part of an oral history interview, how her mother would send clothing back to their relatives in Cork:

> My mother used to go pretty well every week, if not every second week to jumble sales. She used to get big brown paper sacks from the vegetable shop

[168] Katherine Hurley, quoted in Hilary O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 90.
[169] Ibid.
[170] McNabb, *Third Interim Report*, p. 49.
[171] Eleanor, interviewed as part of Lynch's, *The Irish in Exile*, p. 4.

> and rip out the lining and fill them with everything she could buy and send them to clothe the family at home.[172]

In this instance the sending home of clothing is almost a routine action for Eleanor's mother; something that is done 'every week, if not every second week'.[173] Yet this sense of everydayness was not felt on the other side of the relationship. Eleanor recounts that 'the feeling of affluence about our family was caused by these massive parcels which arrived to my nan's; who then circulated them to the family and the cousins at home'.[174] What was, in essence, an everyday chore for Eleanor's mother was a moment of tremendous significance for their family living in Cork. The sending of material objects could convey a sense of prosperity and even superiority in the emigrant/home relationship. Consumer goods, sent back or carried back in person by emigrants, were markers of success, demonstrating that the decision to leave Ireland was correct. Eleanor explains that while her family were in no way affluent by London standards, when they travelled back to stay with their Cork family over the summer they were seen as 'the rich going to visit the poor. I mean, we were the ones that had a television and eventually really luxury items like a fridge and a washing machine.'[175]

It is significant as well, that Eleanor's mother bought the clothing from a jumble sale; clothing from a jumble sale "would do" for the family in Ireland. Molly Allsop, who worked as a domestic servant in London throughout the 1930s also relied on this source to find consumer goods for her family in Ireland: 'I used to go to jumble sales and I'd buy a lot of second hand stuff to send over to my mother for the younger children, and some very nice woollies for my mother.'[176] Allsop only sent second-hand clothing back to Ireland, and she recounted what she did with bequeathed suits from a vicar she had served in a guesthouse,

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[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Molly Allsop, interviewed as part of Schweitzer, *Across the Irish Sea*, p. 6.

> His daughter brought me up two of his suits to send home for my father. So I sent them home. I sent one first and I said "If it fits, I'll send the other one". It fitted great and they wrote to me to send the other one. She brought me over-shirts, beautiful socks, underwear and I sent them all home. It made my father very proud.[177]

As the two above examples suggest, it was primarily women who sent clothing and other gifts back to their families in Ireland. O'Kelly has argued that 'the clothes came as part fulfilment of female filial duty'.[178] Aunts and sisters in the United States or Britain returned gifts out of a sense of responsibility to the wider family, and also perhaps to ensure they were remembered at home. Male emigrants also felt this sense of responsibility but largely seem to have sent money back rather than consumer items. In Ireland the gifts were not treated simply as commodities, but seem to have had a particular significance to families and communities. Schrier's interviewees confirmed that gifts from America were seldom sold and it was considered distasteful to do so. Catherine from Buncrana remembered 'it was very rarely done to sell the clothes' received from relatives abroad.[179] As O'Kelly has argued parcels 'had a more significant exchange value among kin people than they had a realisable cash value'.[180] Gifts represented a tangible, sensory connection binding together relatives that were separated.

It is difficult to know how much support families received from relatives abroad, and it varied greatly. Some migrants claimed they returned as much as 50% of their weekly wage to their family Ireland.[181] The importance of remittances and gifts was certainly apparent to observers of rural communities. Dr Beddy, when travelling through the village of Lahardane, Mayo in 1948, wrote of his 'impression of a people

[177] Ibid, p. 7.
[178] O'Kelly, 'Parcels from America', p. 92.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Christine Pamment, interviewed as part of Schweitzer, *Across the Irish Sea*, p. 149.

living in reasonable comfort and contentment'.[182] The local priest informed Beddy that the apparent comfort was dependent on 'emigrants' remittances and of gifts of clothing from relatives abroad, particularly those in U.S.A … the people of the parish are well dressed and are not short of money'.[183] Hugh Brody found a similar reliance on diaspora support in his study of Inishkillane in the 1960s. He calculated that many men in the village were spending £70 in the pub during the 8 week tourist season, which he also calculated was roughly the sum an average farm could hope to make for marketed produce in the course of a year.[184] As Brody commented, 'that kind of expenditure is not possible without help of the remittance'.[185]

Both Beddy and Brody lamented, or at least commented on, the increasing dependence of such rural communities on the support of their families abroad.[186] Beddy claimed that 'dependence on outside resources colours the outlook of many to such an extent that they are not prepared to do anything for themselves'.[187] Such comments are evidently an exaggeration. Support from relatives abroad did not relieve rural communities from arduous farm work. The flow of money and goods back to Ireland, however, may have encouraged a larger number of families to remain on the land. Brody certainly believed that remittances and gifts had fundamentally undermined mutual aid relationships in the local community and encouraged greater dependence on the 'closest kin'.[188] He commented 'Many farm families do seem to have money for buying the things they need, and often families doing the buying are conspicuously without much source of income of their own.'[189] At the very least it seems possible to say that remittances and gifts from abroad

[182] Dr Beddy, Rural Survey: Mayo and Sligo, Oct. 1948 (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S1).
[183] Ibid.
[184] Brody, *Inishkillane*, p. 122.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Dr Beddy, Rural Survey: Mayo and Sligo, Oct. 1948 (T.C.D./Arnold Marsh Papers/MS 8306/S1).
[188] Brody, *Inishkillane*, pp 139-41.
[189] Ibid, p. 122.

provided an important source of support to many families in Ireland. The flow of money and goods maintained many families in consumer lifestyles that otherwise would not have been possible. Receiving gifts from abroad connected Irish consumers to a wider consumer world, even very remote consumers like the Blasket islanders referenced at the beginning of the chapter. The apparent isolation of Irish citizens and the apparent backwardness of the country were, in this sense, overcome by the individual and collective action of the diaspora and the home community. Gifts often highlighted the superiority of the consumer culture available abroad or even other parts of Ireland, and this was confirmed also by the return of migrants.

Conclusion

The chapter has highlighted the significance of consumer behaviours to any understanding of Irish emigration, especially in the post Second World War period. The desire for consumer goods or practices was a motivation for many migrants to leave Ireland and one that was often conflated with other motivations especially the desire to marry or achieve independence. Previously historians have touched on these issues, but have not given consumer behaviours the attention that is warranted. Contemporary commentators could be condemnatory in regard to the frivolous desires of Irish migrants, but there were also efforts to improve the conditions of consumers in Ireland especially the Rural Electrification scheme.

Consuming behaviours offered a language through which to express discontent with conditions in Ireland, but also to express excitement about the opportunities provided abroad. Many Irish people engaged with the migrant networks in Britain, often based around consumer spaces, especially pubs and dance halls. The chapter has offered critiques of the idea that this was an inevitable stage of transition, as has been implied by most historiography. The experiences of middle class migrants, accepting the problems with this categorisation, have not been given significant attention in historiography. Historians have

naturally been led to the Irish associations for source material. Tracing the more diffuse integration of Irish migrants into British society is a challenging task, but necessary to further nuance our understanding of emigration.

The concept of the 'life-cycle' was used to give structure to the chapter, even though it obviously simplifies the experience of different migrants. Importantly this structure did highlight the connection of migrants to Irish society, and especially with their local communities and families. The return of migrants, especially after World War Two, was frequent and often they returned with new consumer goods or behaviours. Migrants often used such behaviours as a means of highlighting the success they had achieved abroad, even if this was exaggerated. Their return also had the power to generate friction in society and in specific communities, as evidenced by the 'Teddy Boy' fashion or the shop/pub dichotomy highlighted by Brody in Innishkillane. Most often it seems that the goods and the behaviours transported from abroad were welcomed in Ireland. Consumers were excited by the 'American parcel' or such goods sent from Britain. This process highlighted the difference between the consumer culture in Ireland and abroad, but to a certain extent, it also served to undermine this difference.

Conclusion

> *I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the "obsolete" hand-loom weaver, the "utopian" artisan and even the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of prosperity.*[1]

This was the aim outlined by E.P. Thompson in his mammoth study of the English working-class in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. 'The enormous condescension of prosperity' also seems to weigh heavily on the consumer nationalist, the barn-hall dancer, the pilgrim traveller and the women who posted out-sized and out-dated fashions to their relatives in Ireland. In an Ireland of significant economic development and a determinedly internationalist outlook the consumer behaviours of these individuals can appear both disturbingly retrograde and quaintly innocent. Thompson's task was to re-establish the agency of the proto-working class, who had previously been castigated as backward and deluded. This study has, likewise tried to demonstrate the agency open to consumers in Ireland. Given the tendency in Irish historiography to emphasise economic backwardness, isolation and Church/State control there is great value in such a focus. The dissertation believes that sufficient evidence has been presented to question the meta-narratives outlined in the introduction and encourage a more nuanced discussion of everyday life in the period 1922 to 1960.

This study has repeatedly emphasised the agency of Irish consumers despite limitations and deprivation. The first and second chapters noted that consumers copied fashionable designs, undermining the supposed division between home-made and shop-bought goods. Often consumers might not have had the money to purchase fashionable clothing, but this act of copying allowed them to mimic American

[1] E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working-class* (London, 1963), p. 12.

actresses or other fashion icons. Even during the Emergency, the point at which consumers were most clearly constrained in their daily lives, the dissertation noted examples of agency. The ability to source desired products such as tea through smuggling, the black market or from relatives abroad is an example of Irish consumers' agency in the face of severe limitations. The supposed overbearing control exercised by the Catholic Church over consumer behaviours has frequently been challenged by the dissertation. Dance hall consumers, it was argued, were not confined to parochial controlled halls and monitored solely according to strict liturgical rules. Church authorities were shown to be somewhat impotent in their efforts to exercise control over pilgrimage travel. This was true even of John Charles McQuaid: "ruler of Catholic Ireland".

This does not mean that clerical authorities at various levels and in various guises did not limit the freedom of Irish consumers, but there are considerable grounds for nuancing our current understanding. A more multifaceted consideration of social control as it operated in Irish society would benefit Irish historiography. The fourth chapter highlighted the largely unconsidered significance of local communities and their role in limiting consumer behaviour. In contrast to the Catholic Church the control exercised by the State over consumption may, in certain respects, have been under-emphasised in Irish historiography. This control was often less concerned with the moral behaviour of consumers than with their practical safety and material subsistence. The 1935 Dance Halls Act facilitated the expansion of safety regulations, which may have indeed been the primary concern of most police inspections. The third chapter also emphasised the growth of state control over the daily subsistence needs of consumers. To a significant extent this control was not desired or sought by Irish governments and accepted only as a last resort and in response to public pressure especially from consumer groups.

The experience of Irish consumers was often radically divergent. This was highlighted especially in the first chapter, which discussed the significance of the central cleavages in Irish society, such as, income,

class, the rural/urban divide and gender. The dissertation has attempted to cut across these cleavages in its discussion of consumer behaviours, but not to ignore them or diminish their significance. The three case studies focussed on behaviours that were not limited to one particular income group, or class. Different income and status groups engaged in these behaviours in their own ways.

The definition 'consuming behaviours' selected for the dissertation has been important in moving away from prosaic and stereotypical classifications of consumption. By focussing on behaviours that 'revolve around the marketplace, but do not necessarily involve purchasing' the study was able to discuss significant aspects of consumers' lives that have previously been overlooked. The lives of consumers involved the daily mundanity of provisioning the home, but also moments of exhilaration and fun. The dissertation has opened new avenues for international research into consumption. Many of the topics discussed like the consuming of religion or the exchange of gifts as a form of consumption have received limited attention in historical research. The research presented here can add to the new topics and approaches to international consumption historiography.

The problem of selecting appropriate comparison points for Ireland has received repeated attention from the dissertation. Buying for Ireland demonstrated the commonalities that Irish consumer nationalism shared with colonial or semi-colonial nations. At the same time, it also highlighted how consumer nationalism diverged from these colonial examples and can be compared with European imperial nations. The apparent isolation and exceptionalism of the Irish experience has repeatedly been questioned. Notably these concepts were questioned in the discussion of the Emergency; the period of 'Plato's cave'. During the Emergency the everyday experience of Irish consumers parallels with their British and continental counterparts, in regard to deprivation, scarcity and state control.

Consumers in Ireland were not isolated from international developments, and neither did they choose to isolate themselves from international trends in fashion and culture. Consuming the Dance Hall highlighted the popularity of 'foreign' music and dances in Irish dance halls despite the remonstrance of outraged moral campaigners. Buying for Ireland noted the continued popularity of continental, especially Parisian fashion, despite the encouragement to Buy Irish. At the same time, such international trends and products were often adapted according to Irish conditions. The 'foreign' dances held in Mayo would have been unrecognisable to American dancers, just as the Paris fashions worn in Monaghan would have seemed alien to Parisians. Irish consumers generally adapted rather than adopting foreign trends and products outright.

In addition to the direct examples of adaptation by Irish consumers the dissertation has also highlighted how aspects of consumer culture in other nations were paralleled in Ireland. The pilgrimage has often been viewed as a stereotypically Irish activity. In understanding the leisure aspects of the pilgrimage the dissertation has opened potential connections with the growth of mass leisure and tourism in inter-war and post-war Europe. Emigrants living abroad or returned home circulated not only knowledge but also consumer goods purchased in Britain, or the money to purchase many desired goods. The differences in consumer behaviours between Britain and Ireland were highlighted by this process, but, additionally, some of these differences were undermined by the same process.

Some important topics could not be given adequate attention in the dissertation. These were highlighted by the introduction; in particular, the relation between north and south, and the similarity and difference between northern and southern consumers. Most chapters provided some discussion of Northern Ireland, and made comparisons where appropriate. Further research into this area, however, would add to the relatively limited body of cross-border historiography. The dissertation

was also unable to devote much attention to the religious divide and subsequent effect on consumption. The study was skewed very much in favour of the Catholic religion though it did discuss Protestant reactions to dance halls and in chapter four. The source material available in this regard appears to be relatively limited, but further research into distinct Protestant and other minority religious consumption patterns could prove highly insightful.

The dissertation has not provided a definitive study of consumption in Ireland. Rather, it has only begun to scratch the surface of potential research into the area. The approach taken by the dissertation in defining consumption in broad terms will hopefully open new avenues for future research. There is much room for further research into religious consumption, especially the wide array of religious objects collected and valued by many Catholic families. The significance of gender and gender identity to consumption patterns is an interesting topic deserving more research in the Irish context. The expression of masculinity through consumption such as the purchase of particular cigarette brands, alcohol, or clothing styles could help to throw light on the under-researched history of masculinity in Ireland. Research into such areas, however, would be limited by the availability of primary source material.

The significance of consuming behaviours to class identity and social hierarchy is another area ripe for potential research. The dissertation did not devote much attention to this topic though it was considered in the first chapter. Social hierarchies are so often expressed in the minutia of daily life; the purchasing of certain foods, knowledge of a particular culture, wearing the right clothing. A consideration of these and other expressions of social hierarchy through consumption would aid interpretations of class and status differences in Ireland. Again, however, the available source material to conduct such research is limited, especially that material offering an insight into how consumers viewed particular products and practices. This field could benefit perhaps from oral history research.

In contrast there are numerous source bases available for the history of consumer nationalism in twentieth century Ireland, but, so far it has remained largely unconsidered. The dissertation could not go into the detail warranted by the early consumer nationalists, nor discuss Buy Irish campaigns funded by the government in the 1960s and 1970s, as this was beyond the scope of the project. A study of consumer nationalism across different time periods though could offer valuable insights into the changing ideology and methods of Buy Irish promoters. This research could also suggest further similarities between consumer nationalism in Ireland and other nations. In particular, a consideration of anti-imperial consumer nationalist movements in trans-national perspective would be of considerable importance.

In addition to consumption specifically, the study has also encountered other lacunae in Irish historiography. Few works have addressed the social and cultural history of the Economic War period. This is also largely true of the Emergency period though recent work by Evans especially has redressed this to a certain extent. These eras are highly significant for Irish history in the twentieth century. Further research into the social and cultural implications of broader political and economic developments would greatly benefit Irish historiography.

The dissertation hopes to have added to the literature that has questioned the dreary, monotonous, mono-cultural gloom that supposedly hung over pre-1960s Ireland like an impenetrable fog. It has focussed on the pleasure, colour and simple fun of Irish consumers in their daily lives. This does not diminish the restrictions imposed on consumers due to economics, politics or socio-cultural control. Neither does it absolve the Catholic Church or the Irish state of responsibility for their manifest failures. It does, however, approach a more nuanced understanding of everyday life in the period 1922-1960.

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